



PLANNING DEPARTMENT 2021 YEAR-END REPORT

RDBN Planning Department

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YEAR -END REPORT 2021

This report provides an overview of the responsibilities of the Planning Department, the work undertaken by the Planning Department in 2021, and the statistics summarizing the applications and referrals processed by the Department in previous years.

The Planning Department gained two new staff members in 2021 to assist with the workload associated with Parks and Trails, and to replace a Senior Planner who resigned. The Planning Department's responsibilities include a range of interconnected activities as outlined below.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Long Range Planning includes the preparation, review, and administration of the Regional District's seven Official Community Plans (OCPs). It also includes the development of planning studies, and policy development.

2021 Accomplishments

- Completed the Rural Vanderhoof Official Community Plan review that was started in 2019. The OCP bylaw was adopted by the Board in November.
- Started the Rural Fort St James OCP review at the end of 2021. In 2022, the Regional District will undertake a review of the District of Fort St. James OCP concurrently with the rural OCP review.
- Reported to the Board on a Parkland Dedication Policy for OCPs, regarding the provision of parkland or cash-in-lieu equivalency to the RDBN as part of the land subdivision process. The OCP amendment processes are anticipated to occur in early 2022.

CURRENT PLANNING

Current Planning involves the administration of the following land use and development-related bylaws.

- RDBN Zoning Bylaw No. 1800, 2020
- RDBN Floodplain Management Bylaw No. 1878, 2020
- RDBN Manufactured Home Park Bylaw No. 740, 1993
- RDBN Development Procedures Bylaw No. 1422, 2007
- RDBN Board of Variance Bylaw No. 1623, 2012
- RDBN Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw No. 1501, 2009
- RDBN Unsightly Premises Bylaw No. 1649, 2012

This work includes processing, evaluating and developing recommendations to the Regional District Board regarding the following land use and development applications:

- OCP amendments and rezoning applications
- Development variance permit applications
- Development permit applications
- Temporary use permit applications
- ALR exclusion, inclusion, subdivision, non-adhering residential use and non-farm use applications
- Special event permit applications

Current Planning advises the Regional District Board and the Rural Directors Committee on the RDBN response to Crown Land referrals; Recreation Sites and Trails referrals; Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources referrals; Oil and Gas Commission referrals; and telecommunications referrals. In addition, Current Planning involves responding to public inquiries on land use and development related issues.

2021 Accomplishments

- Presented a discussion paper "Gravel Extraction and Processing in Electoral Area A" to the Board.
- Presented an update to the discussion paper "Housing in the RDBN" to the Board.

- Provided updates to the Board regarding the Coastal GasLink Pipeline – Socio-economic Effects Management Plan (SEEMP).
- Reported updates to the Board regarding the Agricultural Land Commission's residential flexibility regulation changes.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

GIS involves the digital storage, management, and mapping of spatial and other data, and management of house numbering. This activity provides support to all Regional District departments. Residents also rely on this service to obtain house numbers, maps, information on regulations, and other information regarding their property and community.

2021 Accomplishments

- Issued 264 new addresses in the rural area and processed 128 new addresses for municipalities and First Nations. The high number of new rural addresses is partly due to an initiative to assign addresses to water access only cabins in remote areas and upgrading Germansen Landing and Manson Creek communities to Next Generation 9-1-1 compatible addresses.
- The RDBN mapping website was replaced by a shared mapping initiative between the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG), RDBN and the Town of Smithers. The new mapping website means that mapping data for several local governments is available in one location, which saves time for users and creates efficiencies and opportunities for the partnering local governments. The District of Fort St James has recently joined the mapping initiative.
- Developing an RDBN Addressing policy.

- Prepared and completed threat assessment maps for the entire RDBN as part of the Community Vulnerabilities (Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Analysis) project.
- Completed OCP maps for the Area F OCP review.
- Gained access to, and training on, Emergency Management British Columbia's Common Operating Portal.
- Completed maps to improve understanding of wildfire threat levels throughout the region for the FireSmart program.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Special Projects refers to a wide variety of projects that do not fit within the regular program of the Department and typically relate to unexpected events or activities that require immediate attention or involve a Provincial planning project. This most often includes participation in the Province's Environmental Assessment process as directed, and reporting to the Regional District Board on Provincial initiatives that potentially impact the Regional District.

2021 Accomplishments

- An Electoral Area Housing Report contract was awarded in May 2021 to M'akola Development Services. The consultant will present the completed Electoral Area Housing Needs Reports to the Board early in 2022.
- Participated in Rio Tinto's Water Engagement Initiative Meetings.
- Monitored the Mount Milligan Environmental Assessment Technical Advisory Planning process.
- Participated in and reported to the Board on the Hwy 27 to Berry Rd. Study.
- Participated in Lake Babine Nation Indigenous meetings regarding pipeline work camp issues.

BYLAW ENFORCEMENT

Bylaw Enforcement includes activities necessary to ensure adequate compliance to Regional District land use, development, and building bylaws. Activities include responding to and investigating complaints, working with the public to resolve bylaw infractions, reporting to the Board, and undertaking formal enforcement action through the Courts or as permitted through legislation.

2021 Accomplishments

- Staff worked with municipalities within the RDBN to develop a Bylaw Dispute Adjudication system.
- Worked through the legal process of obtaining a Consent Order to stop the operation of a scrap and salvage operation, avoiding a more lengthy Supreme Court injunction process.
- Provided Bylaw Enforcement services to the District of Houston.

BUILDING INSPECTION

Involves implementation and enforcement of RDBN Bylaw No. 1634, 2012 and RDBN Floodplain Management Bylaw No. 1878, 2020 in the rural area, throughout the building permit and inspection process.

The Building Inspectors also play a role in bylaw enforcement. The RDBN also provides building inspection services to the municipalities of Granisle, Burns Lake, Fort St. James, Telkwa, Houston and Fraser Lake on a contract basis.

2021 Accomplishments

- Started developing a new Building Bylaw, which staff plans to present to the Board in the spring of 2022.
- Provided Building Inspection coverage for the Town of Smithers during their Building Inspector's absence.

- Filed four Section 57s following contraventions of building regulations as per the Community Charter.
- Implemented a new quarterly reporting system to the Board of Directors.
- Processed an above-average number of building permits in the RDBN.
- Provided regional feedback to the Canadian Home Builders Association via the Advocacy & Government Relations Committee.
- Engaged in various Energy Step Code implementation groups.
- Completed several RDBN information brochures to aid in interpreting the BC Building Code.

TRANSIT

Responsibility of administrative duties for the Bulkley-Nechako Transit Service transitioned to the Planning Department in 2021. The RDBN is responsible for reviewing and approving service and performance standards based on operating and capital budgets set by BC Transit, establishing and collecting the fares and other revenues, and recommending the annual operating budget for BC Transit approval.

PARKS AND TRAILS SERVICE

Parks and Trails Service is a new function for the Planning Department that involves the creation, operation and marketing of Regional Parks and Regional Trails within the Electoral Areas. This function will also include a service that oversees the collection and distribution of funds to societies providing recreation services in the region.

PARKS AND TRAILS SERVICE CONTINUED

2021 Accomplishments

- Staff drafted a Parks and Trails Maintenance policy for RDBN Parks and Trails for Board approval.
- Facilitated a Municipal Insurance Association of BC (MIABC) liability review of RDBN parks.
- Wildfire Threat Assessment of RDBN parks was conducted by a consultant.

Electoral Area "A":

- Staff has spent a significant amount of time working with the Cycle 16 Trail Society and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on different aspects of the Cycle 16 trail project.
- A Trout Creek advisory group meeting was held to discuss opportunities for the site.
- Worked with the Round Lake Community Association regarding their waterfront upgrade project.
- Worked with Hudson Bay Mountain to find a parking solution for the "Trail to Town" skiers on Zobnick Rd.

Electoral Area "B":

- Obtained Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure permits to formalize access and parking lot for Imeson's Beach.
- A Request for Proposal for "Imeson's Beach Parking Lot and Pedestrian Railway Crossing Detailed Design Project" has been issued and the contract is planned to be awarded in early 2022.

Electoral Area "E":

- Staff issued a request for quote for an outhouse facility for Hospital Point which is planned to be constructed in early summer 2022.

Electoral Area "F":

- A public engagement process for property owners around Cluculz Lake was initiated to determine the interest in establishing a regional boat launch on the lake. The survey results will be presented to the Board in 2022.



STATISTICS 2021

This section contains statistics, and historical data, regarding the activities that make up the majority of the day-to-day work undertaken by the Planning Department.

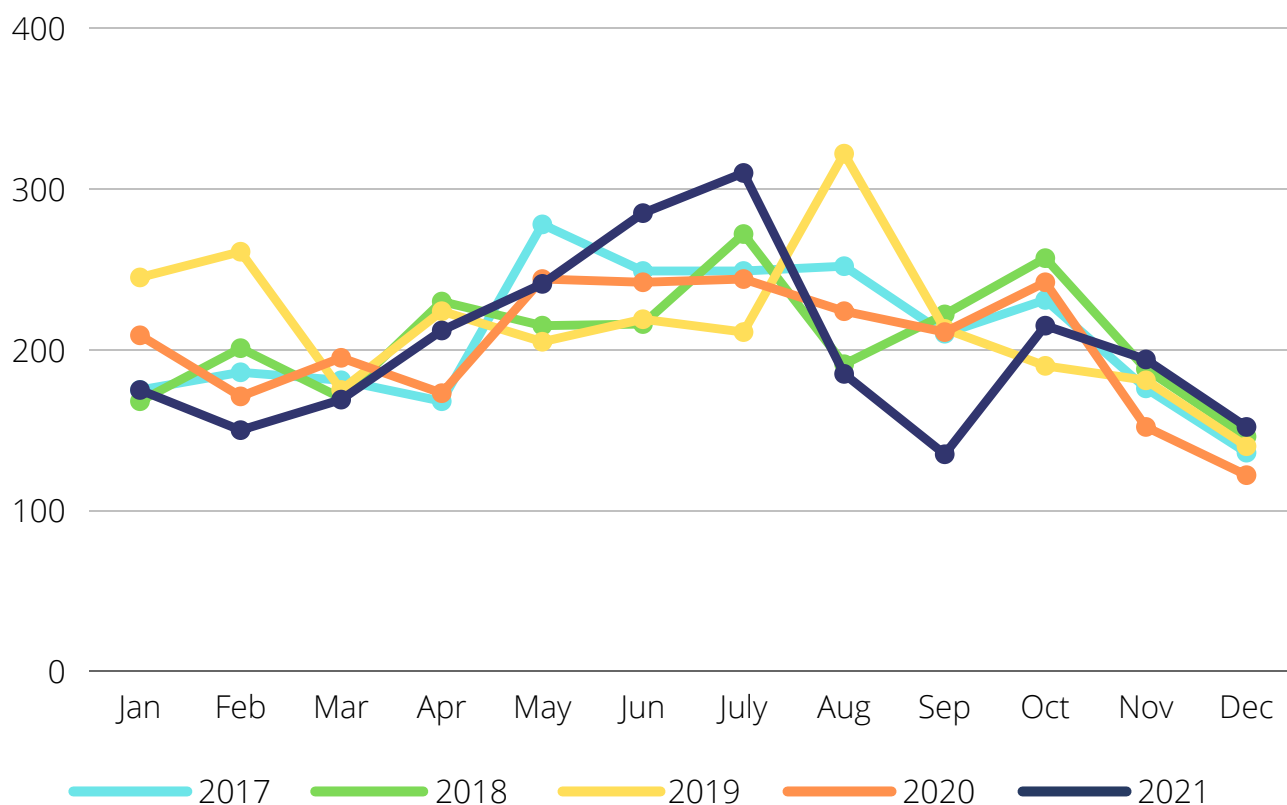
PLANNING DEPARTMENT ENQUIRIES

The Planning Department keeps track of the number of enquiries that are answered each month. The enquiries are divided into the following six main subject areas:

- Development Services (ALR, environmental assessments, subdivision, Crown Land)
- Electoral Area Planning (Zoning, OCPs, Permits)
- House Numbering

- Mapping Requests
- Bylaw Enforcement
- Other (Animal Control, Road Maintenance, Sewage)

In 2021, the Planning Department answered 2,423 enquiries. This number is very close to the 2,429 answered in 2020.

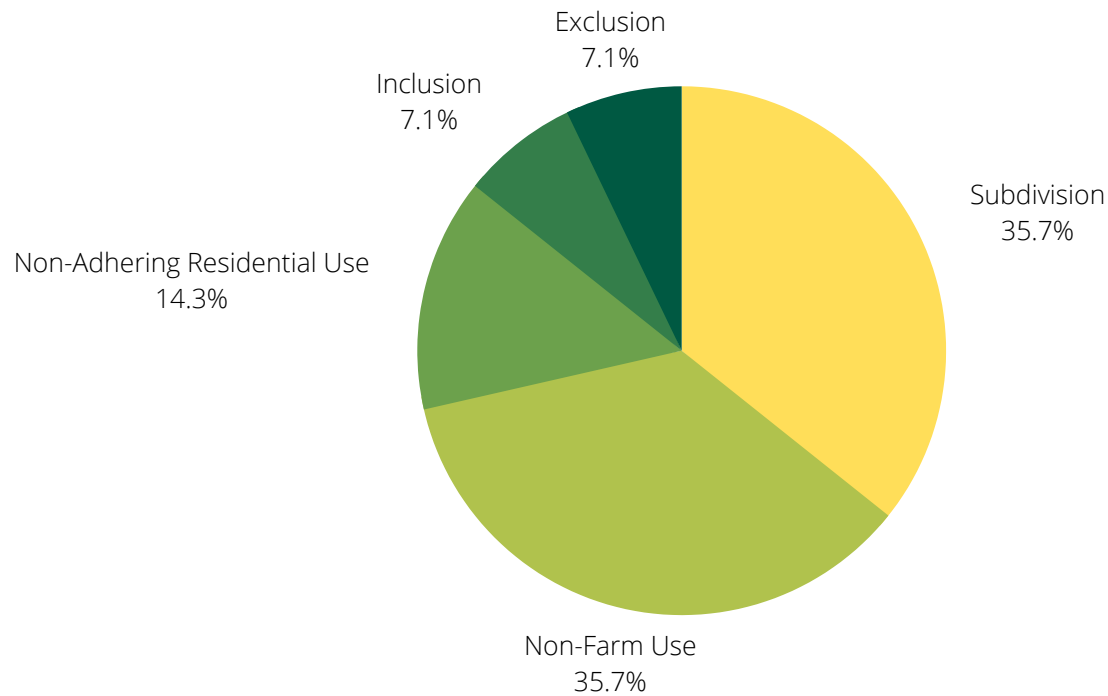


AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE APPLICATIONS

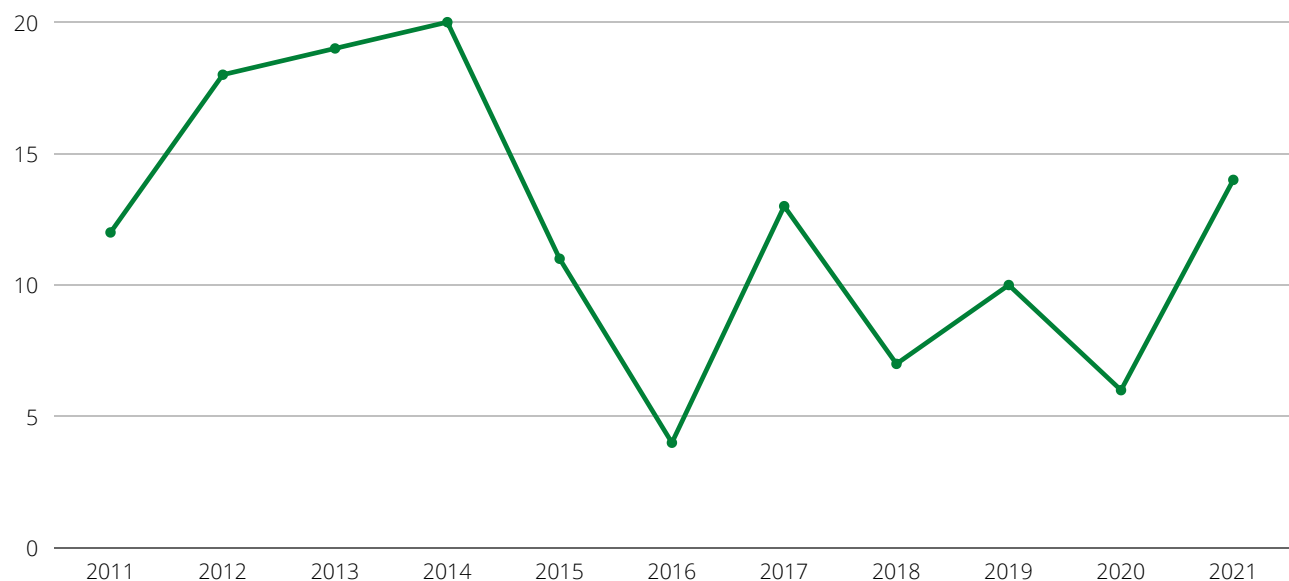
The Regional District processed 14 ALR applications in 2021, which is a notable increase from the six applications processed in 2020.

The Board recommended approval or conditional approval of 12 applications. Nine applications are awaiting ALC decisions.

2021 ALR Applications by Type



ALR Applications by Year



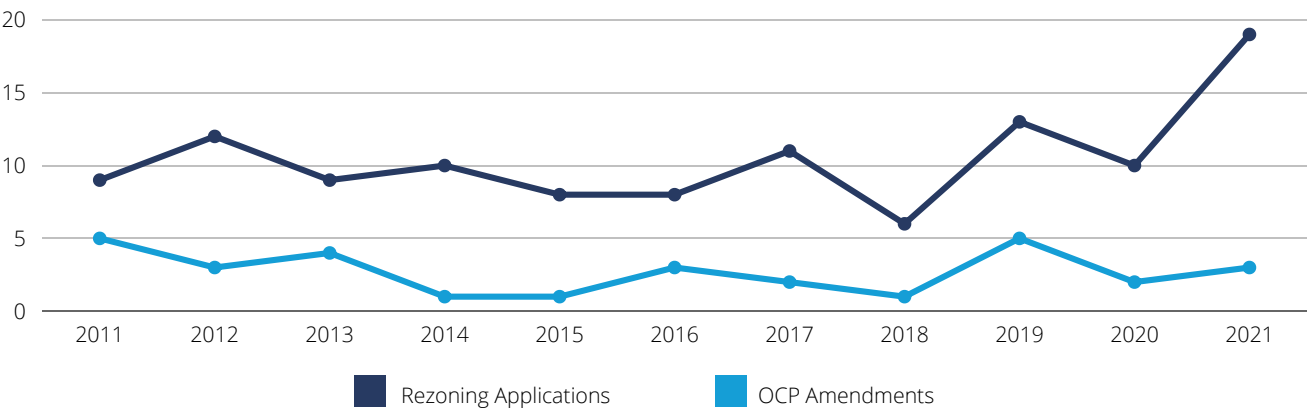
OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN AMENDMENTS AND REZONING APPLICATIONS

Official Community Plan Amendment applications are usually linked to rezoning applications. There were three OCP amendment applications made in 2021, which is a slight increase from the two OCP amendments made in 2020. All three OCP amendment bylaws were adopted.

19 rezoning applications were processed in 2021. This is a significant increase from the ten applications received in 2020, although it is noted that four of the 2021 applications are staff initiated changes to the zoning bylaw.

Eight of the applications have been adopted, eight are still in process, one application was withdrawn, and two were denied. It is noted that almost half (42.9%) of the rezoning applications were made to rezone to the Small Holdings Additional Dwelling Zone.

OCP Amendment Applications vs. Rezoning Applications 2011-2021

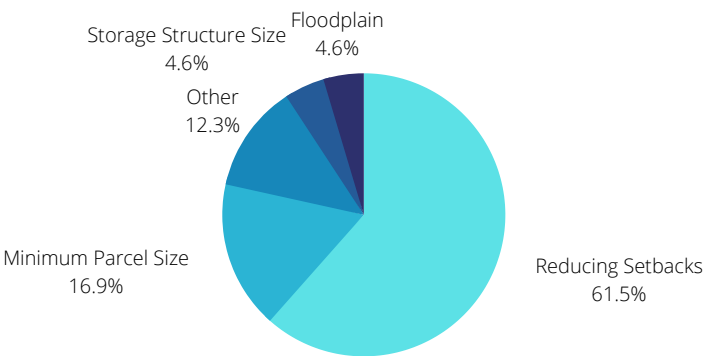


DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Six development variance permit applications were received in 2021, which is a decline from the eight received in 2020.

All of the 2021 development variance permit applications asked to vary a setback to a parcel boundary or a natural boundary. Five applications were approved, and one was denied.

Development Variance Permits by Subject Ten-Year Average

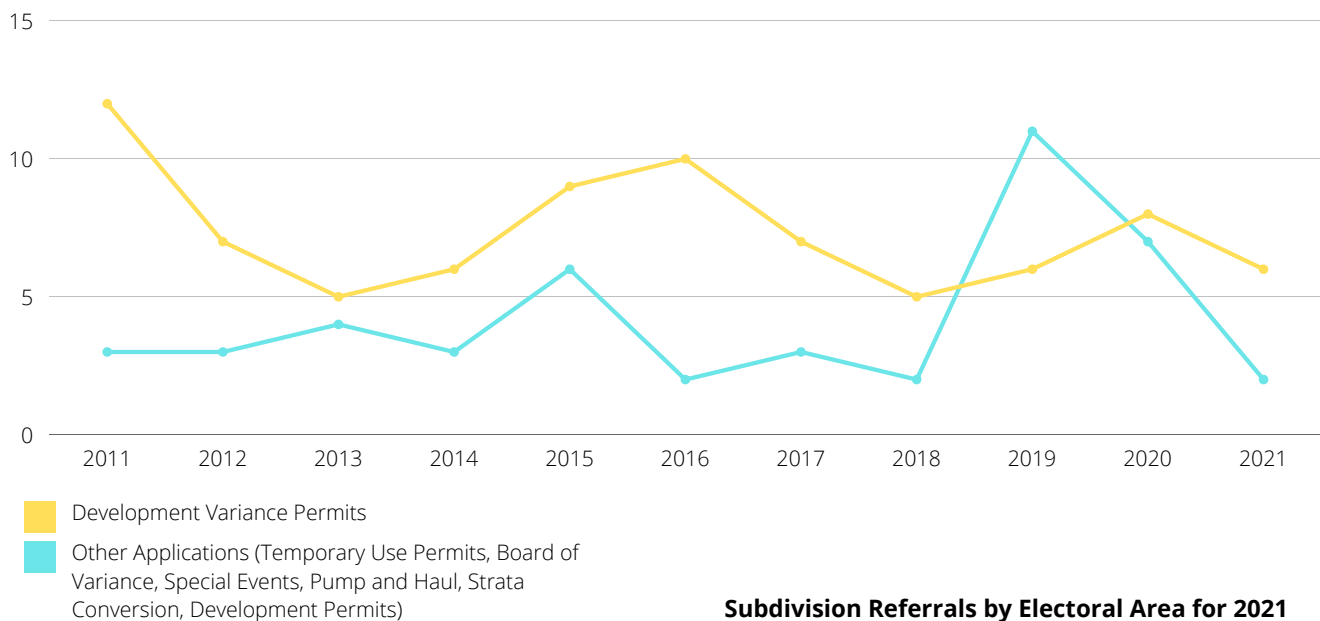


OTHER APPLICATIONS

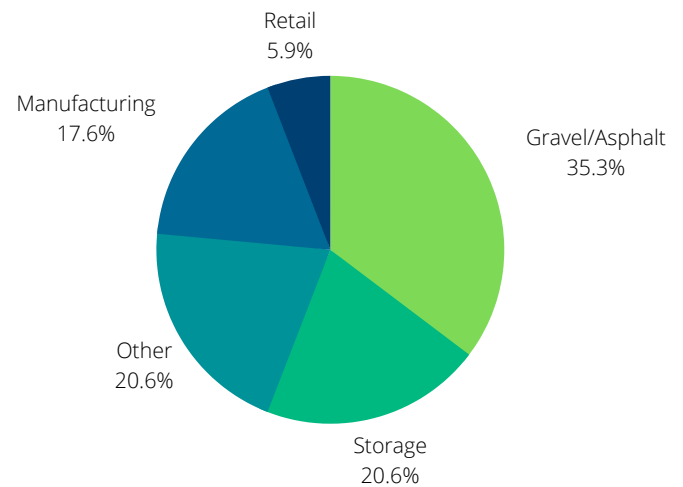
Other Applications include Board of Variance, Special Events, Pump and Haul, Temporary Use Permits, Strata Conversion, and Development Permits. This number of applications declined from eight in 2019, and seven in 2020, to two in 2021. The two 2021 applications were temporary use permit (TUP) applications.

There are significantly fewer TUP applications than the seven applications received in 2020 and the 10 applications received in 2019. It is noted that no TUP applications connected to pipeline construction were received this year.

Development Variance Permit Applications and Other Applications by Year



Temporary Use Permit By Subject from 2012-2021

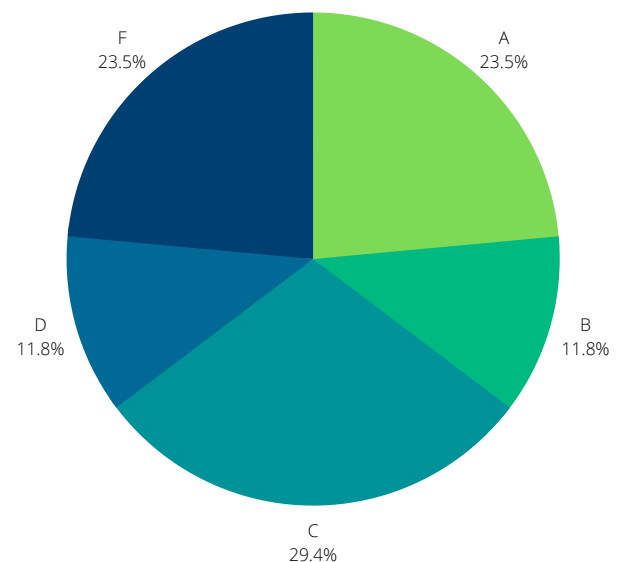


SUBDIVISION REFERRALS

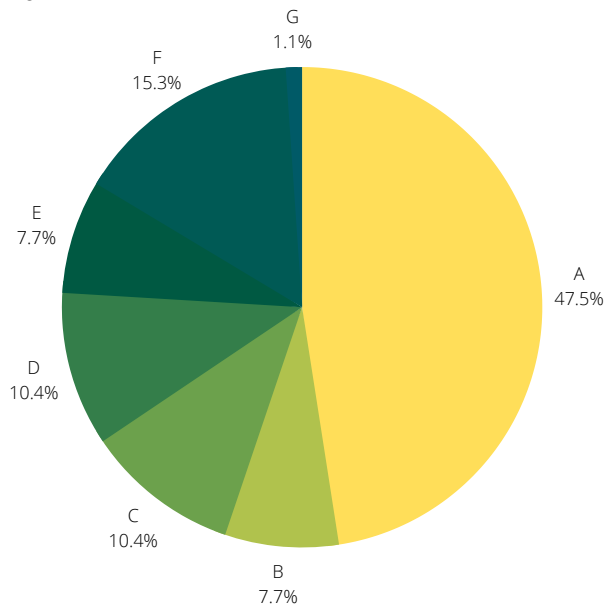
The Regional District received 17 subdivision referrals from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in 2021. This is an increase from the 12 referrals received in 2020.

Twelve referrals were provided positive or conditionally positive referral responses and five referrals were not in accordance with Regional District land use regulations.

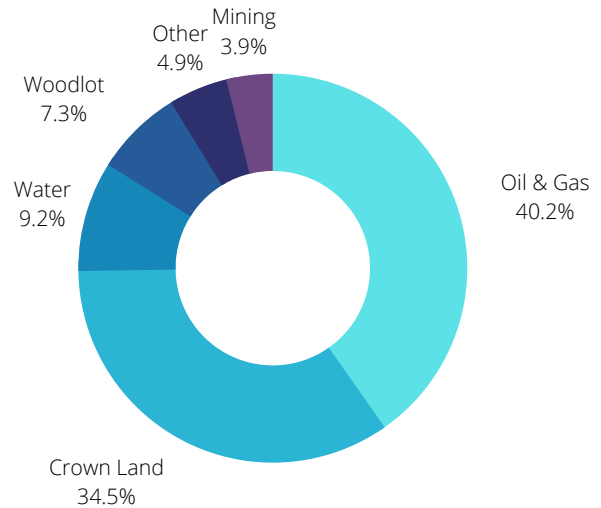
Subdivision Referrals by Electoral Area for 2021



Subdivision Referrals by Electoral Area from 2012 - 2021



Referrals by Type from 2012 - 2021

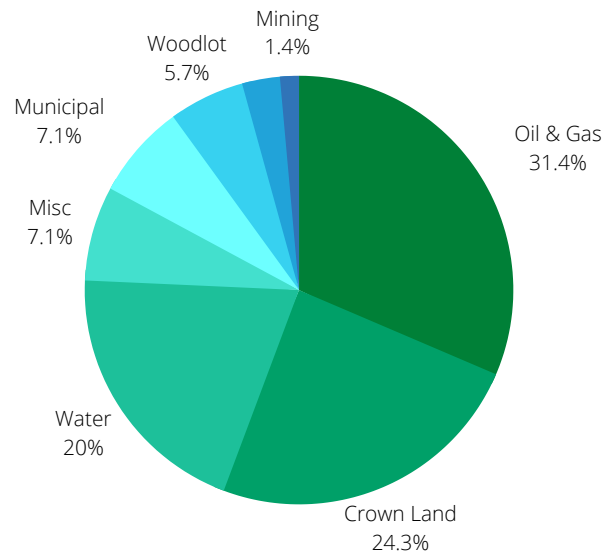


OTHER REFERRALS

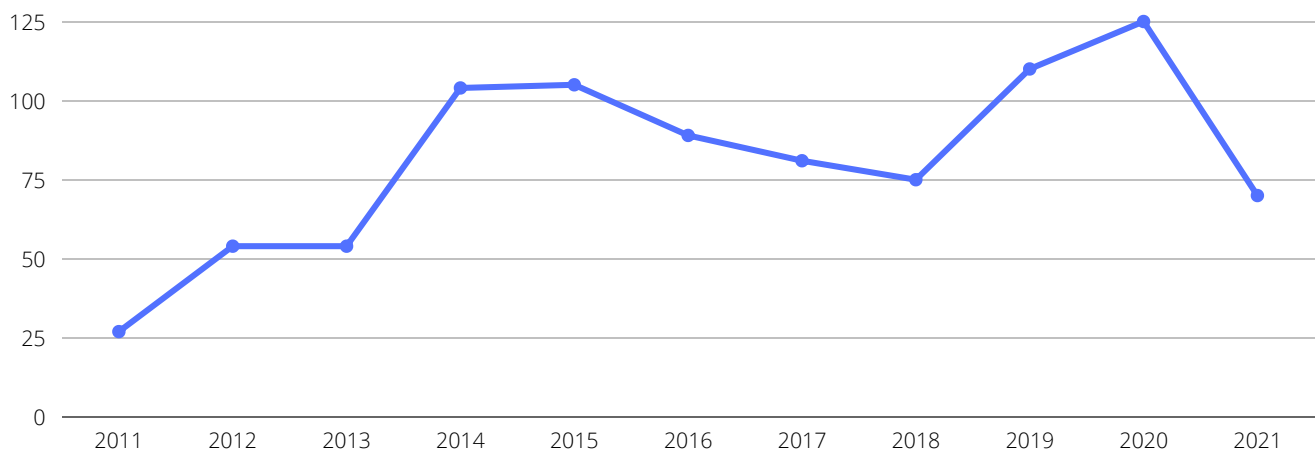
Other referrals include Crown land, mining, addition to reserve, municipal, Water Act, Oil and Gas, woodlot and miscellaneous. The Regional District received 70 other referrals in 2021 which is less than the 125 referrals received in 2020.

The number of Oil and Gas Commission referrals is down to 22 from 55 in 2020. In accordance with Board policy most Oil and Gas Commission Referrals are dealt with directly by the applicable Area Director and are not processed through the RDBN Board.

2021 Referrals by Type



Total Other Referrals from 2012-2021 (Oil & Gas, Mine, Recreation, Woodlot, Water Act, municipal misc)



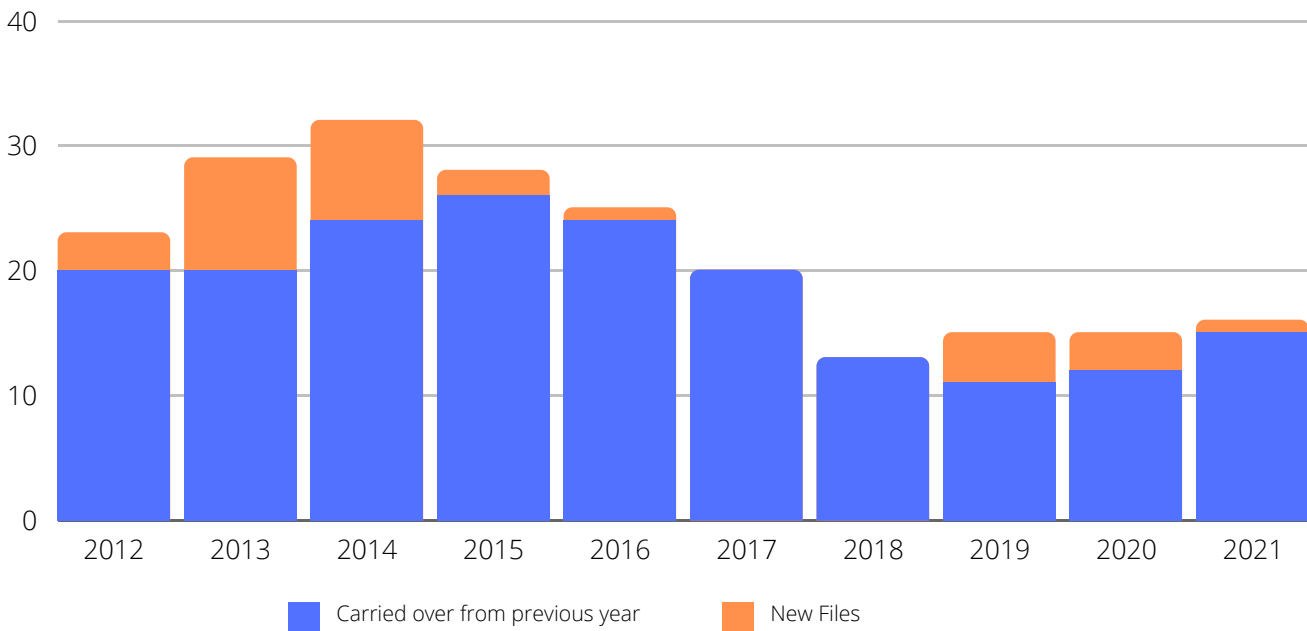
BYLAW ENFORCEMENT

Bylaw enforcement files are created where enforcement action is warranted, and no immediate resolution is forthcoming following discussions with the property owner. A file is not created if the staff investigation determines that a bylaw infraction has not occurred and if further

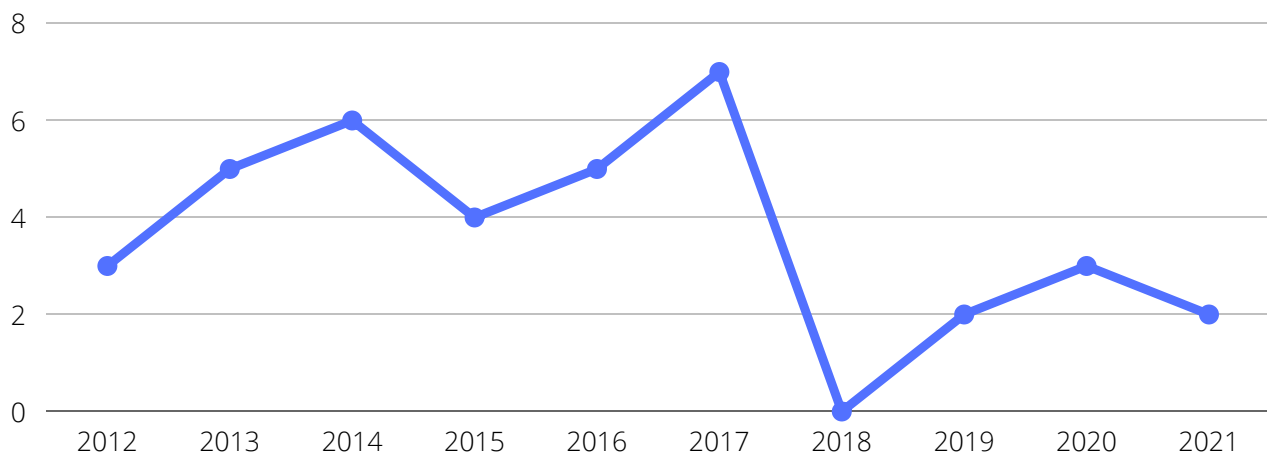
action is not justified, or if the infraction is resolved or likely to be resolved through discussions with the property owner. It is noted that there were numerous bylaw enforcement issues dealt with which did not result in a file being created.

Both the number of new files and the number of resolved files have declined in 2021 compared to 2020.

Composition of Total Bylaw Complaints: Carried Forward & New



Resolved Bylaw Files from 2012 -2021

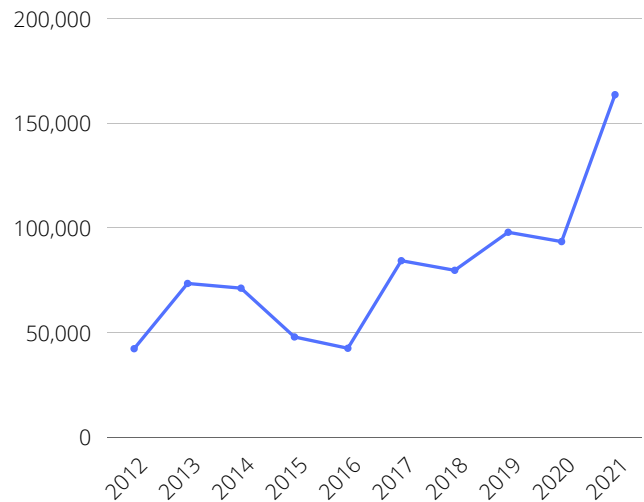


BUILDING PERMITS

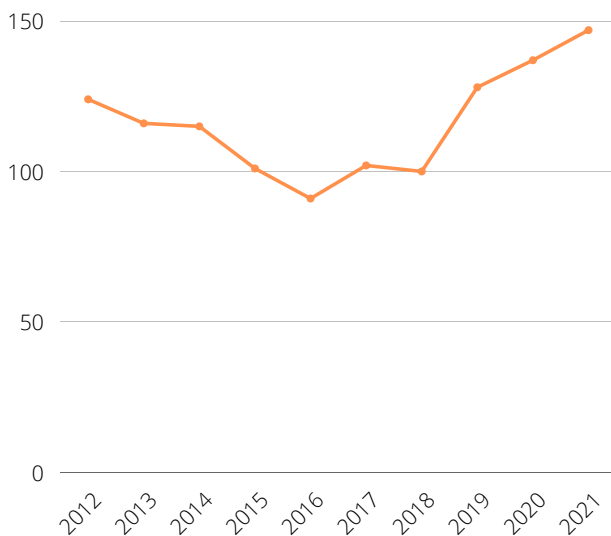
In 2021 there were 147 building permits received in the RDBN Electoral Areas. This figure has been steadily increasing since 2018. Naturally, the Building Permit fees have also increased during this timeframe and total construction value has almost doubled since 2020. This figure increased for every Electoral Area except "C" and "G".

The total number of Single Family Dwellings permitted in municipalities within the RDBN has increased from 25 in 2020 to 29 in 2021.

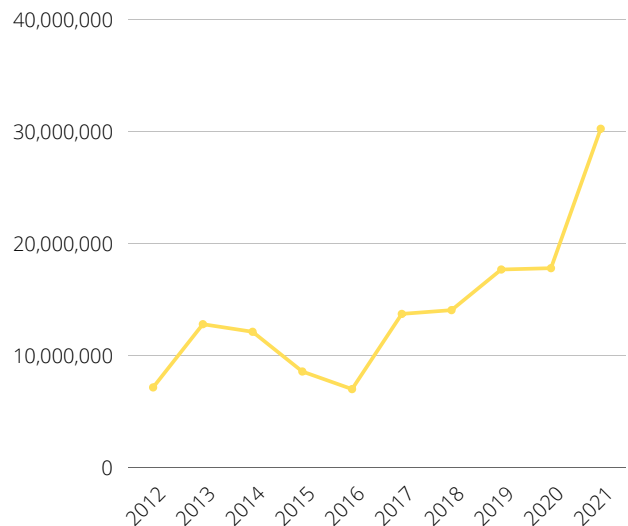
RDBN Building Permit Fees from 2012 - 2021



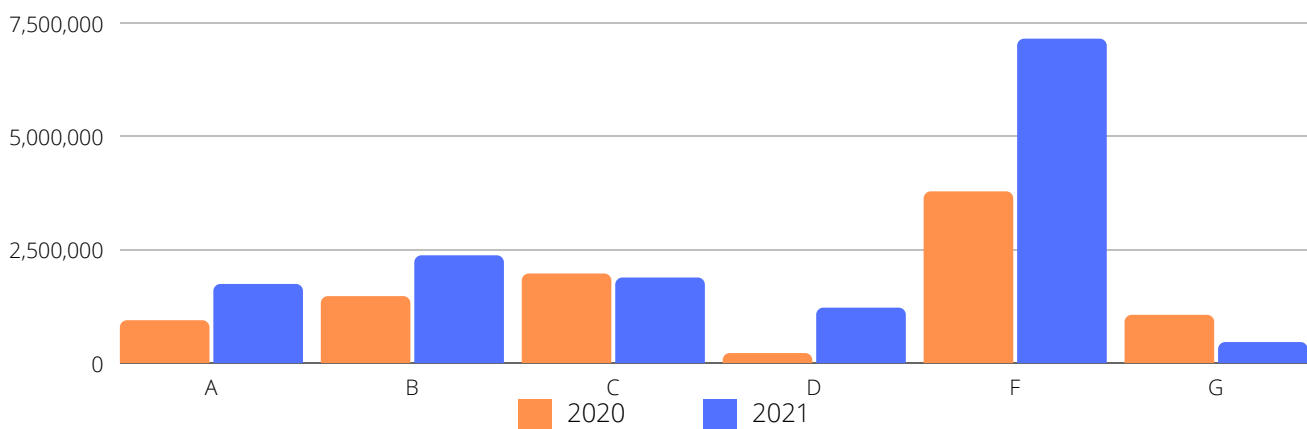
Total RDBN Building Permits Issued by Year from 2012 - 2021



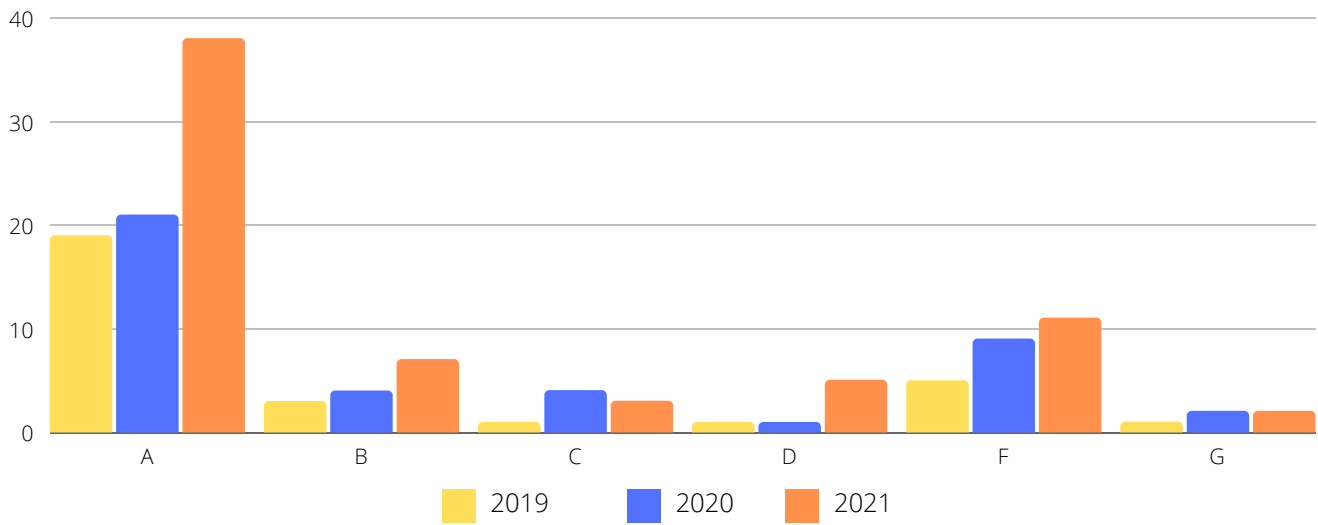
RDBN Construction Value of Permitted Buildings from 2012 - 2021



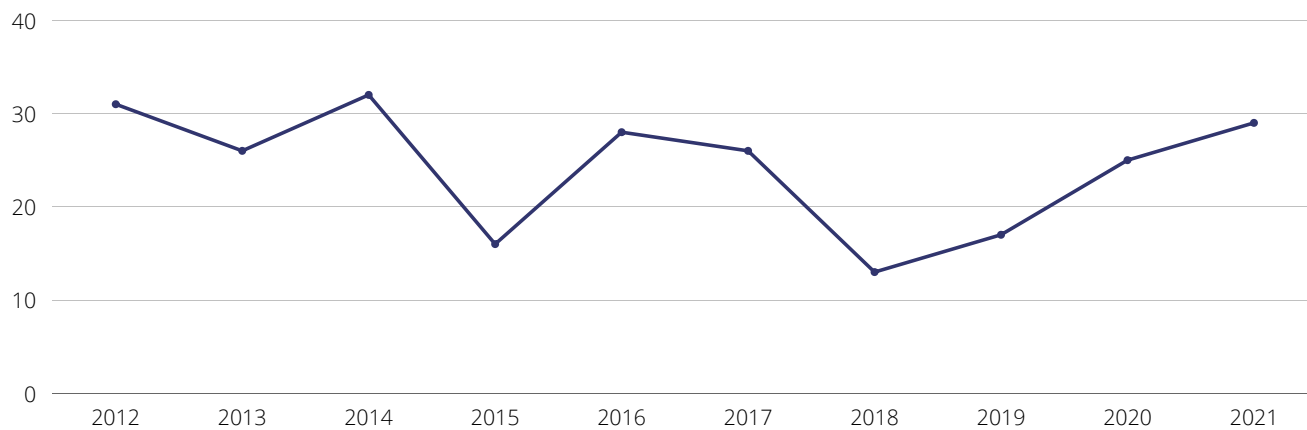
Total Value of Construction in RDBN 2020 vs. 2021



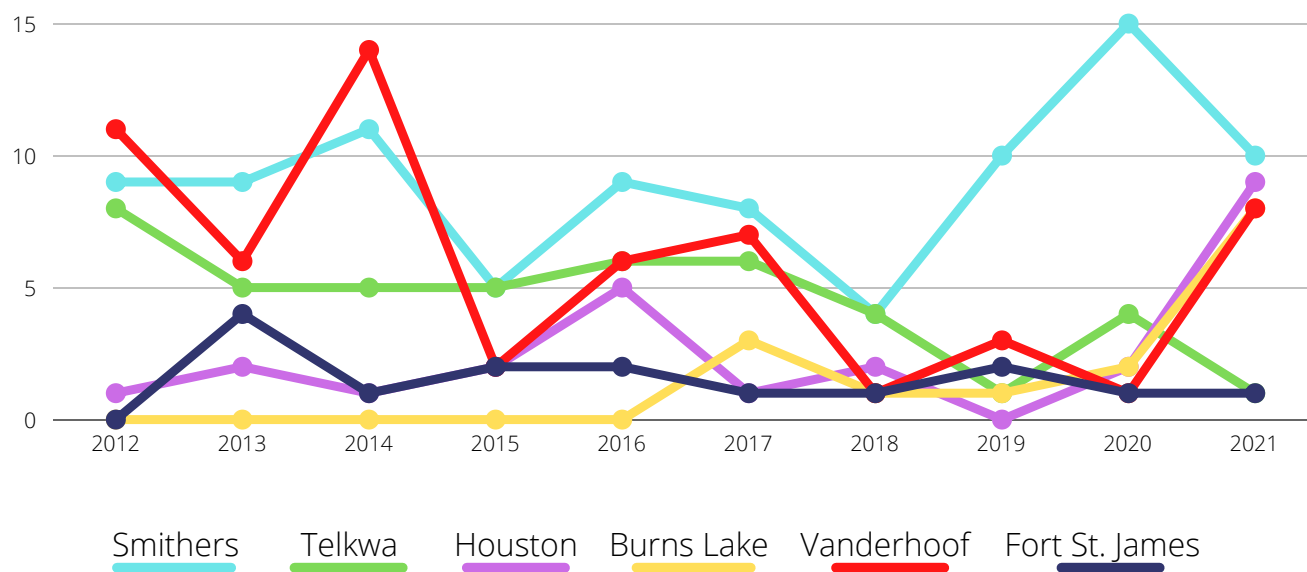
New Residences Constructed in each Electoral Area from 2019 - 2021



Total Single Family Dwellings Constructed within the Municipalities of the RDBN



Single Family Dwellings within the Municipalities of the RDBN



***One Single Family Dwelling was built in the Village of Fraser Lake in 2012, and one Single Family Dwelling was built in the Village of Granisle in 2012: they have been omitted from the above graph for clarity**