



PORTAGE ECONOMIC BASELINE REPORT

MARCH 2022

**Prepared for the Portage Regional Economic
Development organization**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Portage Regional Economic Development organization is to “create an environment that successfully attracts new investment . . . whilst leveraging the strong regional approach of the two municipalities working together in collaboration.”

In order to make the right decisions to support investment in the region, a thorough understanding of the economic context – advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses – is essential. Understanding the economic context is based on information that is up-to-date, and always changing.

The following report was developed to establish an economic baseline of Portage la Prairie, which the Portage Regional Economic Development organization can use to establish baselines and compare to other municipalities across North America.

The data can be used to prepare a Community Profile, Investment Readiness Assessment, and similar documentation that can be used to drive public policy and market the community to potential investors.

The report includes data about both the City of Portage la Prairie (“the City”) and, when available, the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie (“the RM”).

1.1 OVERVIEW:

The report includes the following sections:

- Demography and Population
- Education and Training
- Real Estate
- Building Permit Statistics
- Health
- Industry and Employment
- Transport
- Public Sector and Taxation

2.0 DEMOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

2.1 HISTORICAL POPULATION

The population of the City and RM have remained relatively stable over the last several decades, which is highlighted in **Figure 1**.

According to the 2021 Census, the City had 13,720 residents while the RM had 6,888 residents for a total of 20,158 residents in Portage la Prairie.

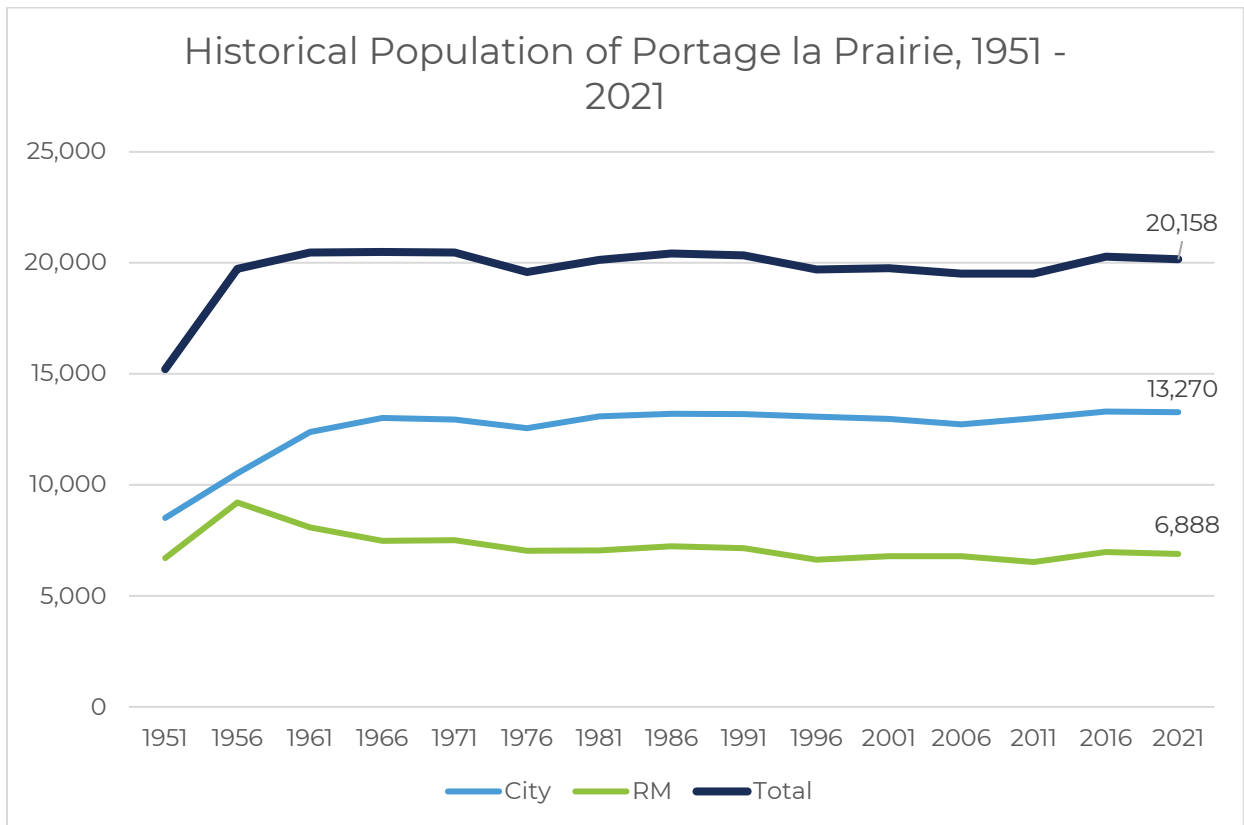


Figure 1: Historical Population, 1951 - 2021

2.2 CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The following population pyramids highlight the age and gender distribution of residents in Portage la Prairie. **Figure 2** highlights the distribution in the City, while **Figure 3** includes the RM.

The City had a high proportion of female residents over the age of 75, while the rest of the population is fairly evenly distributed between age groups. This suggests there may be high demands on the healthcare system in the City in the near future.

The RM has a higher proportion of residents between the 55 to 65 compared to residents between 40 to 54. This suggests there may be labour shortages in the coming decades as many residents reach retirement age.

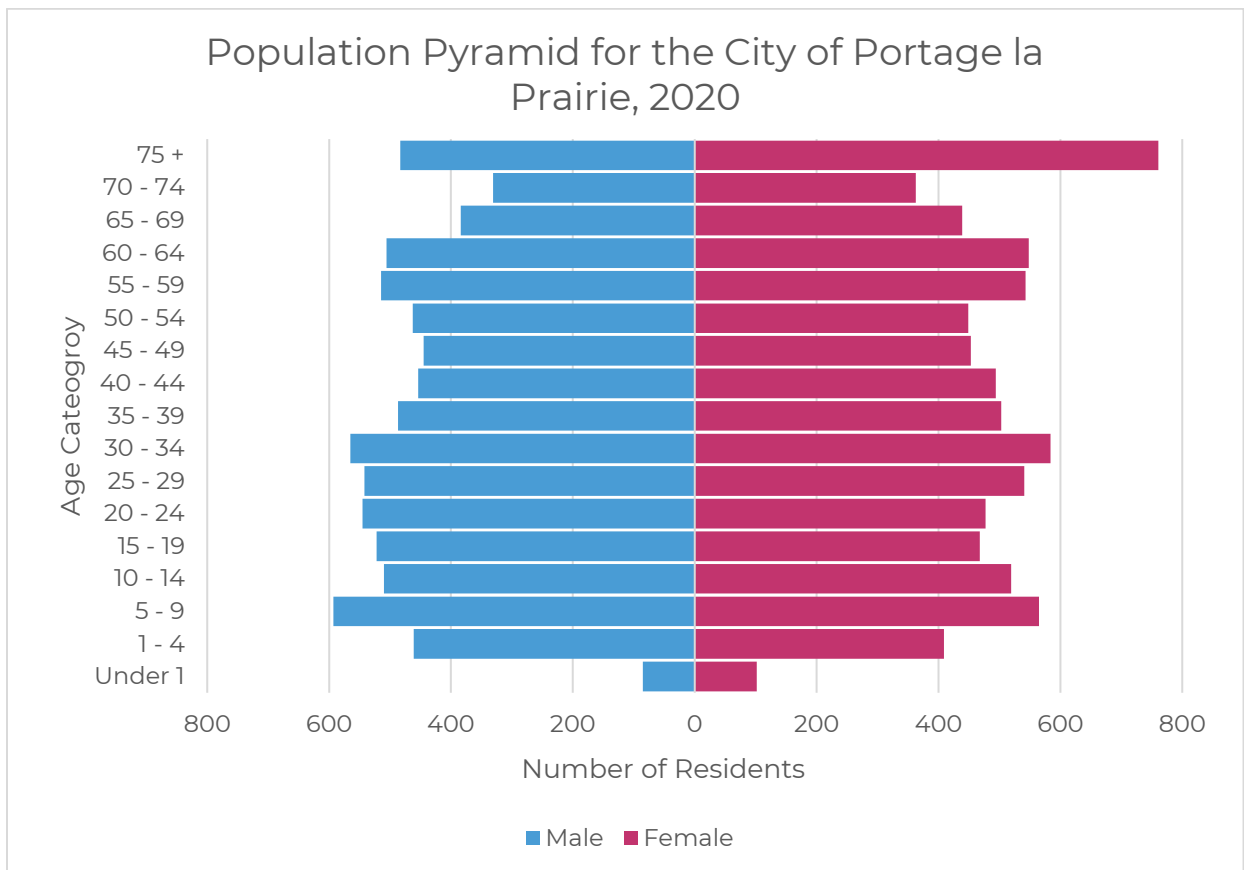


Figure 2: Population Pyramid for the City, 2020

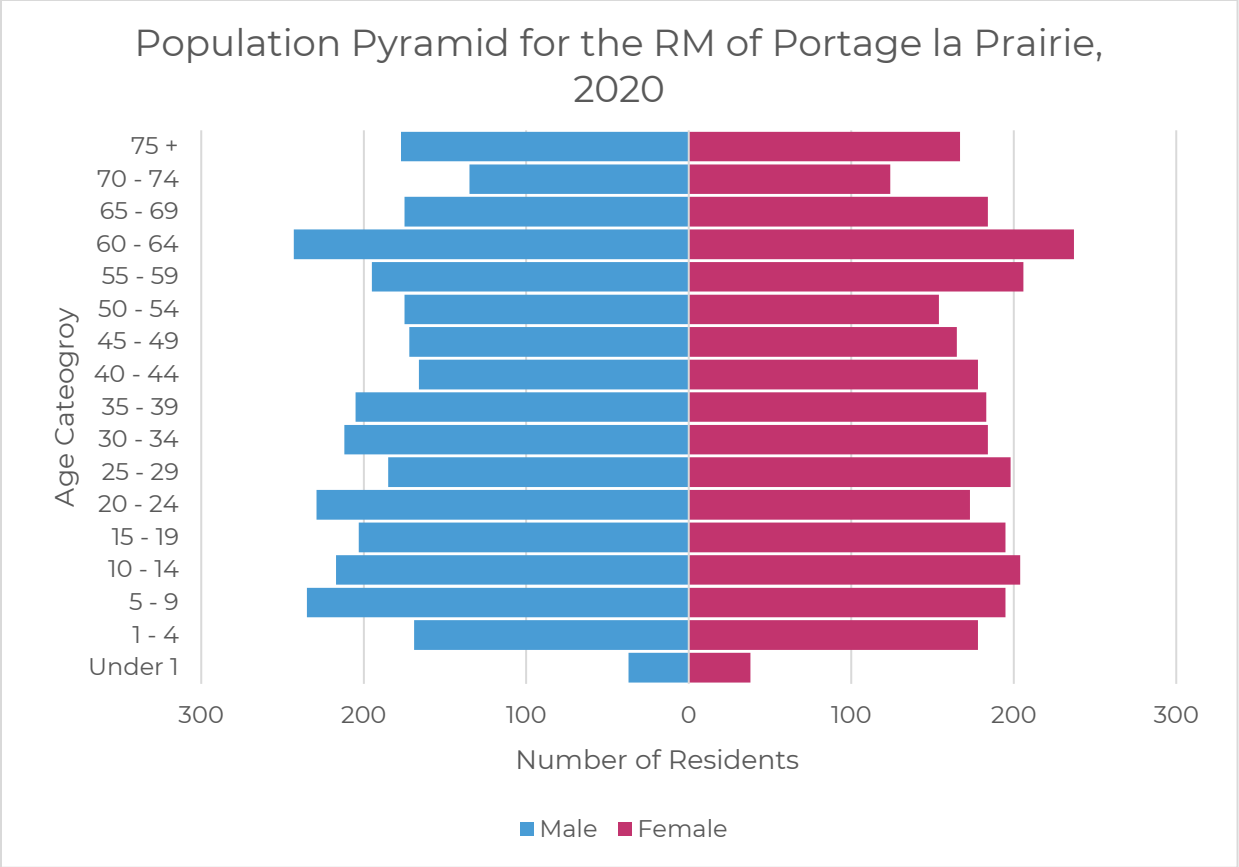


Figure 3: Population Pyramid for the RM, 2020

2.3 POPULATION GROWTH COMPARISONS

The following line charts highlight how Portage la Prairie has grown compared to other cities and RMs in Manitoba since the 1951.

Figure 4 compares the City of Portage with the cities of Selkirk and Steinbach. The City of Portage has followed a similar growth trajectory as Selkirk, but has not grown as fast as the City of Steinbach in recent years.

Figure 5 compares the RM of Portage with the RMs of Grey and Cartier, which are located near Portage. In recent decades, all three of the RMs have had relatively stable populations.

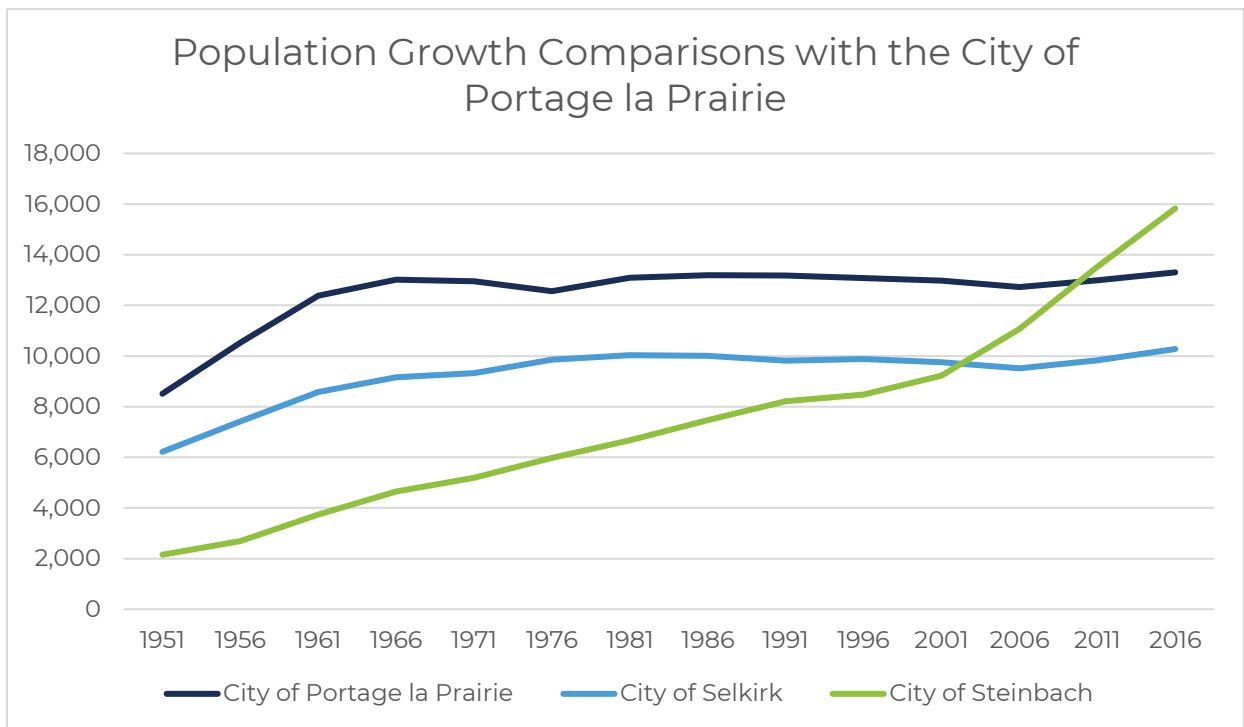


Figure 4: Population Growth Comparisons for the City

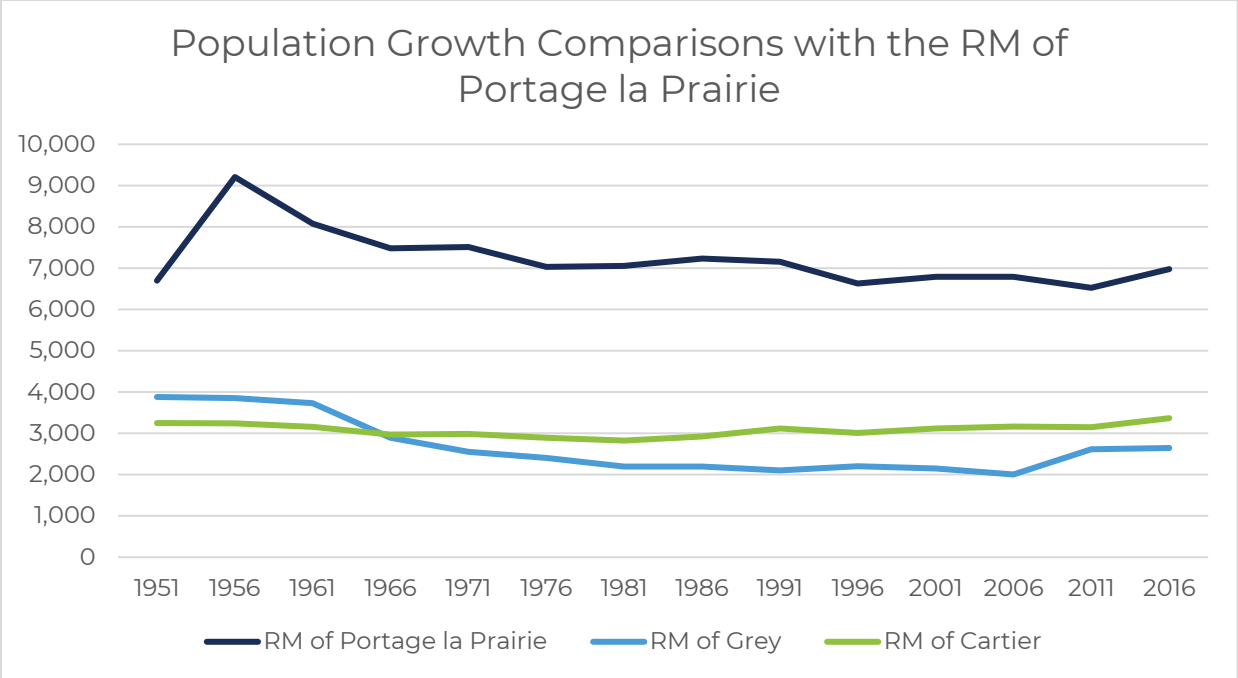


Figure 5: Population Growth Comparisons for the RM

2.4 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The population of the City and RM are projected to continue increasing over the next two decades. **Figure 6** projects forward the average annual growth rates (AAGR) from the last 10 years for both the City and the RM.

If both continue to grow at the same rate, the City will have approximately 20,344 residents while the RM will have 6,780 residents by 2046.

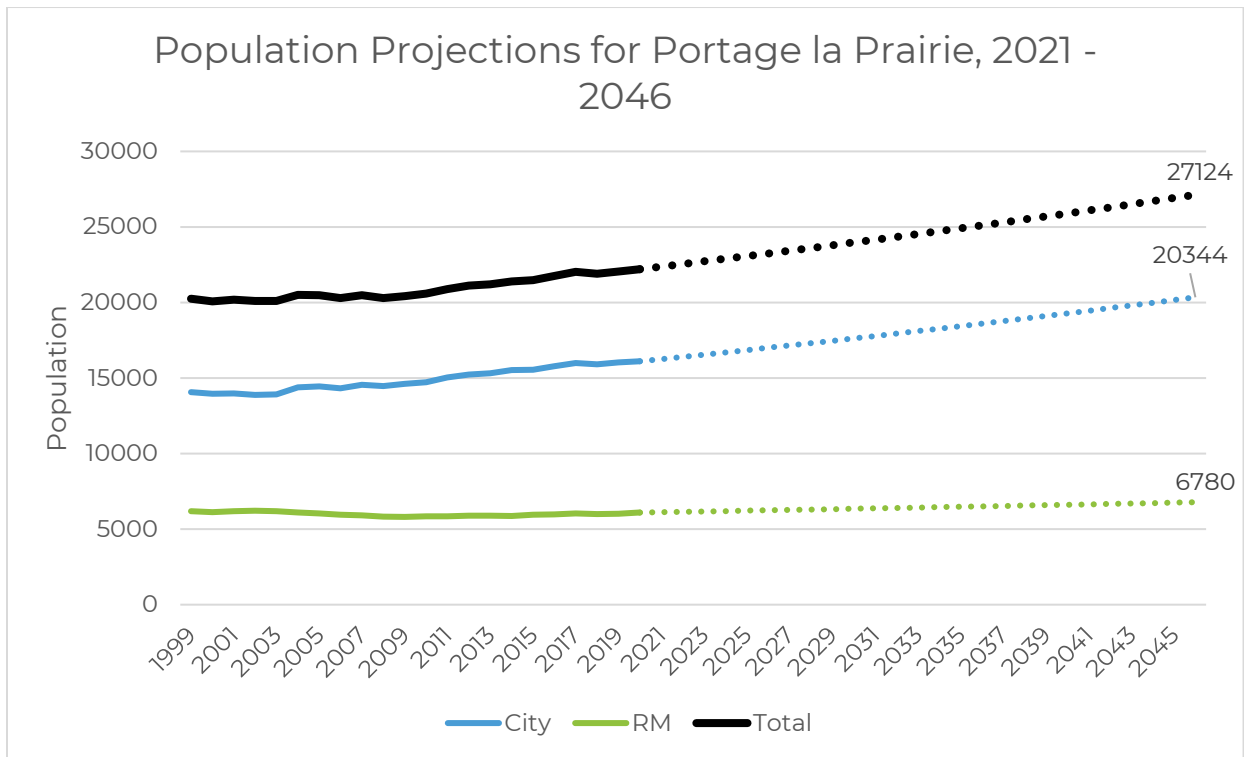


Figure 6: Population Projections, 2021 - 2045

3.0 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3.1 EXISTING PROGRAMS

There are primary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions in Portage. **Figure 7** highlights primary and secondary schools in the region. The Portage la Prairie School Division services roughly 3,300 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 over an area approximately 1,500 square kilometers in size. **Figure 8** provides an overview of the programs offered through Red River College Polytech’s Portage Campus.

Primary and Secondary Schools		
School	Grades	Programs
Ecole Arthur Meighen School	5-8	English and French Immersion
Ecole Crescentview School	K-4	English and French Immersion
Fort la Reine School	K-6	English
La Verendrye School	K-6	English
North Memorial School	K-6	English
Oakville School	K-8	English
Portage Collegiate Institute	9-12	English
Yellowquill School	K-12	English
Hutterian Schools	K-12	10 schools throughout the District

Figure 7: Primary and Secondary Schools

RRC Polytech – Portage Campus		
Program	Type	Length
Administrative Assistant	Full and Part Time	18 week certificate
		4 week practicum
Bookkeeping & Small Business Office	Full and Part Time	5 week certificate
Business Administration	Full Time	Two year diploma with optional co-op term
Business and Administrative Studies	Part Time	Certificate
Business, Accounting, and Management	Full Time	10 month certificate
Child and Youth Care	Various	
Computer Training	Various	
Design Drafting Technician	Part Time	Advanced diploma
Early Childhood Education	Full Time	Two year diploma
Educational Assistant Certificate	Full and Part Time	6 month certificate
Health Care Aide	Full and Part Time	20 week certificate
Health/Safety Workshops	Various	
Health Unit Clerk	Full and Part Time	4 month certificate
Human Resource Management	Full and Part Time	5 month certificate
Industrial Electrical Maintenance	Part Time	Certificate program
Introduction to Food Manufacturing	Full Time	5 month certificate
Introduction to Trades	Full Time	5 month certificate
Languages	Part Time	Various
Management Development	Full and Part Time	3 month certificate
Mechanical Engineering Technology	Part Time	Various
Nursing	Various	Various
Operations Management	Part Time	Various
Power Engineering	Part Time	Various
Project Management	Full Time	5 month certificate
Small Business Management	Part Time	Various
Therapeutic Recreation Facilitator	Full and Part Time	Various
Trade and Industrial Skills	Various	Various
Welding	Part Time	Various

Figure 8: RRC Polytech

3.2 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Figure 9 highlights the highest educational attainment for residents between the ages of 25 and 64 in both the City and the RM. The RM has a higher proportion of residents with secondary school diplomas and trade certificates, while the City has a higher proportion of residents with college or university certificates, diplomas, or degrees.

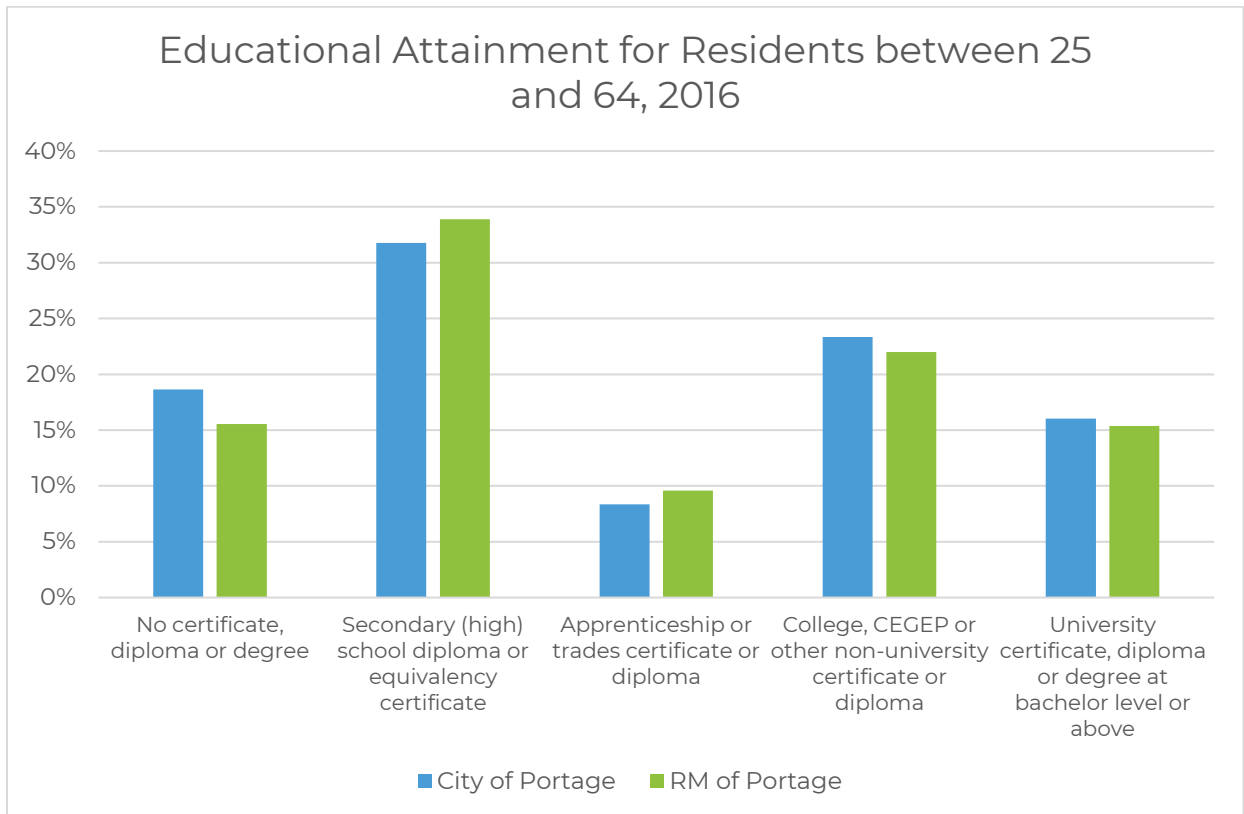


Figure 9: Educational Attainment, 2016

4.0 REAL ESTATE

4.1 TENURE

Figure 10 highlights the proportion of households that rent and own in the City and RM. Approximately one-third of households rent in the City, while less than one-fifth of households rent in the RM.

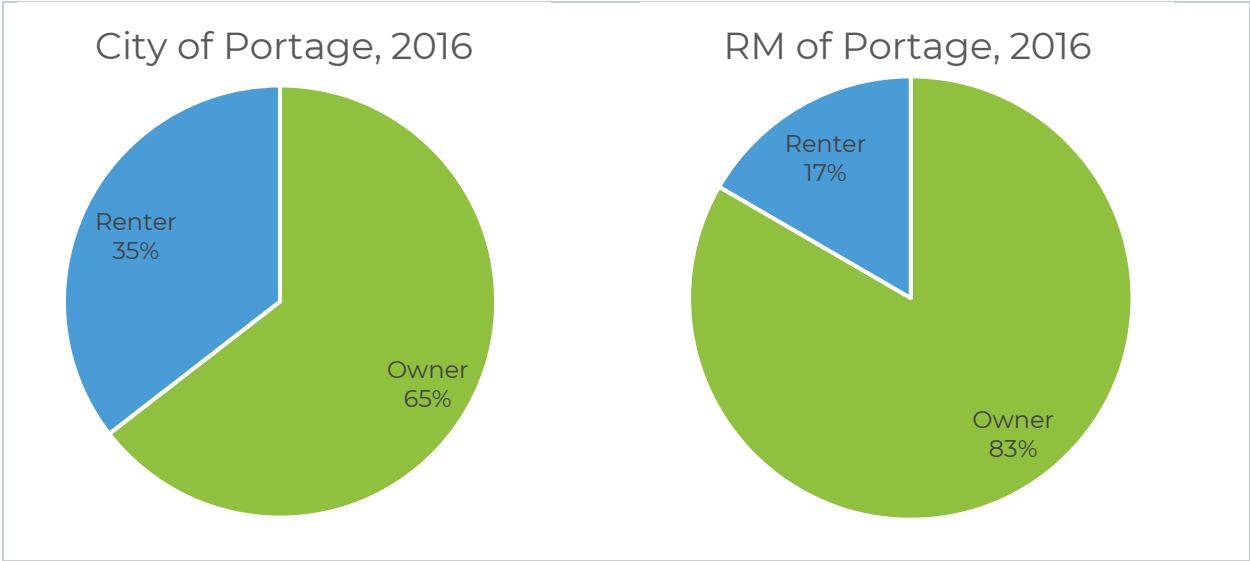


Figure 10: Households by Tenure, 2016

4.2 RENTAL INVENTORY

Figure 11 highlights the number of rental units in the City of Portage. In 2020, there were 22 one-bedroom and 118 two-bedroom rental units added to the market. As of 2020, there were 914 rental units in the City. This data is only available for the City.

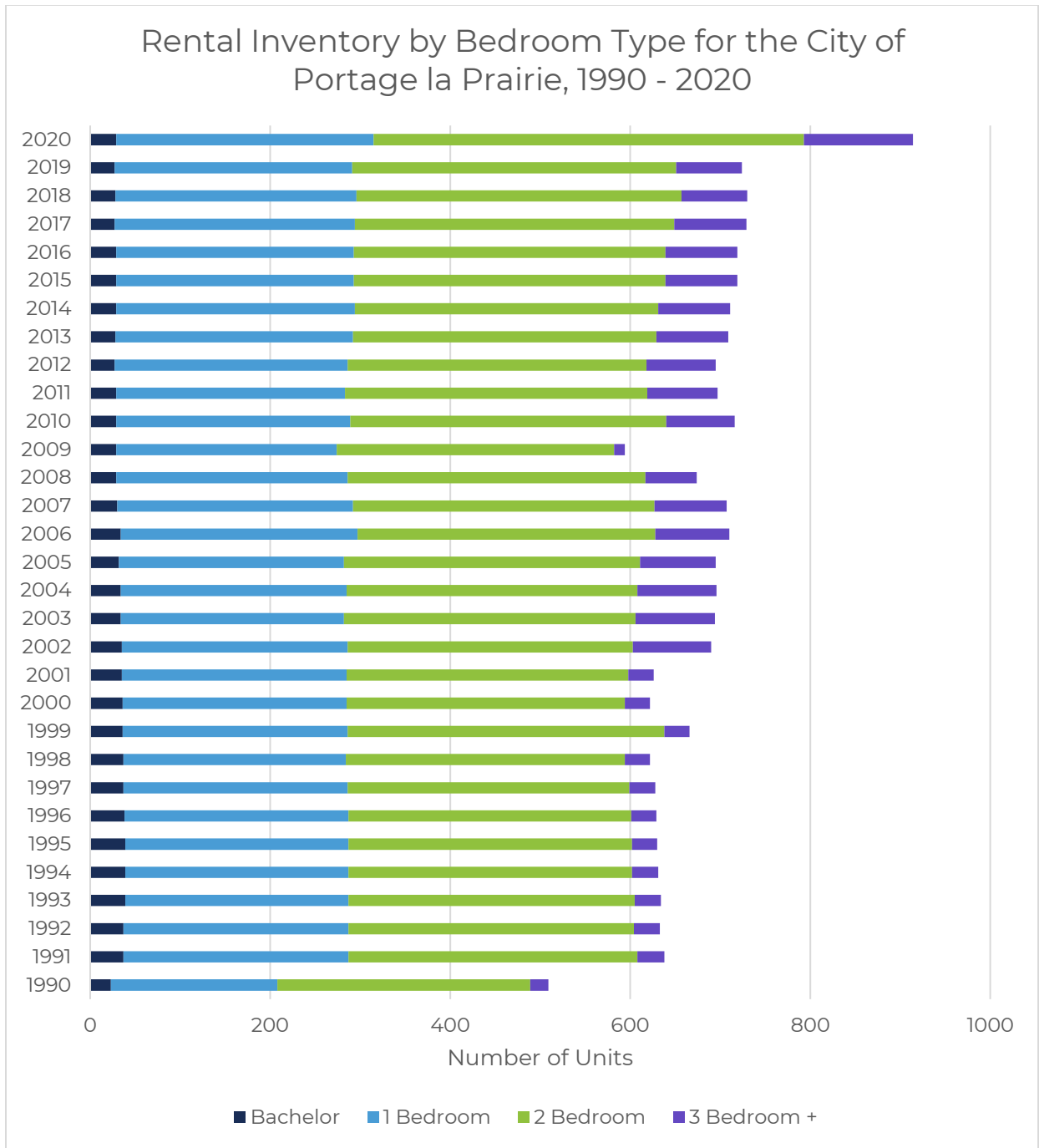


Figure 11: Rental Inventory, 1990 - 2020

4.3 RENTAL VACANCY RATES

Figure 12 highlights historical vacancy rates for rental units by bedroom type for the City between 1990 and 2020. One-bedroom apartments historically had a higher vacancy rate than two-bedroom units. As of 2020, the total vacancy rate was approximately 2.9 percent. This data is only available for the City.

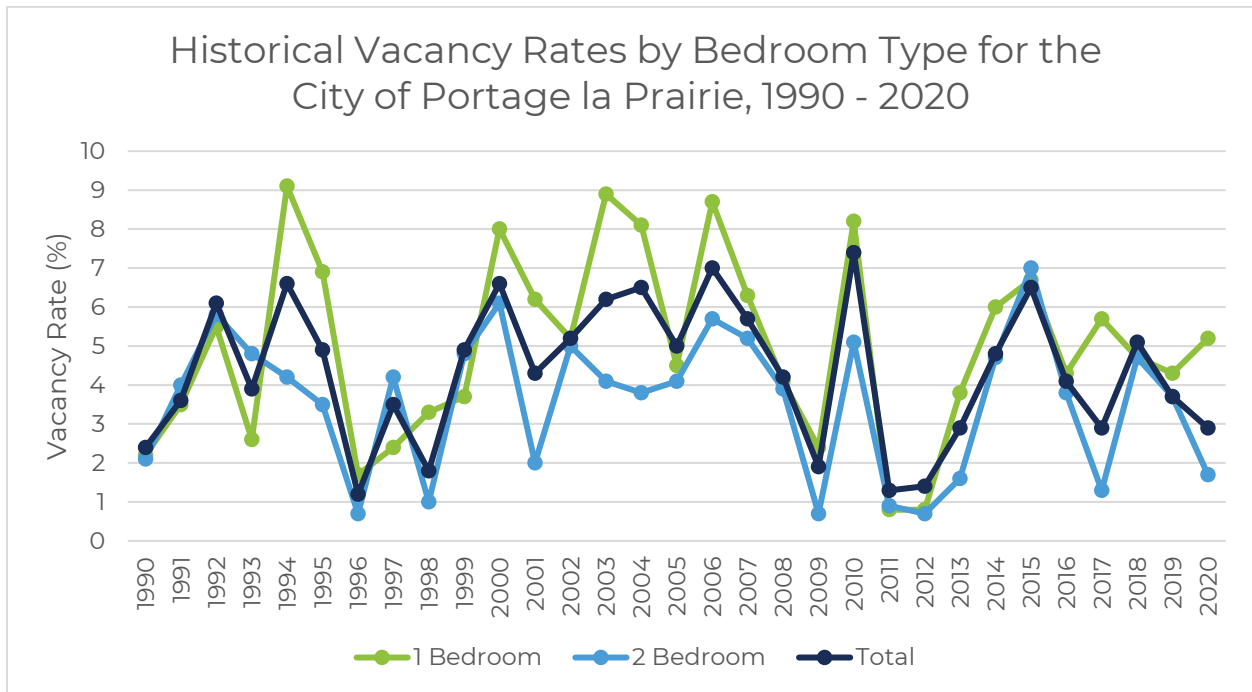


Figure 12: Rental Vacancy Rates

4.4 AVERAGE RENTS

Figure 13 highlights the historical average rental rates in the City by bedroom type. The average rents for one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom apartments have all increased significantly in 2020. This may be due to the addition of new rental units to the market, shown in **Figure 11**. This data is only available for the City.

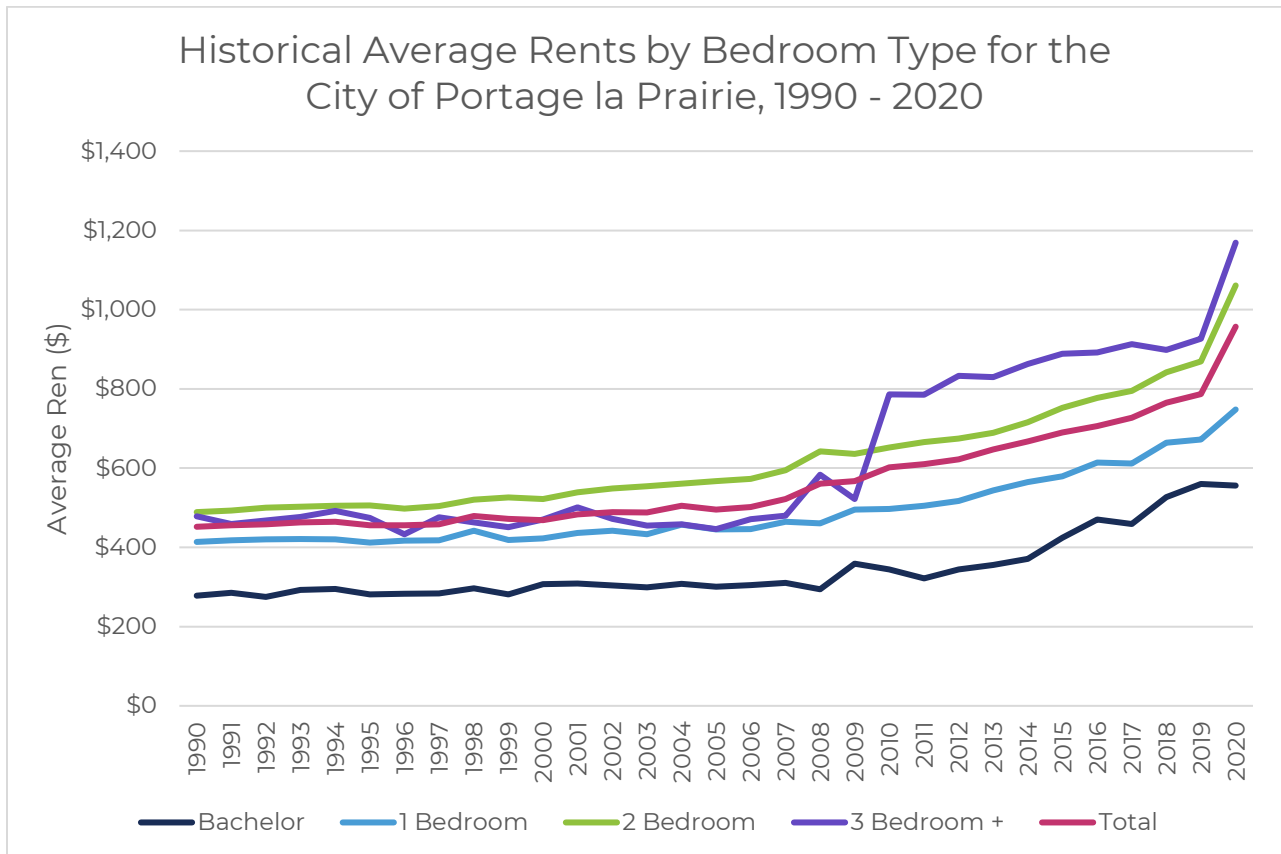


Figure 13: Historical Average Rents, 1990 - 2020

4.5 HOUSING STARTS

Housing starts are defined as the beginning of construction work on a building. **Figure 14** highlights the total number of housing starts per year by dwelling type between 1990 and 2020. There were a significant number of new dwellings under construction in 2018 and 2020. Most of these new starts were apartment units. This data is only available for the City.

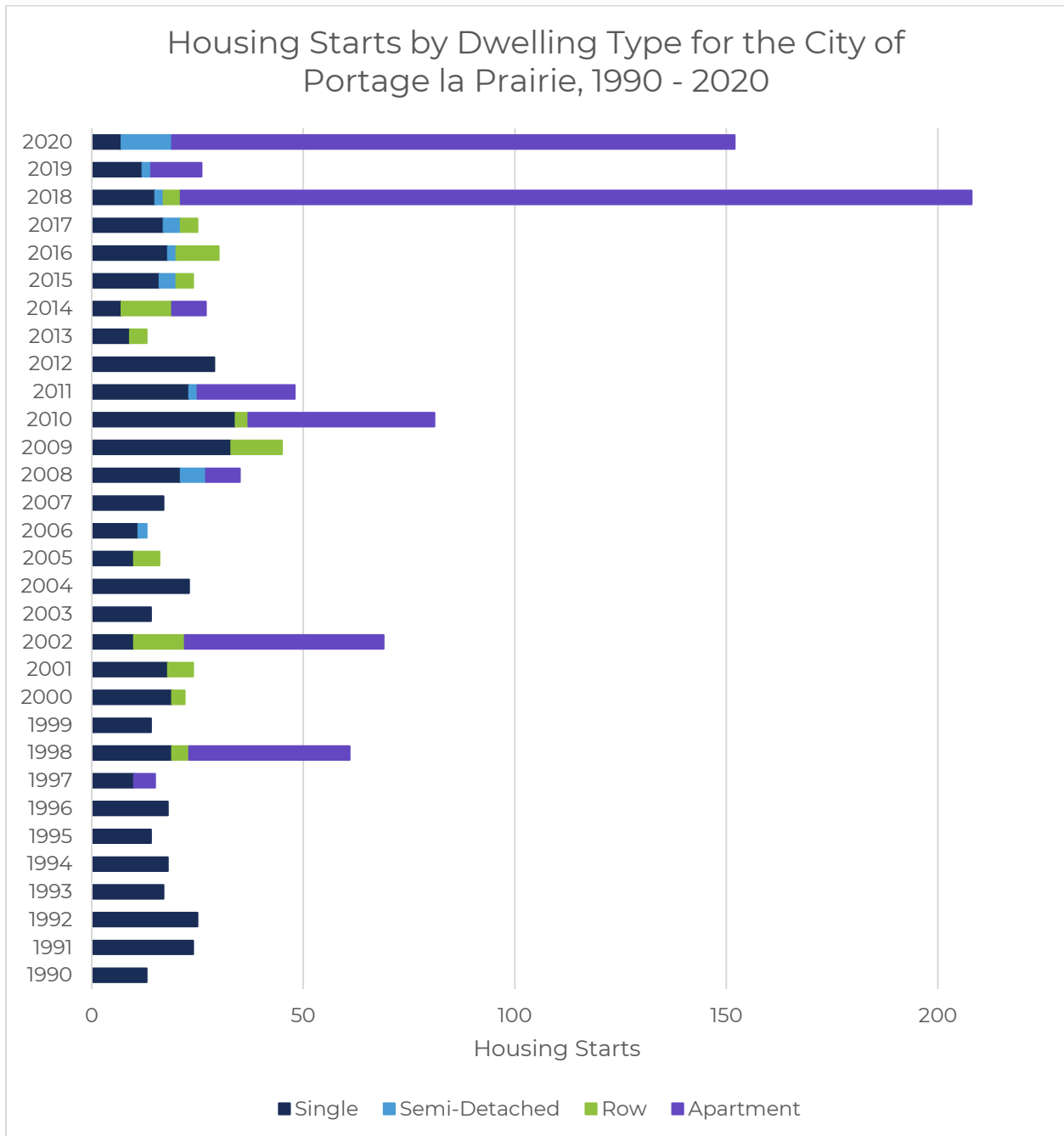


Figure 14: Housing Starts, 1990 – 2020

4.6 AVERAGE HOUSING PRICES

Figure 15 highlights the average housing prices for the City and RM between 2016 and 2021. On average, houses sell for less in the City than in the RM. The price of an average house in the RM decreased slightly from \$269,821 in 2020 to \$239,443 in 2021. In contrast, the price of a house in the City increased slightly from \$207,586 in 2020 to \$225,242 in 2021.

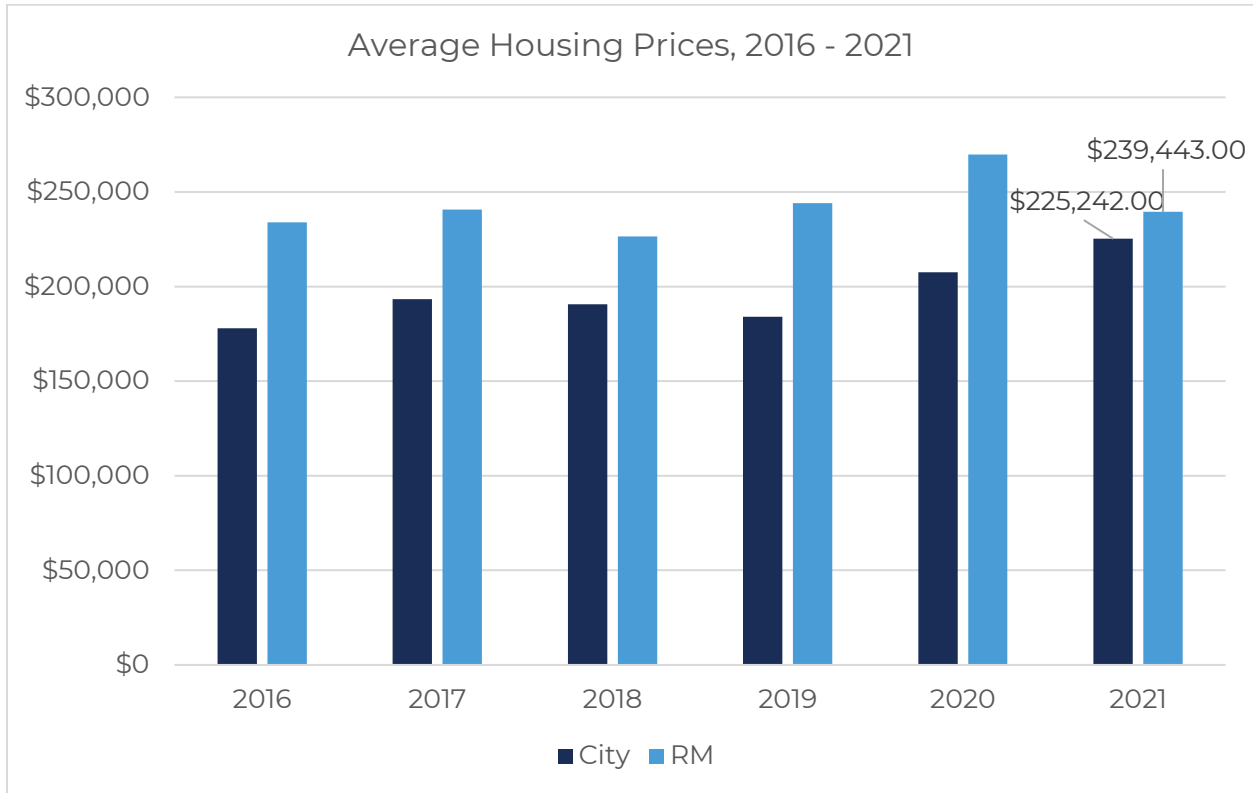


Figure 15: Average Housing Prices, 2016 - 2021

4.7 UNAFFORDABLE HOUSING

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing is affordable if it costs less than 30 percent of a household's before-tax income. **Figure 16** compares rates households living in unaffordable housing in Portage to other cities across Manitoba. Renter households are much more likely to live in unaffordable housing conditions. More than one-third of renter households in the City and just under one-fifth of renter households in the RM live in unaffordable housing. The City has rates comparable to other cities in Manitoba.

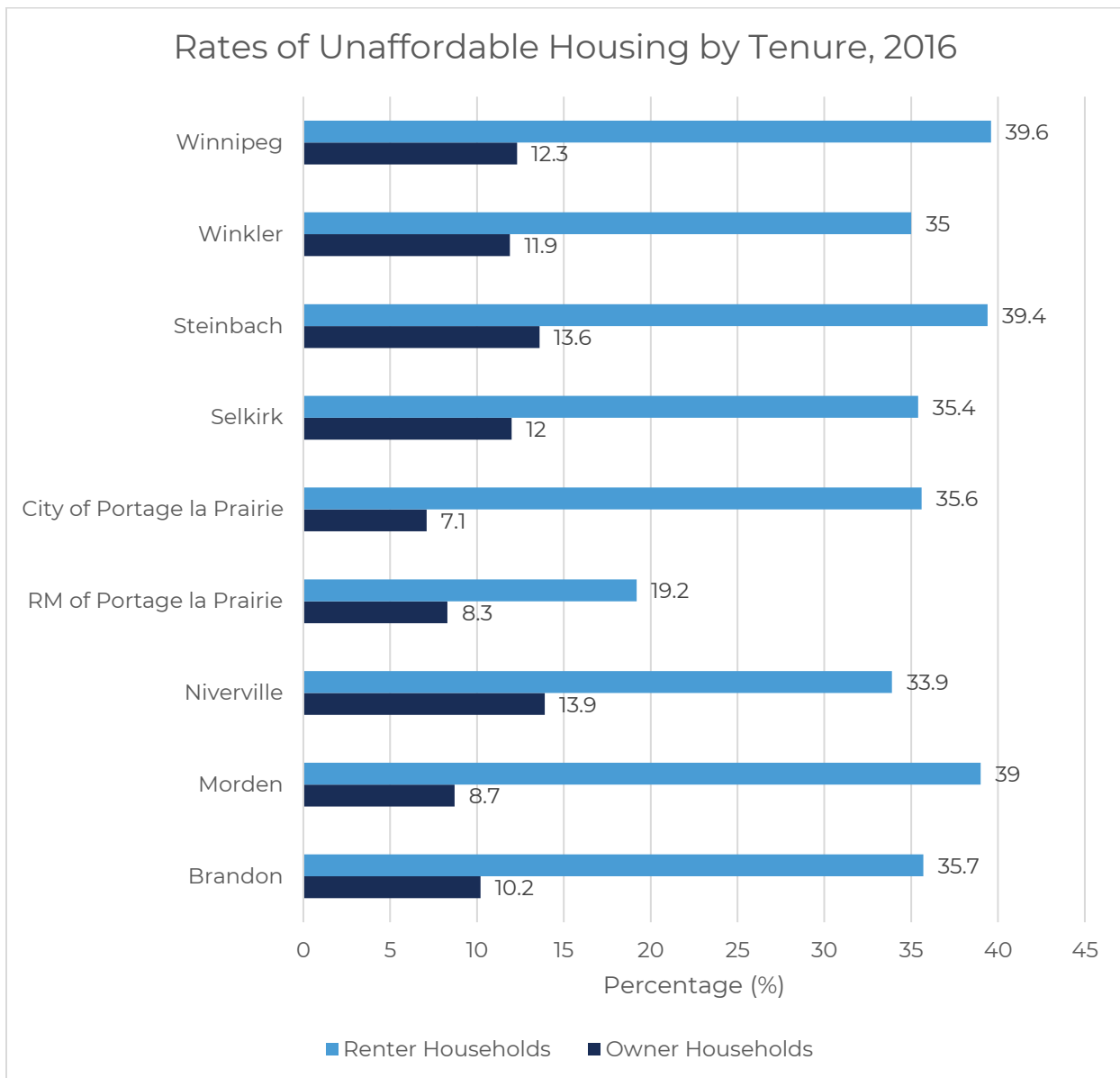


Figure 16: Unaffordable Housing by Tenure

5.0 BUILDING PERMITS

Figure 17 shows the number of building permits issued by the City and RM between 2016 and 2020. This includes permits for new buildings as well as for repairs to existing buildings.

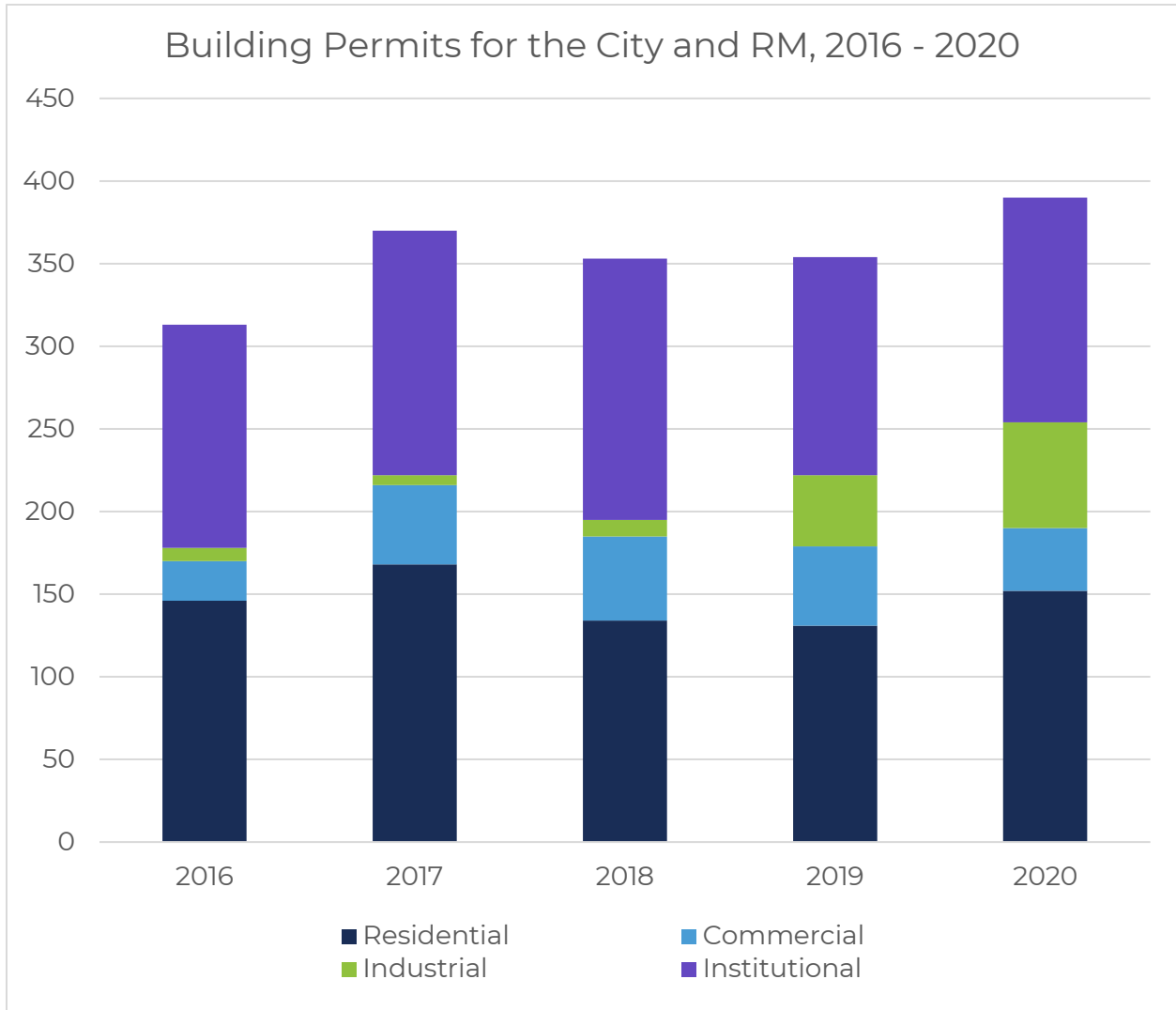


Figure 17: Building Permits, 2016 - 2020

6.0 HEALTH

Portage la Prairie is served by the Southern Health – Sante Sud regional health authority, one of five regional health authorities (RHAs) in Manitoba. Portage is served primarily by the Portage District General Hospital which provides roughly 88 beds, including the services highlighted in **Figure 18**.

Portage is also served by the Portage Clinic, which was established in 1992 and today is served by 31 physicians including 27 General Practitioners, two General Surgeons, and two ENT surgeons. The Portage Clinic moved to a new facility in 2014. Other services offered on-site are highlighted in **Figure 19**.

Portage District General Hospital Services	
Audiology	Cancer Navigation Services
CancerCare	Computed Tomography
Diagnostic Ultrasound	Dialysis
Electrocardiogram	Emergency Department
Fluoroscopy	Holter Monitoring
Indigenous Support Workers	Laboratory
Obstetrics	Occupational Therapy
Physiotherapy	Speech-language pathology
Stress Testing	Surgery
Telehealth	Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
X-Ray	

Figure 18: Portage District General Hospital Services

Portage Clinic	
Walk-in clinic	TMJ and Sleep Therapy Centre
Pharmacy	Dental services
Physiotherapy	Hearing services

Figure 19: Portage Clinic Services

7.0 INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

7.1 BUSINESS COUNT

Figure 20 includes business counts organized by the number of employees for the City and RM in 2021. The City had a total of 1,479 businesses while the RM had a total of 562 businesses. Most businesses had no employees. This data was from a custom data request to Statistics Canada.

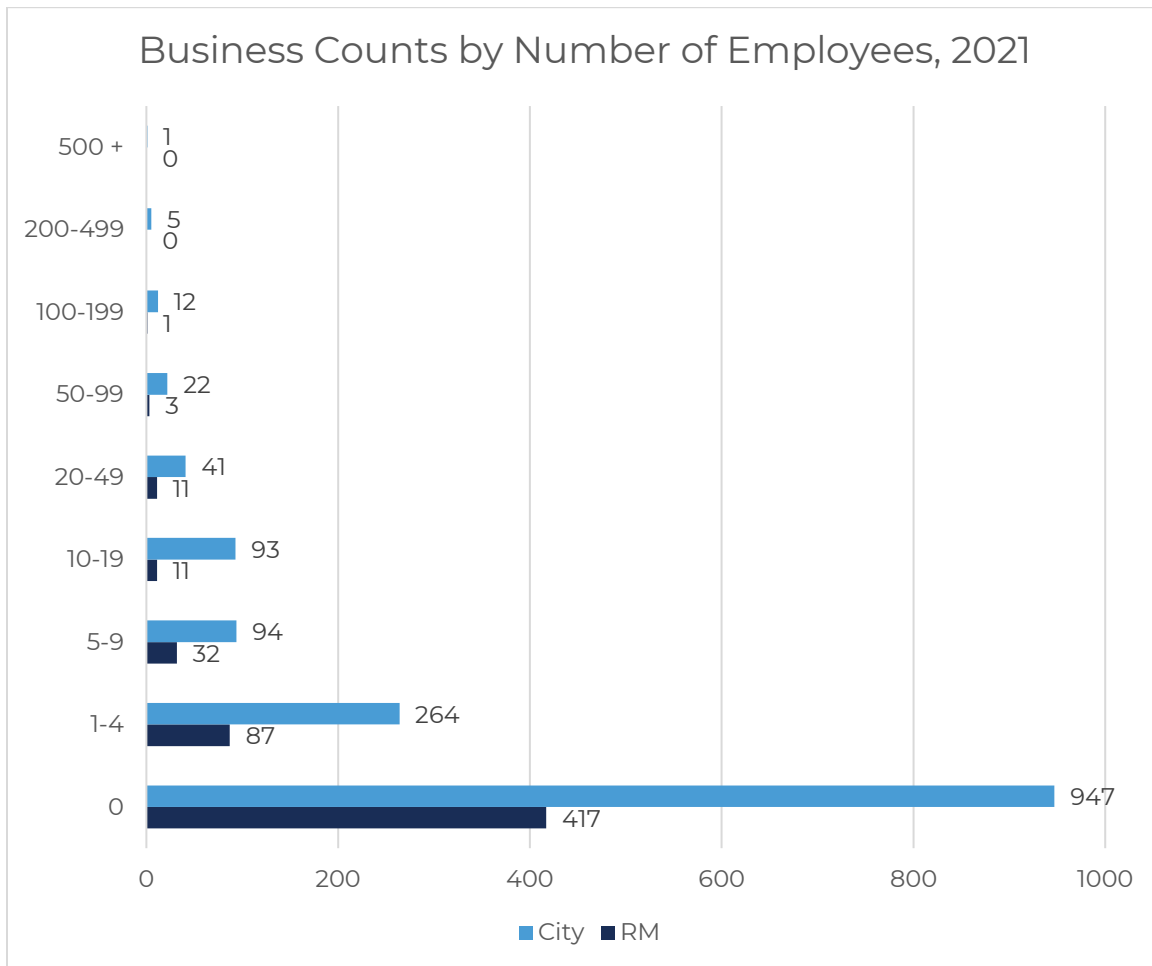


Figure 20: Business Counts, 2021

7.2 BUSINESSES BY INDUSTRY

Figure 21 highlights the proportion of businesses by industry in both the City and the RM in 2021. This does not reflect the size of the businesses. The most common industry was Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting followed by Real Estate and Rental and Leasing. This data was from a custom data request to Statistics Canada.

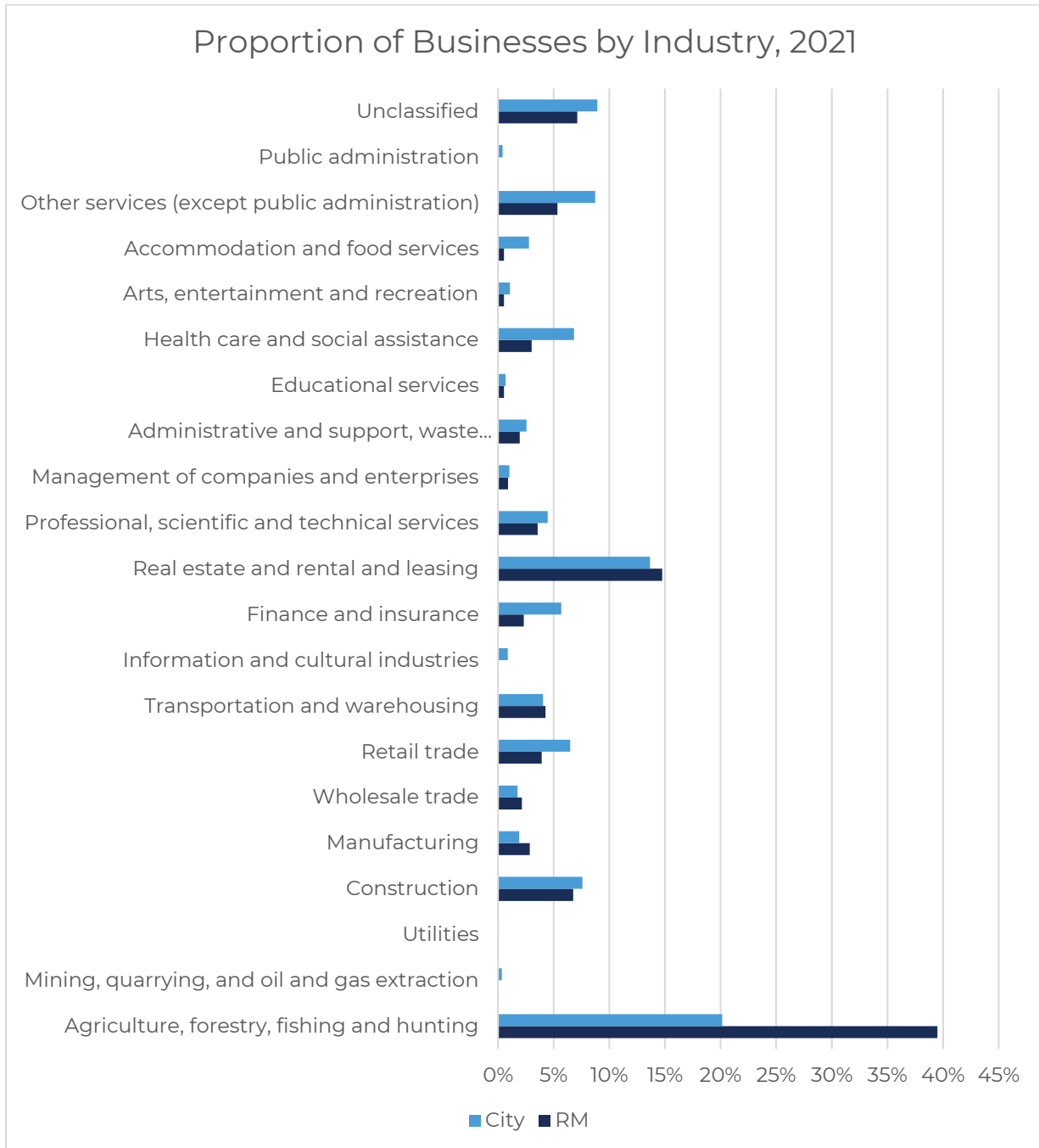


Figure 21: Proportion of Businesses by Industry, 2021

7.3 JOBS BY INDUSTRY

Figure 22 highlights the number of jobs by industry in the Portage la Prairie Area in 2014 and 2019. This refers to the Self-Contained Labour Area, which includes the City, the RM, Long Plain First Nation, Dakota Plains First Nation, and Dakota Tipi First Nation. The industries with the most jobs in 2019 were Healthcare and Social Assistance, Public Administration, and Manufacturing.

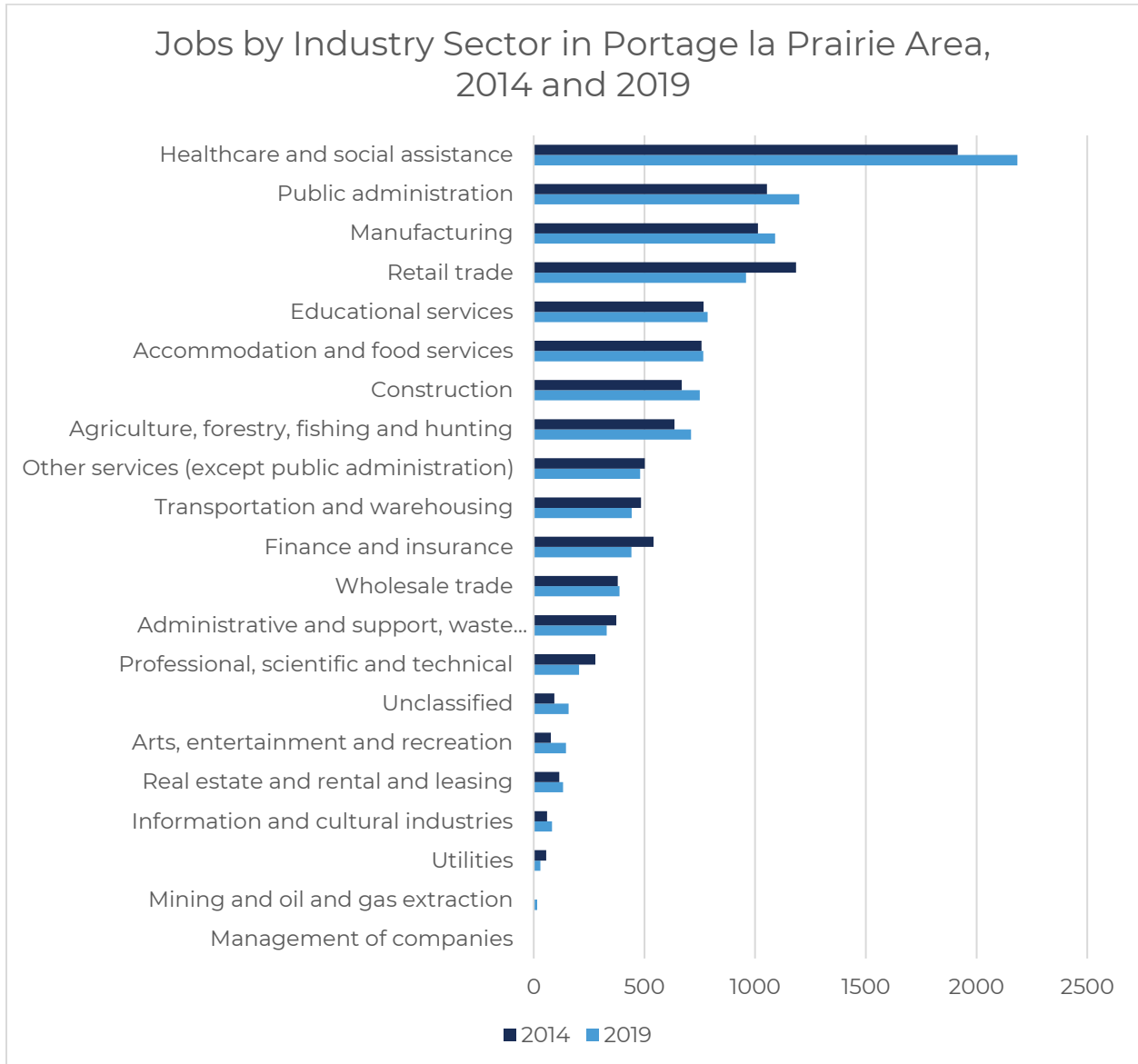


Figure 22: Jobs by Industry Sector, 2014 and 2019

8.0 TRANSPORT

8.1 INFRASTRUCTURE

Portage la Prairie is located along Provincial Trunk Highway 1, which is part of the Trans-Canada Highway system. Other major roads near Portage la Prairie include Provincial Road 240, Provincial Road 305, Provincial Road 227, Provincial Road 331, and Provincial Road 430.

Portage la Prairie is serviced by the CN and CP railroads, shown in **Figure 23**. The two sets of tracks to the east of Portage connect to Winnipeg, while the four sets of tracks to the west of Portage connect the City to Western Canada. Two sets of these tracks connect to the northern segments of the Prairie provinces through Saskatoon and Edmonton, while the other two sets connect to Regina and Calgary.

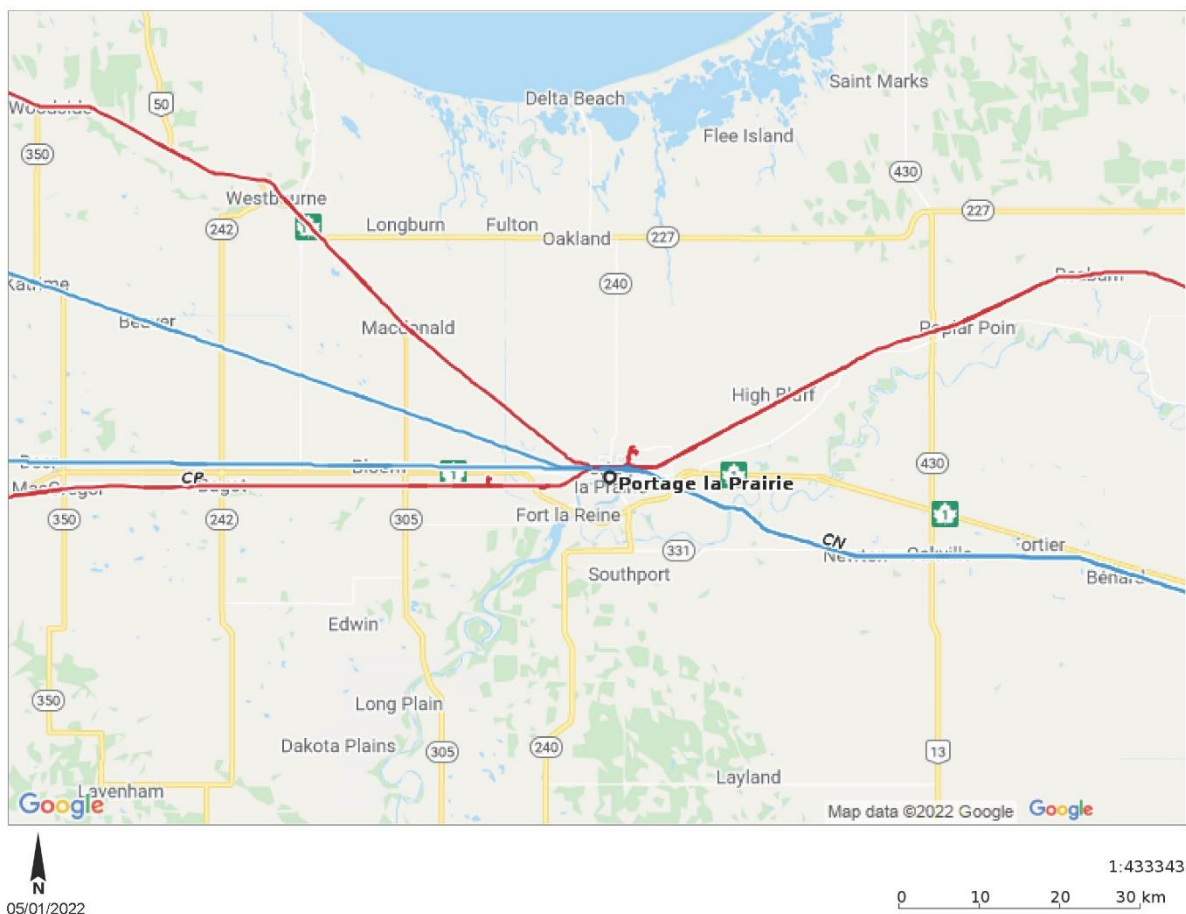


Figure 23: Railways near Portage

8.2 TRAFFIC COUNTS

Manitoba Infrastructure has a Permanent Traffic Count Station (#46) near Portage la Prairie along Provincial Trunk Highway 16, approximately 2.4 kilometres north of Provincial Trunk Highway. **Figure 24** shows traffic count data from the station between 2009 and 2018. The AADT is the Annual Average Daily Traffic and refers to the number of vehicles passing a point on an average day of the year. The AADTT is the Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic and refers to the number of trucks passing a point on an average day of the year. The AADT includes the AADTT. As of 2018, there were approximately 3,690 vehicles passing near Portage on the average day.

Some data was unavailable for 2014 and 2015.

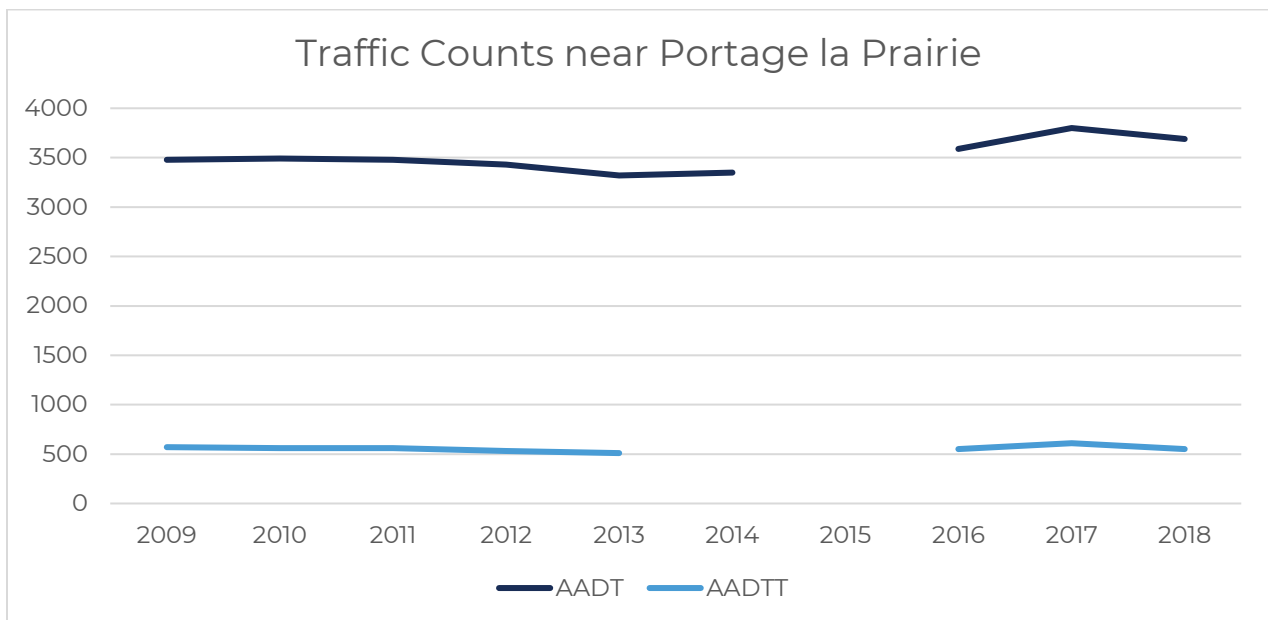


Figure 24: Traffic Counts, 2009 - 2018

8.3 TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Portage has several local and regional transportation options for residents. **Figure 25** provides an overview of handi-transit, taxis, shuttles, buses, and rail options serving the City and RM.

Category	Service	Description
Handi/Seniors Transit	Portage Handi-Van	Offers transportation services for anyone with mobility issues or anyone over 55 and over, both in town and out of town.
	Portage Service for Seniors - Transportation Program	Transportation services for seniors to attend medical appointments, shopping, and social/recreational purposes.
Taxies & Shuttles	All Directions Shuttle	Local taxi and shuttle services.
	Arrow/Portage Taxi	
	Class Shuttle	
	Executive Shuttle	
	Kasper's Shutter Service	
	Lonestar Shuttle	
	Tulip Limousine/Taxi Service	
Regional Transportation	Mahihkan Bus Lines	Provides bus services to Flin Flon and Winnipeg.
	Via Rail	Provides train services to destinations across the country at the Portage la Prairie Train Station.

Figure 25: Transport Options in Portage

9.0 PUBLIC SECTOR AND TAXATION

9.1 PROPERTY TAXES

Property taxes in Manitoba are calculated by applying the municipal and educational mill rates against the portioned assessments of a property, which is 45 percent for residential buildings. **Figure 26** highlights property taxes for a \$300,000 house in 2021 in the City and RM compared to other cities in Manitoba. The City of Portage has a comparable rate to Brandon, while the RM of Portage has lower property taxes than any of the cities.

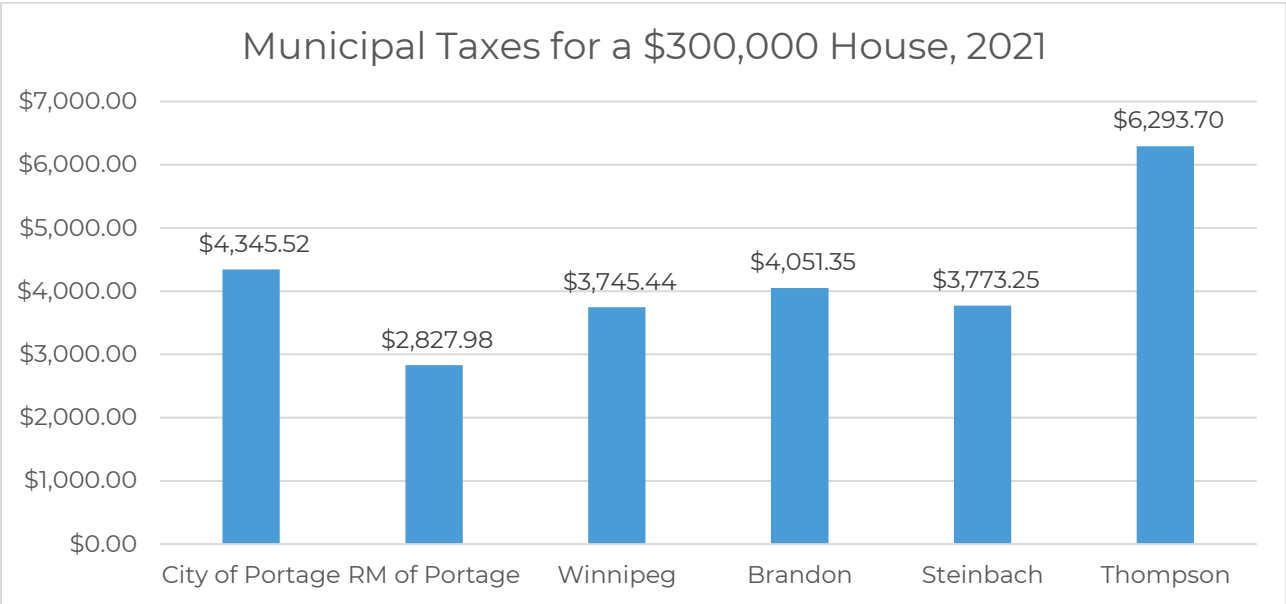


Figure 26: Property Taxes, 2021

9.2 INCOME TAXES

The following charts highlight the combined provincial and federal income taxes in each province. **Figure 27** highlights the marginal combined income tax rates, which refers to the amount of tax paid on the last dollar earned. This is different than the average tax rate, shown in **Figure 28**, because of Canada's progressive tax system.

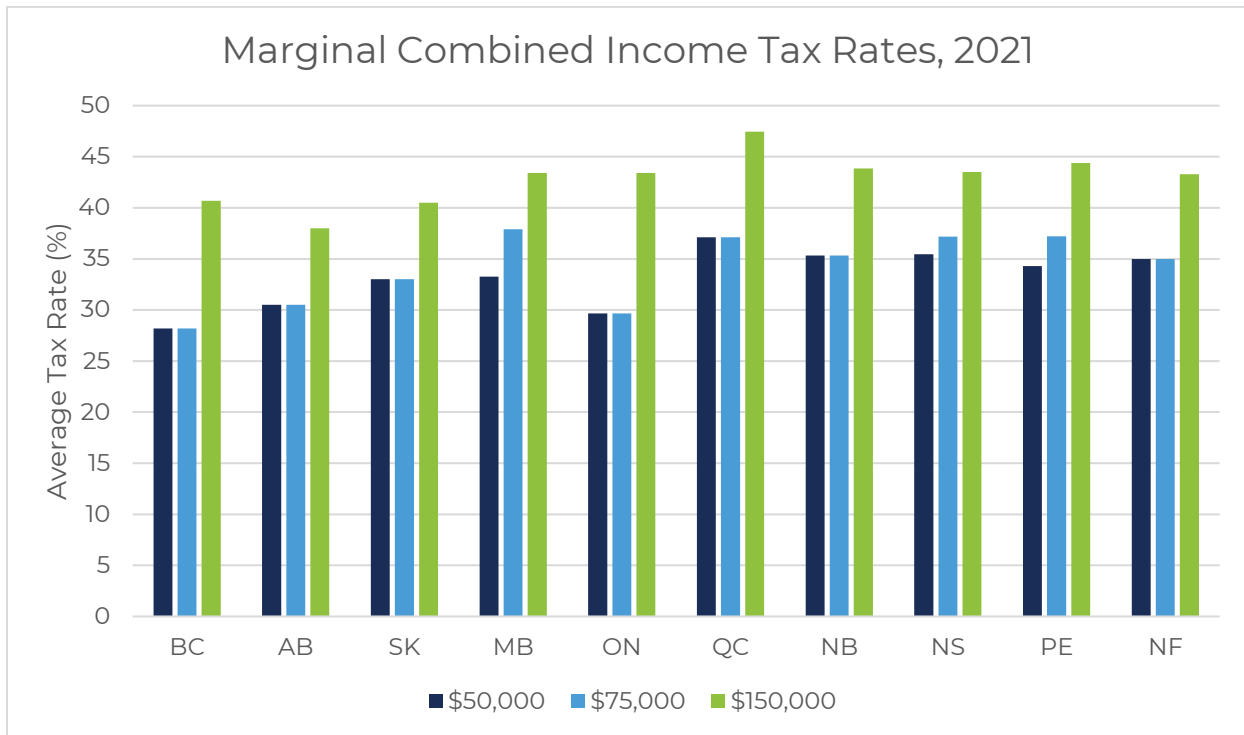


Figure 27: Marginal Combined Income Tax, 2021

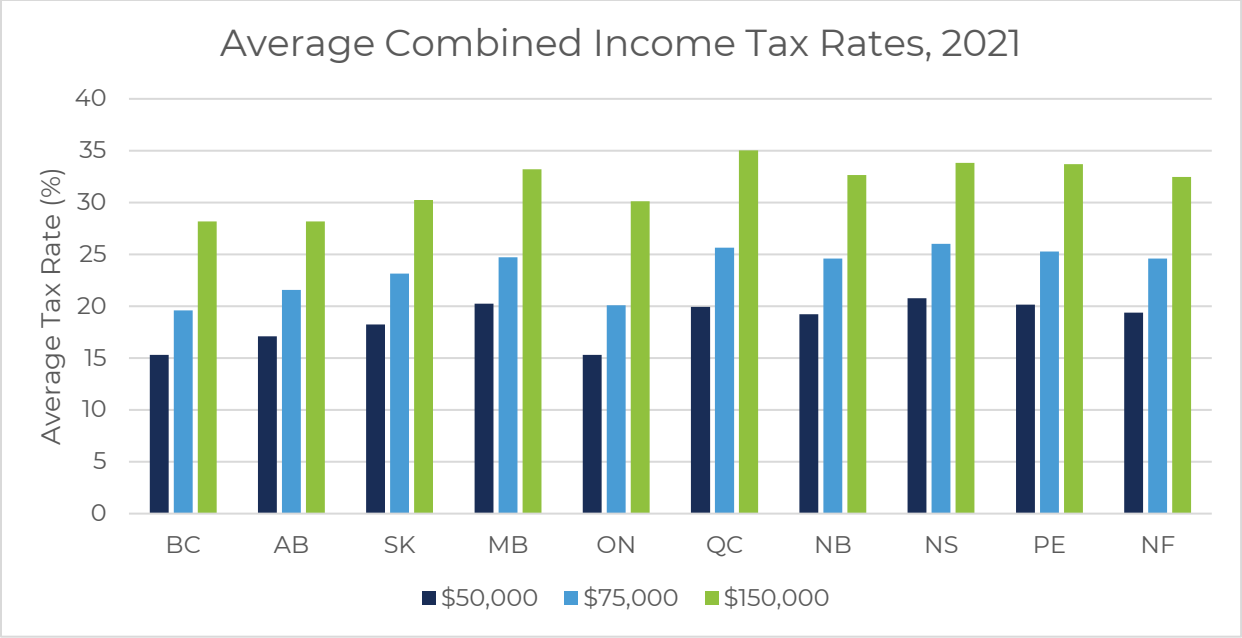


Figure 28: Average Combined Income Tax, 2021

9.3 CORPORATE TAXES

Figure 29 highlights combined provincial and federal corporate tax rates for each province. Manitoba has one of the lowest corporate tax rates for small businesses. The small business limit was \$500,000 in all provinces except Saskatchewan, where it was \$600,000.

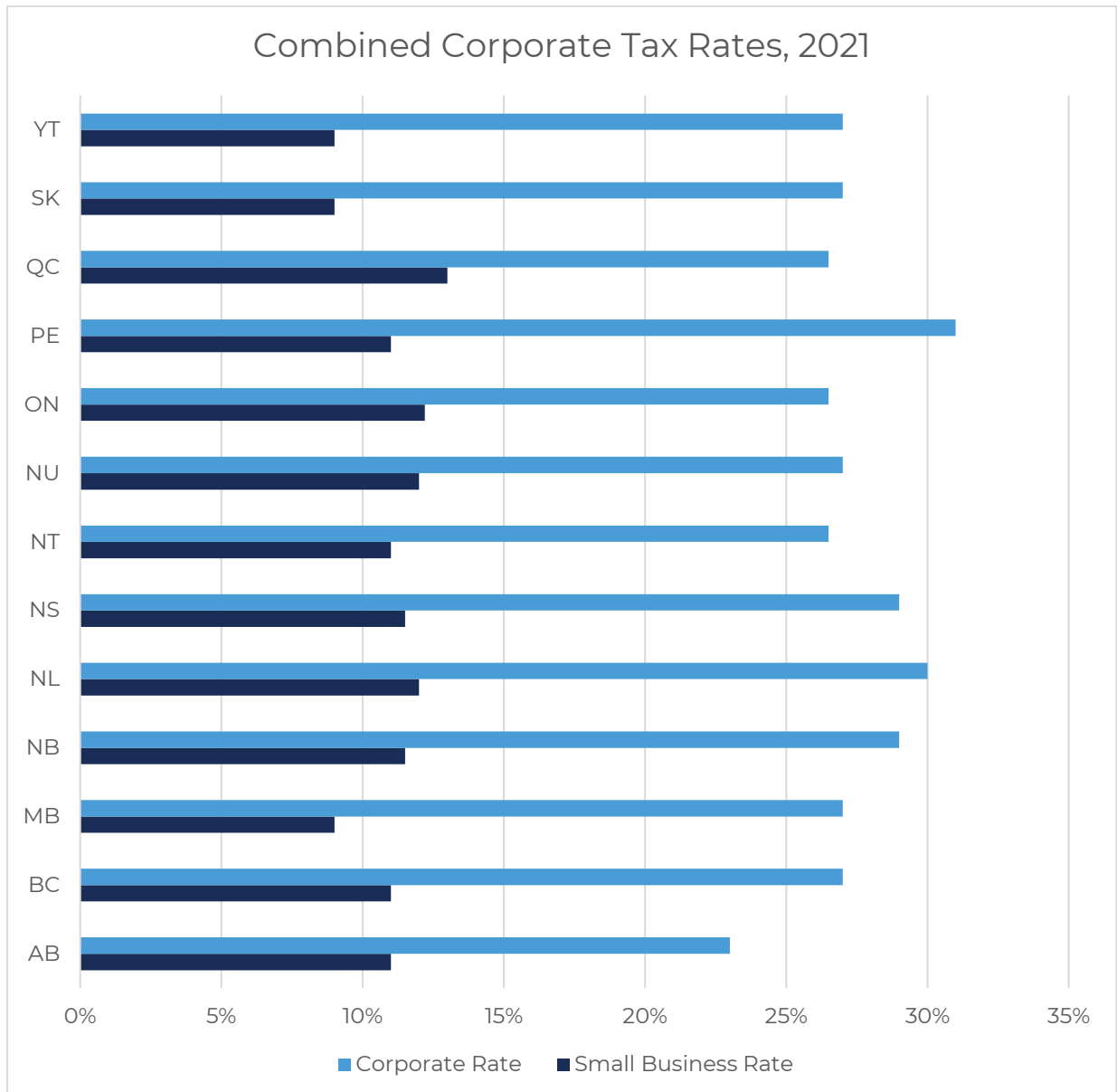


Figure 29: Combined Corporate Tax Rates

10.0 DATA SOURCES

Figure	Source
Figure 1: Historical Population, 1951 - 2021	Statistics Canada / Manitoba Historical Society
Figure 2: Population Pyramid for the City, 2020	Manitoba Health, Healthy Living, and Seniors
Figure 3: Population Pyramid for the RM, 2020	Manitoba Health, Healthy Living, and Seniors
Figure 4: Population Growth Comparisons for the City	Statistics Canada / Manitoba Historical Society
Figure 5: Population Growth Comparisons for the RM	Statistics Canada / Manitoba Historical Society
Figure 6: Population Projections, 2021 - 2045	Manitoba Health, Healthy Living, and Seniors, Urban Systems
Figure 7: Primary and Secondary Schools	Portage la Prairie School Division
Figure 8: RRC Polytech	Red River College Polytech
Figure 9: Educational Attainment, 2016	Statistics Canada
Figure 10: Households by Tenure, 2016	Statistics Canada
Figure 11: Rental Inventory, 1990 - 2020	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Figure 12: Rental Vacancy Rates	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Figure 13: Historical Average Rents, 1990 - 2020	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Figure 14: Housing Starts, 1990 – 2020	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Figure 15: Average Housing Prices, 2016 - 2021	Brandon Real Estate Board
Figure 16: Unaffordable Housing by Tenure	Statistics Canada
Figure 17: Building Permits, 2016 - 2020	Portage Planning District
Figure 18: Portage District General Hospital Services	Southern Health

Figure 19: Portage Clinic Services	Southern Health
Figure 20: Business Counts, 2021	Statistics Canada
Figure 21: Proportion of Businesses by Industry, 2021	Statistics Canada
Figure 22: Jobs by Industry Sector, 2014 and 2019	Emsi
Figure 23: Railways near Portage	Canadian Rail Atlas
Figure 24: Traffic Counts, 2009 - 2018	Manitoba Infrastructure
Figure 25: Transport Options in Portage	Various websites
Figure 26: Property Taxes, 2021	Various websites, Urban Systems
Figure 27: Marginal Combined Income Tax, 2021	Various websites, Urban Systems
Figure 28: Average Combined Income Tax, 2021	Various websites, Urban Systems
Figure 29: Combined Corporate Tax Rates	Various websites, Urban Systems