

# District of Mackenzie

## HOUSING NEEDS REPORT

### What We Learned Report



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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The District of Mackenzie Housing Needs Report What We Learned Report summarizes what we heard from May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 as part of the Housing Needs Report planning process. An online survey for residents as well as key informant interviews were conducted during this time in order to gain additional insights related to housing needs in the District of Mackenzie. For those residents that were unable to access the internet, printed copies of the survey were available at the District of Mackenzie municipal office.

## ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Housing Survey

The Mackenzie Housing Survey was designed to fill quantitative data gaps and capture housing experiences from as many people as possible throughout the District. The survey opened on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and was available online through the District's project webpage for approximately three weeks, closing on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. To inform community members about the survey, the District utilized existing local distribution channels such as social media pages and community newsletters. Paper copies of the survey were available at the District office. The survey received a combined total of 47 responses, which is well below the number of responses that was required to obtain a statistically valid sample. Thus, findings from the survey do not represent the overall population's insight on housing needs in Mackenzie.

### Key Informant Interviews

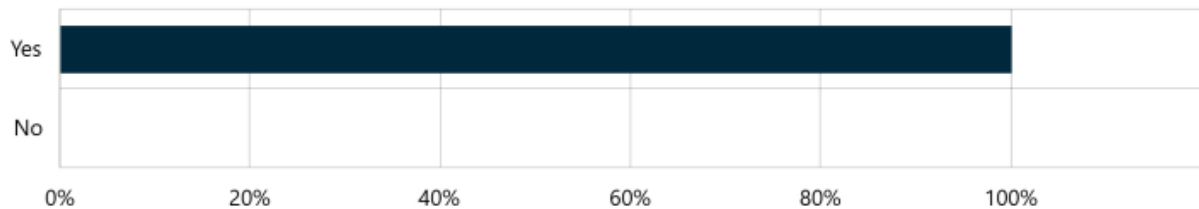
Key informant interviews targeted service providers, non-profit organizations, the general business community, industry professionals, real estate professionals, and community leaders who work primarily with community members that are struggling to find affordable, supportive and stable housing. Key informant interviews provide different information and context than community surveys, demographics and housing data. They capture information about harder-to-reach populations and provide an opportunity for informants to give descriptive answers to questions, often sharing stories or personal experiences.

## WHAT WE LEARNED

## Community Housing Survey

### Question #1: Do you currently live in Mackenzie?

All 47 participants responded to this question and 100% of respondents indicated that they currently live in Mackenzie.



*Figure 1 Do you currently live in Mackenzie?*

### Question #2: If you selected 'Yes' to Question #1, what is your street address?

Participants were asked to provide their street address if they selected 'Yes' to Question #1. All 47 participants responded to this question; however, the results have been removed from this report for privacy reasons.

### Question #3: Which of the following best describes your current dwelling type?

Of the 47 participants that responded to this question, 41 indicated that they currently reside in a single-detached home, 5 indicated that they live in an apartment and 1 indicated that they reside in a duplex, triplex, townhouse, etc.

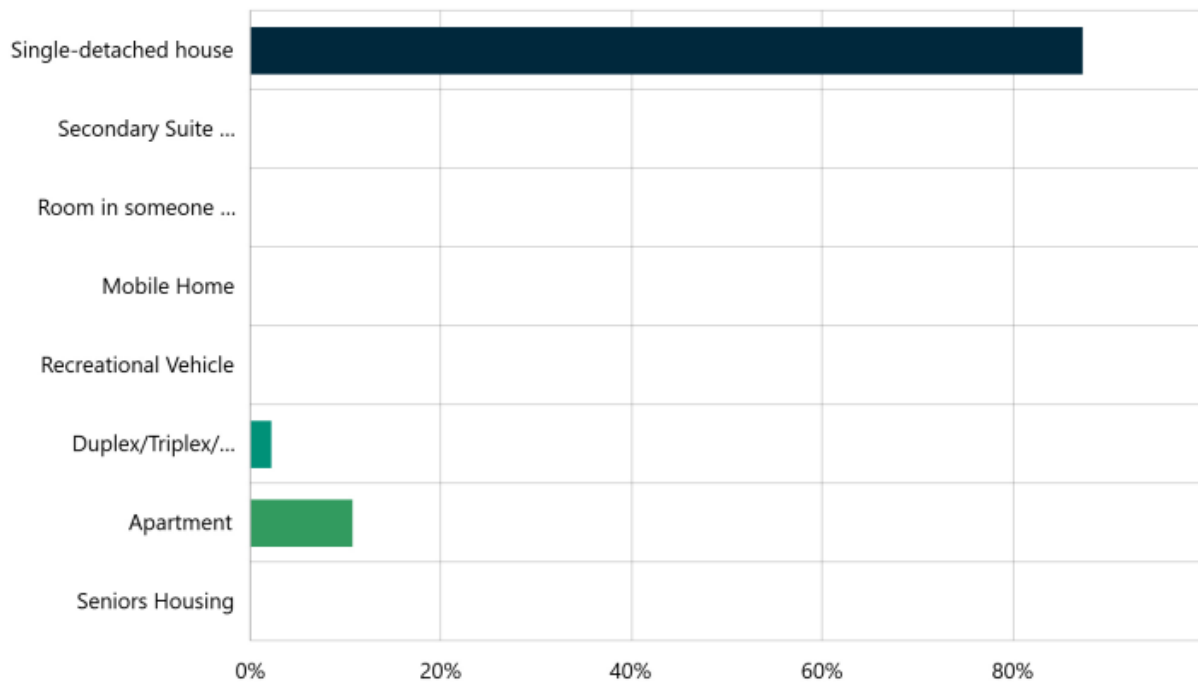


Figure 2 Current dwelling type

#### Question #4: How many years have you lived in your current home?

Of the 47 participants that responded to this question, 4 indicated that they have lived in their current home less than 1 year, 14 indicated that they have lived in their current home for 1 – 5 years, 5 indicated that they have lived in their current home for 5 – 10 years, 7 indicated that they have lived in their current home for 10 – 20 years and 17 indicated that they have lived in their current home for 20 or more years.

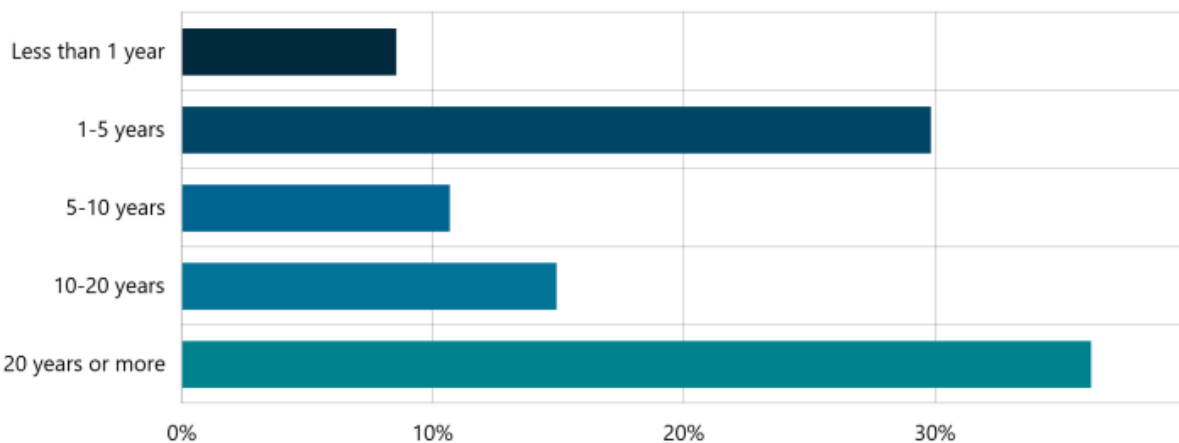


Figure 3 Years lived in current home

Participants indicated that they have lived in their current home for this length of time due to the affordability of home ownership in Mackenzie as many respondents own their homes. Respondents also indicated they have lived in their current home for this length of time as they appreciate the outdoor and recreation opportunities in Mackenzie and chose to live in the community opposed to larger city centers.

#### Question #5: What is your current living arrangement?

Respondents had the opportunity to check all of the options below that applied to them. Of the 47 participants that responded to this question, 41 indicated that they own their home, duplex, or other dwelling in Mackenzie, 3 indicated that they pay rent for a basement suite, apartment, entire house, duplex or other dwelling in Mackenzie, 1 indicated that they are renting a room in someone else's home in Mackenzie and 2 indicated "other".

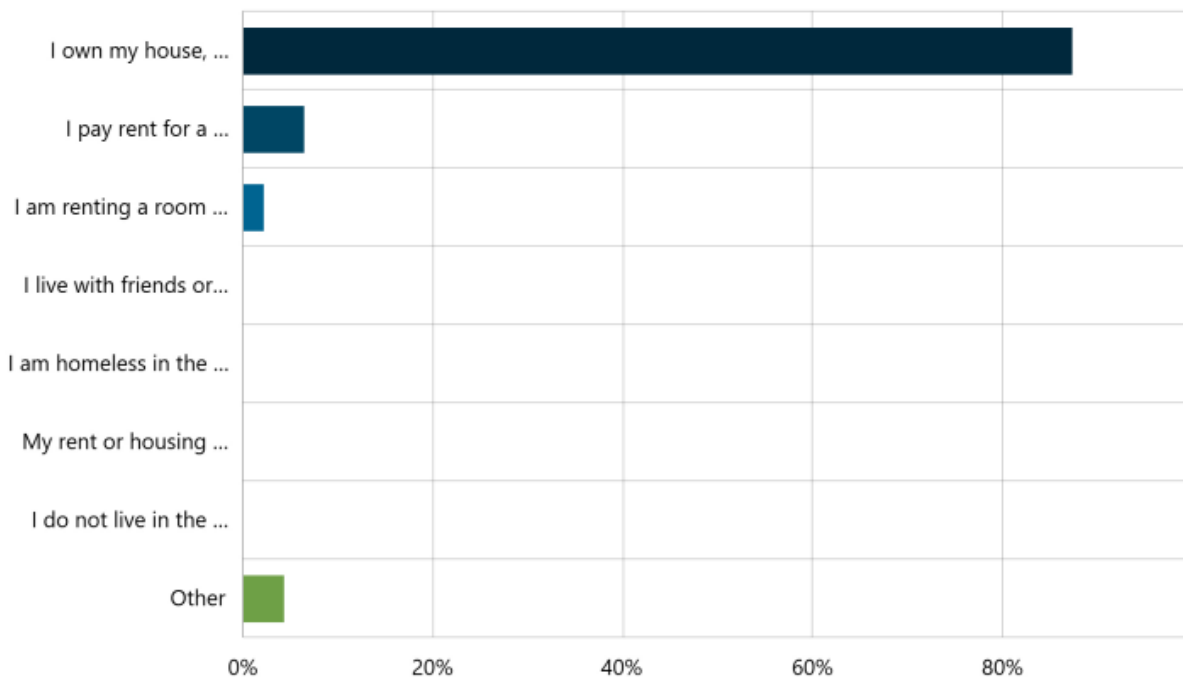


Figure 4 Current living arrangement

#### Question #6: What do you pay for housing per month, excluding utilities?

Of the 47 participants that responded, 11 indicated that they do not pay anything for housing per month, 6 indicated that they pay \$1 - \$500 per month, 9 indicated that they pay \$501 - \$1,000 per month, 13 indicated that they pay \$1,001 - \$1,500 per month, 1 indicated that they pay \$2,001 - \$2,500 per month and 7 indicated that they would rather not say.

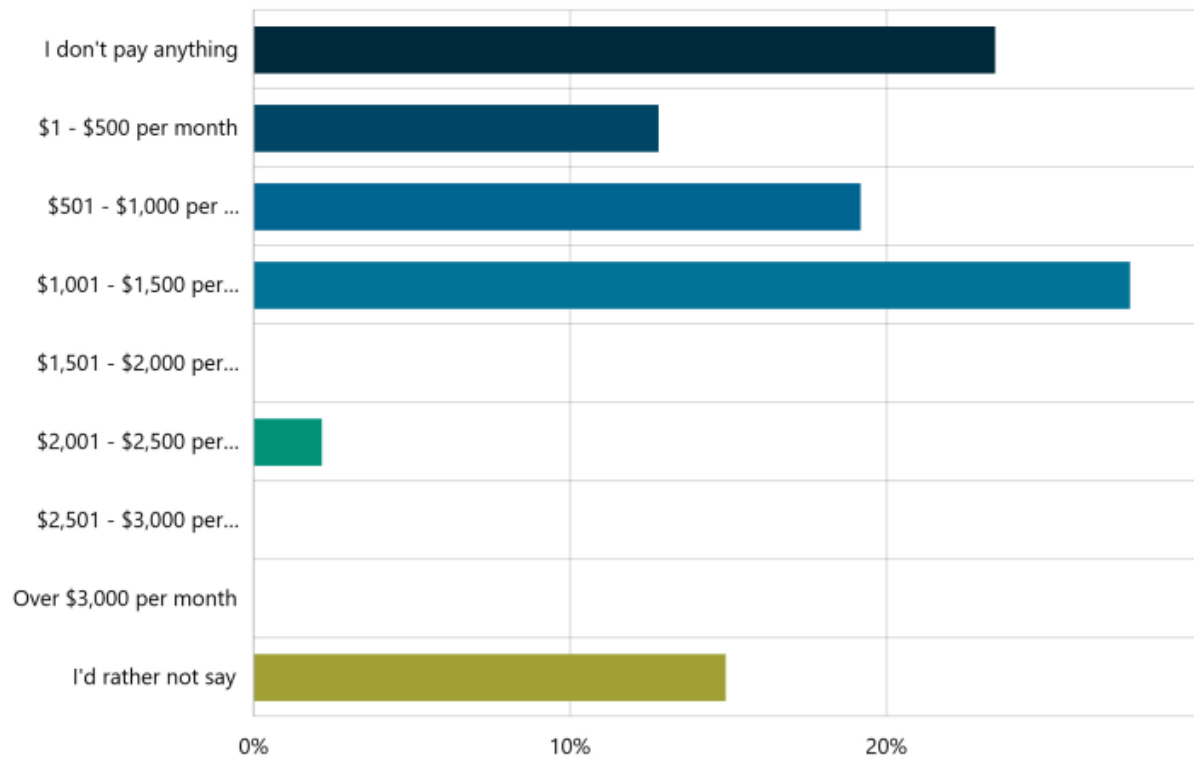


Figure 5 Pay for housing per month, excluding utilities

Question #7: What can you afford to pay for housing per month, excluding utilities?

Of the 47 participants that responded, 3 indicated that they can't pay anything, 6 indicated that they could afford to pay \$1 - \$500 a month for housing, 12 indicated that they could afford to pay \$501 - \$1,000 a month for housing, 13 indicated that they could afford to pay \$1,001 - \$1,500 per month for housing, 3 indicated that they could afford to pay \$1,501 - \$2,000 for housing. 1 indicated that they could pay \$2,002 - \$2,500 per month for housing, 1 indicated that they could pay \$2,501 - \$3,000 per month for housing and 8 indicated that they would rather not say.

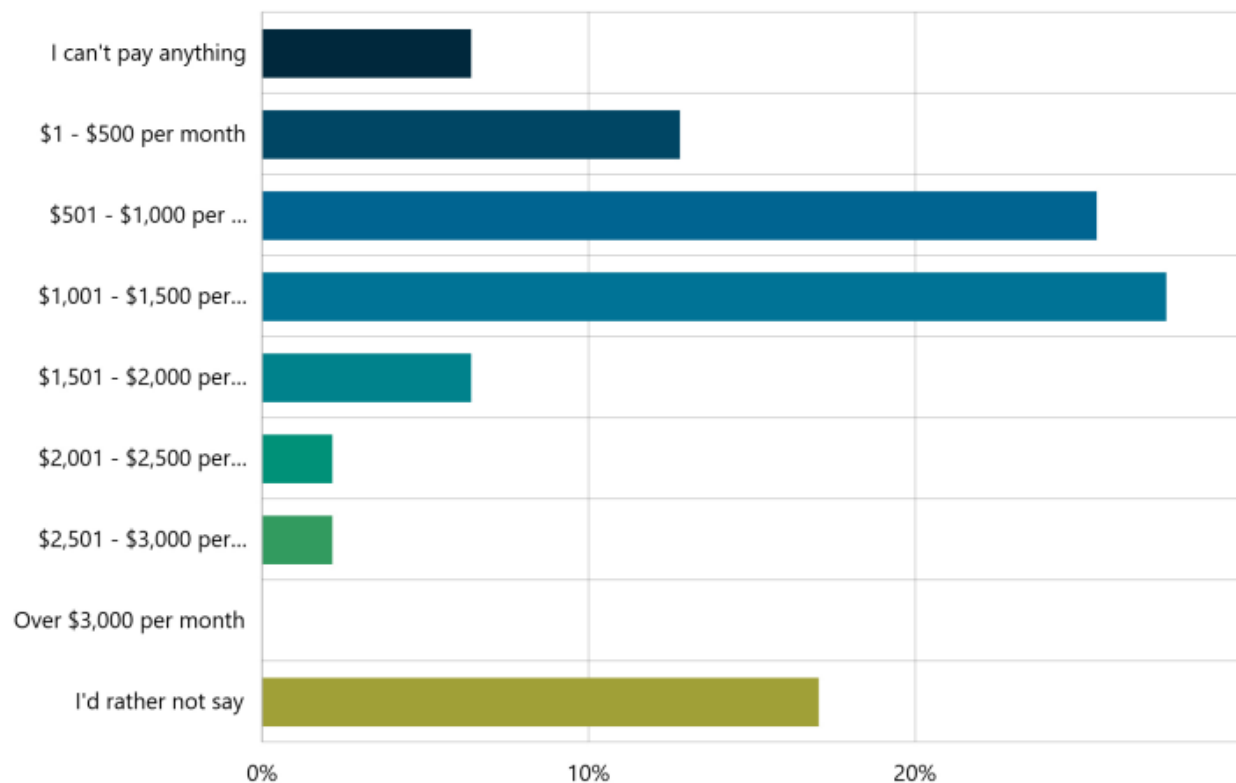


Figure 6 What can you afford to pay for housing per month, excluding utilities

Question #8: How satisfied are you with your current living conditions?



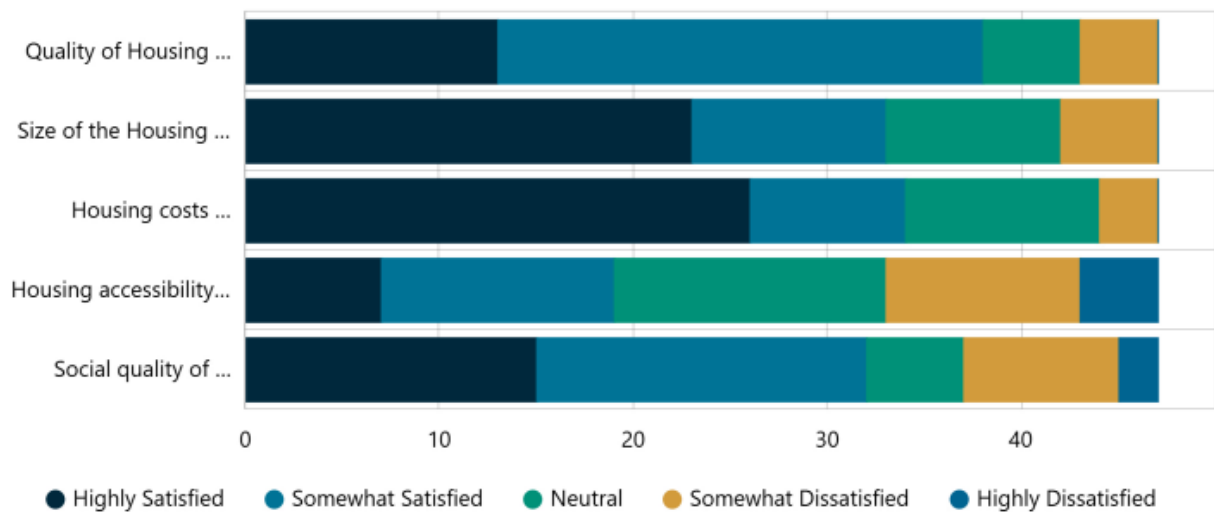


Figure 7 Satisfaction of current living conditions

	Highly satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Total
<b>Quality of housing</b> (whether it needs repairs, etc.)	27.66% 13	53.19% 25	10.4% 5	8.51% 4	0% 0	<b>47</b>
<b>Size of the housing</b> (whether large enough for household)	48.94% 23	21.28% 10	19.15% 9	10.64% 5	0% 0	<b>47</b>
<b>Housing costs</b> (whether mortgage payment or rental payment is affordable)	55.32% 26	17.02% 8	21.28% 10	6.38% 3	0% 0	<b>47</b>
<b>Housing accessibility</b> (whether adequate for those with disabilities)	14.89% 7	25.53% 12	29.79% 14	21.28% 10	8.51% 4	<b>47</b>
<b>Social quality of neighbourhood</b> (crime, homelessness, etc.)	31.91% 15	36.17% 17	10.64% 5	17.02% 8	4.26% 2	<b>47</b>

Table 1 Satisfaction of current living conditions

**Question #9: What are some pressing housing issues in your neighbourhood?**

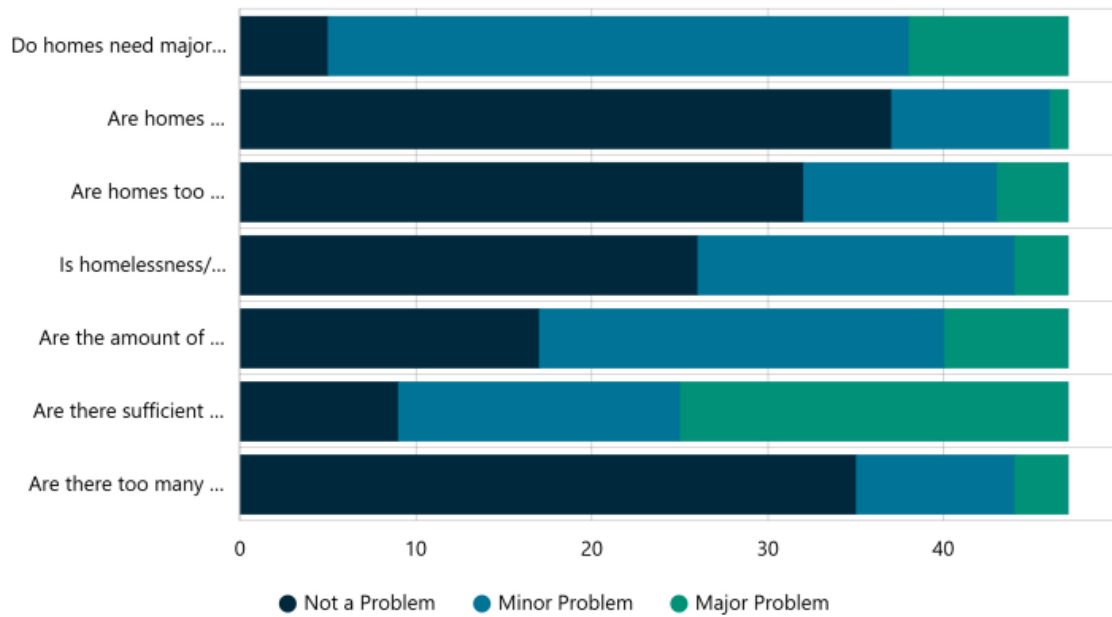


Figure 8 Pressing housing issues

	Not a problem	Minor Problem	Major Problem	Total
Do homes need major repairs?	10.64% 5	70.21% 33	19.15% 9	47
Are homes overcrowded?	78.72% 37	19.15% 9	2.13% 1	47
Are homes too expensive?	68.09% 32	23.40% 11	8.51% 4	47
Is homelessness/near homelessness a problem?	55.32% 26	38.30% 18	6.38% 3	47
Are the amount of services and/or infrastructure provided (roads, sewer, water and electricity) a problem?	36.17% 17	48.94% 23	14.89% 7	47
Are there sufficient housing options for different people with different needs (e.g. single people, elders, families, etc.)?	19.15% 9	34.04% 16	46.81% 22	47
Are there too many vacant lots in the neighbourhood?	74.47% 35	19.15% 9	6.38% 3	47

Table 2 Pressing housing issues

Participants indicated the following additional comments regarding housing issues in the community. Comments are verbatim and as such may include spelling and grammar mistakes:

- Our infrastructure is aging and needs upgrades phone system (landline is terrible) roads have more potholes sewers are backing up into people's homes, road cross drain pipes are heaving out of the ground new paving projects are just bandaids they are not addressing what is causing the subsurface instabilities. Water flushing is showing the poor condition of our pipes it now takes many hours or even a day to get our water to run clear again.
- What is the District doing to advertise the availability of cheap (relative to other parts of BC/Canada) housing - especially now that City West is here and people can come to this beautiful place to live and work remotely? Tourism is great but it doesn't build the tax and revenue base like attracting new homeowners does. How could we (as residents) help promote this?
- We worry a bit about housing repairs. There are highly skilled local tradespeople here, but they are in high demand and not always available. One tradesperson complained to us when we arrived about homeowners who do bad DIY jobs because they are impatient and/or cannot afford to wait for a skilled tradesperson to become available. And another tradesperson who had been a touchstone for us moved away. We prefer to pay local skilled tradespeople, and we cannot afford to pay for tradespeople to come from PG. We'd like to know what we can do to support continued strong trades availability in Mackenzie.
- There are questionable dealings from some homes. Crime is low. I feel safe.
- Lack of affordable senior housing if needed
- There aren't any small lots for seniors to purchase that would be suitable for mobile or small modular homes. The mobile home parks in this community are not safe for seniors and are an eyesore. All of the homes and apartments in Mackenzie have stairs and basements are not suitable for seniors. We currently have a large home on a 2 acre lot . We would love having the option of purchasing a small, easy to maintain lot for a small modular home. Or have the option to live in a 55+ subdivision.
- There are no vacant lots in my neighborhood, but there are a lot of homes for sale
- There aren't any options for downsizing. Especially for seniors. 2 bedroom, 2 bath rancher style homes with a garage would be a great option.
- Mackenzie is in need of low cost senior housing with one floor and easy accessibility. By that I mean ONLY for seniors. No children or welfare young people
- There needs to be more 1 level homes available either single family or semi-detached as there are only a handful of senior 1-level homes available and the sq.ft of those is small. A couple that doesn't want to totally downsize needs at least 1500 sq.ft to live comfortably and there is nothing available
- There is a lack of qualified contractors in town. For instance, our apt building needs a new (torch-on) roof. We will have to bring someone up from Prince George to do this, which will cost us considerably more. Even then, our choices are limited, because no one wants to come to Mackenzie. I asked for a quote from the one company (in Prince George) that does these kinds of roofs, back in Dec and again in April and we are still waiting. The big question will be, can we even afford it, once we get that quote. These homes were built for the most part 50 years ago. Demographics have changed. Many more seniors now and nothing for them, no home for seniors. No elevators in apt buildings. No ramps for wheelchairs etc. No taxi in town.
- Each of the trailer courts should be encouraged to clean up their properties and make the vacant lots appealing to people to bring modular homes into the community. People with derelict yards or homes should be required to clean them up. Low income owners should be offered financial incentives such as tax breaks or grants to allow them the funding to be able to maintain their homes. Home owners should be encouraged to consider AirBnB or legal suites to provide for more rental options (short-term and long-term).

- Taxes go up services get worse, roads get worse and the towns spending is out of control but its the taxpayers problem.
- Inadequate seniors housing options available such as longterm care and assisted living facilities.
- Lots of empty homes in town. Hard to get contractors to town to do repairs. Most of us homeowners are left on our own. Even if I have money to pay someone, I can't get anyone to do the work. Very concerned about future major home repairs like siding replacement etc.
- We have an utter lack of accessible housing for families. My family settled on a townhouse but we would have preferred a modular home without stairs. However none of the local trailer parks are appealing and there are few on private lots available to buy with enough space for a small family.
- Many in need of repair or facelift. Unkept properties. Rental properties neglected by occupant and/or owner. Bylaws not enforced, mostly due to complaint driven however bylaw can see things like unlicensed vehicles, unsafe premises, unsightly premises.
- low rent and mortgage attracts wrong crowd. Town not adequate to attract seniors due to lack of required infrastructure
- Too many collected non working vehicles. Many homes have sometimes dozens of vehicles parked in their yard. Also. Too many barking dogs keeping neighbours up at night.
- Unkept lots, older, mobile trailers on street, and in need of repair and updating
- All houses on the street have:
  - 1) Asbestos
  - 2) Stairs to home or to basement
  - 3) All built to code from the 1970's and are no longer adequate for current needs of citizens
  - 4) Houses were not built to suit seniors or people with disabilities
  - 5) No housing supports for people at risk of homelessness or long term care needs
- I personally would love to see a seniors home in town. when I was a teenager, I worked at one in Fraser lake for a summer job as a maintenance worker, it is a wonderful job opportunity and it connects the gap between seniors and the younger generation. Having a seniors home could also keep families in town, together and create more jobs. Also I come from a farming community, it would have been amazing to have an option to buy land to farm around here.
- Not enough senior living options
- There is a lack of affordability in housing here. Rentals are priced at astronomical amounts for bare minimum home conditions with bare minimum amenities with major conditions such as no pets, not disability friendly, unattainable noise policies, repairs needed, etc.  
Mackenzie is not disability inclusive, the side walks don't support inclusive access. We no longer have a taxi service. There isn't adequate travel options for those who can't or don't drive to get to Prince George. Coops prices are inflated. We don't have enough infrastructure like Tim Hortons for example to draw people to town and the housing prices for purchasing homes for the condition of the homes doesn't match. There aren't enough jobs and the ones there are want bachelors degrees for positions that aren't fairly compensated. There are homeless teens and young adults squatting and stealing. Drugs are rampant and there have been major drug related crime incidents in the past year. This devalues Mackenzie as a whole.
- Neighborhood crime, loose dogs
- As I age, I worry about accessibility in my home and what options I would have if I have to move.
- More affordable property taxes and pothole that needs to be fixed over a year
- My main concern currently is the resale value of housing compared with the cost of obtaining housing elsewhere. I am looking to put my house on the market, but it comes nowhere near the cost of downsizing to a one bedroom apartment in a major center. There is a need for housing for the homeless/drug addicted people in Mackenzie. I know of homes that were rented and

then the renter did not leave and did not pay the rent. I believe renting in Mackenzie as a home owner to be too risky.

**Question #10: What kind of housing issues do you believe the District of Mackenzie should focus on?**

Participants were able to check all of the housing issues that applied.

Housing Issue	Responses
The available housing options are too expensive	3
The available housing options are too small	3
The available housing options are too large	4
The available housing is old and requires a lot of work	22
There is not enough available housing for seniors	35
There is not enough available housing for people with disabilities	30
There is not enough temporary housing options available for those experiencing homelessness	16
There is not enough land to build a house on	6
There is not enough contractors or builders to assist with home repair or construction	36
Other	7

*Table 3 Housing issues to focus on*

## Key Informant Interviews

Seventeen key informant interviews were conducted during the engagement period via phone and email with key representatives from local organizations, housing services, real estate professionals and related fields. Informants' identities have been kept confidential, and all findings have been anonymized in this report.

## Key Themes:

1. Housing for seniors has been and continues to be a concern for the community of Mackenzie. A lack of housing options for seniors to age-in-place, lack of culturally appropriate housing for elders as well as a lack of housing options with accessibility needs was noted numerous times. Informants' mentioned that the current housing stock that could be suitable for seniors or those with accessibility needs do not have

elevators, have multiple steps inside and outside of the buildings and are in a high need of repair. Further, there is multiple year waiting list for any accommodations that are geared towards seniors or those that are low-income in the community.

2. Limited available and affordable rental housing and a very low vacancy rate was noted as an ongoing issue in Mackenzie. The housing stock in Mackenzie is aging with investment in repairs and upgrades badly needed. However, finding local trades people to do the work to upgrade or build new housing is a large challenge in Mackenzie and hiring trades people from Prince George is expensive and typically out of budget for the average citizen.
3. The overall lack of specialized medical services such as a dentist, optometrists, etc., was identified as something that deters people from moving to Mackenzie or sometimes is the reason why residents chose to move out of Mackenzie.
4. Further, when asked what would deter people from moving to Mackenzie, the consensus of informants was the lack of available urban amenities such as restaurants and retail in order to provide residents with things to do in the evenings.
5. When asked what type of housing projects would draw new people to the community, informants indicated projects such as one building that includes independent living seniors housing to a long-term care facility with health supports and social programming, newer homes for larger families and more apartment buildings with elevator assistance for the elderly or those with accessibility needs.