

FORT MACLEOD

Mobility & Commuting Report

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Executive Summary

Fort Macleod's 2021 profile is defined by a strong local orientation in both where people live and how they work. Most residents had been in the community a year earlier, and over a five-year view the largest group was still made up of people who had not moved. At the same time, mobility was not absent. The clearest source of change came from within Alberta, with intraprovincial migration rising much more strongly than movement from elsewhere in Canada or abroad. This leaves a picture of a town shaped more by continuity than by rapid turnover, but with a meaningful stream of residents arriving from elsewhere in the province.

That same local pattern is visible in employment and commuting. Most employed residents still worked at a usual workplace, even as working from home and jobs with no fixed workplace both increased over the five years. The change appears gradual rather than transformative, with the traditional workplace remaining the main anchor of employment. Commuting was centered close to home: most workers with a usual place of work travelled within Fort Macleod itself, while fewer commuted to other parts of Alberta and none were recorded as commuting to another province. Travel times reinforce that pattern. Short trips remained the norm, especially commutes under 15 minutes, although there was some growth in the middle-distance ranges. Departures were concentrated in the early morning, led by the 7 a.m. hour, with much lighter movement later in the day.

Private vehicles remained the dominant way of getting to work by a wide margin. Driving far outpaced every other mode, while walking accounted for a smaller but visible share and passenger travel increased from a low base. Public transit was absent and cycling remained limited. Taken together, Fort Macleod appears as a town with a largely self-contained daily rhythm: a population rooted locally, migration shaped mainly by movement within Alberta, and a labour market still organized around in-person work, short commutes, and early morning travel, even as a modest diversification in work arrangements has begun to emerge.

Place of Work Status

Fort Macleod’s employed labour force was still concentrated in a usual workplace in 2021, with 970 people, down 3.96% from 2016. No fixed workplace reached 235, while worked at home rose to 125, up 56.25%.

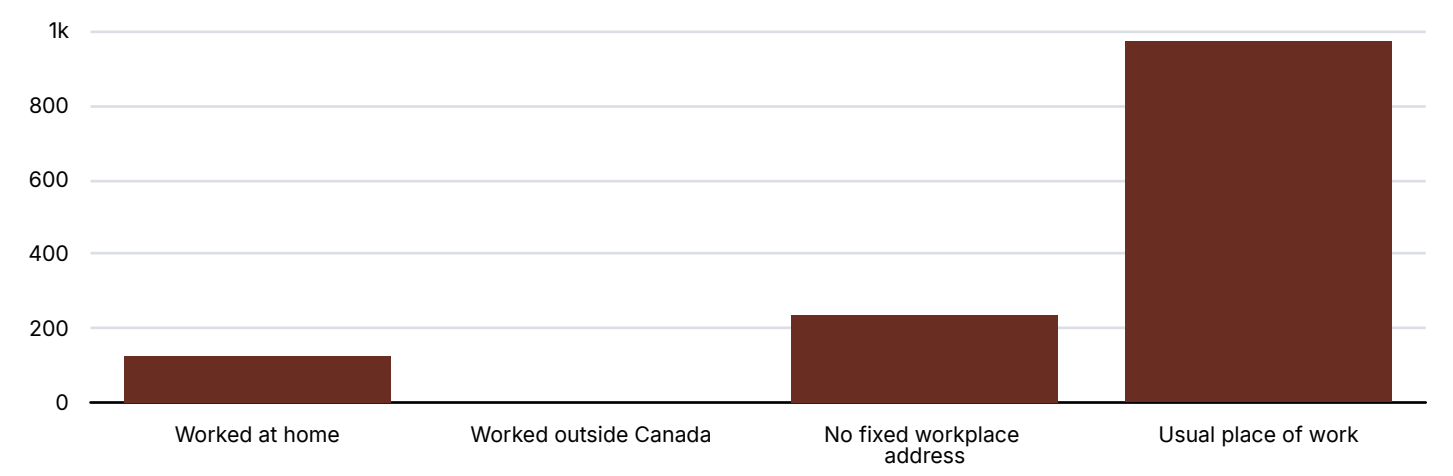
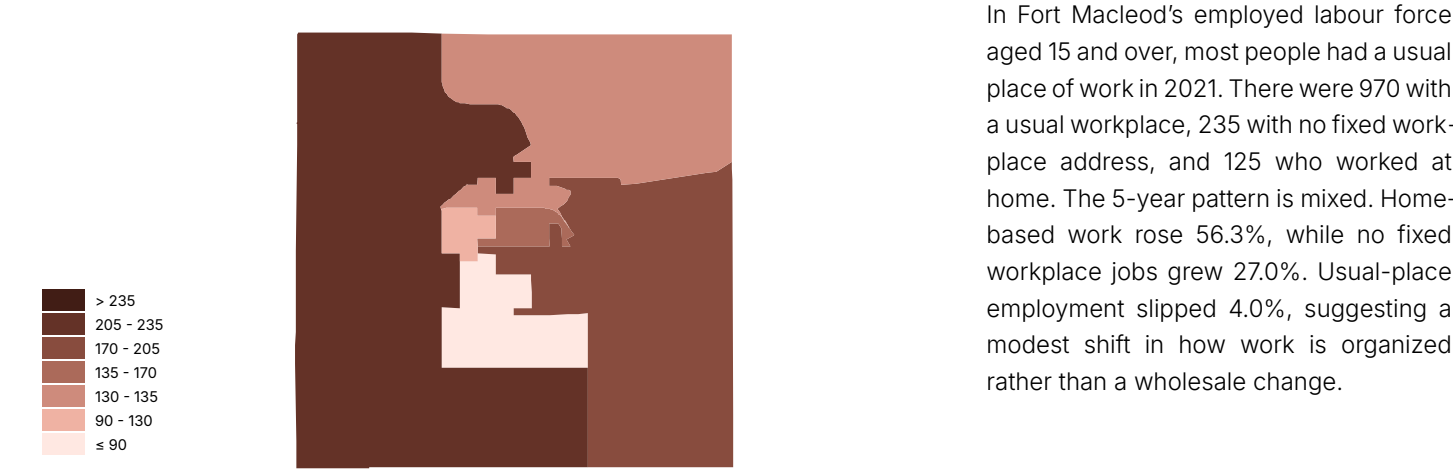


Figure 1.1: Shows whether people work from home, at a usual workplace, or at no fixed workplace. It helps indicate how work is organized across locations. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

In Fort Macleod in 2021, place of work status was led by people with a usual place of work, at 970. Another 235 people had no fixed workplace address, while 125 worked at home. No one was recorded as working outside Canada. The five-year change shows different directions across these categories: working at home rose by 56.3%, and no fixed workplace increased by 27.0%, while usual place of work declined by 4.0%. Within the employed labour force aged 15 years and over, the pattern suggests a modest shift toward more varied work arrangements alongside a slightly smaller core of usual workplace employment.



In Fort Macleod’s employed labour force aged 15 and over, most people had a usual place of work in 2021. There were 970 with a usual workplace, 235 with no fixed workplace address, and 125 who worked at home. The 5-year pattern is mixed. Home-based work rose 56.3%, while no fixed workplace jobs grew 27.0%. Usual-place employment slipped 4.0%, suggesting a modest shift in how work is organized rather than a wholesale change.

Figure 1.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Place Of Work Status - Usual place of work (Fort Macleod)¹

Lived Here 1 Year Ago

Fort Macleod’s largest group remained non-movers at 2,675 people in 2021, up 7.0% from 2016. Interprovincial migrants rose to 35, while intraprovincial migrants edged up to 190 and non-migrants to 250.

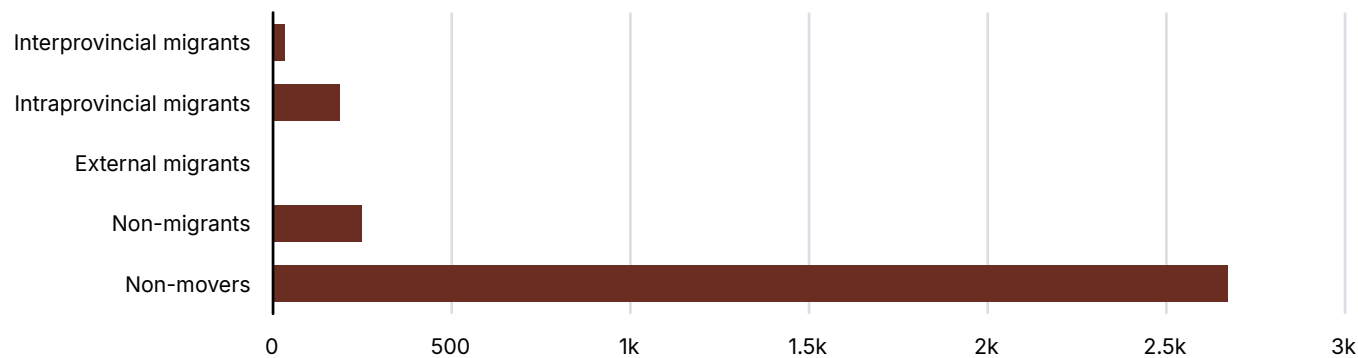


Figure 2.1: Shows where residents lived one year ago compared with their current location. It helps indicate recent mobility and short-term population churn. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

In 2021, Fort Macleod’s short-term mobility profile was dominated by people who had already been living there a year earlier. Non-movers accounted for 2,675 people, while 250 were non-migrants who had moved within the community’s broader surroundings. Intraprovincial migrants numbered 190, and interprovincial migrants 35. External migrants were recorded at 0. The pattern points to limited churn at the far end of the mobility scale, with most residents staying close to home.

In Fort Macleod, recent residence patterns show a mostly stable population in 2021, with 2,675 non-movers out of the total population and 250 people who had moved within the past year. The main flow came from within Alberta: 190 intraprovincial migrants compared with 35 interprovincial migrants, while external migrants were recorded at 0. Over five years, non-movers rose 7%, non-migrants increased 78.6%, and interprovincial migrants climbed 250%. That mix suggests short-term turnover is present, but the town’s mobility profile remains anchored in people already in the province.



Figure 2.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Mobility Status - Non-movers (Fort Macleod)¹

Lived Here 5 Years Ago

Fort Macleod’s largest group in 2021 was non-movers at 1,740 people, up 5.5% from 2016. Intraprovincial migrants rose to 625, a 101.6% increase, while non-migrants fell to 400.

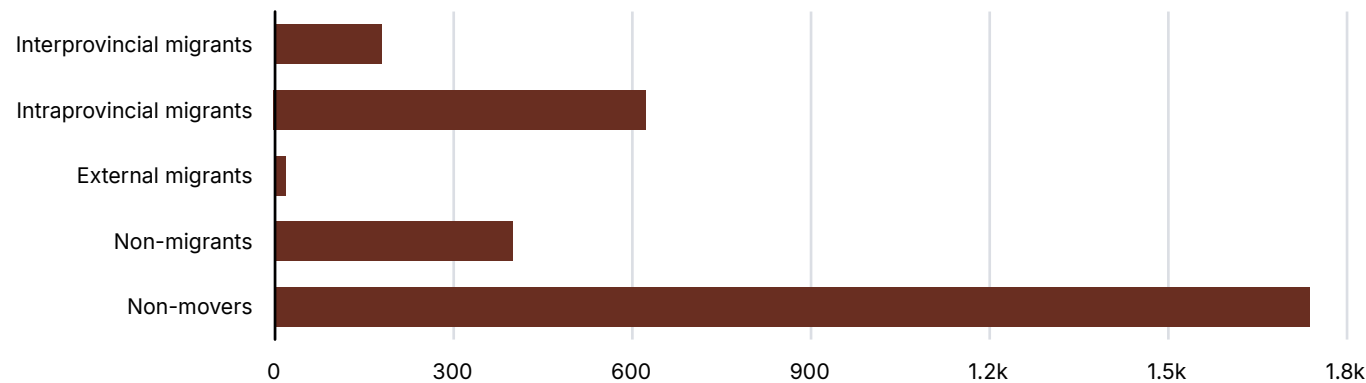


Figure 3.1: Shows where residents lived five years ago compared with their current location. It helps indicate longer-term mobility and migration patterns. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

In 2021, Fort Macleod’s population mobility profile was shaped more by long-term local continuity than by recent inflow. The town counted 1,740 non-movers, alongside 400 non-migrants, 625 intraprovincial migrants, 180 interprovincial migrants, and 20 external migrants. Recent change was strongest among migrants from within Alberta: intraprovincial migrants rose 101.6%, while interprovincial migrants increased 33.3%. Non-movers edged up 5.5%, but non-migrants fell 20.8% and external migrants dropped 79.0%.

Fort Macleod’s 2021 mobility profile shows a community with a large share of residents who were already living there five years earlier, alongside notable movement into the town from elsewhere in Alberta. The town recorded 1,740 non-movers, 625 intraprovincial migrants, and 180 interprovincial migrants, while non-migrants numbered 400 and external migrants 20. The five-year changes point to a mixed pattern: non-movers rose modestly by 5.5%, but intraprovincial migrants more than doubled, up 101.6%. External migrants fell sharply, while interprovincial migrants increased by 33.3%.



Figure 3.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Mobility Status - Non-movers (Fort Macleod)¹

Commute Destination

Fort Macleod’s largest commuting group stayed within the census subdivision, rising to 750 people in 2021, up 11.1% from 2016. Commuting elsewhere in the province fell to 135 people, down 35.7%.

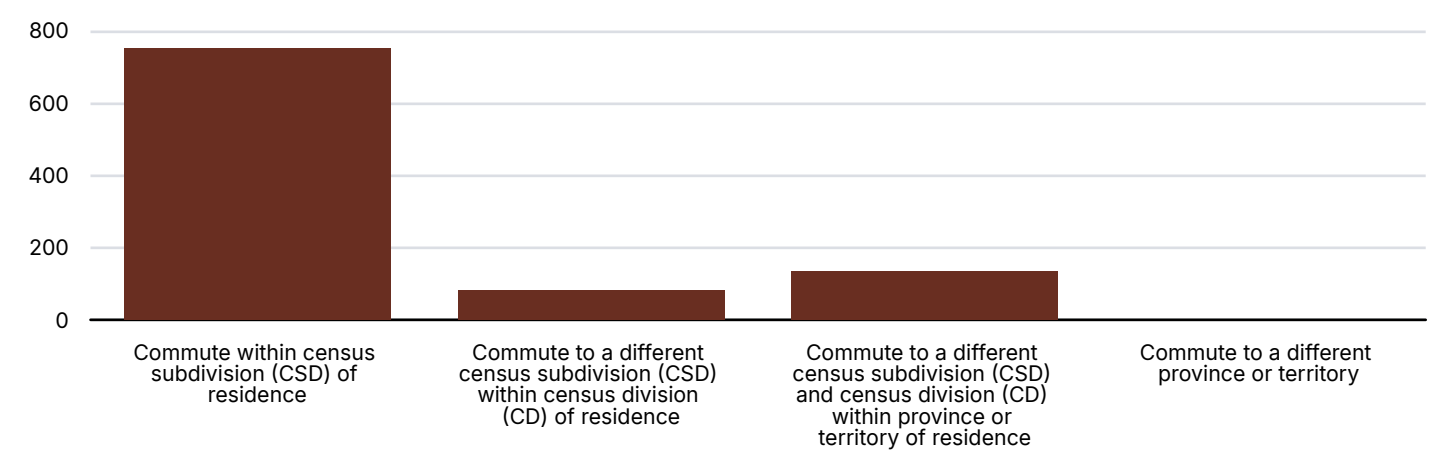


Figure 4.1: Shows where residents travel for work. It helps indicate whether the area functions mainly as a self-contained labour market or as part of a wider commuting region. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

In 2021, Fort Macleod’s commuting pattern was centered close to home. Among employed residents aged 15 and over with a usual place of work, 750 people commuted within the census subdivision of residence, while 80 travelled to another census subdivision within the same census division and 135 travelled to another census division within Alberta. No residents commuted to another province or territory. The 5-year change points to a shift toward local commuting, with travel within the census subdivision up 11.1% and trips to other areas down 30.4% and 35.7%. The pattern suggests a relatively self-contained labour market, with the strongest movement staying within Fort Macleod itself.

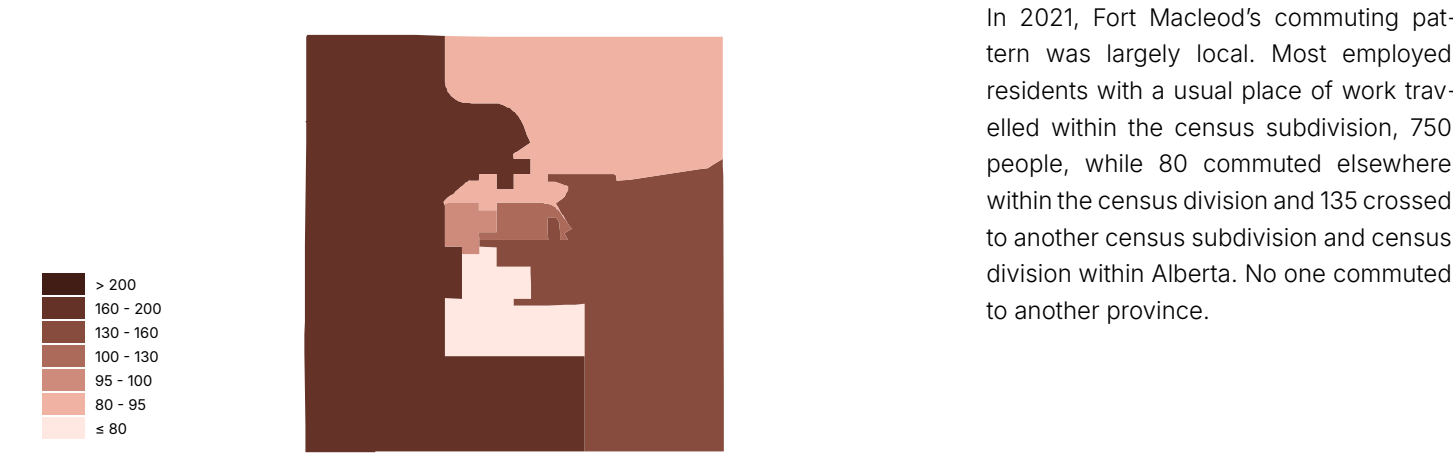


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Commuting Destination - Commute within census subdivision (CSD) of residence (Fort Macleod)¹

Time Leaving for Work

Fort Macleod's peak work departure time remained between 7 a.m. and 7:59 a.m., with 375 people in 2021, up 1.4% from 2016. The 9 a.m. to 11:59 a.m. group fell to 65, down 35%.

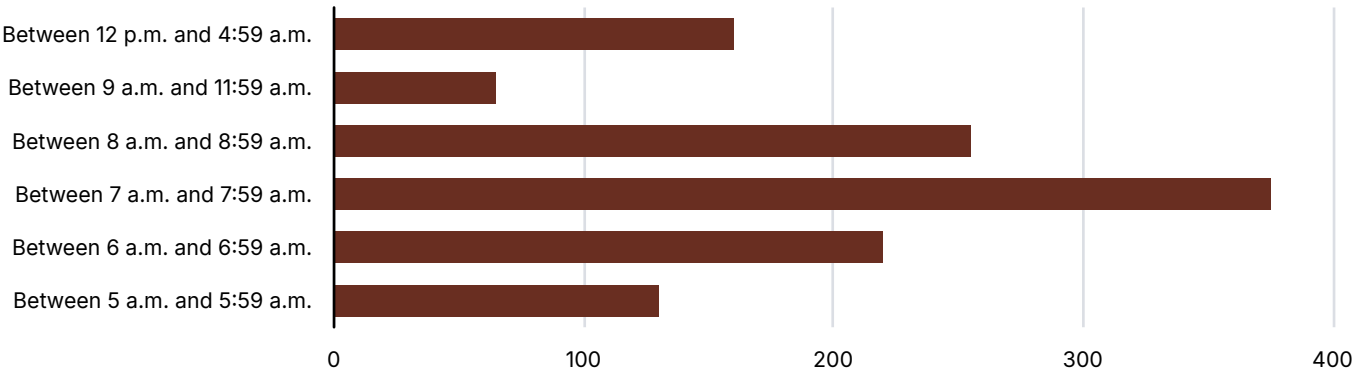


Figure 5.1: Shows the time of day residents usually leave for work. It helps indicate commuting patterns and peak travel demand. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

Fort Macleod's work departures in 2021 were concentrated in the early morning, with the 7 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. hour standing out as the busiest period. The town recorded 375 people leaving at 7 a.m. to 7:59 a.m., compared with 255 at 8 a.m. to 8:59 a.m. and 220 at 6 a.m. to 6:59 a.m. Another 130 left between 5 a.m. and 5:59 a.m. Later departures were much smaller, including 65 people between 9 a.m. and 11:59 a.m. The pattern suggests a clear peak in standard morning commuting, with relatively limited movement later in the day.

In 2021, Fort Macleod's commuting pattern among employed residents with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address was concentrated in the early morning, led by 375 people leaving between 7 a.m. and 7:59 a.m. The next largest groups were 255 leaving between 8 a.m. and 8:59 a.m. and 220 between 6 a.m. and 6:59 a.m. Later departures were much smaller, including 65 between 9 a.m. and 11:59 a.m. Five-year change was mixed, with the 8 a.m. hour up 24.4% and the 9 a.m. to 11:59 a.m. period down 35%.



Figure 5.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Time Leaving Work - Between 7 a.m. and 7:59 a.m. (Fort Macleod)¹

Commute Duration

In Fort Macleod, commutes under 15 minutes remained the largest group at 765 people in 2021, down 2.6% from 2016. Longer trips shifted, with 30 to 44 minutes rising to 195 and 45 to 59 minutes falling to 30.

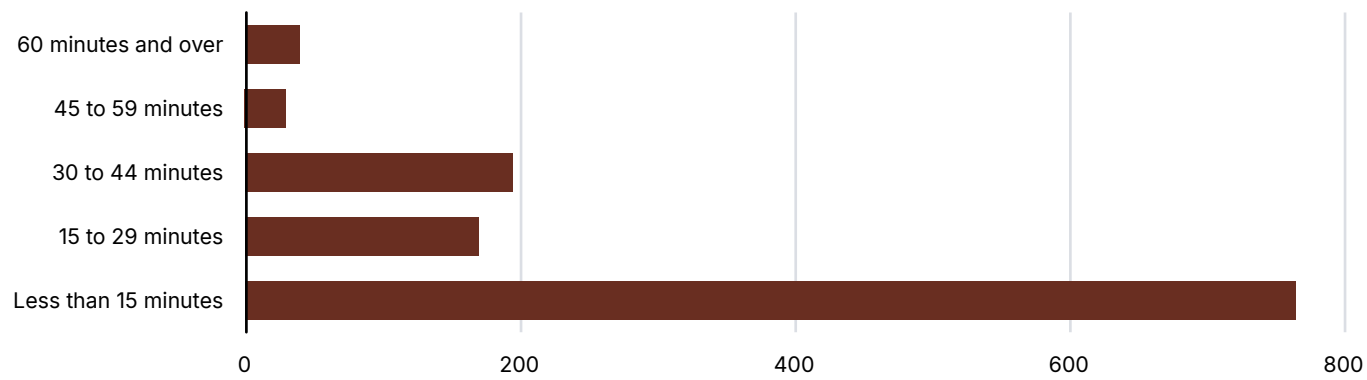


Figure 6.1: Shows how long residents typically spend travelling to work. It helps indicate commuting burden and jobs-housing balance. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

In 2021, commute times in Fort Macleod were concentrated in the shortest category, with 765 employed residents aged 15 and over commuting less than 15 minutes. Longer trips were less common: 170 people travelled 15 to 29 minutes, 195 commuted 30 to 44 minutes, 30 spent 45 to 59 minutes, and 40 travelled 60 minutes or more. The 5-year change suggests a mixed shift, with gains in the middle ranges and declines at both extremes. This points to a commute profile that has become more balanced over time.

Fort Macleod’s commute profile in 2021 was dominated by short trips: 765 employed residents usually travelled less than 15 minutes, far more than any other band. Another 195 commuted 30 to 44 minutes, while 170 were in the 15 to 29 minute range. Longer commutes were much less common, with 30 people travelling 45 to 59 minutes and 40 travelling 60 minutes or more. The pattern suggests a workforce centered on relatively short travel times, with some longer-distance commuting present.



Figure 6.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Commuting Duration - Less than 15 minutes (Fort Macleod)¹

Main Mode of Commuting

In Fort Macleod, driving remained the main commuting mode with 985 people in 2021, down 2.96% from 2016. Passenger commuting rose to 80 people, while walking fell to 105.

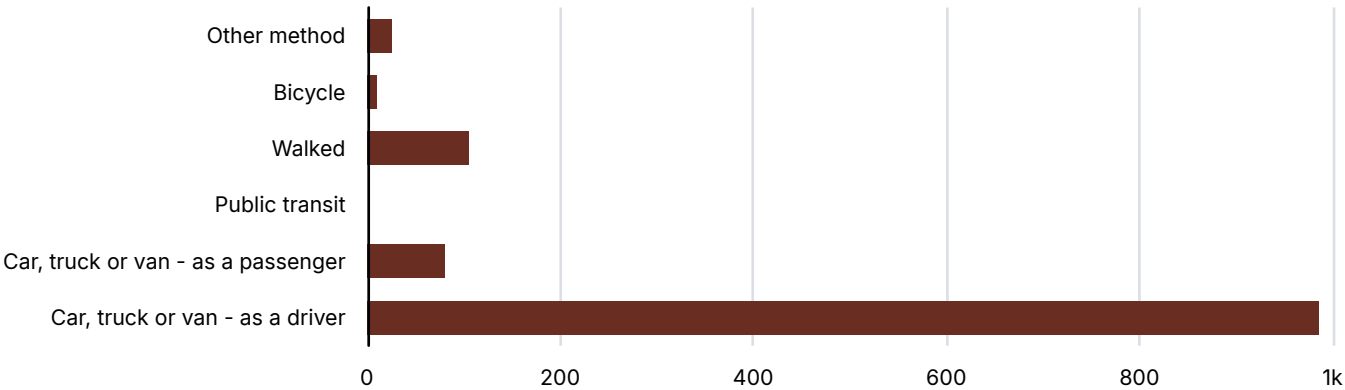


Figure 7.1: Shows the main mode residents use to get to work. It helps indicate dependence on driving, transit, walking, cycling, or other travel modes. (Fort Macleod, 2021)¹

In Fort Macleod, commuting in 2021 was dominated by driving. Among employed residents with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address, 985 people travelled as car, truck or van drivers, far more than any other mode. Walking accounted for 105 commuters and declined 8.7% over five years, while passenger travel rose sharply to 80, up 166.7%. Public transit was not used, bicycle commuting was 10, and other methods totalled 25.

Fort Macleod’s commuting pattern in 2021 was strongly centered on private vehicles. Among employed residents aged 15 and over with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address, 985 people drove to work, far more than the 105 who walked. Another 80 commuted as passengers, while public transit and cycling recorded 0 and 10 people, respectively. The five-year change was mixed: driving slipped slightly, walking declined, and passenger commuting rose sharply.



Figure 7.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Commuting Mode - Car, truck or van - as a driver (Fort Macleod)¹

Data Sources

1. Statistics Canada, Census Profile. Published in Dec 15, 2022.

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