



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

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NOV 26 2015

Legal and Legislative Services

### ***Council Meeting Presentation Request***

Completed requests to make a public presentation must be received by 12:00 noon on the Wednesday immediately prior to the scheduled meeting. **Presentations are a maximum of 5 minutes in duration.**

<b><i>Presentation Information</i></b>	
<b>Preferred Date of Presentation</b>	As early in the 2016 Schedule as possible
<b>Name of Presenter(s)</b>	Howard Rensler
<b>Organization Represented</b>	Fort McMurray Boys & Girls Club
<b>Topic</b>	Results of our 2015 summary of children and youth in Fort McMurray
<b>Please List Specific Points/Concerns</b>	Our report is a census of sorts that focuses on the demographic element of children & youth and the core family unit in a way that conventional census data might not emphasize.
<b>Action Being Requested of Council</b>	Accept presentation as information and keep that information top-of-mind in future
<b>Are you providing any supporting documentation (ie: Powerpoint)?</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, the documentation <u>must</u> accompany this request, as handouts will not be distributed at the meeting. To ensure that your documents meet minimum standards, please see presentation guidelines on the next page.	
Supporting documents may be e-mailed to <a href="mailto:Legislative.Assistants@woodbuffalo.ab.ca">Legislative.Assistants@woodbuffalo.ab.ca</a> .	

*As per Procedure Bylaw No. 14/025, a request to make a presentation may be referred or denied.*



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## A DEMOGRAPHIC SLICE ... OF LIFE IN FORT MCMURRAY 2015



### CHILDREN & YOUTH IN FORT MCMURRAY 2015

The Fort McMurray Boys & Girls Club [FMBGC] has undertaken a "SENSE OF US" census of children in youth resident in our City as at June 2015.

The purpose of this exercise is to focus on the specifics of this demographic that may not be obvious from gross examination of Census and other population projections that are prepared from time to time by or for the RMWB.

The results of this census are summarized here in what are hopefully digestible bytes that will be easily retained and leave a lasting impression.

The intention is to present this Summary Report to RMWB Mayor and Council either in late 2015 or early 2016 as their schedule permits. Hopefully, not only will Council accept this report as "information" but will also remember and consider this information in their weighting and prioritizing of approvals and funding for the wide variety of initiatives that may come before them in support of other demographic segments.

Please note use of the word "children" here includes all those under the legal age of adulthood or 18 yrs. In common parlance this would include includes those referred to as both children and youth. Also included for perspective are the young adult students of ages up to and including 19.



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From reports to Convergence YMM conference in February 2015 we learned that the best estimate of the day is that there are **6,000** children living here that are **under the age of 6**. With an average age of school entry at age 5, we can account for these 6,000 as follows:

- **2,145** are registered in **kindergarten** [including early-entry ½ day kindergarten] and **1,802** are registered in **grade 1**
- Only **715** are registered in **licensed day care** programs across the City
- This leaves about **2,058** under school entry age that are cared for by stay-at-home moms, nannies or other family/friends in **informal or amateur child care**.

Also reported by the Northern Lights Health Centre was that an average of just under **100 babies** have been born here each month over the past year or two.

One point of significance to this number is clearly that a large number of residents are starting or expanding their families. That is taken as an indication as to their investment and comfort in our community as a good place to raise their children and build their family.

It also means that the age strata or age funnel can be expected to be filled from the bottom in the foreseeable future.

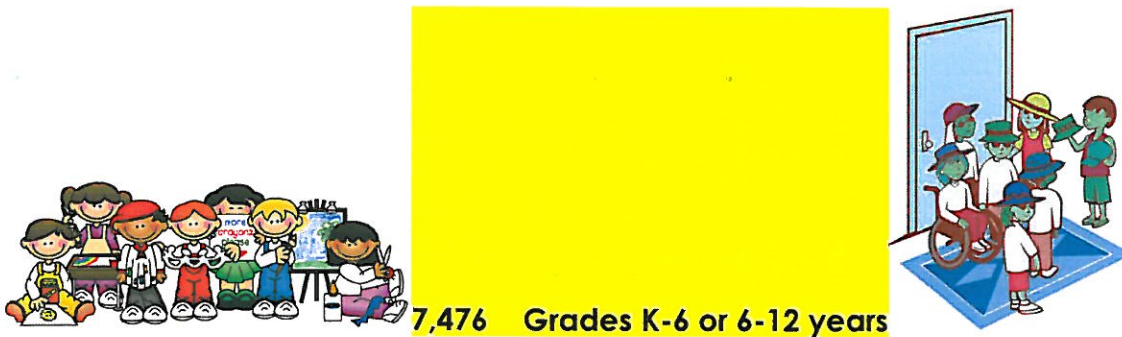
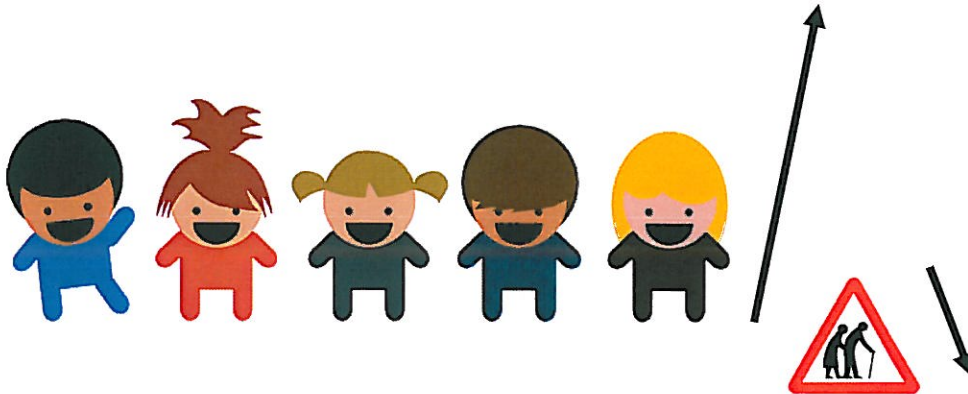
Here are just a few comparisons of this **6,000** number to other demographic measures:

- It is about twice the number of the total population of all rural hamlets in Wood Buffalo
- It would fill Shell Place stadium with all seats and standing room on the field
- It is about 3 or 4 times the number of seniors in Fort McMurray





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**7,476 Grades K-6 or 6-12 years**

There are **7,476** children in our City enrolled in the kindergarten to grade 6 primary school systems which generally spans the age range of 6 to 12 years.

- The specific breakdown by approximate age and grade is:
  - 2,145 in Kindergarten or age 5
  - 1,082 in Grade 1 or age 6-7
  - 946 in Grade 2 or age 7-8
  - 851 in Grade 3 or age 8-9
  - 805 in Grade 4 or age 9-10
  - 829 in Grade 5 or age 10-11
  - 818 in Grade 6 or age 11-12



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We have no information on the number of children in this age range that are being home-schooled.

Now some comparative statistics to this **7,476** number:

- It is about 1.5 times the staff at the Suncor mine site
- It is about 4-5 times the total occupancy capacity of all hotel rooms in Wood Buffalo



There are **4,506** children in the City enrolled in middle schools and high schools spanning the grade range of 7 to 12 and the age range of about 12 to 17.

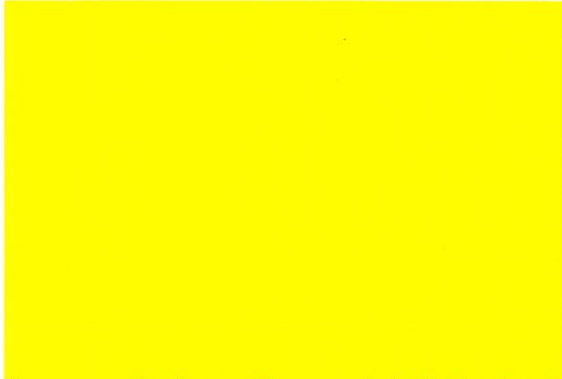
- The specific breakdown by approximate age and grade is:
  - 614 in Grade 7 or age 12-13
  - 486 in Grade 8 or age 13-14
  - 763 in Grade 9 or age 14-15
  - 765 in Grade 10 or age 15-16
  - 781 in Grade 11 or age 16-17
  - 1,097 in Grade 12 or age 17-18

Again, we have no information on home-schooled children in this age range.

Given that about **2,643** or about **59%** of the children in this strata can be expected to graduate in the next 1-3 years, and given that the younger age strata can be expected to fill up: the profile of children in our City in the very near future will be one of many more very young children and many fewer teens, youth and young adults.



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### **Keyano College Young Adult Students**



Whereas Keyano College reported total enrollment of **14,440** students in both credit and non-credit courses their specific age breakdown was:

- **72** of age 17 or under or about 0.5% of total enrollment
- **6,788** of ages 18 – 24 or about 47% of total enrollment

We have no numbers as to the number of 17-18 year olds who may live here, have finished or left high school and are not enrolled in Keyano College. However, the 2012 Census data shows **3,282** in the 15-19 age range.

### **TOTAL CHILDREN**

The 2012 Census shows **14,721** as a subtotal of the 0-19 age range. Our census indicates a total of: 15,909 + uncounted as home schooled + out of school ... Let's use **16,000**.

### **16,000 IN PERSPECTIVE**

Our most recently estimated total resident population is in the order of **75,000**.

That total, may not include the so called "shadow population" of those residing in work camps, but it does include a number of people who could well be characterized as "quasi-residents". These people are technically residing here, but only on a temporary or intermittent, work related based basis. The Census does not make a distinction about such quasi-residents. However, their profile is that of a single or solitary person, [meaning either single as a marital or relationship status, or as a person who might have family elsewhere but they are separated





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by virtue of working here and commuting "home" [by either fly-in/out or drive-in/out] between work schedules]. These people generally do not have children resident with them while here. Our best guess as to the magnitude of this portion of the censused resident population is in the order of **10,000** people. This would leave a functional, full time or "true resident" population of those who genuinely "live" here as little as **65,000**.

Our first comparative statistic is that **children, youth and young adult students comprise about** [16,000/65,000] **or about 25 % of our total true resident population.**

As a comparative note, consider that Seniors [65> yrs] in our community comprise about [1,100] or 1.7% of our total true resident population.

#### **ANOTHER 16,000 ARE PARENTS**

Now let's account for the core family unit [i.e. parents and children].

Approximately 20% of children in our community are from single parent families.

Approximately 55% of families here currently include 2 or more children.

Therefore, these 16,000 children, youth and young adult students are here living in core family units that include about [16,000 x 45% = 7,200 x 20% = 1,440 x 1 parent + 7,200 x 2 parents = 14,400] **15,840 or about 16,000 parents.** These parents comprise about **25%** of our total true resident population.

#### **32,000 IN CORE FAMILY UNITS**

Therefore, the **core family units** of children and parents in our community is estimated at about **32,000** people or about **49%** of our true resident population.

We are also aware that there are approximately **2,000** people, resident here that are extended family members who are intimately engaged in child care. Adding them to the core family unit numbers brings the total to about **34,000** people or about **52%** of our true resident population.

Overall, our own census and analysis thereof leaves us completely comfortable in saying we, the component of the social profit sector servicing children and



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youth, represent about **50%, ½ or 1 out of every 2 true residents**. This, if nothing else, is our intended takeaway from this presentation.

Standard Census or demographic profiling will only group people into artificial categories of age, gender, employment status/income etc. This perspective or "slice" through that data, much better represents the lifecycle stage of **about ½ of our population** which is to say they **are either in childhood themselves or intensely involved in childhood**.

Hopefully Mayor & Council and RMWB Administration can not only remember this very meaningful statistic, but can also use it as a benchmark for consideration and funding of most initiatives, programs, events, activities etc.

Fort McMurray is now, and can be expected to continue to be, a young family city. Anything and everything that the RMWB condones and funds as an initiative of community development or quality of life enhancement would be well measured against the simple criterion of: **Does this, or How does this, benefit the children of our community?**

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Respectfully presented; Howard Rensler

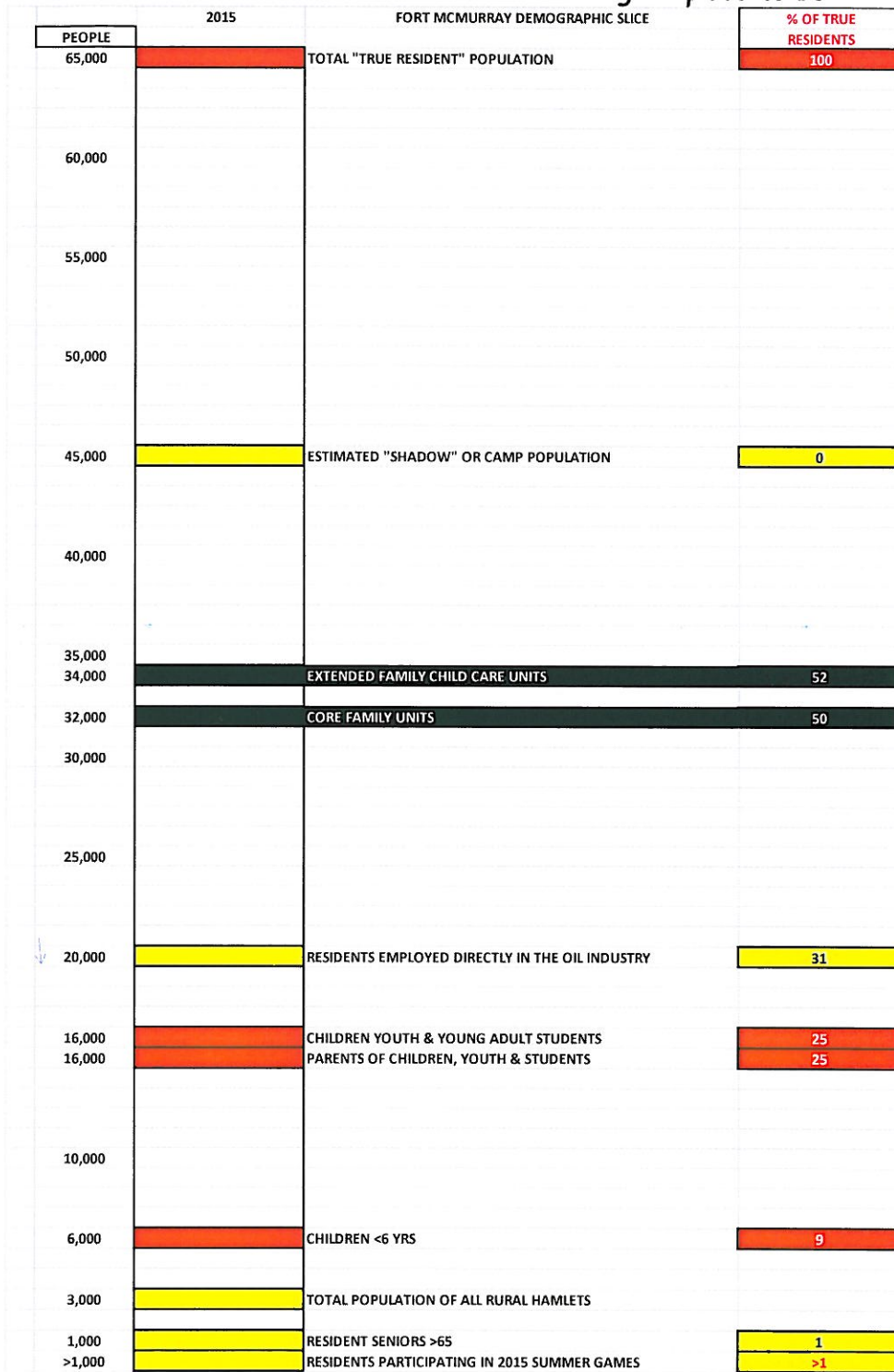
The following chart is included as a simple visual representation of the numbers discussed above.





Fort McMurray  
Boys & Girls Club

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