

KEREMEOS COMMUNITY PROFILE

THE PLACE

The Village of Keremeos is located in the south-west corner of British Columbia, Canada. We are 340 kilometres east of the Greater Vancouver metropolitan area. Keremeos is on the western boundary of Canada's Sonoran Desert and is the Western Gateway to Interior Wine Country.

Access to Keremeos is via Hwy 3 from the Fraser Valley, Hwy 5a from the Thompson Valley and via Hwys 3 and 3a from the Okanagan Valley.

Table 1: Distance and Travelling Time from Major Centres

Place	Distance (km)	Distance (miles)	Driving Time hrs: mins
Vancouver (downtown)	355	213	4:15
Seattle	455	273	5:30
Spokane	350	210	4:20
Kelowna	115	69	1:15
Kelowna airport	130	78	1:30
Kamloops	240	144	3:00
Calgary	730	440	9:00

Keremeos is the second largest municipality in the Similkameen Valley and is at the heart of surrounding Areas B and G of the Regional District Okanagan – Similkameen. Areas B and G are the catchments area for Keremeos and statistics from the Village and surrounding Area H will be provided.

The area has a mild, dry climate with temperatures in the 30-32C (85-90F) range in the summer. Annual hours of sunshine are 2600+. Annual rainfall is 30.5cm (12 inches). Elevation is 413m (1,377 feet).

History

The Similkameen Valley has been inhabited by the Sylix people for many millennia. They are part of what is now called the Okanagan Nation, whose traditional territory extends from the Thompson River to where the Okanagan River joins the Columbia River.

The Sylix tell a story that a Spanish expedition came to the Similkameen and killed some of their people. The Sylix counter-attacked. A famous pictograph shows men on horses leading a line of bound captives. The first recorded visit by a non-native in the Similkameen Valley is by Alexander Ross in 1813.

The establishment of an international boundary in 1846 prompted the Hudson's Bay Company to move their trading post from Fort Okanogan, Washington. A post was established at present-day Cawston on the Dewdney Trail, that connected the Fraser Valley with the Kootenay region. Almost immediately the post was moved to the Upper Bench, above present-day Keremeos. The establishment of the trading post drew settlers, many of whom are commemorated by local

place names. A living landmark from the early era is the Keremeos Grist Mill, built in the 1880s, and open to the public today.

In 1886 the Federal government established native land reserves. Some of the Sylix people had become ranchers. Some reserves conformed to ranching parcels and are occupied to this day by descendants of the original First Nations ranchers.

A community known as Upper Keremeos formed around the trading post. Following a fire in 1904, the community centre moved ½ mile south and was called Keremeos Centre. When word came that the Great Northern Railway was being built through the Similkameen, speculators bought land closer to the river. Quickly, this community grew into what is now the Village of Keremeos.

Community Facilities

Recreation

Recreation Centre: bowling alley, racquet ball courts, fitness centre

Outdoor hockey rink

Skateboard Park

Outdoor swimming pool

Baseball diamonds

Memorial Park, Pine Park and Riparian Park

Biking and hiking trails system

Health Unit:

- Long Term Care assessment
- Community Nursing Care
- Home Support
- Palliative Care
- Family Medicine
- Public Health Nursing
- Mental Health
- Drug & Alcohol services

Ridgewood Lodge:

- 37 bed multi-level Residential Care
- Provides personal & daily care services, plus 24 hr. supervision by health care professionals.
- Nutritional services
- Activities programs
- Rehabilitation services

Police: The RCMP has a detachment in Keremeos

THE PEOPLE

In 2006, the population of Keremeos was 1289, up 7.7% since 2001. The population in the surrounding area was 3390, up 9.8% from 2001. Nearly 85% of residents were not born here,

indicating that movement of people to the area has been significant. Since 2000, in-migration has increased annually.

Income

Median individual income for persons over 15 years of age working full time is:

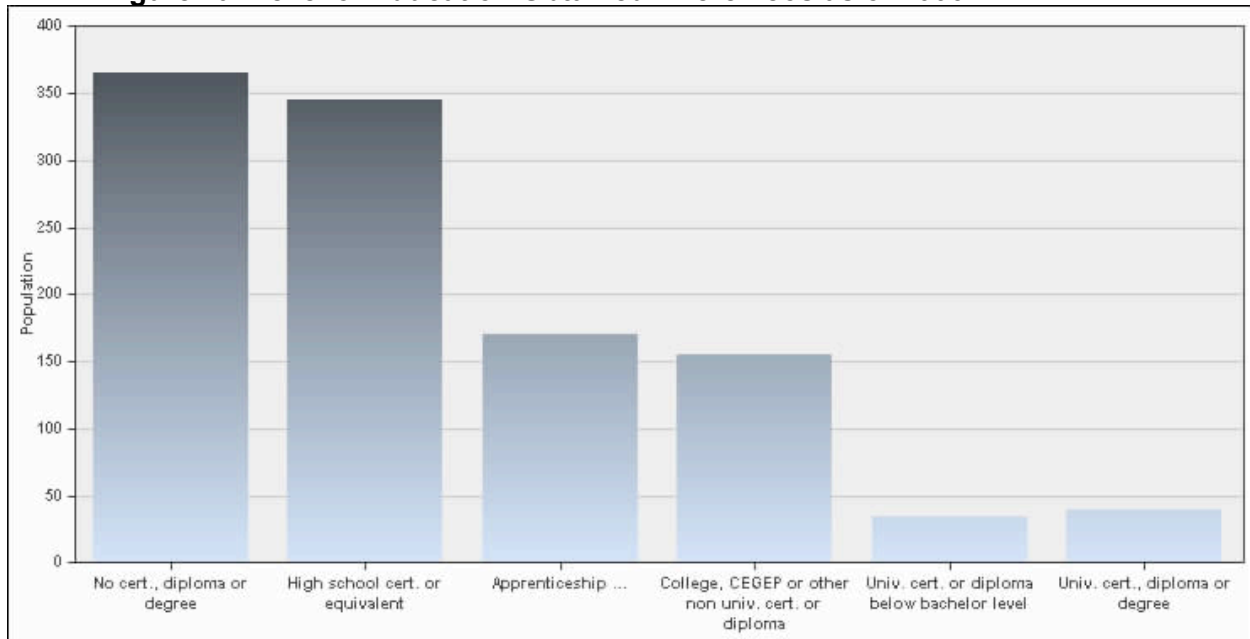
	Keremeos	British Columbia
All individuals	\$32377	\$42230
Male	\$34601	\$48070
Female	\$27746	\$36739

Median incomes in Keremeos are lower than the Provincial average. One likely reason is the very high number of retired persons. Non-employment income (pensions, investments) is 52% of total income in Keremeos.

Education

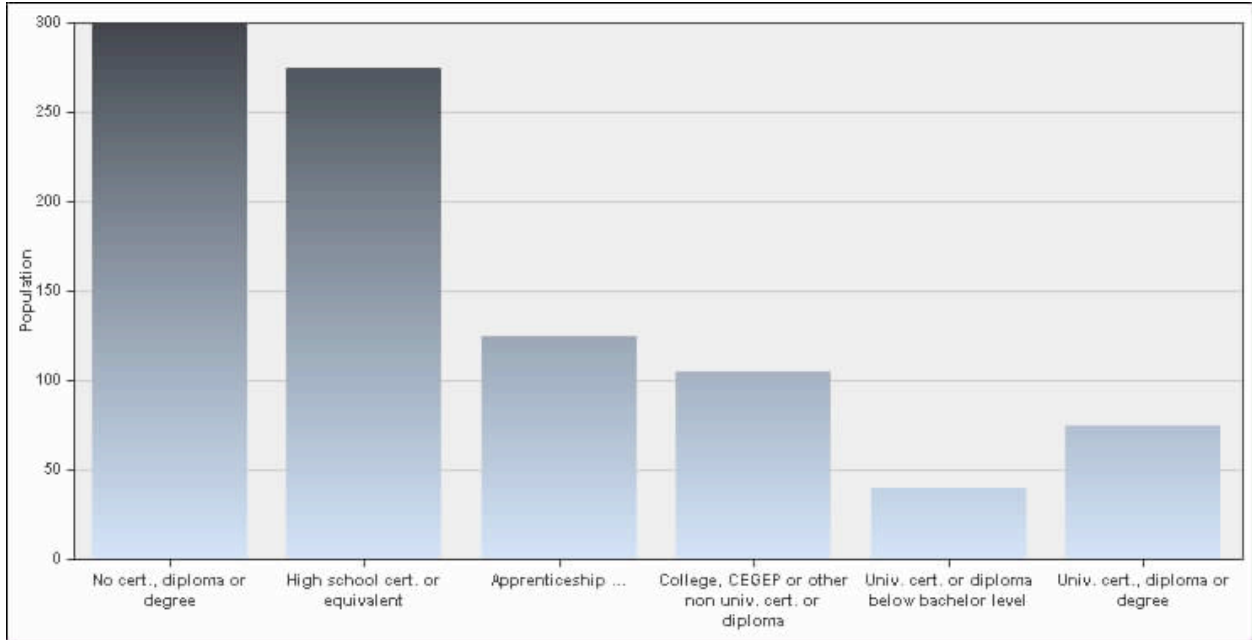
Education level attainments are shown in Figure 1. The data is for people 15 years and over, which increases the number shown for no certificate or diploma.

Figure 1a: Level of Education Obtained - Keremeos as of 2006



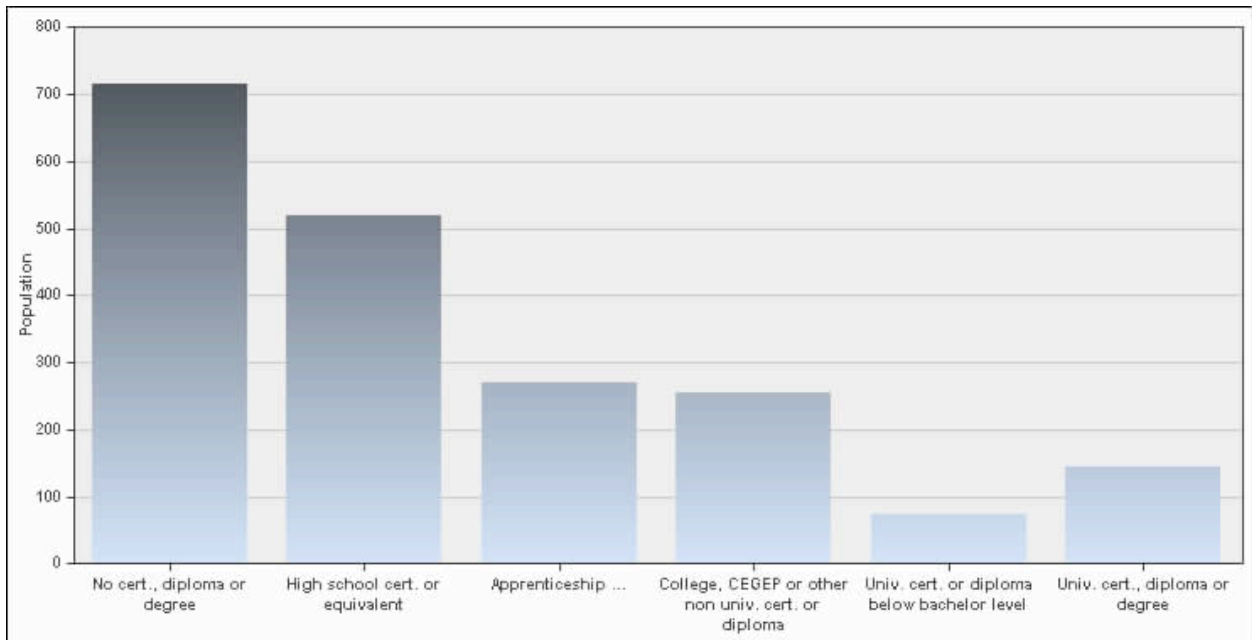
In Keremeos, 36% of residents hold a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. High numbers are in engineering and technology related fields, business management, health care and transportation services.

Figure 1b: Level of Education Obtained – Area B as of 2006



In Area B, 41% of residents have a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. High numbers in engineering and technology related fields, business management, health care and agriculture.

Figure 1c: Level of Education Obtained – Area G as of 2006



In Area G, 37% of residents have post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. High numbers in the engineering and technology related fields, health care, agriculture and transportation related sectors.

In BC, 47% of the population over 15 years has a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. Keremeos and Areas B and G have a higher percentage of residents with apprenticeships and non-university certificates and diplomas than the provincial average and a lower percentage with university diplomas or degrees.

Dwellings

According to the 2006 census, there are 620 private dwellings in Keremeos, of which 82% are single, detached homes. One hundred and thirty-five dwellings, approximately 22% of total dwellings, are rented. Two hundred and seventy-five (44%) dwellings were built between 1986 and 2006. The average price of a home in 2006 was \$190,000

In Areas B and G combined, there are 1505 dwellings. Area B has 95% single, detached homes, Area G has 62% single detached. In Area B, 31% of homes are mobile homes. Across both Areas, 280 homes, roughly 19%, are rented. There are 505 homes (34%) built between 1986 and 2006. The average value of a home in Area B in 2006 was \$404,000; in Area G average price was \$183,000.

The pace of residential construction in Keremeos has increased every year since 2003. Since 2004, 62 new homes have been built, equalling a growth rate of 10% over four years.

WORK AND INDUSTRY

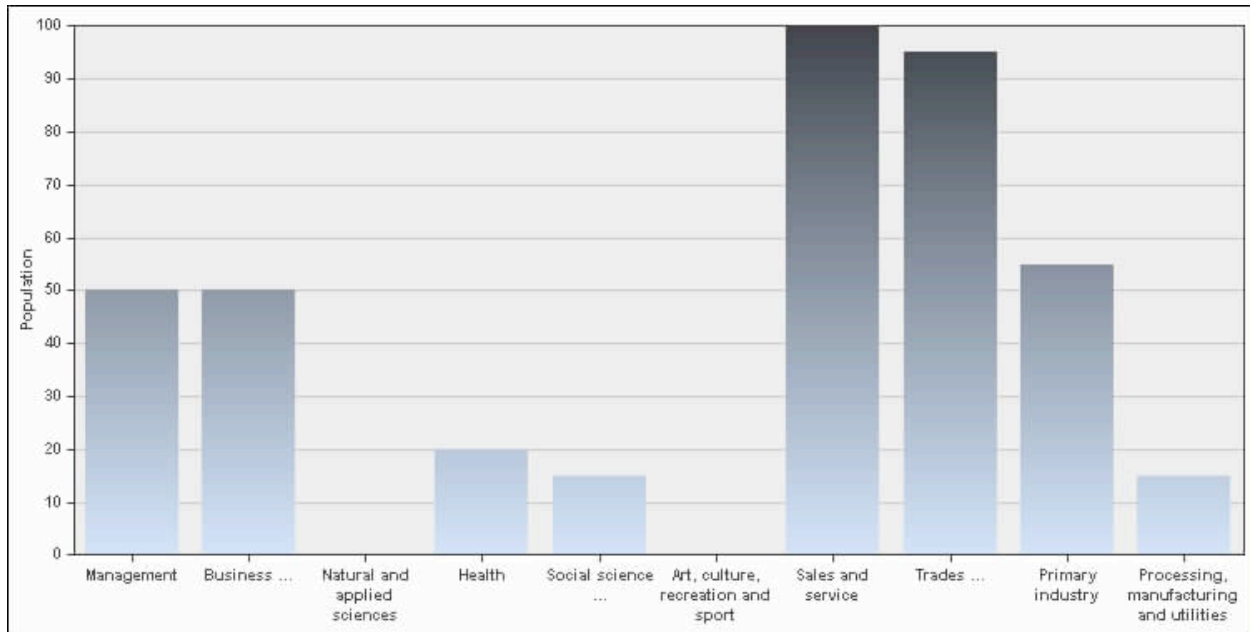
Labour Force

In 2006, the labour force for the Village and surrounding area was 1885 persons, giving a labour force participation rate of 47%. The participation rate for Keremeos is 37%, reflective of the high number of retirees living in the community.

Figure 2 shows labour force participation by labour sector. Consistent with the education profiles in Figures 1a-1c are the high percentage of jobs in the trades and primary industry. Agriculture and forestry are the primary industries. Manufacturing occupations are mainly related to wood products and food handling.

Area G has an occupations profile very similar to that of Keremeos. Area B has a very high proportion of occupations in the primary industry sector, attributable to agriculture industry.

Figure 2: Occupations in Keremeos



Industry

The main industry in the Keremeos area is agriculture. The Village has commercial farms within its boundaries. The surrounding area, chiefly Area B, is a food growing region. Grape growing is increasing rapidly in scale. In 2003, there were two wineries in the area. In 2008, there are eight, with more scheduled to open. Tourism is a large and growing contributor to the Keremeos and area economy. Agri-tourism is the largest segment of the tourism sector.

Table 2 shows the gross sales by industry sector in 2004 for businesses in the Similkameen Valley. Keremeos and area makes up about 40% of the Similkameen economy. Almost all of the agricultural is generated in the Keremeos area. Most of the forestry revenue is generated outside of the Keremeos area.

Table 2: 2004 Annual Gross Sales by NAICS Sector: Similkameen Valley

Total Gross Sales	NAICS Sector
\$59,075,000	Forestry
\$38,100,000	Retail Trade
\$21,237,500	Agriculture
\$16,500,000	Accommodation/Food Services
\$14,000,000	Manufacturing
\$12,662,500	Educational Services
\$11,337,500	Wholesale Trade
\$8,862,500	Construction
\$6,125,000	Health Care/Social Assistance

\$5,550,000	Other Services
\$3,837,500	Real Estate/Rental/Leasing
\$3,250,000	Public Administration
\$2,137,500	Transportation/Warehousing
\$2,125,000	Finance/Insurance
\$2,000,000	Utilities
\$1,862,500	Professional/Scientific/Technical Services

We estimate that the construction industry has at least doubled in size since 2004 when its gross revenue was \$8.8 million.

Keremeos is the retail and services hub for the Lower Similkameen Valley, an area extending from Hedley to the two passes into the Okanagan Valley on Hwy 3 (Richter Pass) and Hwy 3a (Yellow Lake)