

**Tumbler Ridge  
Community Transition Survey 2001  
Socio-Economic Profile Report**

**for:**

Tumbler Ridge Employment Development Services Committee  
District of Tumbler Ridge  
UNBC Northern Land Use Institute  
Community Transition Branch of the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's  
Services

**prepared by:**

Greg Halseth  
and  
Laura Ryser

Geography Program  
University of Northern British Columbia

March 20, 2002

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## Table of Contents

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Project Description	i
Acknowledgments	ii
Other Reports	iii
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Introduction	1
Overview of Survey Respondents	3
Household Characteristics	8
Employment Profile	12
Housing	17
Tumbler Ridge Housing Sale	20
Concluding Comment	25

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## List of Tables

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Table 1	Have You Ever Lived in Tumbler Ridge?	3
Table 2	How Long Have You Lived in Tumbler Ridge?	4
Table 3	Have You Lived in a Small Town before Tumbler Ridge?	4
Table 4	Place of Residence Before Tumbler Ridge	5
Table 5	Physical Health Compared to Others Your Age	6
Table 6	Stress Level Compared to Others Your Age	6
Table 7	Are there any Dependants in Your Household?	7
Table 8	Marital Status	8
Table 9	Age Distribution	9
Table 10	Sex Distribution	9
Table 11	Highest Level of Education	10
Table 12	Household Income Before Taxes	11
Table 13	What is Your, or Your Spouse or Partner's, Primary Employment Status?	13
Table 14	Term of Employment	14
Table 15	What Economic Sector Do You Work In?	15
Table 16	1996 Census - Employment by Economic Sector	16
Table 17	Housing Type	17
Table 18	House Types Built in Tumbler Ridge	18
Table 19	Do You Own or Rent Your Housing	18
Table 20	When Did You Purchase Your Housing	19
Table 21	Is This the First Housing You Have Owned in Tumbler Ridge	19
Table 22	Who Do You Rent From?	20
Table 23	What Did You Purchase Your Housing As?	21
Table 24	Why Did You Chose to Relocate / Purchase a Housing in TR?	22
Table 25	Months Dwelling is Occupied	23
Table 26	How Did You Hear About the Housing Sale in Tumbler Ridge?	23
Table 27	Did You Use the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation Website?	24
Table 28	Quality of Service Received from the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corp.	24

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## **Project Description**

The community of Tumbler Ridge is in a state of transition. Rapid changes since the March 2000 announcement of the Quintette mine closure are being undertaken as part of a community revitalization strategy. During this transition period, information on the makeup and needs of local residents will be useful to a range of groups, service providers and decision-makers in Tumbler Ridge. This need for timely and relevant information about how the community is changing has been made more urgent as a result of a second round of layoffs involving Quintette's reclamation crew employees and the success of the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation sale of properties.

Types of information needed during this transition period include socio-economic profiles of residents to see how the town is changing, identification of program and activity needs for the civic centre and for local service providers (especially unmet needs), patterns of housing use, a review of community quality of life issues, and patterns of local participation by local residents. People and groups in Tumbler Ridge are interested in this survey because of the information they need to adjust to changing local circumstances.

As a result of pressures associated with community transition, a questionnaire survey of residents and property owners was undertaken in the fall of 2001. The questionnaire process was developed in concert with a number of partners including the District of Tumbler Ridge, the Tumbler Ridge Employment Development Services Committee, the Community Transition Branch in the Local Government Department of the Provincial Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services, and the University of Northern British Columbia's Northern Land Use Institute. The questionnaire was carried out under the direction of Greg Halseth of the Geography Program at the University of Northern British Columbia.

## Acknowledgments

In order to complete this research project, a great deal of assistance was required. First and foremost, we would like to thank and recognize all residents and property owners in Tumbler Ridge who took the time to be interviewed or to complete the questionnaire. The response rate to the survey was tremendous, demonstrating a depth of interest in both the town and its transition planning process.

It is important to recognize our partners in this study. These include the District of Tumbler Ridge, the Tumbler Ridge Employment Development Services Committee, the Community Transition Branch in the Local Government Department of the Provincial Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services, and the University of Northern British Columbia's Northern Land Use Institute.

We would like to also acknowledge the financial support of the Tumbler Ridge Employment Development Services Committee, the Community Transition Branch of the Provincial Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services, and the University of Northern British Columbia's Northern Land Use Institute. Fred Banham in Tumbler Ridge and Brent Mueller in Victoria deserve special acknowledgment for their support, advice, and assistance.

Lana Sullivan and Greg Halseth have been working with northern communities, including Tumbler Ridge, for the past 4 years. We would like to thank Lana for her help with local logistics as we set in place the fieldwork for the 2001 Transition Survey.

Finally, we would also like to thank Brian Stauffer who, along with Laura Ryser, formed our research team in Tumbler Ridge. Together, they knocked on every door in town (up to three times if they couldn't get anyone at home) and worked long hours through September and October to complete the survey work. They very much enjoyed the process of getting to know Tumbler Ridge and it now fills a special place in their memories. Laura continued with the project in creating the databases from the survey and assisting with the report preparation.

Greg Halseth and Laura Ryser  
Prince George  
March 2002

## **Other Reports**

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Summary Report

Methodology Report

Report on New 'Tools' for Community Economic Development

Socio-Economic Profile Report

Report on Perceptions of Community, Services, and Programming Needs

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## **Availability**

Copies of all reports from the 2001 Tumbler Ridge Community Transition Survey are available in a number of locations. In Tumbler Ridge, copies have been deposited with the District of Tumbler Ridge offices, the Tumbler Ridge Employment Development Services Committee, and the public library. In addition, copies of the reports are available on-line at the District of Tumbler Ridge website (<http://www.district.tumbler-ridge.bc.ca/>). At the University of Northern British Columbia copies have been deposited with the Northern Land Use Institute and the Weller Library.

# **Tumbler Ridge Community Transition Survey 2001 Socio-Economic Profile Report**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Tumbler Ridge has experienced considerable change and transition since the announcement of the Quintette mine closure. Some long time residents left town in search of work, while others have purchased homes in Tumbler Ridge and made a commitment to local economic diversification. With the closure of Quintette, the District of Tumbler Ridge, through an agreement with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), began to market many of the houses through the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation (TRHC). This very successful housing sale brought many new residents to the town. It also introduced Tumbler Ridge to many people who became out-of-town property owners. The sale of the homes and successful marketing of the community was facilitated, in part, through the provincial government's transition assistance package that put the District into a more solid financial position and also ensured the protection of core public services like education and health through the transition period. All of these changes mean transition in the local population. As local groups plan for the provision of services, and for the economic development needs of the community, they need to know about the new characteristics of this local population. This report uses information from the 2001 Tumbler Ridge Community Transition Survey to develop a socio-economic profile of residents and property owners.



This report includes a detailed description the survey respondents. This is developed though five sections. The first is an overview of respondent characteristics, including familiarity with Tumbler Ridge, experience with living in small towns, whether they have any dependents, special service needs, and their own evaluation of their well-being. The second section is a detailed profile of respondent marital status, age, income, sex, and education levels. The third section is a summary of respondent employment characteristics, while the fourth section is a summary of their Tumbler Ridge housing. If respondents rent their home, additional questions ask from whom they are renting, while home owners are asked when they purchased their property and whether this is their first home in Tumbler Ridge. The final set of questions focus upon the TRHC and the recent housing sale.

All data in this report come from the 2001 Tumbler Ridge Community Transition Survey. As such it includes only the responses of those who completed the survey and is not a 100 percent census of the local population. Most tables provide totals for respondent answers to the various questions. In some cases, lists of respondent suggestions / comments are provided. In accord with our confidentiality procedures, only items identified by 5 or more people have a count of the number of times suggested. For the remaining items in such lists, readers should assume they were put forward by fewer than 5 people. In the discussion accompanying the tables, the analysis includes comments comparing responses across a set of four 'evaluative' variables: Housing Tenure, Housing Type, Out of Town Owners, Familiarity with Tumbler Ridge. Not all evaluative variables are reported for each of the items discussed as in many cases there were no differences in the pattern of responses. For a more detailed discussion of the evaluative variables, please see the Methodology Report.

**OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

This section of the report provides an overview of survey respondent characteristics. This includes whether they have ever lived in Tumbler Ridge, their experience with living in small towns, their physical and stress well-being assessments, and whether they have any dependents or special needs in the household.

**Ever Lived In Tumbler Ridge**

When asked if they had ever lived in Tumbler Ridge, about three quarters of respondents reported that they had (Table 1). When responses are examined across our evaluative variables, the most notable finding is that none of the out-of-town property owners had ever lived in town.

**Table 1: Have You Ever Lived in Tumbler Ridge?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	506	75.2
No	167	24.8
n =	673	100.0

As shown in Table 2, about 44 percent of respondents had lived in Tumbler Ridge for one year or less. An additional 11 percent had lived in Tumbler Ridge for between 1–3 years. As a result, over half of the local population had lived in town only during the recent period of transition and change associated with Quintette’s closing and the TRHC’s housing sale. In contrast, nearly 40 percent of respondents had lived in Tumbler Ridge for 10 or more years. This population can be considered long term residents who had been in the community since before the first announcement of Quintette’s restructuring in the early 1990s. The results of Tables 1 and 2 clearly show the impact of the recent housing sales program in bringing new residents to town and attracting home buyers who had no previous experience with Tumbler Ridge.

**Table 2: How Long Have You Lived in Tumbler Ridge?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
1 year or less	215	44.1
1 - 3 years	55	11.3
4 - 10 years	33	6.8
10 or more years	185	37.8
n =	488	100.0

### **Small Town Experience**

Table 3 includes responses to the question “have you ever lived in a small town before coming to, or buying property in, Tumbler Ridge”? As shown, approximately 88 percent of respondents have experience with small town living. There are few differences across the evaluative variables, as between 75 to 91 percent of respondents in any category reported living in a small town before moving to, or buying property in, Tumbler Ridge.

**Table 3: Have You Lived in a Small Town Before Tumbler Ridge?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	585	88.2
No	78	11.8
n =	663	100.0

When asked about their place of residence before moving to Tumbler Ridge, about 42 percent of respondents had moved directly from another small town while approximately 20 percent had moved from a large city (Table 4). In terms of the evaluative variables, there is a small difference in terms of housing type, with those living in a manufactured home more likely to have moved to Tumbler Ridge from another small town setting.

**Table 4: Place of Residence Before Tumbler Ridge**

Size of Place	Frequency	Percent
Always lived in Tumbler Ridge	1	0.2
Rural village (<1,000)	8	2.1
Town (1,001 - 10,000)	49	12.7
Small city (10,001 - 30,000)	164	42.4
Medium city (30,001 - 100,000)	82	21.2
Large city (>100,000)	74	19.1
Other	9	2.3
n =	387	100.0

## Health Status

Respondents were then asked two questions about their health status. These are qualitative questions that seek respondents' own evaluation of their health and well-being relative to other people their age. Community transition planners are interested in this information because such perceptions can affect whether people participate in local activities and events crucial to community development. As shown in Table 5, respondents rate their physical health about the same or better than others their age. There were no differences in this response pattern across the set of evaluative variables.

**Table 5: Physical Health Compared to Others Your Age**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Much worse	7	1.1
Moderately worse	33	5.0
About the same	330	50.3
Moderately better	155	23.6
Much better	92	14.0
Don't know	39	6.0
n =	656	100.0

When asked about their stress level, about 40 percent of respondents felt their stress level is similar to others their age while about 40 percent felt their stress level is much better relative to others their age (Table 6). There were some differences in responses across the evaluative variables, with those owning their own home, and those who had lived in Tumbler Ridge for one year or less, reporting less stress relative to others their own age.

**Table 6: Stress Level Compared to Others Your Age**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Much worse	23	3.5
Moderately worse	61	9.3
About the same	251	38.3
Moderately better	141	21.5
Much better	119	18.2
Don't know	60	9.2
n =	655	100.0

## Dependents

When asked about whether there are any dependents living in the household, approximately half of respondents reported children living in the home (Table 7). There were very few special needs dependents identified through the survey. In terms of the evaluative variables, out-of-town owners were more likely to report that they had children living in their home than were residents, long term residents were more likely to report having children in the home, and new residents were more likely to report no dependents living in the household. In terms of house type, the only notable difference was that few apartment owners reported children or other dependents living in the household.

**Table 7: Are there any Dependents in your household?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Children	253	49.9
Special needs	2	0.2
Other	28	5.5
None	225	44.4
n =	507	100.0

**HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**

In this section, basic socio-economic characteristics for the surveyed households are identified. These include marital status, age distribution, household income level, sex distributions, and education levels.

Most resource dependent towns in northern British Columbia are characterized by very high proportions of married households, and Tumbler Ridge certainly continues to fit this description. As shown in Table 8, approximately 80 percent of respondents reported that they are married or living with a partner. An additional 10 percent identified that they are either divorced or separated. There are relatively few differences across the evaluative variables with the exception that out-of-town property owners are even more likely to be married.

**Table 8: Marital Status**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Married / living with a partner	530	79.9
Single / never married	46	6.9
Divorced / separated	66	10.0
Widowed	19	2.9
Other	2	0.3
n =	663	100.0

A typical age distribution in northern resource towns involves a large proportion of adults aged 35-54 and a large proportion of children under the age of 20. This reflects a historic preference by resource companies for young workers with families who are seeking to establish careers in these industries and homes for their families. As shown in Table 9, the age distribution of Tumbler Ridge is similar in that large numbers of children and large numbers of working age adults are present. The main difference is that nearly 25 percent of respondents are over 55 years of age (which is close to the BC average), something which represents a significant departure for

both the age profile of the town and the typical pattern in northern BC's resource communities. As noted elsewhere in the Transition Survey, increased calls for services to an older population are grounded in this age distribution, but so are calls for maintenance or delivery of services to children and youth.

**Table 9: Age Distribution**

Response	Frequency	Percent
0 - 6 years	117	7.3
6.5 - 12 years	153	9.5
13 - 18 years	141	8.7
19 - 24 years	58	3.6
25 - 34 years	147	9.1
35 - 44 years	301	18.6
45 - 54 years	309	19.1
55 - 64 years	280	17.3
65 and up	109	6.8
n =	1,615	100.0

In Table 10, the distribution of respondents by male or female is shown. At the time of the survey, this distribution is almost evenly divided between males and females. There is little differentiation in this distribution across the evaluative variables.

**Table 10: Sex Distribution**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Male	834	50.9
Female	804	49.1
n =	1,638	100.0



In terms of level of education, Table 11 includes the sum of responses from both the respondent and (where applicable) the respondent’s spouse or partner. Approximately 23 percent of those surveyed reported that they have a high school diploma. An additional 14 percent indicate that they have a trade certificate or vocational diploma, and almost 20 percent have a university education (although not all have completed a degree). There are relatively few differences across the evaluative variables. However, there were some items of note with respect to the distribution of education by gender. In this case, females were more likely to report that their highest level of education was a high school diploma while males were more likely to report that their highest level of education was a trade certificate or vocational diploma. In addition, females were more likely than males (on an almost 2 to 1 basis) to report having some university education. It is not unusual in resource dependent towns for women to have a higher level of education than males. Part of this reason is the historic availability of good paying resource sector jobs for men in such towns.

**Table 11: Highest Level of Education**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Grade school (K to grade 8)	51	4.3
Some high school	177	14.9
High school diploma / GED	272	23.0
Some vocational / business training	65	5.5
Trade / vocational certificate / diploma	165	13.9
Some community college / technical institute	79	6.7
Community college / technical institute diploma	140	11.8
Some university	85	7.2
University degree	143	12.1
Don’t know	7	0.6
n =	1,184	100.0

Table 12 includes information on the respondent’s household income before taxes. Of note is that approximately 120 households did not answer this question in the survey. This result is not particularly surprising as, even with assurances of confidentiality, people are often reluctant to

disclose this information. For those who did answer the question, there is a broad distribution across income categories. Approximately 30 percent of households reported an income of less than \$40,000, while approximately 20 percent reported an income above \$85,000. Historically, Tumbler Ridge was marked with high incomes earned through the resource sector. As the age distribution of the local population has changed, so too have the expectations with respect to household income level. For example, households which identify themselves as being retired quite often have lower annual incomes, something which is not necessarily a good measure of their household wealth.

**Table 12: Household Income Before Taxes**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Up to 10,000	18	3.2
10,001 - 24,999	73	13.1
25,000 - 39,999	77	13.8
40,000 - 54,999	103	18.5
55,000 - 69,999	93	16.7
70,000 - 84,999	77	13.8
85,000 - 99,999	49	8.8
100,000 or more	59	10.6
Don't know	8	1.5
n =	557	100.0

There are two items of note with respect to the household income distribution when we compare across the evaluative variables. First, Tumbler Ridge residents were more likely to be clustered in the middle and lower income categories between \$10,000 and \$70,000 per year while out-of-town property owners were more likely to be concentrated in the categories above \$70,000 per year. With respect to the number of years respondents had lived in Tumbler Ridge, long term residents were more likely to be clustered in the \$40,000 - \$85,000 per year categories while new residents were more likely to be concentrated in the \$10,000 to \$55,000 per year categories. Again, a recent influx of retirement age households, with their commensurate lower annual incomes, can account for a good deal of this difference. Residents who have remained in town

for ten or more years are more likely to include miners still working for Bullmoose Operating Corporation.

## **EMPLOYMENT PROFILE**

This section includes a summary of respondents' employment status. This covers whether the respondent is employed full- or part-time, works annually or proportions of the year, and in which economic sector their principal employment is found. The following tables include data for respondents and (where applicable) their spouses or partners.

### **Employment Status**

In Table 13, the primary employment status of respondents, and their spouses or partners, is shown. Approximately 44 percent of respondents indicated that they are working full-time. The next largest category involves those who are retired (at approximately 17 percent). Before the Quintette mine closure and the housing sale, Tumbler Ridge had been home to very few retirees. Approximately 20 percent of respondents are either working part-time or are self-employed (either full-time or part-time). An additional 7 percent identified that they are homemakers, while only about 6 percent indicated that they were unemployed but looking for work.

**Table 13: What is Your, or Your Spouse or Partner's, Primary Employment Status?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Working full-time	524	44.0
Working part-time	103	8.7
Self-employed full-time	98	8.3
Self-employed part-time	42	3.5
Homemaker	86	7.2
Student	17	1.4
Unemployed, but looking for work	68	5.7
Unemployed by choice	31	2.6
Retired	206	17.3
Leave	9	0.8
Disability	6	0.5
n =	1,190	100

In comparing employment status across the evaluative variables, three items are noteworthy. In terms of respondent type, residents were more likely than out-of-town owners to report that they are retired. In fact, nearly 80 percent of retired households in the sample are living in Tumbler Ridge. In terms of numbers of years lived in Tumbler Ridge, over half of respondents who are working full-time have also lived in Tumbler Ridge for ten or more years. In contrast, those who are self-employed, either full-time or part-time, are more likely to be new residents. Again, retired households show up as important, as more than 80 percent of retired households reported that they have lived in Tumbler Ridge for one year or less.

In terms of housing type, two points are notable. The first is that most of the respondents who are living in a manufactured home in a mobile home park reported that they are working full-time. In addition, the largest group of respondents living in an apartment reported that they are retired. One cautionary note with respect to house type differences is that the number of responses in any categories other than single detached house is quite small.

For respondents who identified that they were working, or that their spouses/partners were working, we asked about their term of employment (Table 14). For those who responded, the largest share by far reported that they are employed year round. Approximately 8 percent reported that they are employed seasonally, while less than 3 percent identified that they either work on a contract or some other basis. There are few differences in the term of employment pattern across the evaluative variables with the exception that most of those who reported that they are working seasonally have lived in town for one year or less.

**Table 14: Term of Employment**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Year round	678	89.3
Seasonally	60	7.9
Contract	18	2.4
Other	3	0.4
n =	759	100.0

The final employment question asked about the economic sector in which the respondent (or spouse / partner) works. As shown in Table 15, the most common economic sector for Tumbler Ridge continues to be mining, where approximately 26 percent of workers participate. The next largest sectors involve health and social services, construction, education services, accommodation, food and beverage services, and tourism services.

Across the evaluative variables, there are three notable differences. First, most of those who work in agriculture, construction, forestry, and manufacturing do not live in Tumbler Ridge (they answered the mail-out survey). In addition, 40 percent of those who identified they work in the health and social services sector were also out-of-town respondents. There are two differences by housing tenure, as about 25 percent of those employed in the health and social services sector and about 40 percent of miners, reported that they rent their accommodation. The final evaluative variable concerns the number of years respondents have lived in Tumbler Ridge. In

this case, nearly 80 percent of miners have lived in Tumbler Ridge for ten or more years. Again, these are likely to be long term employees with Bullmoose Operating Corporation. In addition, approximately 60 percent of those who identified they work in education services have lived in Tumbler Ridge for ten or more years.

**Table 15: What Economic Sector do you Work in?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Accommodation, food and beverage	62	7.8
Agriculture	12	1.5
Business services	41	5.2
Construction industry	62	7.8
Education services	58	7.2
Finance, insurance, real estate	27	3.4
Forestry	23	2.9
Government services	37	4.7
Health and social services	82	10.4
Manufacturing	10	1.3
Mining	209	26.4
Tourism services	50	6.3
Transportation, communications and utilities	10	1.3
Other	109	13.8
n =	792	100.0

This survey distribution across economic sectors is quite different from the historic pattern in Tumbler Ridge. Table 16 shows the 1996 Census data on occupational status for residents over the age of 15 years. There are two structural differences between Table 15 and Table 16. The first is that Mining, Forestry, and Agriculture in Table 15 are combined as Primary in Table 16. In 1996, nearly all of this primary sector employment in Tumbler Ridge was in mining. The second is that Tourism Services in Table 15 are subsumed into Retail Services in Table 16. As suggested, there has been a change in local employment with the Primary sector declining sharply from about 56 percent of local employment to less than 26 percent. This is the most well known aspect of change in Tumbler Ridge and the one which precipitated the work of the Tumbler Ridge Revitalization Task Force and the Tumbler Ridge Employment Development

Services Committee.

**Table 16: 1996 Census - Employment by Economic Sector  
(pop aged 15+)**

Response	Percent
Accommodation, food and beverage	3.9
Business services	0.7
Construction industry	1.7
Education services	4.6
Finance, insurance, real estate	2.2
Government services	2.2
Health and social services	5.1
Manufacturing	1.4
Primary - Mining, Forestry, Agriculture	56.1
Retail services	9.5
Transportation, communications and utilities	4.8
Other	7.3

## HOUSING

A 'housing profile' of respondents is developed in this section of the report. This profile includes the type of housing, as well as the organization of tenure into rental or owned. Most of the housing stock in Tumbler Ridge is comprised of single detached family houses on individual residential property. This house type is typical of the single-industry instant towns developed across northern British Columbia in the post World War II period and is based on real estate market preferences by families in Canada. In Table 17, the distribution of housing types among respondents is shown. Approximately 80 percent of respondents lived in or owned a single detached house. Additionally, approximately 6 percent owned or lived in an apartment, while approximately 8 percent lived in a manufactured home either on a residential property or in a mobile home park. The 'other' category involves the co-op housing development. Given the overwhelming presence of single family houses, there are relatively few differences in house type across the evaluative variables.

**Table 17: Housing Type**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Single Detached House	539	80.2
Apartment	39	5.8
Mobile Home on Property	30	4.5
Mobile Home in Mobile Home Park	25	3.7
Townhouse / Rowhouse	13	1.9
Other	26	3.9
n =	672	100.0

This distribution of house types from the survey generally corresponds to the distribution of house types within Tumbler Ridge to the extent that single detached houses are most common (as listed in Table 18). However, the number of built apartment units and manufactured home sites is much greater than covered in the survey. The reason for this is that many manufactured home sites in Steeprock Park are vacant and not all of the apartment buildings in town have yet



been re-opened for occupancy.

**Table 18: House Types Built in Tumbler Ridge**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Single Detached House	947	59.2
Apartment	408	25.5
Mobile Home	230	14.4
Townhouse / Rowhouse	15	0.9
n =	1,600	100.0

Approximately 85 percent of respondents reported that they own their housing in Tumbler Ridge (Table 19). There are relatively few differences across the evaluative variables with the exception that all out-of-town owners reported that they own rather than rent (commensurate with their definition as an out-of-town housing owning group).

**Table 19: Do You Own or Rent Your Tumbler Ridge Housing?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Own	567	85.4
Rent	97	14.6
n =	664	100.0

Respondents who reported that they own their Tumbler Ridge housing were asked when they purchased it (Table 20). Approximately 25 percent of respondents had purchased within the past year while just over half had purchased in the year 2000. Both of these coincide the house sale undertaken by the TRHC. An additional approximately 20 percent of respondents had purchased before the year 2000. These people were involved either in the early house sales by the Bullmoose mine or they were owners of manufactured houses. The 109 surveyed households

who did not answer this question are almost entirely accounted for by those who rent their housing. There are few differences in the pattern of responses across the evaluative variables with the exception that more than 60 percent of those who had lived in Tumbler Ridge for more than ten years had purchased before the year 2000, indicating an early desire to make a commitment to the community.

**Table 20: When Did You Purchase Your Tumbler Ridge Housing?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
2001	137	24.3
2000	317	56.1
Before 2000	111	19.6
n =	565	100.0

When asked if this is the first housing they had owned in Tumbler Ridge, nearly all respondents reported 'yes' (Table 21). There were relatively few differences across the evaluative variables with the exception of the number of years the respondent had lived in town. In this case, about half of respondents who had lived in town for ten or more years reported that this was not the first housing they had owned in Tumbler Ridge. Many of these long term residents would, therefore, have participated in home ownership before the housing buy-back plans of the early 1990s.

**Table 21: Is This The First Housing You Have Owned in Tumbler Ridge?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	482	85.5
No	82	14.5
n =	564	100.0

In Table 19, a total of 97 respondents reported renting their Tumbler Ridge housing. Most are renting from a private property owner, while about 10 percent each are renting from the District of Tumbler Ridge, from one of the resource industry companies working in or around the Tumbler Ridge area, or are participating in the Tumbler Ridge Housing Co-op (Table 22). An additional 5 percent rent from the school board or other government agency providing a service in the community. There are relatively few differences across the evaluative variables with the exception that almost all respondents in the Tumbler Ridge Housing Co-op had lived in the town for ten or more years. In addition, about half of long term residents who were renting, were renting from a private property owner.

**Table 22: Who do you rent from?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Property owner	57	60.6
District of Tumbler Ridge	11	11.7
School Board / Government Agency	5	5.3
Resource company	9	9.6
Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation	2	2.1
Co-op Housing	10	10.7
n =	94	100.0

**TUMBLER RIDGE HOUSING SALE**

In this section, questions focused upon the recent housing sales through the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation. When asked about reasons they purchased housing in Tumbler Ridge, or the number of months they use that housing, respondents were allowed to list as many responses as was applicable. As a result, the percentages will not add to 100.

When asked, approximately 60 percent of respondents reported that they had purchased their housing in Tumbler Ridge as a permanent residence (Table 23). Additionally, people identified investment, seasonal get-away, retirement property, and future retirement property as rationales for their purchase. Across the evaluative variables, a number of items are of note. This includes that nearly all those who identified a purchase for a future retirement property do not live in Tumbler Ridge and most had purchased within the past year. Additionally, about 20 percent had lived in town for more than ten years and were looking to maintain a place for retirement. While most housing is single detached, approximately 20 percent of those who purchased housing as a seasonal getaway had purchased an apartment. In addition, nearly all of these seasonal getaway purchasers still live out-of-town. For those who purchased housing in Tumbler Ridge as an investment, approximately 75 percent are out-of-town owners.

**Table 23: What Did You Purchase Your Housing As?**

Purchase Type	Frequency	Percent
Investment Property	94	13.9
Permanent Residence	393	58.3
Seasonal Get-Away	102	15.1
Retirement Property	75	11.1
Future Retirement Property	104	15.5
Other	5	0.7

n = 674

When asked why they chose to relocate or purchase housing in Tumbler Ridge, the largest response category involves inexpensive housing, one of the key marketing tools employed by the TRHC (Table 24). In addition, good retirement location, small community, and availability of outdoor recreation all were cited as important reasons for choosing to relocate or purchase housing in Tumbler Ridge.

**Table 24: Why Did You Chose to Relocate / Purchase Housing in Tumbler Ridge?**

Choice	Frequency	Percent
Inexpensive housing	294	43.6
Employment opportunity	44	6.5
Business / investment opportunity	55	8.2
Close to family	35	5.2
Good place to raise children	35	5.2
Commuting distance to work	15	2.2
Good retirement location	159	23.6
Small community	172	25.5
Outdoor recreation	159	23.6
Natural environment	44	6.5
Schools / churches	4	0.6
Health	3	0.4
Vacation spot	3	0.4

n = 674

While approximately 390 people purchased their housing as a permanent residence, an additional 280 purchased it for part-time or seasonal occupancy. Table 25 shows the distribution by months that these part-time or seasonal respondent's use their Tumbler Ridge housing . July and August are the two most popular months, with the May through October period also being quite popular. It seems that summer recreation was a motivation for seasonal-use purchasers of Tumbler Ridge properties.

**Table 25: Months Dwelling is Occupied**

Month	Frequency	Percent
January	17	6.1
February	14	5.0
March	13	4.6
April	31	11.1
May	39	13.9
June	46	16.4
July	66	23.6
August	70	25.0
September	44	15.7
October	37	13.2
November	18	6.4
December	24	8.6
Weekends	15	5.4
Weeks at a time	4	1.4

n = 280

When asked about how they heard about the Tumbler Ridge housing sale, the most popular response was from a family member or from a friend (Table 26). The next most popular means was via the television or newspaper media. Only 5 percent of respondents indicated they heard about the housing sale via the Internet or advertising from the TRHC.

**Table 26: How Did You Hear About the Housing Sale in Tumbler Ridge?**

Medium	Frequency	Percent
Newspaper	104	15.4
Television media	116	17.2
Radio	28	4.2
Promotional video	8	1.2
Internet	36	5.4
Tumbler Ridge Housing Corp.	37	5.5
Friend / family member	172	25.5
Real estate agent	9	1.3
Other	12	1.8

n = 674

For those who wanted to find out more about the Tumbler Ridge housing sale, one of the principal mechanisms used by the TRHC was an Internet website. A total of 180 respondents reported using the website (Table 27). Of these, approximately half now live in Tumbler Ridge while the other half were contacted through the mail-out survey to out-of-town property owners. As with results described elsewhere, most of these 180 respondents purchased a single detached house.

**Table 27: Did You Use the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation Website?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	180	47.5
No	199	52.5
n =	379	100.0

The final house sale question asked respondents to rate the quality of service received from the TRHC (Table 28). As shown, approximately 88 percent of respondents felt the service received was good or excellent. There was little differentiation in this pattern across the evaluative variables.

**Table 28: Quality of Service Received from the Tumbler Ridge Housing Corporation?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	67	37.6
Good	89	50.0
Adequate	14	7.9
Poor	5	2.8
Don't know	3	1.7
n =	178	100.0

## **CONCLUDING COMMENT**

This report has described the socio-economic profile of respondents to the 2001 Tumbler Ridge Community Transition Survey. Many of the variables described in this report provide a foundation for assessing service needs and future economic directions for the town. For example, changes in population age distributions will have an impact upon the types of services required or supported in town. As well, perceptions of resident health and well-being can act as a barometer on how the transition planning is doing. The data also provide a foundation for interpreting information contained in the other 2001 Tumbler Ridge Community Transition Survey reports. Based upon this report, it is clear that there has been a significant turnover in local population and that a great many of the residents have only recently moved into Tumbler Ridge. One result is that the age distribution of the town's population now more closely resembles the provincial average. In addition, these new residents have joined with the many long term residents in making a commitment to the future of Tumbler Ridge through their purchase of housing in town. This purchase also creates small business opportunities in the home/garden maintenance, renovation, and supply sectors. The participation of residents in local activities is described in the report on "Perceptions of Community and Services and Programming Needs". As they collectively work on economic transition, the skills these new and long term residents can bring to bear are described in the "New Tools for Community (Economic) Development" report.