

WILLOW CREEK NO. 26

Mobility & Commuting Report

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Executive Summary

Willow Creek No. 26 presents a picture of a settled rural workforce and population, with stability in where people live and a commuting pattern shaped by nearby travel and strong reliance on private vehicles. In 2021, most residents had lived in the same place one year earlier, and the five-year view also remained led by non-movers. At the same time, movement within Alberta stood out more over the longer term than over the shorter one, indicating that change in the area was tied more to within-province relocation than to inflows from outside Alberta or abroad. The labour force showed a similarly balanced structure, split mainly between people working at a usual workplace and a substantial group working from home.

The strongest employment pattern was not one of long-distance travel, but of regular movement within the surrounding area. Among workers with a usual place of work, the largest commuting stream went to another census subdivision within the same census division, while a smaller share worked within Willow Creek No. 26 itself and another group travelled farther within Alberta. Departures were concentrated in the early morning, especially between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m., which points to a workday organized around conventional start times. Commute lengths were generally short: trips under 15 minutes formed the largest group, followed closely by journeys of 15 to 29 minutes, while the longest commutes became less common over the five-year period. This combination suggests that many jobs were accessible within relatively close range even when they were located outside the subdivision.

Travel to work was overwhelmingly car-based. Driving accounted for by far the largest share of commuting, while walking remained limited and public transit use was minimal. Against that backdrop, the rise in short commutes and the persistence of a large home-based workforce reinforce the same broad impression: Willow Creek No. 26 is marked by a stable resident base, moderate local and regional labour movement, and an everyday geography of work centered on nearby destinations rather than extended travel.

Place of Work Status

Willow Creek No. 26 had 1,340 people with a usual place of work in 2021, up 13.1% from 2016. Worked at home held at 1,035, while worked outside Canada fell to 10, down 50.0%.

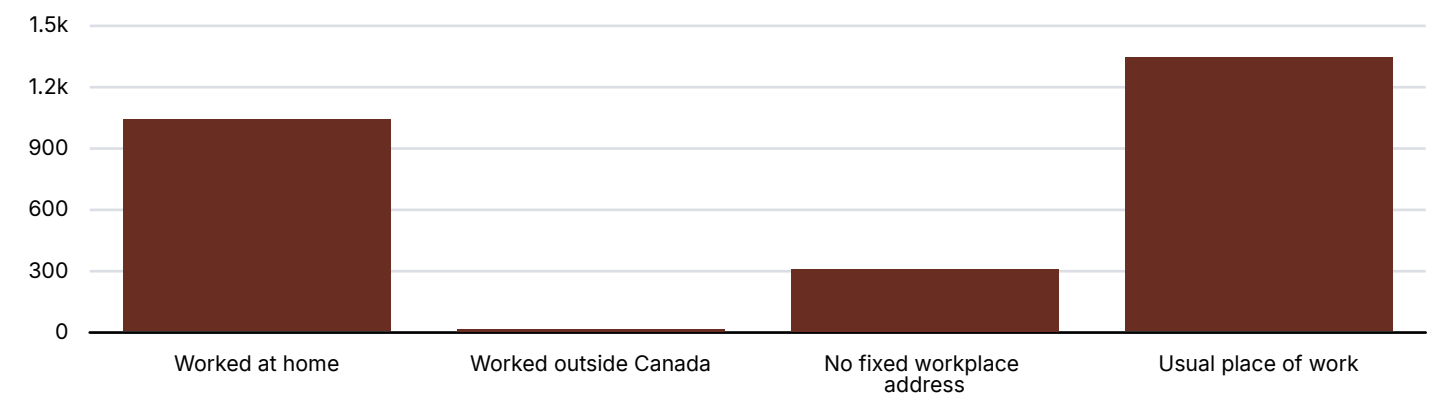


Figure 1.1: Shows whether people work from home, at a usual workplace, or at no fixed workplace. It helps indicate how work is organized across locations. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

In 2021, work patterns in Willow Creek No. 26 were split between a usual place of work and home-based arrangements among the employed labour force aged 15 and over. The largest group worked at a usual workplace, with 1,340 people, while 1,035 worked at home. Smaller numbers worked at no fixed workplace address, 305 people, and 10 worked outside Canada. The five-year change was flat for home-based work, up 13.1% for usual workplaces, down 4.7% for no fixed workplace, and down 50% for work outside Canada.

In 2021, work status in Willow Creek No. 26 was split mainly between a usual place of work and work from home among the employed labour force aged 15 and over. The largest category was usual place of work at 1,340 people, followed by 1,035 who worked at home. A smaller 305 people had no fixed workplace address, and 10 worked outside Canada. Over five years, usual place of work rose 13.1%, while work from home was unchanged. The pattern suggests a workforce with both established workplace-based jobs and a sizable home-working segment. Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profile.



Figure 1.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Place Of Work Status - Usual place of work (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Lived Here 1 Year Ago

Willow Creek No. 26 was led by 4,535 non-movers in 2021, up 13.4% over five years. Non-migrants rose to 115, intraprovincial migrants slipped to 185, and interprovincial migrants increased to 25.

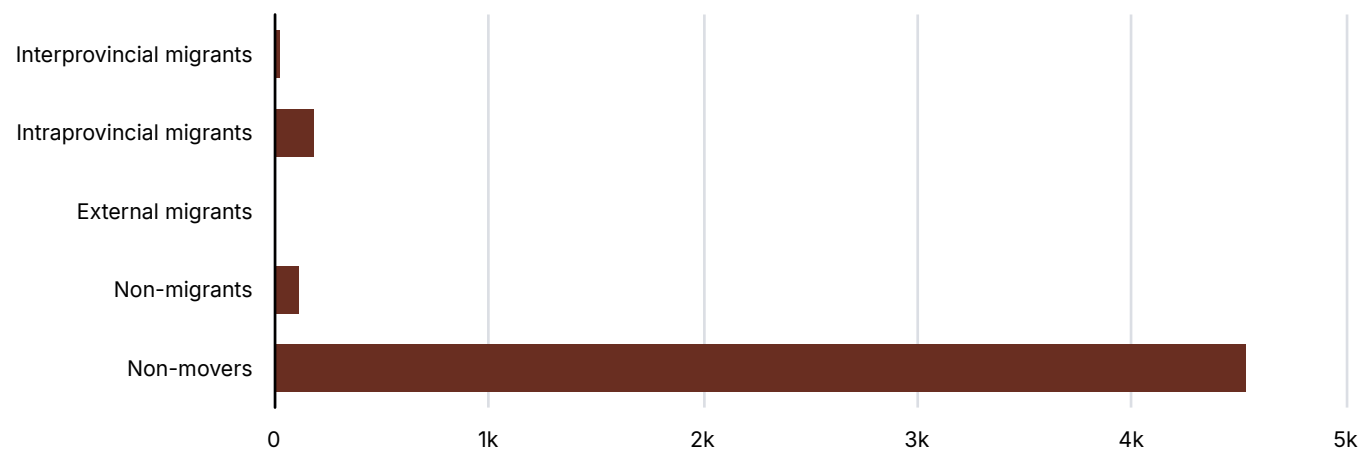
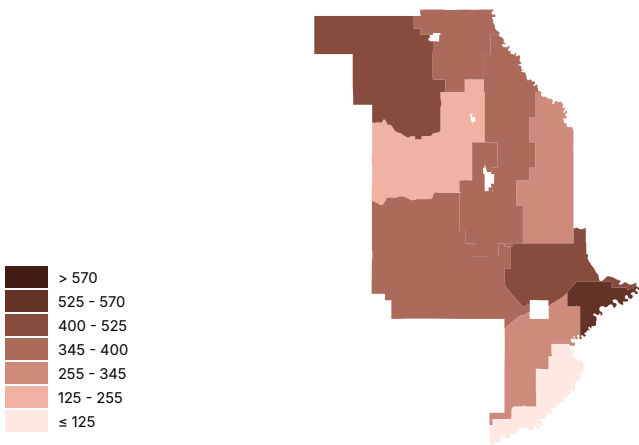


Figure 2.1: Shows where residents lived one year ago compared with their current location. It helps indicate recent mobility and short-term population churn. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

Willow Creek No. 26’s one-year mobility profile in 2021 was dominated by non-movers, suggesting limited short-term population turnover. Out of a total population of 4,860, 4,535 people had lived in the same place a year earlier. The remaining population was mostly made up of intraprovincial migrants, at 185, and non-migrants, at 115. Interprovincial migrants were a much smaller group, at 25, while external migrants were recorded at zero. The five-year change points to a mixed pattern: non-movers rose 13.4%, non-migrants 21.1%, and interprovincial migrants 66.7%, while intraprovincial migrants fell 5.1% and external migrants dropped to zero.



In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26 showed a largely settled population, with 4,535 residents who lived there one year earlier. Another 115 people were non-migrants, while 185 moved within Alberta and 25 arrived from another province. No external migrants were recorded. The pattern points to limited short-term churn and a strong local base of residents. Among nearby areas in the dataset, non-mover counts ranged from 125 to 570, placing Willow Creek No. 26 among the larger settled populations.

Figure 2.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Mobility Status - Non-movers (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Lived Here 5 Years Ago

Willow Creek No. 26's largest group remained non-movers at 3,390 people in 2021, up 9.9% from 2016. Intraprovincial migrants rose 64.1% to 845, while non-migrants fell 40.0% to 240.

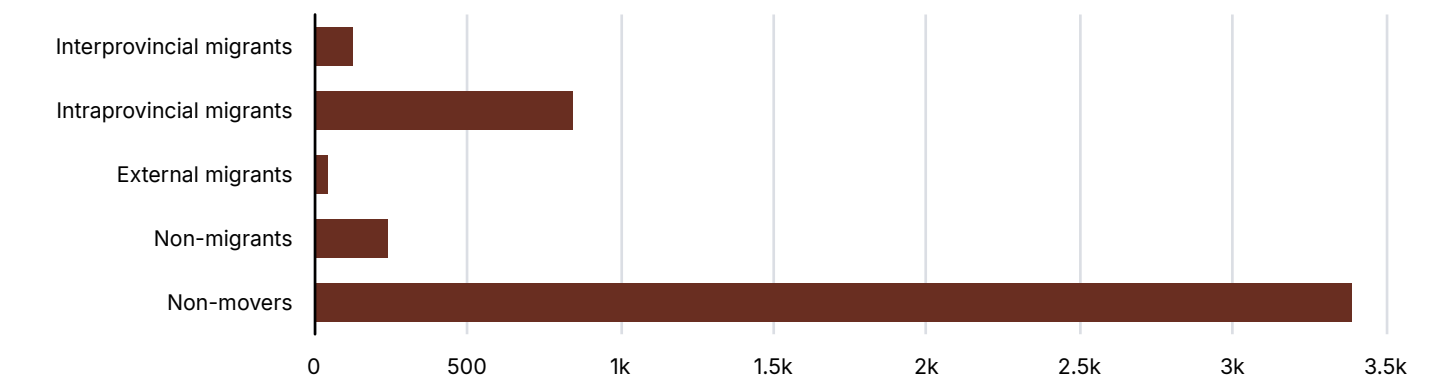


Figure 3.1: Shows where residents lived five years ago compared with their current location. It helps indicate longer-term mobility and migration patterns. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26's population mobility profile was dominated by people who had not moved far in the previous five years. The largest group was non-movers at 3,390 people, followed by intraprovincial migrants at 845 and non-migrants at 240. Smaller groups were interprovincial migrants, at 125, and external migrants, at 45. Recent change was mixed. Non-movers rose 9.9%, while intraprovincial migrants increased 64.1% and external migrants grew 12.5%. Non-migrants fell 40%, and interprovincial migrants edged up 4.2%.

In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26 showed a mobility pattern led by long-term residents and people moving from elsewhere in Alberta. Non-movers were the largest group at 3,390, while intraprovincial migrants numbered 845. Interprovincial migrants totalled 125, compared with 45 external migrants and 240 non-migrants. The 5-year change points to stronger gains in intraprovincial migration, up 64.1%, while non-migrants fell 40%. That mix suggests local stability with active within-province movement.



Figure 3.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Mobility Status - Non-movers (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Commute Destination

In Willow Creek No. 26, commuting to a different census subdivision within the division remained the largest group at 820 people in 2021, up 7.9% from 2016, while commuting within the subdivision rose to 145 people.

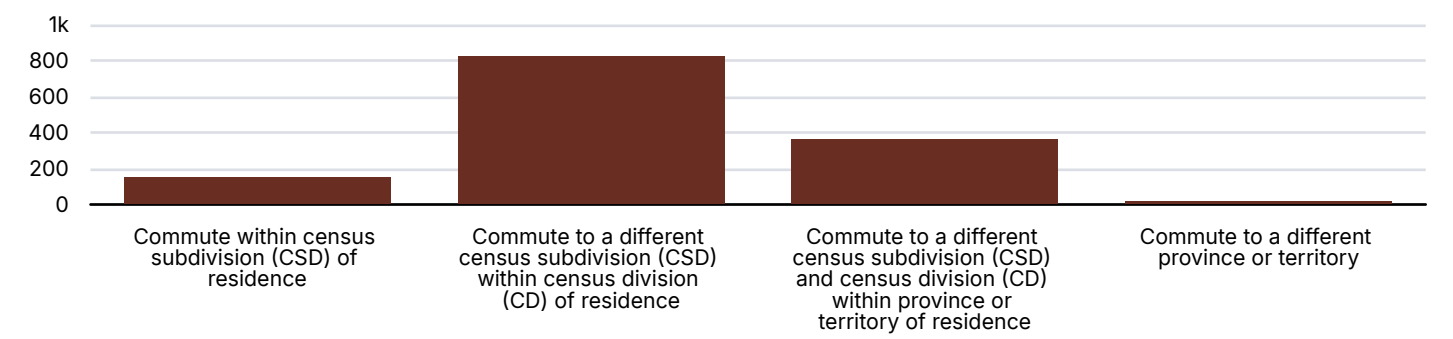


Figure 4.1: Shows where residents travel for work. It helps indicate whether the area functions mainly as a self-contained labour market or as part of a wider commuting region. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26 showed a mixed commuting pattern among employed residents aged 15 and over with a usual place of work. Most commuted to a different census subdivision within the same census division, at 820 people, while 145 worked within the subdivision and 360 travelled to a different census subdivision and census division within the province. The five-year changes point in different directions: commuting within the subdivision rose 383.3%, inter-subdivision commuting within the census division increased 7.9%, and cross-province commuting climbed 50.0%. The pattern suggests changing travel habits, but the dataset does not explain why.

In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26 showed a commuter pattern centered on travel beyond the subdivision itself. Of the employed labour force with a usual place of work, 820 people commuted to another census subdivision within the same census division, compared with 145 who worked within the subdivision and 360 who travelled farther within Alberta. Only 15 crossed provincial lines.



Figure 4.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Commuting Destination - Commute to a different census subdivision (CSD) within census division (CD) of residence (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Time Leaving for Work

In Willow Creek No. 26, the 7 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. departure window remained largest at 530 people in 2021, while 6 a.m. to 6:59 a.m. rose to 430, up 32.3% since 2016.

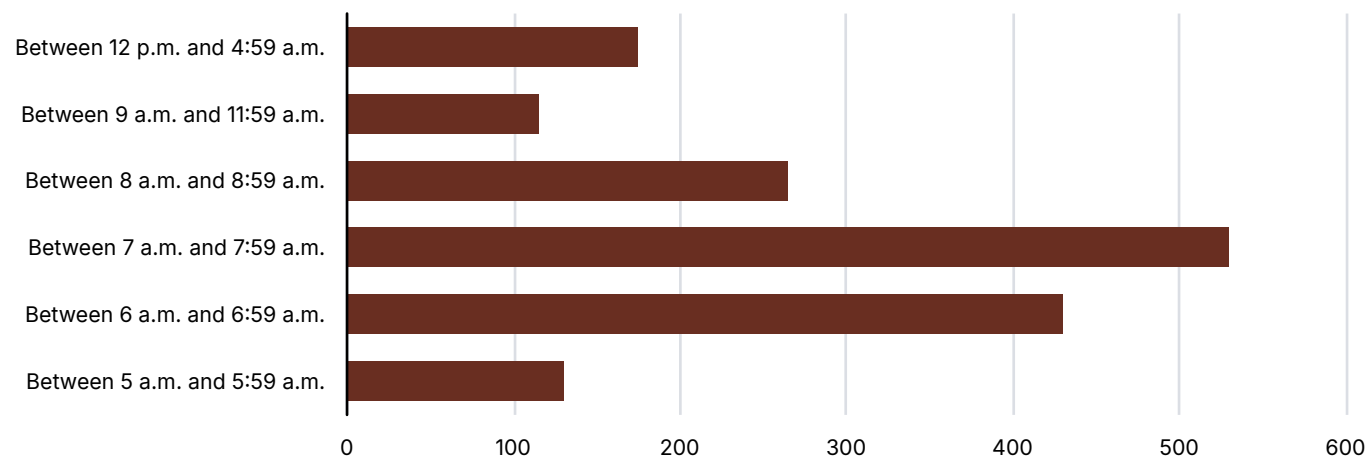


Figure 5.1: Shows the time of day residents usually leave for work. It helps indicate commuting patterns and peak travel demand. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

In Willow Creek No. 26, work departures are concentrated in the early morning, with the largest group leaving between 7 a.m. and 7:59 a.m. at 530 people. Another 430 leave between 6 a.m. and 6:59 a.m., while 265 leave between 8 a.m. and 8:59 a.m. Smaller numbers leave before 6 a.m. or later in the day. Between 5 a.m. and 5:59 a.m. rose 18.2% over five years.

In 2021, Willow Creek No. 26’s employed labour force was most concentrated in the 7 a.m. hour, with 530 people leaving then, followed by 430 at 6 a.m. and 265 at 8 a.m. The pattern points to a strong early commute peak: 130 people left before 6 a.m., while 115 left between 9 a.m. and 11:59 a.m. Later departures were fewer, suggesting a largely morning-oriented workday.



Figure 5.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Time Leaving Work - Between 7 a.m. and 7:59 a.m. (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Commute Duration

In Willow Creek No. 26, commutes under 15 minutes were the largest group in 2021 at 625 people, up 38.9% from 2016. The 15 to 29 minute group reached 550, while 60 minutes and over fell to 90.

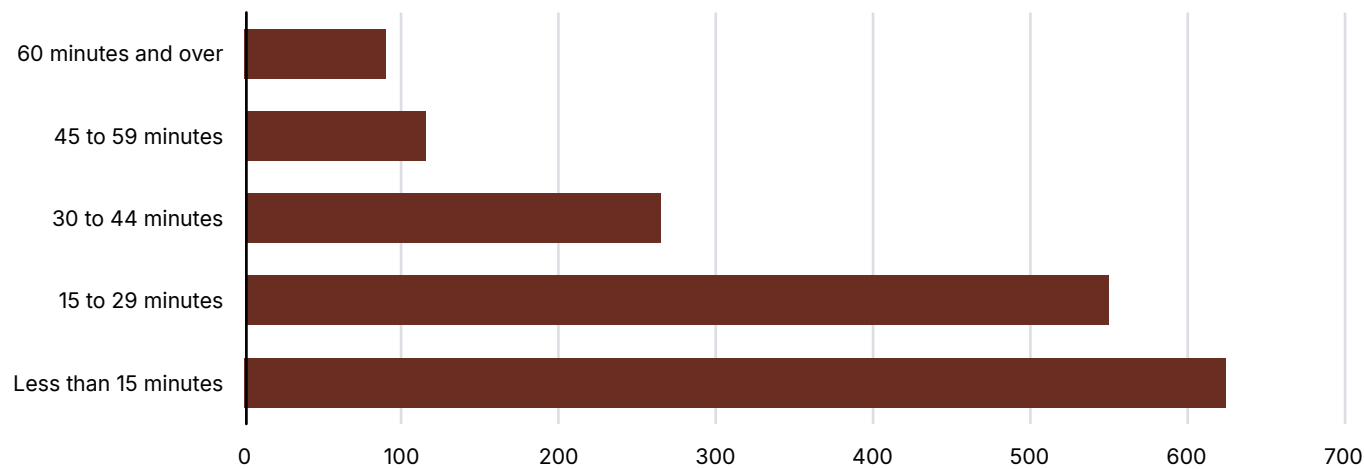
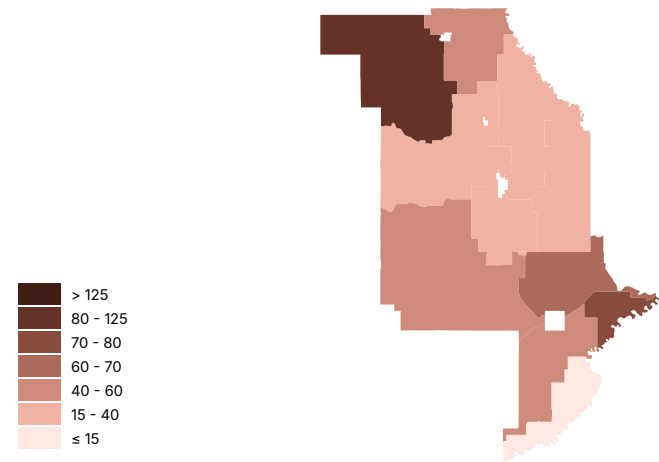


Figure 6.1: Shows how long residents typically spend travelling to work. It helps indicate commuting burden and jobs-housing balance. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

In Willow Creek No. 26, commute times in 2021 were concentrated in the shorter ranges. The largest group, 625 workers, spent less than 15 minutes travelling to work, while 550 commuted 15 to 29 minutes. Longer trips were less common, with 265 at 30 to 44 minutes, 115 at 45 to 59 minutes, and 90 at 60 minutes and over. The 5-year changes show mixed movement: short commutes rose 38.9%, 45 to 59 minute trips increased 21.1%, and the longest commutes fell 37.9%.



In Willow Creek No. 26, commuting is concentrated in shorter trips, with 625 workers travelling less than 15 minutes and 550 taking 15 to 29 minutes in 2021. Longer commutes are less common: 265 people spent 30 to 44 minutes, 115 took 45 to 59 minutes, and 90 travelled 60 minutes or more. The short-commute groups also showed the strongest 5-year gains, while the 60-minute-plus group fell by 37.9%. That pattern suggests a commuting profile tilted toward nearby work locations, with relatively limited exposure to very long travel times.

Figure 6.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Commuting Duration - Less than 15 minutes (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Main Mode of Commuting

Driving remained the main commute mode in Willow Creek No. 26, with 1,485 people in 2021, up 8.8% from 2016. Walking rose to 90 people, while passenger commuting held at 45.

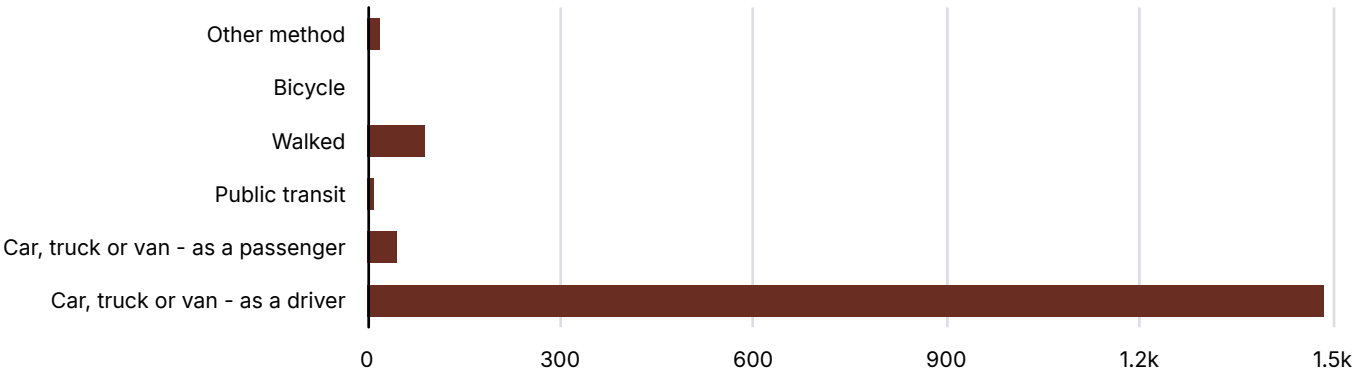


Figure 7.1: Shows the main mode residents use to get to work. It helps indicate dependence on driving, transit, walking, cycling, or other travel modes. (Willow Creek No. 26, 2021)¹

In 2021, commuting in Willow Creek No. 26 was dominated by driving. Out of the employed labour force aged 15 and over with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address, 1,485 people commuted as car, truck or van drivers, far more than any other mode. Walking was the main alternative at 90 people, and it rose 63.6% over five years. Passenger trips totaled 45, other methods 20, public transit 10, and bicycle commuting was not reported.

In Willow Creek No. 26, commuting is heavily centred on driving. In 2021, 1,485 employed residents aged 15 and over with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address mainly travelled as car, truck or van drivers. Walking was a distant second at 90 people, while passenger trips accounted for 45. Public transit was used by just 10 people, and cycling was not reported at all. Other methods accounted for 20 commuters. The pattern suggests a commuting profile shaped by strong dependence on private vehicles, with only limited use of alternative modes.



Figure 7.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Commuting Mode - Car, truck or van - as a driver (Willow Creek No. 26)¹

Data Sources

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

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