

Family-Friendly Housing

Planning for Family-Friendly Homes, Buildings and Communities

BIG Move

Requiring a Portion of New Homes to be Family-Friendly

Since most new housing will be built in multi-unit housing forms, it will be increasingly important to ensure multi-unit buildings include a good portion of homes suitable for families. The OCP Update proposes to require a minimum number of three-bedroom units in new multi-unit developments, particularly low- and mid-rise apartment forms. Zoning would also continue to support denser ground-oriented forms throughout the city, such as townhouses, which can contain higher proportions of homes for larger family households.



RailYards, Bridges Park

What is Family-Friendly Housing?

Family-friendly housing is defined in Victoria's Housing Strategy as units with at least two bedrooms and some sources suggest that at least three bedrooms are needed to comfortably house families with two or more children.

Family-friendly housing is about more than just bedrooms. It helps families with children thrive and can include storage, larger balconies or outdoor space and multi-age play areas. Placement of family-friendly housing units within buildings can also support family well-being.

Why is it Important?

Families with children help support a healthy economy, school enrollment and joyful, resilient communities. In Victoria, family-friendly housing is increasingly hard to find and often unaffordable. This has resulted in a trend of young families, or families looking to have children, leaving the city for more affordable places to live. Welcoming more diverse types of multi-unit buildings in Victoria that are suitable for families is key to ensuring young families can stay rooted in their communities as Victoria grows and changes into the future.



Relates to Survey Q6

Three-Bedroom Rentals are Rare

Only 2 per cent of existing and new rentals in Victoria have three or more bedrooms. These units are in high demand. In 2023, the vacancy rates for 2- and 3-bedroom units were even lower than the city's already low average.

Average Rents are High

Victoria has the highest average rent for homes with three or more bedrooms in the region.

Not Enough are Being Built

Ground-oriented (AKA missing middle) housing such as townhouses are a good option for delivering family-sized homes for those who can't afford a single-detached house in Victoria, but few of these types of homes are being created.

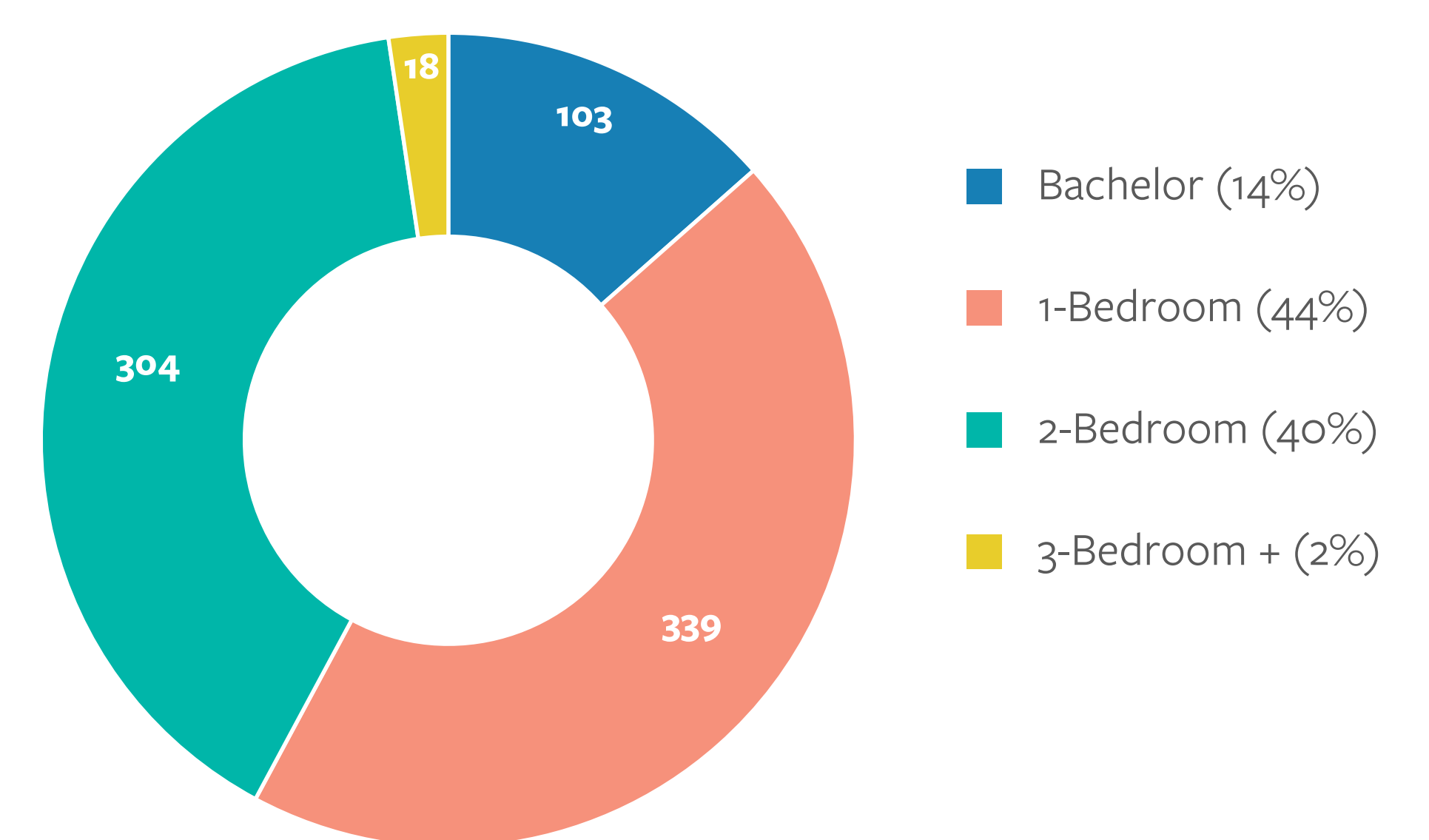
Not Available Everywhere

The majority of existing family-sized units in Victoria are concentrated in just some neighbourhoods, commonly in lower-density, more unaffordable housing forms.

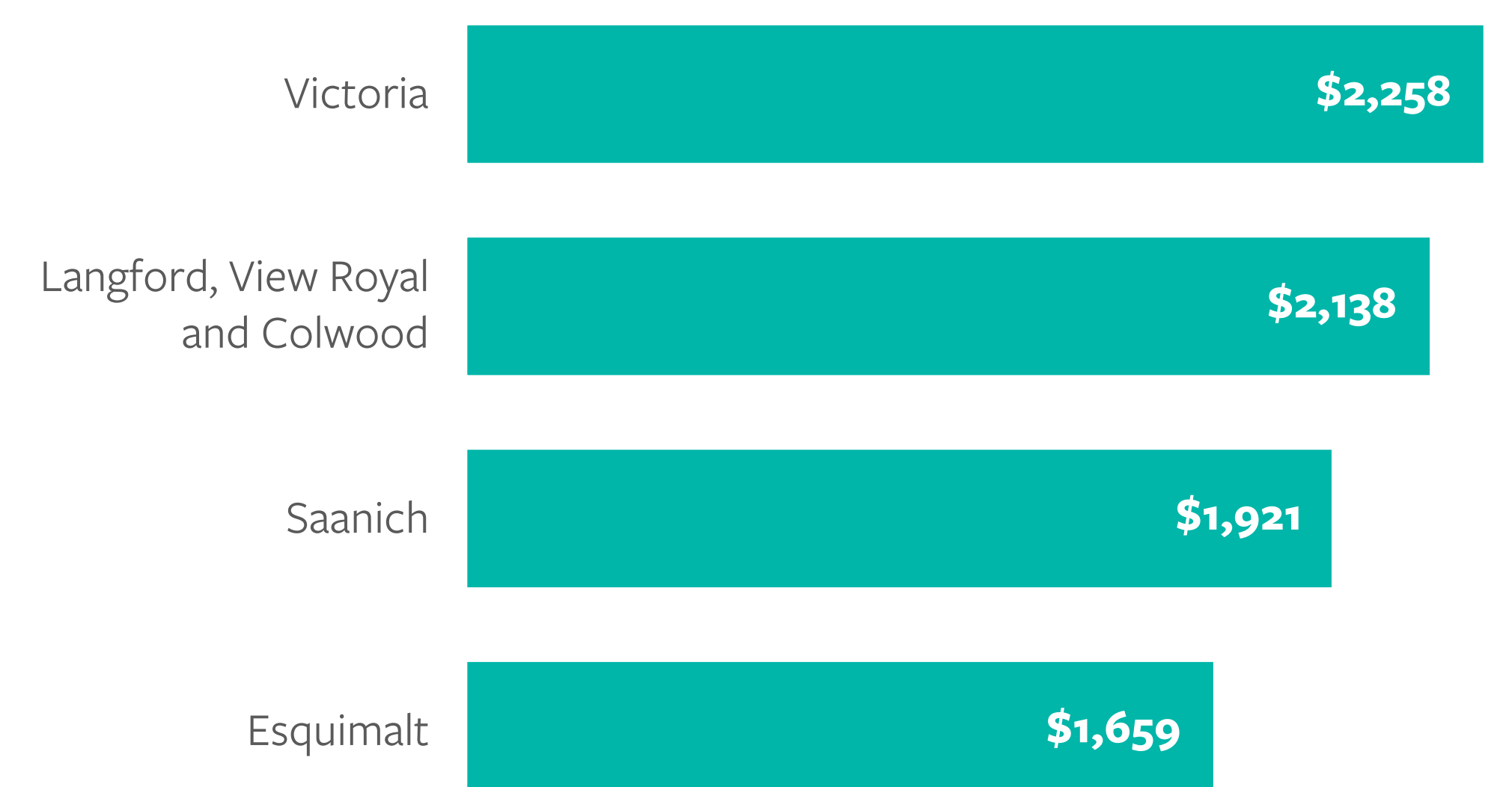
Fewer Adults are Forming Households

More adults in Victoria are living in single households than in the past, which points to a lack of suitable housing. In particular, there are fewer adults under 24 (the age at which people are more likely to be trying to enter the rental market) and adults aged 35-44 (when people are more likely to be forming families or trying to enter homeownership) forming their own households in Victoria.

New Rental Housing Stock (June 2020-2023)



Average Rent for Units with Three or More Bedrooms (2023)



Building Permits by Housing Type (2014-2023)

