The *Look into Wood Buffalo* Community Wellbeing Survey: Residents’ Perceptions of their Wellbeing

Bryan Smale, Ph.D.
Director, *Canadian Index of Wellbeing*
University of Waterloo

Resilient Communities Conference
Fort McMurray, Alberta
October 1-3, 2014
Wellbeing as a basic human right

“People are much more than the goods and services they produce! Their health and quality of life come from the conditions of their daily living – the circumstances in which they are born, grow, live, work, and age.”

The Honourable Monique Bégin
Former CIW Advisory Board Co-Chair
Former Canadian Commissioner
WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health
What is WELLBEING?

The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression, focused on but not necessarily exclusive to:

✔ good living standards
✔ robust health
✔ a sustainable environment

✔ high levels of democratic participation
✔ access to and participation in leisure and culture

✔ vital communities
✔ an educated populace
✔ balanced time use
CIW Mission

- to conduct **rigorous research** related to, and regularly and publicly report on, the quality of life of Canadians
- to encourage policy shapers and government leaders to make **decisions based on solid evidence**
- to empower Canadians to **advocate for change** that responds to their needs and values
Public Consultations

Community organisations, special interest groups, general public

Policy makers, government agencies

Consultants, academics, researchers

Research Teams

Domains and indicators selected, reports released

Sharing Results

First composite index released, permanent home at University of Waterloo

Canadian Index of Wellbeing

8 Domains
- Healthy Population
- Democratic Engagement
- Living Standards
- Community Vitality
- Education
- Environment
- Leisure and Culture
- Time Use

8 Indicators in each domain

CIW Composite Index
64 Indicators consolidated into a single CIW average
The CIW Approach

Tracking Indicators of Wellbeing in all Domains
CIW and GDP per capita 1994 to 2010

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN INDEX

GDP 29%

CIW 5.6%

YEARS

1994

100

110

120

130

2010
CIW Community Wellbeing Survey

Look into Wood Buffalo Selected Results
A Profile of Residents in Wood Buffalo

Two-thirds of residents are 44 years of age or younger (65.6%)

Two-thirds of residents are married couples with children, either still at home or living elsewhere (66.0%)

About 15% of residents were born in a country other than Canada and have lived here for about 19 years on average

Residents have lived in Wood Buffalo region for 14 years on average
Living Standards

85% of residents worked for pay, and 20.1% worked for 60 or more hours per week.

3 of 5 residents felt their personal lives enhanced their mood at work (61.2%), but over a third felt their jobs interfered with their personal lives.

Over 10% of residents could not pay their bills on time at least once in the past year.

Over 90% of residents shopped online for household items at least once in the past year.
Community Vitality

Over half of residents *volunteered* in the last 12 months (55.3%)

Over half of residents *provided some unpaid help to others* in the last 12 months

Three-quarters of residents are *proud of their community* (75.1%) and over two-thirds would recommend Wood Buffalo as *a great place to live* (68.1%)

*But …* almost 1 in 5 have *trouble connecting with others* (18.0%)
Only 2.6% report their mental health as *poor*, but that’s 2.5 times higher than the national rate (1.0%)

Almost half of residents say their health is *very good* or *excellent* (47.4%)

Three-quarters of residents *regularly eat healthy meals* (76.2%) and over half get *good quality exercise* (54.1%)

*But* … over 15% of residents felt they “could not get going” during the past week
Demographic Engagement

Over 1 in 3 residents participated in a local charitable event (35.8%) or a community event (35.5%) in last 12 months

But ... less than 10% were actively engaged in local issues in the community in the last 12 months (e.g., community meetings)

4 in 10 residents felt that the programmes and services offered by the local government had made them somewhat or much better off (41.9%)
Environment

Over 80% of residents feel they have a personal responsibility to help protect the natural environment (83.6%)

But … many do not feel the air quality (35.7%) or the water quality (26.1%) in the community is “very good”

Well over 80% of residents regularly recycle, reuse, and reduce, and try to conserve energy

But … 1 in 4 never walk, bike, or use public transit, or purchase foods locally produced
Time Use

Only about 14% of residents feel families have an adequate supply of childcare (although over 40% do not know)

Almost three-quarters of residents say they feel rushed at least once every week (73.5%)

Many residents feel there is not enough time to be active in the community (18.8%), be with their partners (19.0%), or be together as a family (18.3%)

Residents are getting a little less sleep than the recommended 7 to 8 hours per day (6.8 hours)
Education

Over 40% of residents took formal courses in the past year to improve their job skills and over 10% of residents took courses for interest in the past year (e.g., woodworking, sewing).

While over half of residents agreed there are many opportunities to take courses, almost 1 in 3 felt they were too expensive or offered at inconvenient times.

Over 60% of residents saw taking courses as opportunities to get to know people from different cultures.
Leisure and Culture

Most residents regularly participate in *light exercise* (88.5%) or *vigorous exercise* (57.9%) each month.

Most residents enjoy *reading for pleasure* each week (85.6%) and over two-thirds attended a *music concert* or *festival* in the past year.

Almost 9 of 10 residents *socialise with others online* every day.

*But …* 25.2% of residents feel the *cost* of public recreation programmes prevents participation.
Overall Wellbeing

82.6% of Wood Buffalo residents are satisfied with their lives in general.

80.0% feel that the things they do in life are worthwhile.
So how do residents of Wood Buffalo compare to those from other Canadian communities?
Residents who volunteered in the past 12 months

- Wood Buffalo: 55.3%
- Victoria: 53.9%
- Waterloo: 51.0%
- Guclph: 53.4%
- Kingston: 51.8%
Types of Organisations in which Residents Participate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Sports/Recreation</th>
<th>Public Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood Buffalo</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resident perceptions of health care services

Note: Represents the percentage of residents who rated services/access as “good” or better
Residents with a strong sense of belonging to the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood Buffalo</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>58.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Represents the percentage of residents who with a strong/very strong sense of belonging
Which domains make the most important contributions to overall wellbeing?
"LOOK INTO WOOD BUFFALO" - COMMUNITY WELLBEING SURVEY | HAVE YOUR SAY!

Canadian Index of Wellbeing

- Community Vitality
- Time Use
- Living Standards
- Leisure and Culture
- Healthy Populations
- Democratic Engagement
- Education
- Environment
We have tried to measure what matters...

Now we must make the measures matter
For more information: www.ciw.ca