

Dimensions of Diversity: 2006 Census Snapshot

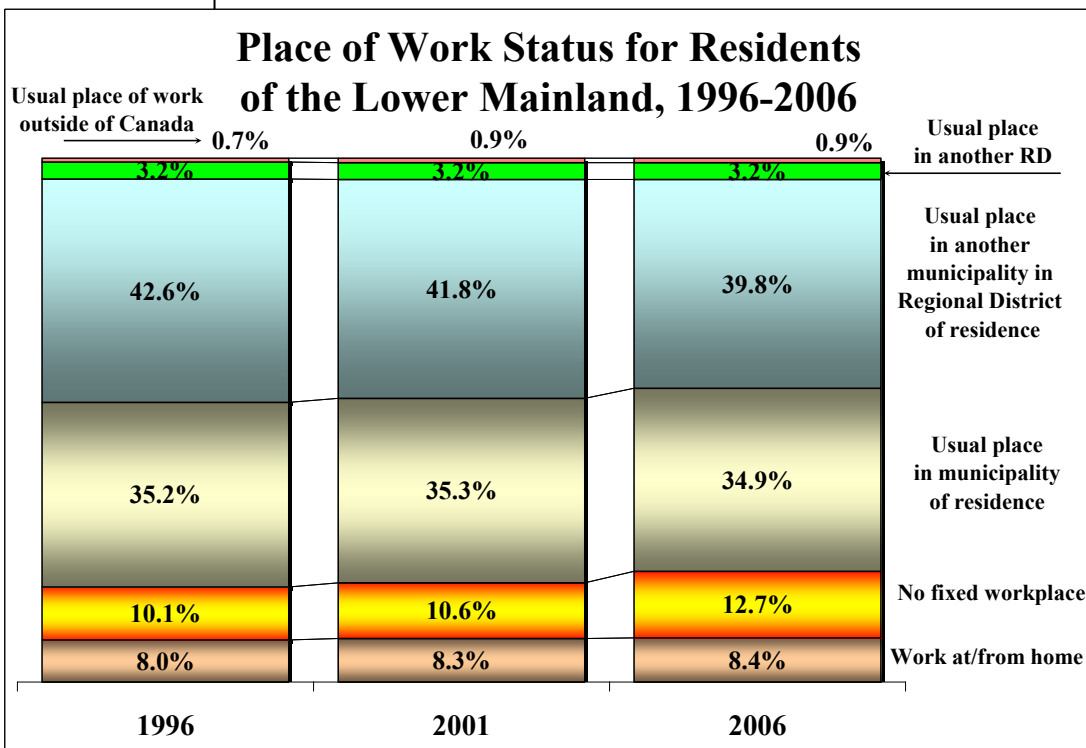
Diversity in Destinations: Changing Places of Work for Lower Mainland Residents

The most recent release of the 2006 Census data provides important insight into the changing location and nature of the workplace. Over the past decade there has been, and continues to be, significant shifts in the nature and location of workplaces within the region, shifts that have marked implications for transportation within the region. The following data focuses on the workplaces within the Lower Mainland, the combined Greater Vancouver, Fraser Valley and Squamish Lillooet Regional Districts which reflects a single functional region, united by a shared economy, labour force, and transportation system.

There are two aspects of changes in the location of people's work that may be examined using the Census Data. The first, considered here, is the nature of the workplace. The second, to be released in early April, is the geographic locations of workplaces within the region.

The Census data on the nature of workplace details four different types of workplaces, each of which implies different transportation impacts and requirements. The most common workplace category is the worker who has a usual place of work outside of the home, a situation which implies a regular pattern of travel to work and back to home. In 2006, 78 percent of the employed residents in the Lower Mainland had a usual place of work outside of the home. This represents a three percentage point decline in the proportion of workers who said they worked at a regular job location each day (down from the 81 percent that prevailed in 1996). This is not to say that this type of employment has declined – from 1996 to 2006 the number of jobs of this type increased by 147,260 – but rather that this 18 percent increase was less than the overall average increase of 22

Figure 1



percent in the regional workforce, and hence that its share declined over the past decade.

It is also interesting to consider changes in the broad pattern of where these usual places of work were found in the region. For example, in 1996, 35.2 percent of the Lower Mainland's employed workers had a usual place of work that was in the same municipality in which they lived; by 2006 this had declined by 0.3 percentage points to 34.9 percent of the region's workers. In absolute terms, this

represented an increase of 77,095 workers, from 360,075 in 1996 to 437,170 in 2006 (a 21 percent increase, Figure and Table 1).

A more substantial decline in the share of workers with a usual place of work outside the home occurred for those with a usual workplace in the Regional District in which they live albeit not in the same municipality. In 2006, 39.8 percent of the region's resident workers reported that they worked in the same Regional District, but not the same municipality in which they lived. This was down from 42.6 percent in 1996. Again, this decline in share was in spite of an absolute increase of 63,015 (14 percent) workers with these job locations from 435,560 in 1996 to 498,575 in 2006.

The percentage of the region's residents who reported that they had a usual place of work outside the Regional District in which they lived, be it in an adjacent Regional District within the Lower Mainland, one elsewhere in the province, or one in another province, remained constant at 3.2 percent of the resident workforce (an absolute increase of 7,170 workers, from 32,930 to 40,100). *(Identifying the details of specific municipal origins and destinations will have to await the upcoming release of data on the geographical location of employment in early April.)*

Finally, the percentage of the region's residents who reported a usual place of work outside of Canada increased marginally over the past decade, from 0.7 percent to 0.9 percent of the region's resident workers, an increase of 3,225 workers from 7,620 to 10,845. While this picture of slight decline or relative stability, with respect to employment with a usual place of work occurred, (the greatest change being the 6.6 percent decline in the share of usual places of work in another municipality within the Regional District of residence) may initially paint a picture of predictable change for transportation within the region, two other categories of workplace need to be considered before this assessment can be made.

The first location, and the one experiencing the overwhelming majority of the increase in share over the past decade, was in workers who reported that they had no fixed place of work. These represent the workers who work away from the home at a workplace that changes perhaps daily (such as a window washer) or monthly (a residential construction worker). In the Lower Mainland, these workers would most often be those who remained in the region during their work day, but could include those who might work throughout the province (it is not possible to determine from the Census data the region where these activities might be contained). This category of workers increased from 10.1 percent of the region's workers in 1996 to 12.7 percent in 2006, a 2.6 percentage point, or 26 percent, increase in the proportion of workers with no fixed workplace. In absolute terms, the number of workers with no fixed workplace grew from 103,430 in 1996 to 159,120 in 2006, a 54 percent increase (55,690 workers). Jobs occurring with no fixed place or work therefore grew significantly faster than the overall increase in resident workers of 22 percent over the same period.

While the title of the final category, those who work at home, suggest a cozy home office or workshop and hence little in the way of transportation implications, a closer inspection of who says they "work at home" shows that this group might best be referred to as *home based* workers, as many of the occupations clearly involve a significant amount of travel from the home. This group includes contractors, construction workers, real estate, manufacturing, retail and wholesale agents, health care and social workers, as well as farmers, along with the anticipated consultants, designers and accountants. This home based work group also increased modestly at the expense of those reporting a usual place of work outside the home, increasing from 8.0 percent of the workforce in 1996 to 8.4 percent in 2006. This saw the number of home based workers increase from 82,100 in 1996 to 105,325 in 2006, an additional 23,215 people. As with jobs with no fixed workplace, the 42 percent increase in home based workers was significantly faster than the 22 percent growth in the Lower Mainland's resident workforce.

**Place of Work
Status in the Lower
Mainland**

Table 1

The past decade of Census data on place of work within the region show a clear shift away from fixed workplaces, and hence from a regular and predictable pattern for the daily journey to work. Increasingly, the region's workers are seen to have no usual place of work. When combined with

those using the home as a base for a growing diversity of work activities, one fifth of the region's workforce can be characterized by having an increasingly variable and diverse pattern of daily travel related to the journey to work.

Within this context, it should also be noted that even those with a fixed place of work are increasingly working in non-traditional work hours, be they swing shifts, earned days off, job sharing or flex hours. Finally, trends in employment locations for workers with both usual

**Place of Work Status for Residents
of the Lower Mainland, 1996-2006**

	1996	2001	2006	change 96..06	
				abs.	rel.
Total	1,021,745	1,122,345	1,251,130	229,385	22%
Usual place of work	828,585	900,410	975,845	147,260	18%
In CSD of residence	360,075	395,735	437,170	77,095	21%
In different CSD	468,490	504,675	538,675	70,185	15%
In same CD	435,560	468,640	498,575	63,015	14%
In different CD	32,930	36,035	40,100	7,170	22%
At home	82,110	93,255	105,325	23,215	28%
Outside Canada	7,620	9,645	10,845	3,225	42%
No fixed workplace	103,430	119,055	159,120	55,690	54%

CSD=Census Subdivision CD=Census Division

and unusual places of work in the region are also seen to be increasingly outside of the region's traditional employment centres. *(more on these to come with future data releases)*

Combined, the diversification of *a)* the nature of employment locations away from the traditional "usual place of work", *b)* the hours and days of work away from the - Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 -, and *c)* the usual places of work outside of historical employment cores suggest that robust transportation planning, and by extension transportation infrastructure, must emphasize adaptability if it is to service a growing diversity of work, workers and workplaces.

Data Definitions

"Place of work status - Refers to the place of work of non-institutional residents 15 years of age and over who worked at some time since January 1, 2005. The variable usually relates to the individual's job held in the week prior to enumeration. However, if the person did not work during that week but had worked at some time since January 1, 2005, the information relates to the job held longest during that period.

Responses - worked at home (including farms); Worked outside Canada; No fixed workplace address; Worked at the address specified below (usual workplace address)

Worked at home – Persons whose job is located in the same building as their place of residence, persons who live and work on the same farm, building superintendents and teleworkers who spend most of their work week working at home.

Worked outside Canada – Persons who work at a location outside Canada. This can include diplomats, Armed Forces personnel and other persons enumerated abroad. This category also includes recent immigrants who may not currently be employed, but whose job of longest duration since January 1, 2005 was held outside Canada.

No fixed workplace address – Persons who do not go from home to the same workplace location at the beginning of each shift. Such persons include building and landscape contractors, traveling salespersons, independent truck drivers, etc.

Worked at the address specified below – Persons who are not included in the categories described above and who report to the same (usual) workplace location at the beginning of each shift are included here. Respondents are asked to provide the street address, city, town, village, township, municipality or Indian reserve, province/territory and postal code of their workplace. If the full street address was not known, the name of the building or nearest street intersection could be substituted. Workers who spend less than one-half of their workweek working at their home office are asked to report the full address of their employer. Persons whose workplace location varied, but who reported regularly to an employer's address at the beginning of each shift, are asked to report the full address of the employer."