

Regional Growth Strategy Indicators Report for 2024



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Prepared by Regional Planning and Transportation
February 2026

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The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)

The 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:

1. What is being measured?
2. Why is the indicator important?
3. What is the target/desired trend?
4. 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 2024 reporting year (January to December 2024). In this reporting year, 14 of the 19 indicators were updated with new data.

This year, three indicators have seen positive changes to their performance metre (*see page 1*):

1. Waste stream: solid waste disposal (2.2a)
2. Average residential water consumption (2.2b)
3. Increase supply of affordable housing (3.2d)

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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

** indicates no new data for this year

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 (RGS) 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

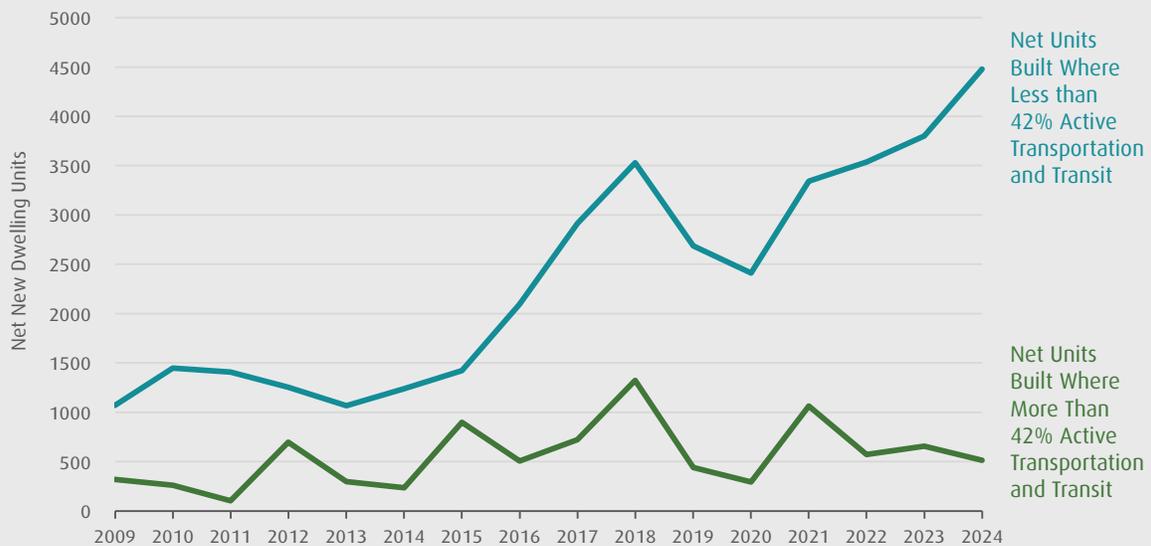
Place growth in areas conducive to walking, cycling and transit.

How are we doing?

Currently, we are not meeting the desired trend.

In the Growth Management Planning Area in 2024, a total of 4,990 new dwellings were completed in the region. Of these, 90% (4,478 total) were in areas that do not meet the 42% active transportation target, while 10% (512 total) were in areas that meet the target. The proportion of new dwellings in areas meeting the 42% target has steadily declined over the last five years.

It should be noted that areas meeting the 42% target are updated based on census data every five years and additional areas may be added based on the upcoming 2026 census.



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

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

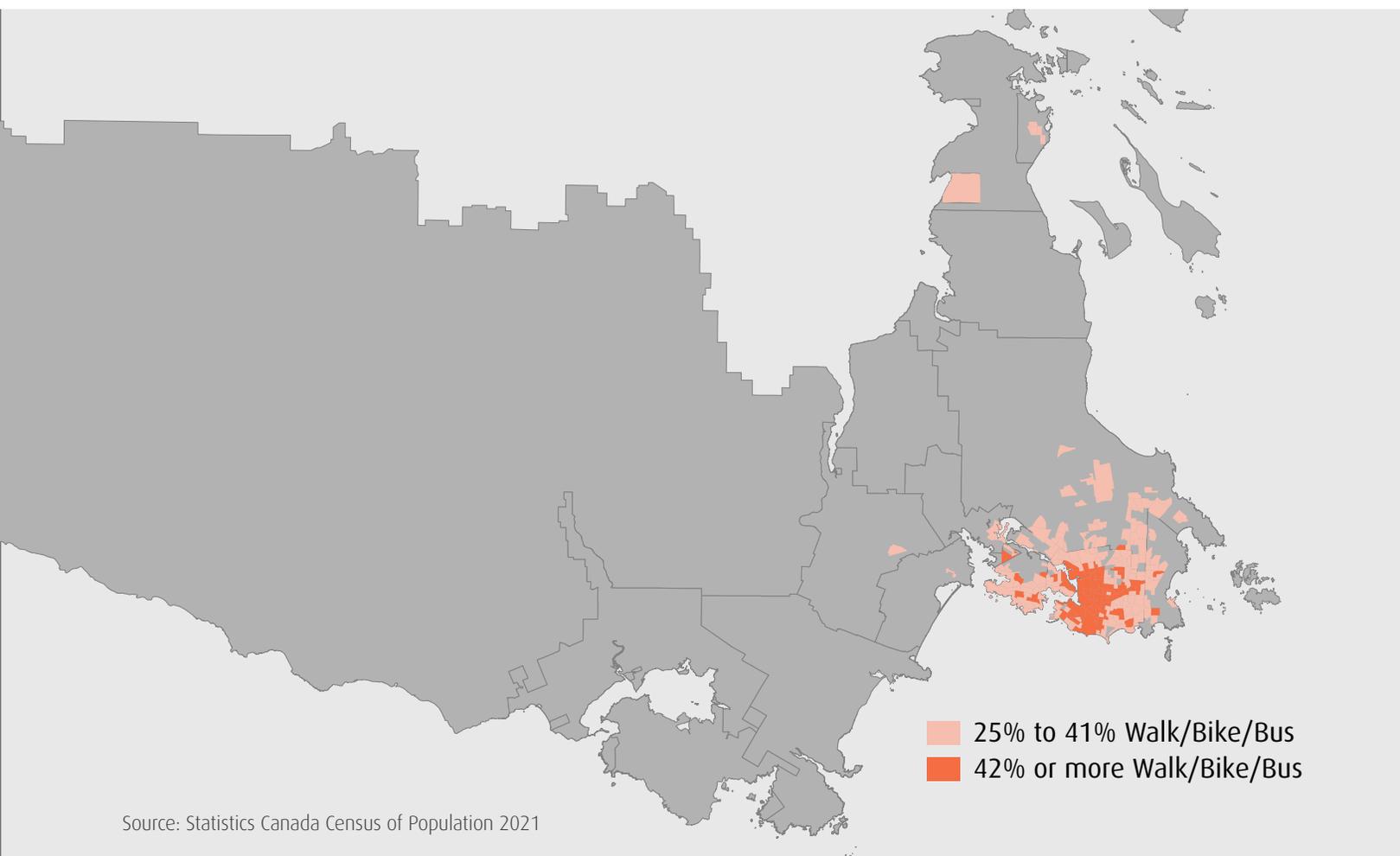
What does the map indicate?

This map shows census Dissemination Areas where more than 42% of residents walk, bike and bus to work, meeting the RGS 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 RGS 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.



Source: Statistics Canada Census of Population 2021

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.

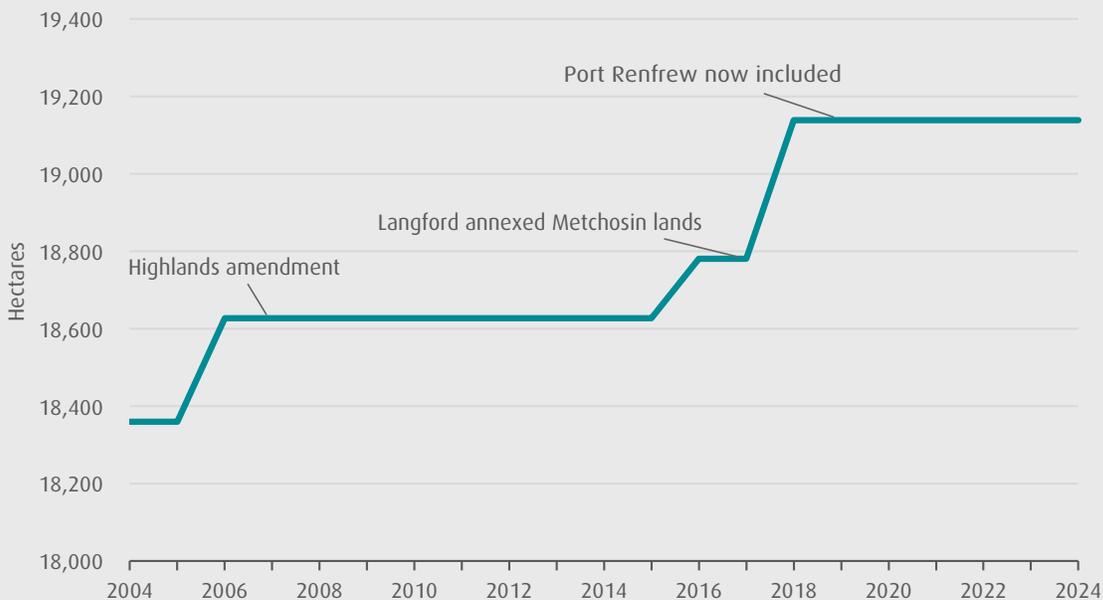
Target/Desired Trend

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.

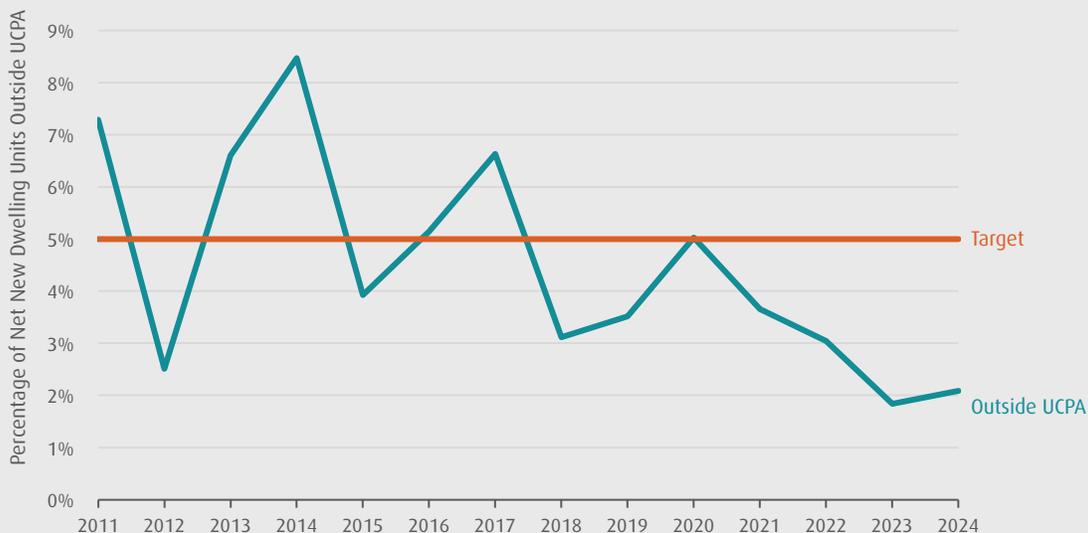
Target/Desired Trend

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 3.8%. After a notable reduction between 2020-2023, 2024 has seen a small increase to 2.1% from the 2023 low of 1.8%. This continues to be well under the 5% target.



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.

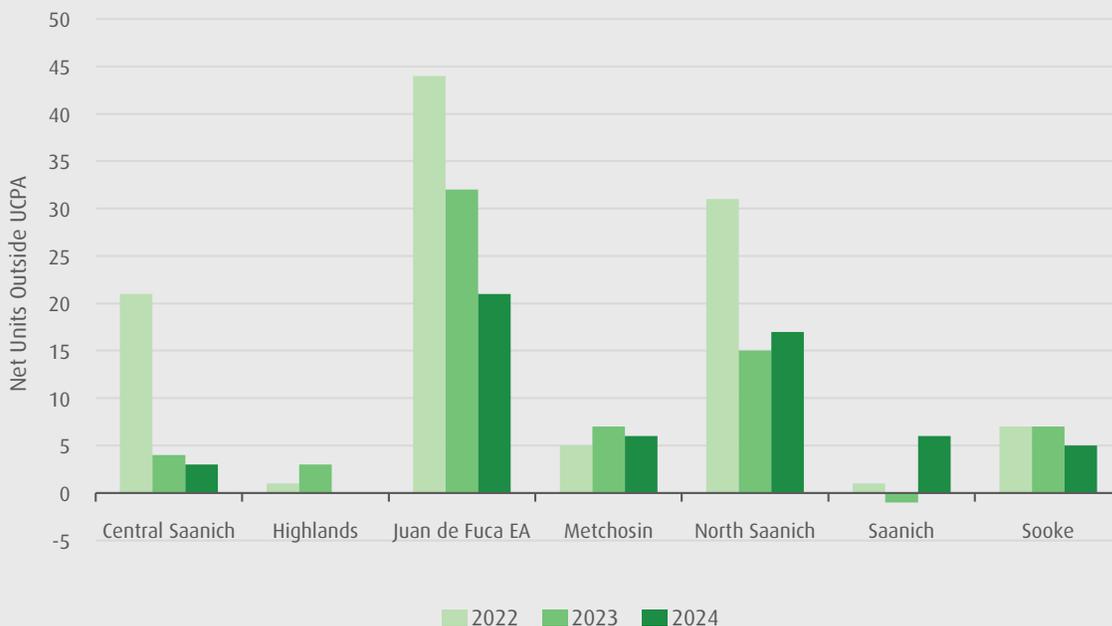
Only local governments that have land outside the growth boundary are included. Together these units make up the percentage of new units built outside the growth area.

The RGS 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.

In previous RGS Indicator Reports, this distribution was reported as percentage of the regional total by local government. This year, the numbers of new units are provided to more directly represent the scale of growth by local government.



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 2024 there are 1,702 dwelling units in East Sooke and Otter Point, with an increase of 11 units from 2023. There has been minimal expansion, with an average of 17 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 measures the total area of land within the Regional Parks system. It also presents the proportion of Regional Parks classified as Conservation Area, Wilderness Area, Conservancy Area, or Natural Recreation Area. At present, no land is designated as a Conservancy Area, as this classification was recently introduced in the Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022–2032.

Why is this indicator important?

The RGS aims to protect, conserve, and manage ecosystem health. This indicator is important for demonstrating the growth of the Regional Parks system and for assessing how parkland is allocated

among different park classifications to meet regional priorities. Together, these measures help evaluate progress toward long-term conservation objectives and support informed decision-making related to land protection, recreation planning, and ecosystem management.

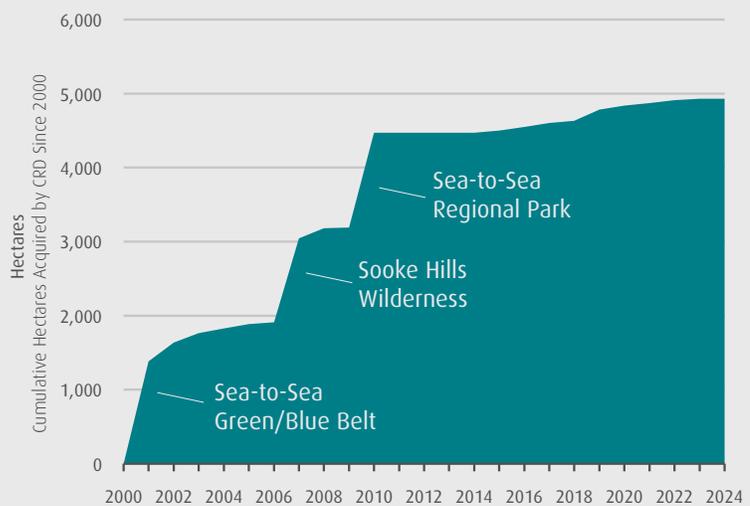
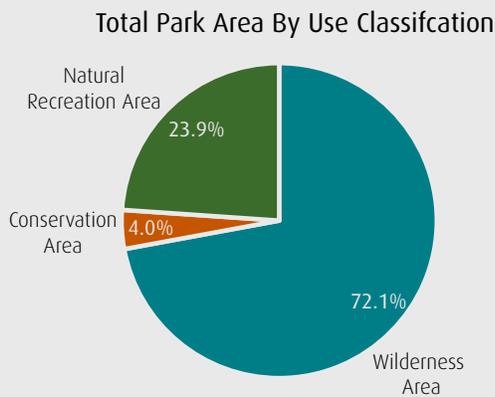
Target/Desired Trend

Continue to acquire park land.

How are we doing?

No new park land was acquired in 2024.

CRD Regional Parks continues to evaluate and acquire land for regional parks through its Land Acquisition Program, which is guided by its Strategic Plan and Land Acquisition Strategy.



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 by the end of 2023.

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) target 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 2024, no new sections were added, however 97.5% of the proposed 100 kilometres of the Regional Trail Network has been completed.

In August of 2023, the Capital Regional District Board approved the Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening and Lighting Project. Work is complete on critical below-deck repairs to the Selkirk Trestle, with construction on the rest of the project corridor set to begin in 2026.

97.5% of Regional Trail Network completed (2024)

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 and to manage regional infrastructure services sustainably. A high level of compliance is the first step in wastewater treatment, reduces contaminants in marine regional waters and is a cost-effective way to manage regional infrastructure.

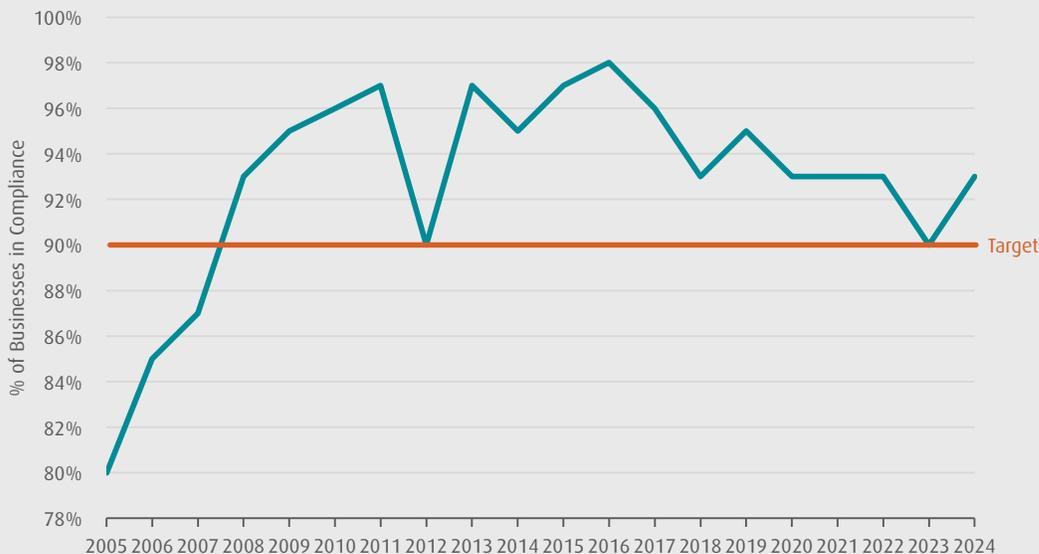
Target/Desired Trend

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

How are we doing?

Compliance with the Source Control Bylaw increased to 93% in 2024 from 90% in 2023, exceeding the 90% target.

We continue to observe high levels of compliance, successfully meeting our goal. In 2022, the program increased inspections of food services facilities which contributed to a slight decline in compliance the following year. Non-compliance issues were then resolved leading to a rebound in 2024.



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 municipal and other jurisdictions stormwater discharges with high public health concern.

Why is this indicator important?

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

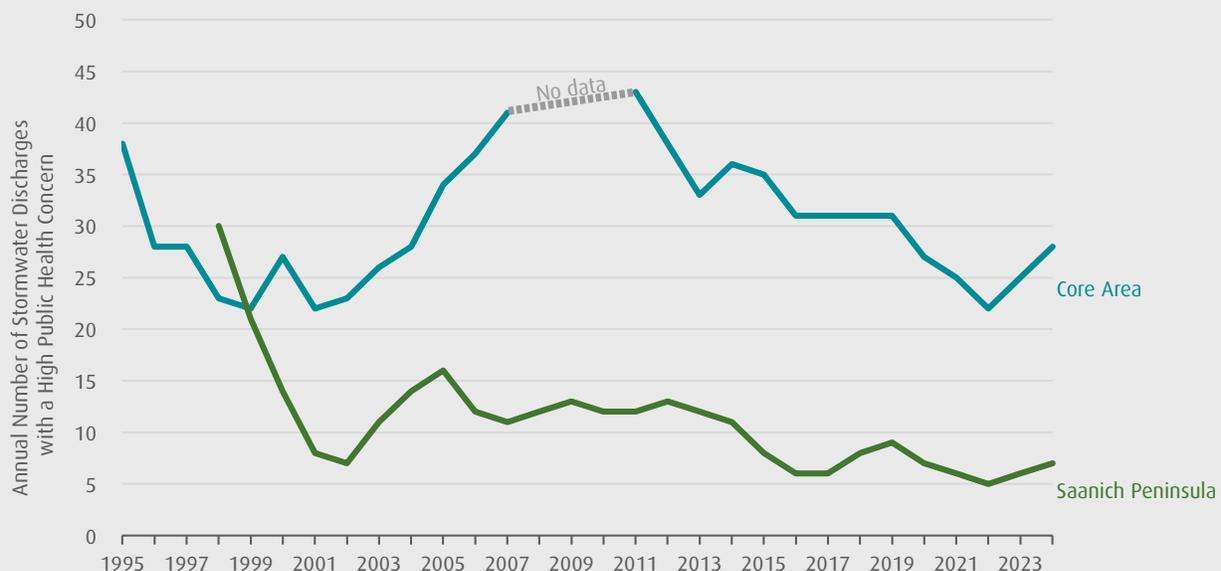
Target/Desired Trend

Monitor and work with municipalities to reduce 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 2023 to 2024 in both the Core Area and the Saanich Peninsula. This marks the second consecutive year of increases. Prior to 2023, there had not been an increase in the Core Area since 2014 and on the Saanich Peninsula since 2019.

There were 28 discharges in the Core Area and six in the Saanich Peninsula in 2024.



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.

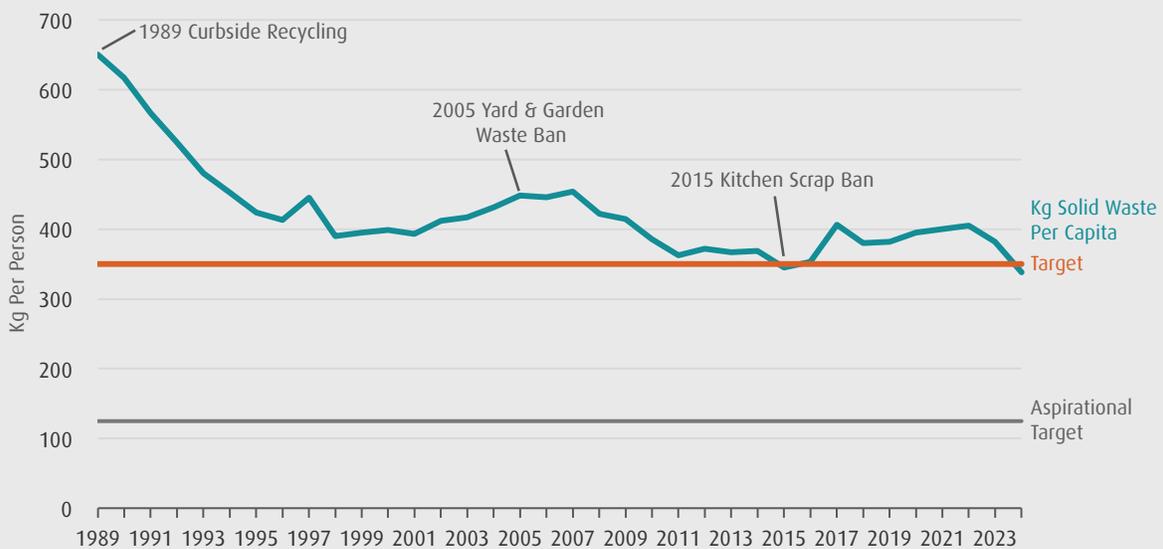
One of the CRD’s Solid Waste Management Plan goals is to surpass the provincial per capita waste disposal target (350 kg/capita/year) and aspire to achieve a disposal rate of 125 kg/capita/year.

How are we doing?

Currently, we are on target.

The solid waste disposal rate decreased from 382 kg/capita to 338 kg/capita, surpassing the 350 kg/capita goal.

In 2024, material bans on wood (clean and treated) and asphalt shingles were implemented contributing to the significant decrease in the per capita waste. We anticipate further reduction in 2025 as the adoption of the material bans expands and materials are more effectively separated.



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.

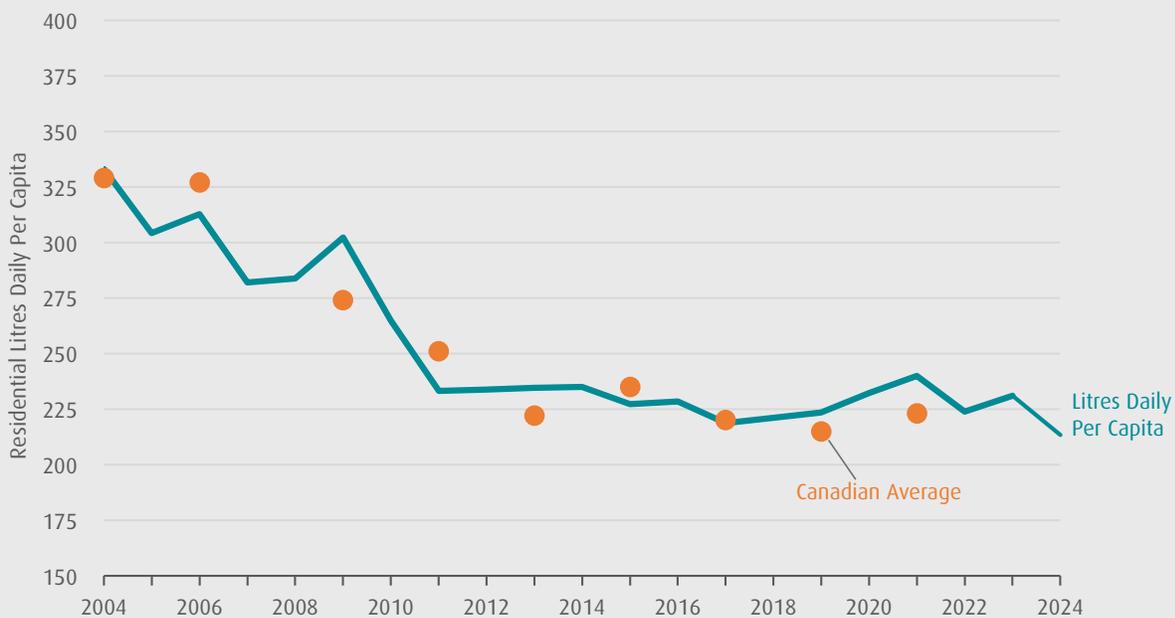
Target/Desired Trend

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 15 years, and meet the Canadian average.

The average residential water consumption has decreased from 2023 to 2024 by 17.6 litres daily per capita to a total of 216.5 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.

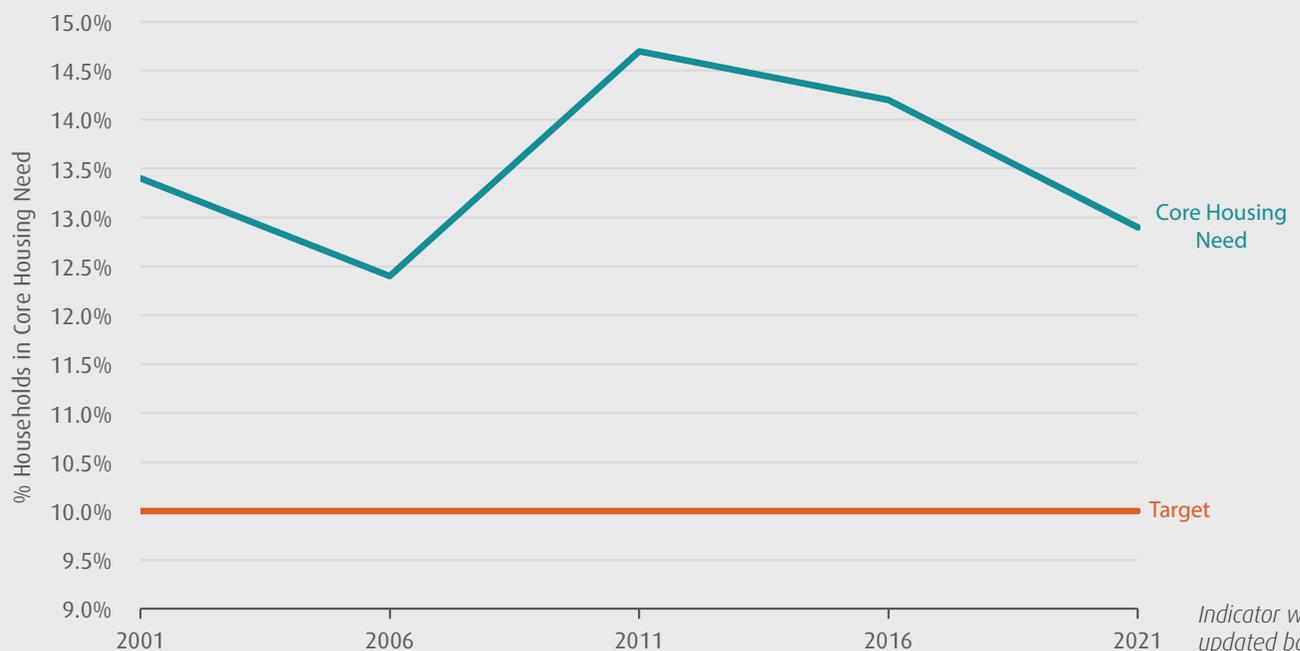
Target/Desired Trend

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

How are we doing?

We are not meeting the target.

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 benefited the working-age population, with the Canada Child Benefit helping parents and children (The Daily, Statistics Canada, July 13, 2022).



Indicator will next be updated based on 2026 Census data

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

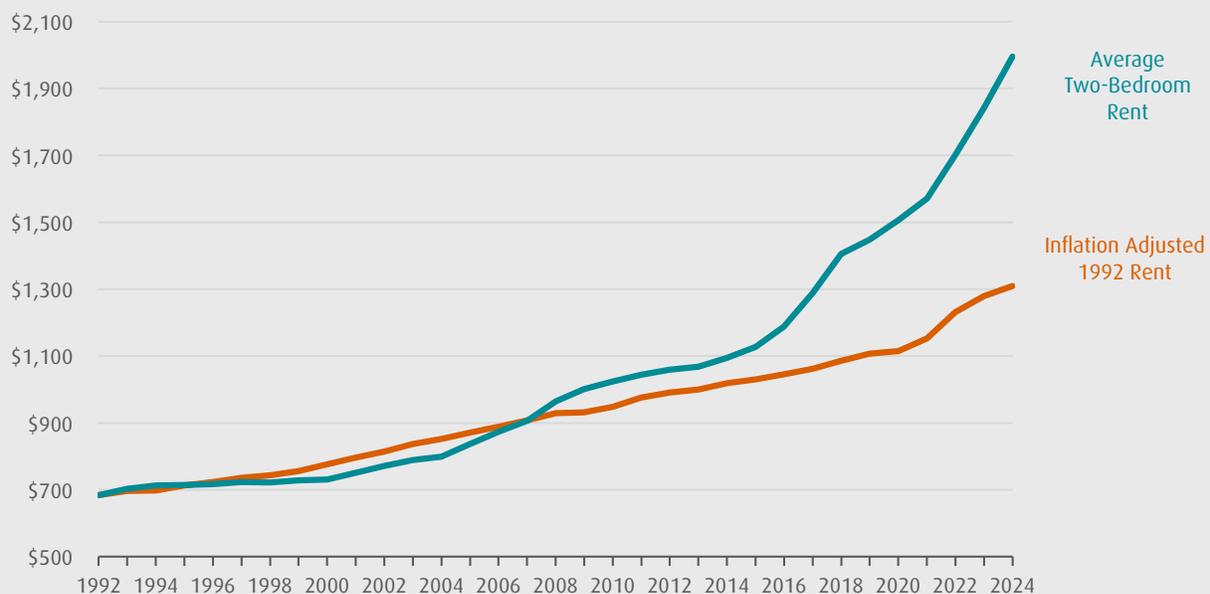
There is no target for the average cost of rental housing, however, cost increases at or below the level of inflation are preferable.

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 2024, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Victoria CMA is \$1995, while the inflation adjusted rent would be \$1310.

Since this data reporting year, market conditions have changed and average rents are anticipated to improve relative to inflation in the 2025 reporting year.



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 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

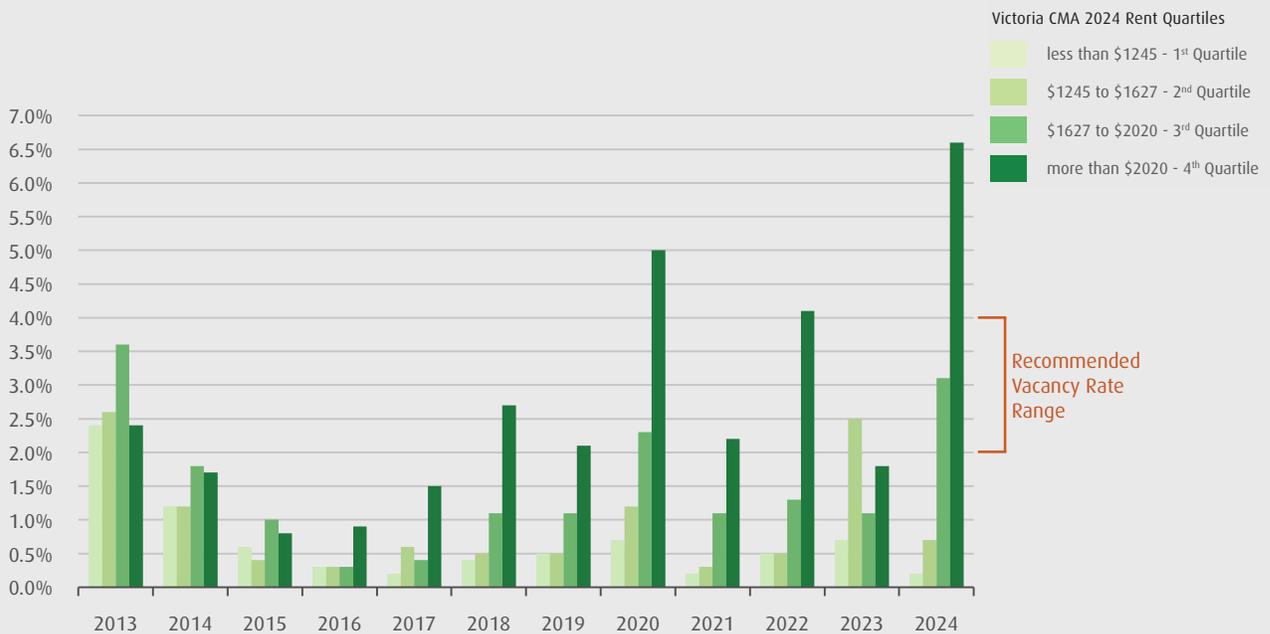
Higher vacancy rates across all prices are preferable. Recommended vacancy rates range between 2-4%.

How are we doing?

We are currently not meeting the desired trend.

The vacancy rate for the bottom two quartiles has dropped, with quartile 1 down to 0.2% from 0.7%, and quartile 2 to 0.7% from 2.5%. Meanwhile, quartile 3 rose to 3.1% from 1.1%, and quartile 4 rose to 6.6% from 1.8%.

Current conditions are likely reflecting outcomes related to recent housing legislation and increases to new housing supply, which rent at higher rates. With this CMHC data being from October 2024, the impact of recent policy changes by the federal government for international students and overall immigration will be reflected in future reporting 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.

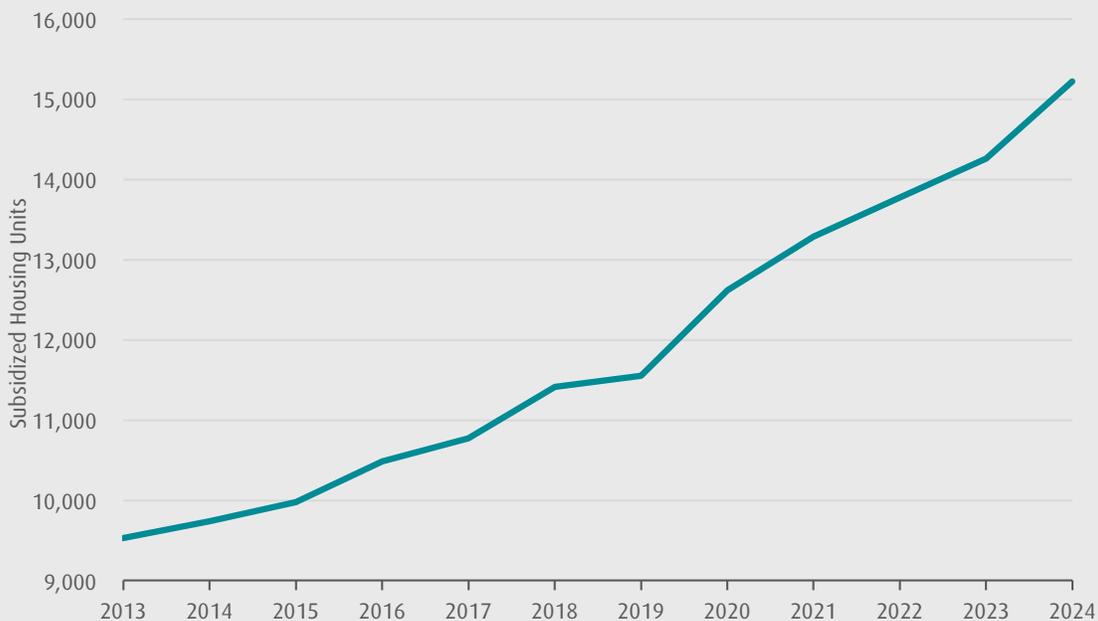
Target/Desired Trend

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, 2025 there were 15,222 subsidized housing units in the GMPA, representing an increase of 960 units in this reporting period. This is up from 490 new units previously reported for 2023-2024.

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 (GMPA).

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 sizable 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.



Indicator will next be updated based on 2027 CRD Origin Destination Survey

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.

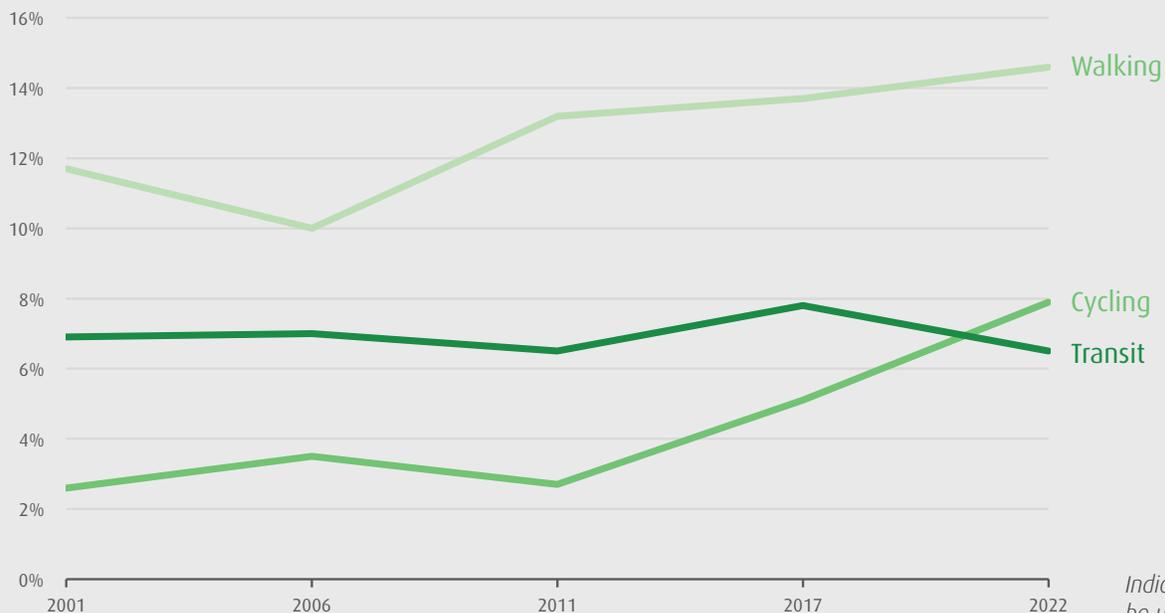
Rather than depicting the combined total of each mode, this graph depicts the individual contributions of walking, cycling, and transit towards achieving our goal.

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.

The introduction of rapid bus service between the West Shore and Core in 2023 has also had positive impacts.



Indicator will next be updated based on 2027 CRD Origin Destination 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.

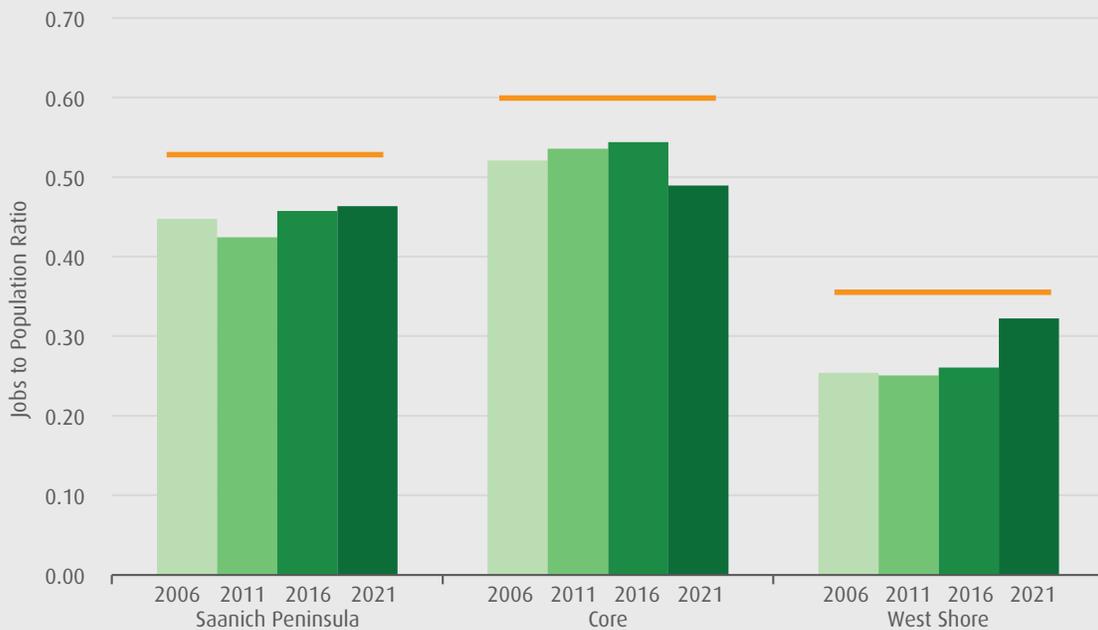
Target/Desired Trend

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 Area, which has historically maintained the highest jobs to population ratio, compared to the West Shore which has had the lowest ratio. This trend may be influenced by the shift to working from home brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no data update this year as the next Census will be conducted in 2026.



Indicator will next be updated based on 2026 Census data

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?

This indicator measures the total operating revenues for farms in the region.

This includes 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.

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.

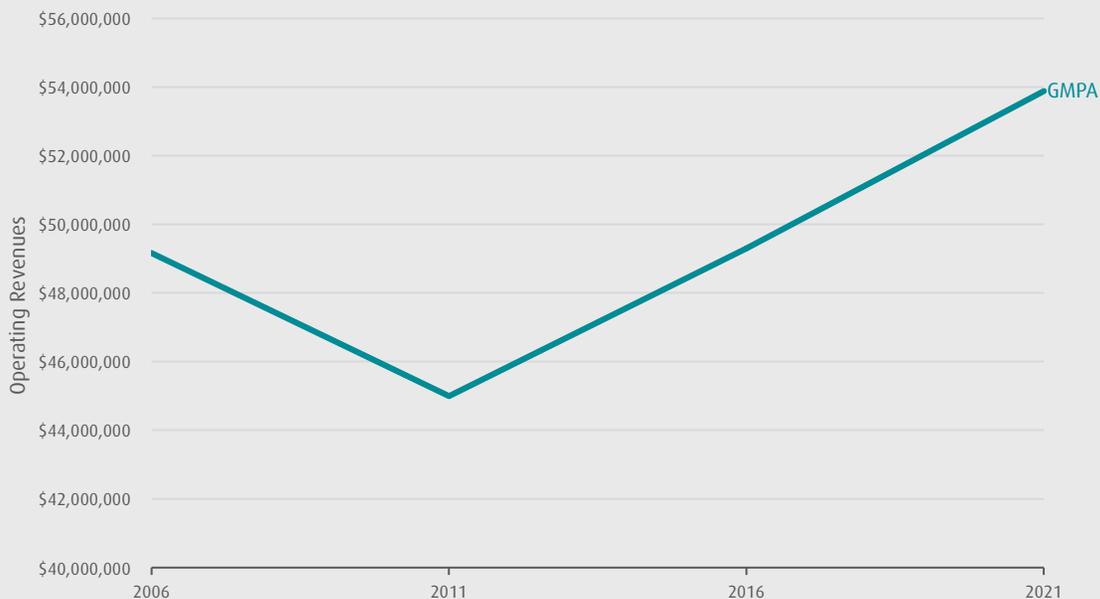
Target/Desired Trend

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 Growth Management Planning Area (GMPA), however the 2021 census data wasn't available for our region due to poor data quality.

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

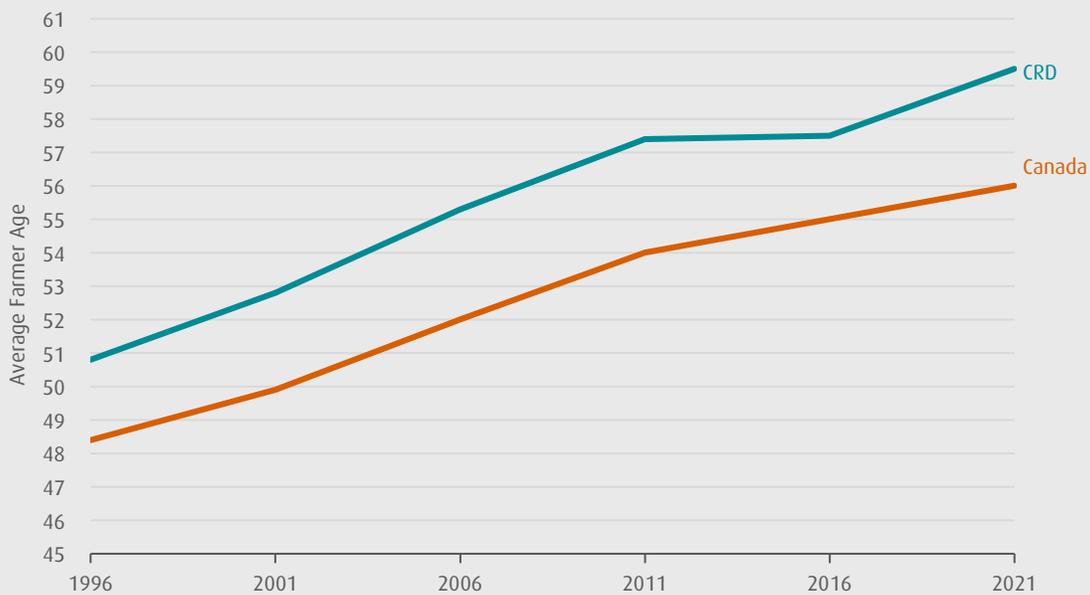
A lower average age of farmers is desirable.

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.



Indicator will next be updated based on 2026 Census data

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

7.1a Community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions



What is being measured?

This indicator measures community GHG emissions.

This GHG inventory represents the best available information. Following the BASIC+ Global Protocol for Community-Scale GHG emissions, 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

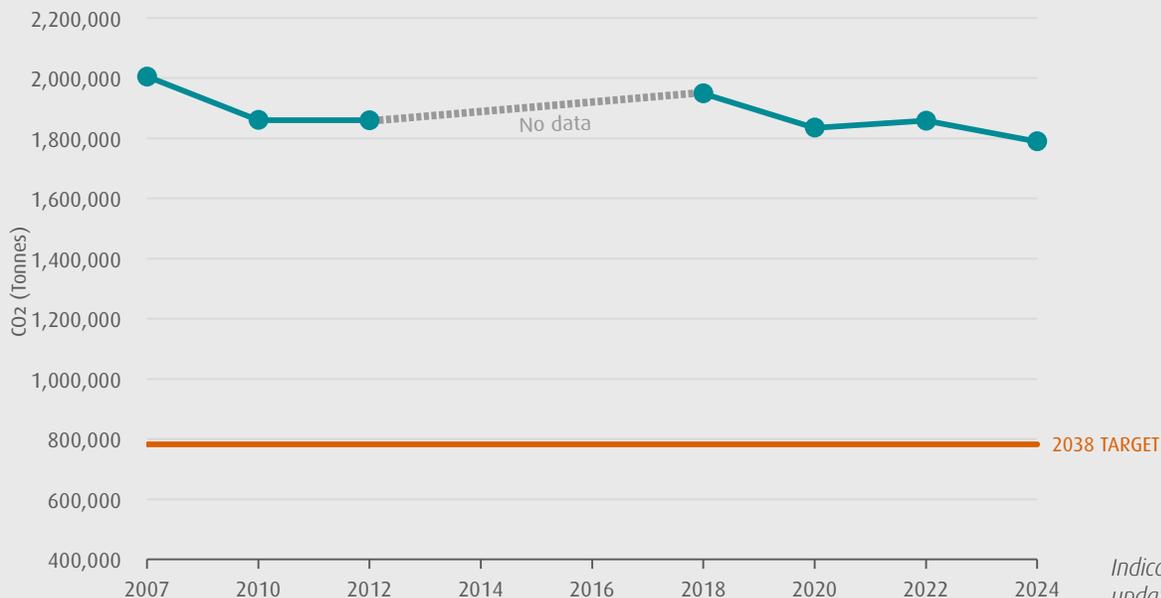
Decrease community GHG emissions by 33% from 2007 levels by 2020 and 61% by 2038.

How are we doing?

In 2024, the Capital Regional District's (CRD) annual GHG emissions totalled approximately 1.79 million tonnes, which represents 1% decrease from 2022 and a 10.7% decrease from the 2007 base year GHG emissions.

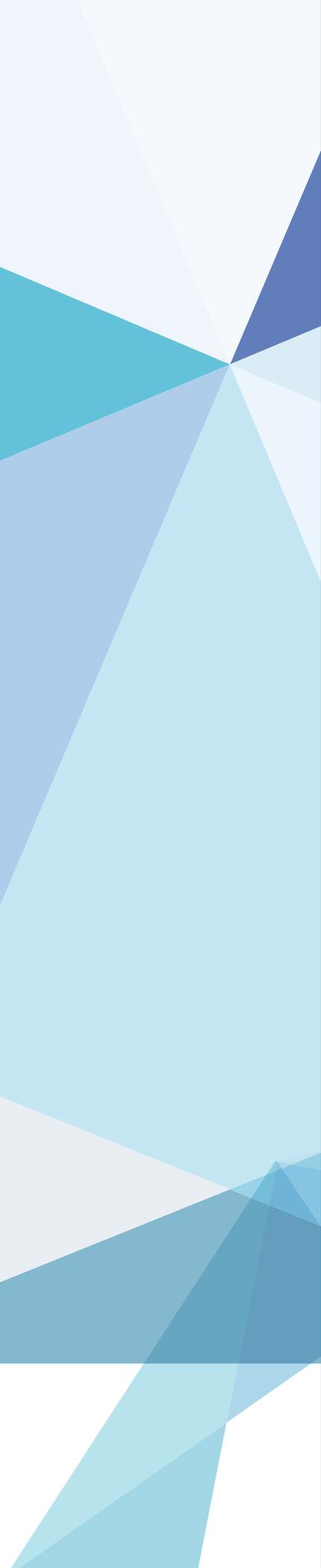
This reflects a positive trend in that GHG emissions have reduced despite continued population growth in the region. However, the current trend suggests that we will not meet the target by 2038.

On a per capita basis there has been a decline of 30.7% between 2007 and 2024. This speaks to the efforts the CRD, local, provincial and federal governments have made to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions.



Indicator will next be updated based on 2026 Census data

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



CRD

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