

WHAT YOU SAID

- things to CELEBRATE
- things to IMPROVE

GREATER VICTORIA

- the BEST THINGS
- the ISSUES

VICTORIA'S VILLAGE OF

100

WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE?

MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE

VICTORIA'S

VITAL SIGNS[®] 10TH



GREATER VICTORIA'S ANNUAL CHECK-UP IS CELEBRATING ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY
2015

INSIGHTS & OUTLOOKS

10 YEARS OF VICTORIA'S VITAL SIGNS[®]



VICTORIA FOUNDATION

CONNECTING PEOPLE WHO CARE WITH CAUSES THAT MATTER[®]

+ How to Use This Report

Start conversations.

Use the information in this report to talk about what's behind the data and what people are experiencing in our community.

Take action.

If you're moved by what you read, use this report as a starting point for action.

Pass it on.

Share this report, the information in it and your reaction to it with friends, colleagues, neighbours or elected officials.

Contact us.

We know the issues and organizations in our community. If you are looking for ways to make a difference, we can help.

Request a speaker.

If you want to learn more about *Victoria's Vital Signs*®, contact us to arrange a presentation for your group or organization.

Find out more.

Learn about the many organizations in our community working to improve it, and ask how you, too, can help.

+ How to Understand This Report

More information about this report can be found in the **Methodology** section on page 58.




Issue / Response

The Victoria Foundation takes an active role in addressing issues of concern in our community. Often, these issues come to light as the result of research findings profiled in *Victoria's Vital Signs*®.

Public Opinion Findings

An online survey was taken by 2,009 people. Citizens were asked to grade each issue area. They were also asked to provide their top three priorities for improving the grade, and to tell us what is working well when it came to each area. This section provides the average grade as well as the most commonly noted priorities and statements about what is working well.

Community Wellbeing

Look for this  icon for data from the 2014 Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey.

Factual Data

Selected for their reliability and relevance, among other factors, indicator data were collected from a number of national, provincial and local sources such as Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Capital Regional District.

+ Scan of Trends

KEY ISSUE AREA	2014	2015	CHANGE
Arts & Culture	B+	B+	—
Belonging & Engagement	B-	B	↑
Economy	C+	C+	—
Environmental Sustainability	B	B	—
Getting Started in our Community	B-	B-	—
Health & Wellness	B	B	—
Housing	C	C	—
Learning	B	B	—
Safety	B	B	—
Sports & Recreation	B+	B+	—
Standard of Living	C+	B-	↑
Transportation	B-	C+	↓

Unforgettable, by Carey Newman



With an estimated 14,200 people who identify as Aboriginal, Greater Victoria is home to a rich diversity of Indigenous peoples and cultures. The Capital Region sits on the traditional territories of approximately 22 First Nations, of whom 11 have reserve lands

and, of these, nine have settlement populations within the region. We would like to acknowledge that the Victoria Foundation's office is located on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen peoples as represented by the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations.

This magazine has been printed on paper that has 10% post-consumer recycled content.

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The Victoria Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life in our community today and for generations to come. We inspire giving, care for the assets entrusted to us, and invest in people, ideas and activities that strengthen our community.

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THE PULSE OF THE CITY FOR 10 YEARS

Welcome to the tenth edition of *Victoria's Vital Signs*[®], the region's annual look at 12 different — yet interconnected — issue areas that are vital to our wellbeing as individuals, and as a community.

It's difficult to believe that it's already been a decade since we started producing this remarkable report. When we considered taking on this project back in 2006, we couldn't have guessed the impact that it would have throughout the Capital Region. Modelled on the report that the Toronto Community Foundation had been doing since 2001, we weren't sure how it would be received by the Greater Victoria community.

Were we ever in for a surprise.

Vital Signs hasn't just survived for 10 years, it's thrived! The publication has been used by countless institutions, governments, businesses, donors, students, and many others from virtually every corner of this wonderful region. At the Foundation, we've integrated it into everything we do — it has entered the DNA of our organization.

We're proud to have brought this initiative to our community, and of the positive changes it has helped — and will continue to help — make for everyone who lives here. A lot has changed in ten years too. Victoria isn't what it used to be, and it still holds tremendous potential for growth and improvement. The report continues to track progress we should be proud of and concerns that need to be addressed.

The Foundation is committed to building on our successes and tackling the challenges ahead. Ten years ago, our endowment was a little over \$70 million and, that year, we gave \$3.8 million to charitable organizations. A decade later, our endowment has grown to over \$250 million and last year we granted over \$13.3 million — more than a million dollars a month. From arts and culture to housing, sports and recreation, education, health and social services and more, we continue *connecting people who care with causes that matter*[®].

Thanks to the generous donors who share our vision for a healthier, happier, more vibrant community, we're improving the lives of citizens within the region, the province and across the country. A growing number of people — just like you — are instrumental in that change. Thank you.

Rasool Rayani
Chair, Board of Directors

Sandra Richardson
Chief Executive Officer



+ Quality of Life in Greater Victoria

Participants in this year's Vital Signs survey were generally very positive about their quality of life and feelings of connectedness to their community.

89%

Would describe themselves as **happy**

90%

Feel supported by **loving family, companions and/or friends**

74%

Are **happy in their job** and satisfied with work

71%

Rarely or very rarely **felt lonely** over the past week. Eight percent have felt lonely often or very often.

76%

Rate their general sense of **mental wellbeing** as high



71%

Rate their general sense of **physical wellbeing** as high.



26%

Feel high or **overwhelming stress** associated with personal finances

20%

Feel uncomfortable at least sometimes as a result of **discrimination**

83%

Feel somewhat or very **connected** to their community

68%

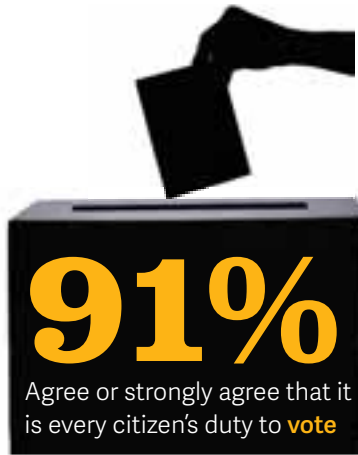
Are satisfied with **work and home life balance**

81%

Feel it is likely or very likely they will be **living and working** in Greater Victoria ten years from now

66%

Feel they have the opportunity to **make a difference** in their community or city



91%

Agree or strongly agree that it is every citizen's duty to **vote**

63%

Agree or strongly agree that it is every **citizen's duty** to engage in activities that strengthen democracy

61%

Actively participate in their community of interest

48%

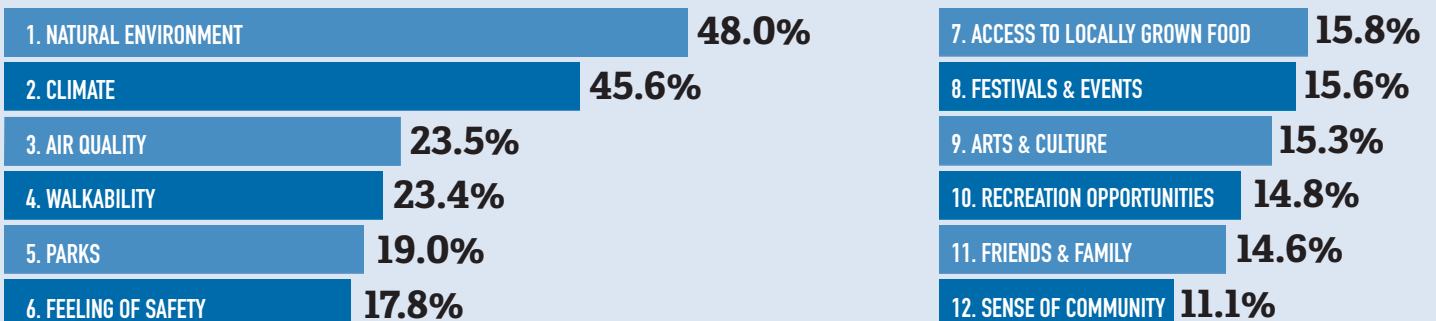
Volunteered their time to an organization at least once a month

63%

Feel they **know their neighbours** well enough to ask for assistance

+ The Best of Greater Victoria

What are the **best things** about Greater Victoria? According to Vital Signs graders, **these are their top 12** and the percentage of graders that selected them.



+ A Village of 100

gender

age breakdown

- 13**
0-14 years
- 12**
15-24 years
- 56**
25-64 years
- 9**
65-74 years
- 6**
75-84 years
- 4**
85+ years

48
MALES

52
FEMALES



marital status

- single (never married) **27**
- common-law **10**
- married **45**
- divorced **8**
- widowed **6**

Doesn't add up to 100 due to rounding and exclusion of "separated".

If Greater Victoria was made up of 100 people, there would be...

median age **44.2**

83 life expectancy at birth



languages

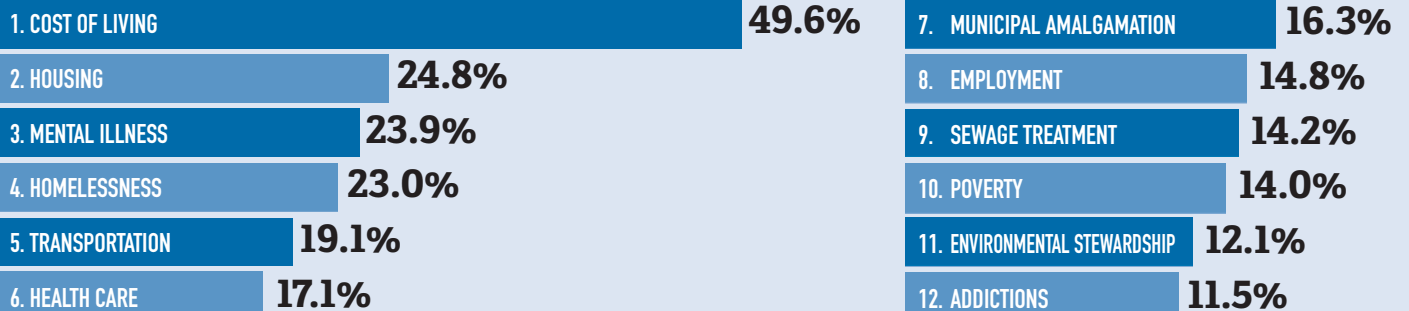
- 93** speak English most often at home
- 10** have knowledge of both official languages
- 5** speak other than English & French most often at home

miscellaneous

- employed **61**
- low income **13**
- Aboriginal **4**
- visible minority **11**
- immigrant **18**
- religious affiliation **49**
- post secondary credential **60**

+ Greater Victoria's Issues

What are the most important **issues** facing Greater Victoria today? According to Vital Signs graders, **these are the top 12** and the percentage of graders that selected them.





measuring what *matters*

VICTORIA'S VITAL SIGNS®

It is said that you can't manage what you can't — or won't — measure. But the flip side of managing what you measure is that what you measure is what you end up managing. So if we measure the wrong things, or measure them in the wrong way, we end up managing what we measure and not necessarily what we should be managing.

One of the key challenges we face in the 21st century is that in many cases we are measuring — and thus managing — the wrong things. A key purpose of the Vital Signs report is to focus our attention on what matters to us as a community, and to measure and thus better manage what matters.

Dr. Trevor Hancock

Professor and Senior Scholar

School of Public Health and Social Policy
University of Victoria

WE ARE MEASURING THE WRONG THINGS

A prime example of measuring and managing the wrong thing is Gross Domestic Product, the GDP. The system of national accounts from which the GDP is derived was established in the 1930s. One of its key architects, Simon Kuznets, warned the US Congress in 1934 that it should not be used as a measure of social welfare, noting that “the welfare of a nation can scarcely be inferred from a measure of national income.”

Yet that is how it has come to be used. The GDP has come to represent not only the national income of a country, but a descriptor of the general standard of living and wellbeing of the citizens of a country. We hear constant references in the news media and in government pronouncements to the GDP and whether it is growing, whether it is growing enough or whether — horrors! — it is shrinking. As a result, public policy largely becomes devoted to maximizing GDP, even if this means harming the health of the environment, the community or the population.

But the GDP is a ridiculous and indeed harmful way of assessing the

progress of a society or community. Consider that GDP includes both the entire economic activity of the tobacco industry and the entire economic activity involved in treating tobacco-related diseases; that when Hurricane Sandy hit the East Coast, the economic costs of cleaning up the mess, restoring and rebuilding damaged property all serve to boost the GDP; and that all the economic activity generated by an oil spill, a major fire or a war, is included.

Conversely, GDP does not measure all the non-monetized contributions that people make to social progress, especially at the local level. This includes most notably volunteer activity, but also growing our own food, raising our kids, caring for family and friends when they are ill and so on. Clearly, GDP is not a good measure of societal wellbeing or progress, since it puts the economy before considerations of a community's wellbeing, its inhabitants and its environment.

As a result, there is a growing interest in alternative measures of progress, a number of which are gaining currency as more valid such as the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, the Genuine Progress Indicator or the Happy Planet

Index. The Vital Signs report is itself a step in this direction at the local level. What they all have in common is a concern with measuring progress in different, more human-centred, environmentally and socially conscious ways. In essence, they all ask: What business are we in?

SO WHAT BUSINESS ARE WE IN?

If our purpose in life — as individuals, as communities and as a society — is to grow the economy, then maybe GDP is the right measure of progress. But surely there is more purpose to our lives than to grow an economy? Here are a couple of thoughts that I have been part of shaping over the years about what really matters.

First, my friend and colleague Len Duhl and I developed the original definition of a Healthy City for the World Health Organization in 1986. We described the various aspects of a Healthy City working together to “enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.”

A few years later I was part of a

Canadian Public Health Association Taskforce on Human and Ecosystem Health. In our 1992 report, we re-defined sustainable development from a human development perspective, writing: “Human development and the achievement of human potential require a form of economic activity that is socially and environmentally sustainable in this and future generations.”

Perhaps the most succinct and poetic statement I know of comes from Jim Rouse, the developer of Columbia, Maryland in the 1960s. He told his development team that he wanted them to “build me a garden to grow people in.”

Now that is something I hope we could all relate to: our purpose in life — the business we are in or should be in — is to “grow” people, not the economy, to maximize human development and the achievement of human potential, and to do so in a way that is ecologically and socially sustainable.


It is noteworthy that municipalities do not use the GDP as a measure of social wellbeing. In Canada, for example, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has been developing a system for measuring quality of life for more than 20 years; the Vital Signs reporting system has many similarities with it. This suggests that municipalities — and community foundations — operate from a very different value base than do provincial or national governments. It also suggests that these higher levels of government have much to learn from municipal governments and from the Vital Signs program about measuring progress!

WHAT MATTERS IN VICTORIA?


With all that as a preamble, we can now turn to what matters in Victoria. What we choose to measure tells us a lot about who we are and what we value, as individuals and as communities. Measurement tools such as the Vital Signs initiative of the Community Foundations of Canada can help tell us

TABLE 1:
KEY ISSUE AREAS


 Arts & Culture


 Belonging & Engagement


 Economy

 Environmental Sustainability

 Getting Started in our Community


 Health & Wellness

 Housing

 Learning

 Safety

 Sports & Recreation

 Standard of Living

 Transportation



what we think is important — and what we leave off the list may tell us what we think is not as important. Thus, what we choose to measure can help define what business we think we are in, as a community, or as the agency or group that creates a set of indicators.

So what does Vital Signs tell us about what we value (and what we don't) in Victoria? First, and interestingly, there are three parts to the process: a set of Key Issue Areas with indicator data in each, lists of “important issues” and “best things” for the region as chosen by local citizens, and a rating of the Key Issue Areas by the local citizenry.

The first is the identification of Key Issue Areas (Table 1) based on the 11 categories created in the original Vital Signs report developed in Toronto and then promulgated by Community Foundations Canada; a 12th category, Sports and Recreation, was added for the Victoria reports, based on local input. The Key Issue Areas provide a framework for organizing the Vital Signs survey questions and responses. Within each issue area, each year, a number of objective measures are presented. These indicators use fairly standard national, provincial and regional data.

Next there is the identification of two

separate sets of priorities based on the responses of more than 2,000 (in 2015) self-selected respondents to an open on-line survey that asks “What are the most important issues facing Greater Victoria today?” and “What are the best things about Greater Victoria?” (they select their top three from a set of options drawn from past surveys, but can also add new choices).

Such surveys are, of course, subject to a certain amount of bias — for one thing, you need to be able to access and use the online world — but perhaps less than we might think. As noted in the Methodology section of this report: “A recent comparison conducted by another community foundation found that the responses from a random sample telephone survey and the online survey revealed no significant differences between the two methodologies.”

Of the two sets of priorities that emerged from this on-line survey, one is about the most important concerns facing Greater Victoria (table, pg. 5), the other refers to the best things about Greater Victoria (table pg. 4).

The first of these — the important issues — identifies a set of largely social issues that can be grouped as relating to the cost of living (1, 2),

“The business we are in or should be in — is to ‘grow’ people, not the economy...”

related aspects of poverty (4, 10), mental health and addictions problems that often overlap with issues of poverty (3, 12), urban planning and management (5, 7), health care (6) and employment (8). In 2015, for the first time, more than one environmental issue made the top 12 (9, 11).

It is important to consider the interconnectedness of many of the issues (e.g. homelessness, housing, mental health and addictions — all of which we know are related), as well as recognizing that the choices made by the survey respondents may have been selected because they combine a number of issues. For example, when people choose “Cost of Living” they may, in fact, be conflating things such as housing costs, food costs, transportation costs and others under this convenient banner.

Turning next to the best things about Greater Victoria, they are mostly associated with the natural environment (items 1, 2, 3), the quality of the built environment (4, 5, 6), the sense of community (6, 11, 12) and culture and recreation (8, 9, 10), with access to locally grown food (7) as a separate benefit, perhaps fitting in with sense of community.

Perhaps not surprisingly, there is not much overlap; those that are seen as the “best things” are not those that are seen as “issues,” which are usually the problems or challenges we face. The category of “best things” equates to what is known as asset-based indicators; they measure the capacities and resources of a person, a group or a place. It is something we often fail to do, because we tend to focus on problems. But it is a very important approach in community development, where it is known as asset-based community development (ABCD). We need to identify and build on our strengths

as well as identify and address our weaknesses.

The Key Issue Areas (Table 1) are in some ways a combination of these lists of issues and assets, but with a few interesting additions not explicitly identified, or at least not obvious in those two lists: Environmental Sustainability, Getting Started in the Community (including things like early childhood development and the newcomer experience) and Learning (both formal education and lifelong learning).

The grading applied to these indicators by the participants in the online survey (Table 2) is also revealing. In broad terms, the quality of sports and recreation, culture and human health and development in the Victoria Region (1, 2, 3 and 5) is rated fairly high, while economic issues (9, 11, 12) are not rated as high.

SHIFTING CONCERNS? TEN YEARS OF VITAL SIGNS

The first *Victoria’s Vital Signs*® report was published in 2006; this is the 10th. How have concerns and issues changed over those years? While not all the reports have included grading of the issues by participants in the online surveys, this has been a feature since 2008, and the shifts that have occurred — or not occurred — since then are worth commenting on. What story about our perceptions of Victoria — and our changing perceptions — does the series of Vital Signs reports tell us?

First, there has been a steady, marked and quite dramatic decline in seeing homelessness as the #1 issue facing Victoria in 2008 (58%) to being the #4 issue in 2014 (16%). But it is not clear that the problem has diminished all that much, until this year.

- The 2011 report noted that, between

them, five of Greater Victoria’s six shelters provided beds to 1,823 unique individuals in 2008/09, increasing to 1,958 in 2010/11, although the 2014 report noted a slight drop in 2013/14 to 1,785 unique individuals.

- This year’s report notes a further drop to 1,167 unique individuals based on the 2014 Facility Count.

It seems that until very recently the level of homelessness has not changed all that much, but public concern has plummeted, which in itself is a cause for concern.

Second, and at the same time, there has been a steady rise in seeing the cost of living as the #1 issue, from 2nd place at about 37% in 2008/10 to 1st place since 2009, peaking at 52% in 2014.

The cost of living is a more general and broad-based concern, affecting everyone, while homelessness affects only a small (but very vulnerable) group of people. So what does this apparent reversal of priorities mean? Is it that our opinion of those less fortunate has shifted, or are we simply more preoccupied with our own situations due to mounting economic pressures?

The concern with the cost of living seems somewhat inconsistent with the fact that **poverty has not been ranked that highly as an important issue**, coming around 8th or 10th in importance at about 12 – 15%; in some years it did not even feature in the top dozen issues. Yet poverty rates remain fairly stable and quite high, especially among single-parent families and among children (for more on this, see the Standard of Living section in this report).

A third key theme is a steady and marked decline in seeing addictions as an important issue, from the #3 issue facing Victoria in 2008–2010 (37%)

**TABLE 2:
GRADING OF KEY ISSUE AREAS**

	2013	2014	2015
Arts & Culture	B+	B+	B+
Belonging & Engagement	B-	B-	B
Economy	C+	C+	C+
Environmental Sustainability	B-	B	B
Getting Started in our Community	B-	B-	B-
Health & Wellness	B	B	B
Housing	C	C	C
Learning	B+	B	B
Safety	B	B	B
Sports & Recreation	B+	B+	B+
Standard of Living	B	C+	B-
Transportation	B-	B-	C+
Overall Quality of Life	B+	B+	B+

to the #12 issue in 2015 (11.5%). In the 2014 youth survey it was the 10th most important issue, at 11%.

But there has also been a fairly steady and somewhat increasing concern with mental illness, from about the 5th most important issue (16%) in 2008 to 2nd in 2013 and 3rd in both 2014 and 2015 at 20% and 24% respectively. Indeed, **if combined, addictions and mental illness would have been the second most important issue every year except 2011, when they would have been first.**

Yet most people have good mental health. The self-reported rates of positive mental health among South Vancouver Island residents over age 12 have fluctuated between 69% in 2009 and 76% in 2013; this was higher than BC (67%) and Canada (71%) in 2013.

Clearly then, it is not that people as a whole feel they have poor mental health — far from it — but that they presumably have a concern for the sometimes obvious and sometimes hidden mental health problems that many do experience in their lives, and the lack of suitable services to assist

people when they do have mental health and addiction issues.

Fourth, there has been a steady concern with housing as important, generally the 4th most important issue, but this dropped a bit after 2010 from 27% (average for 2008 – 2010) to about 20% on average in the years since, though rising this year to almost 25%.

As of March 31, 2014, there were 7,510 units of subsidized rental housing in Greater Victoria, operated by BC Housing, up from the 6,347 units as of as of March 31, 2006. This year's report notes that as of April 2015, the average vacancy rate for market rental housing in the region was 1.2% (and 1% for one bedroom apartments), despite an increase in market rental supply over the past two years.

Beyond these top four concerns, there has been a steady, moderate and about equal concern with community planning and with transportation since they both appeared in 2010 and with municipal amalgamation (since 2012). There has also been an intermittent

moderate concern with eldercare, sewage treatment and employment. But several issues have appeared only once or twice in the top concerns: crime/law and order, leadership, childcare, the economy and, in 2015 for the first time, environmental stewardship.

On the positive side, since 2011, respondents to the online community survey have also been asked to identify **the best things about Greater Victoria**. As noted earlier, these are the assets that make Victoria a good place to live.

1. The **natural environment and the climate** have easily and consistently been the first and second best thing, respectively, with air quality consistently ranked high, in fourth or third place.
2. **Walkability** dropped after 2012 from 30% to a low of 18% in 2014, and back up again slightly to 4th position at 23%.
3. While **festivals and events** appear to drop in 2013 and 2014, this was perhaps because of the choice of *arts and culture* as a category. When combined, they score consistently in the top half of best things.
4. **Parks, locally grown food, and friends and family** score consistently as moderately important.
5. **Community safety** has been of moderate importance since showing up in 2013.
6. **Recreation** was valued steadily but somewhat less, as were community support and sense of community (which might conflate?).

These attributes — which in general are remarkably stable and consistent over time — together with the absence of crime and safety as an important issue of concern, suggest what it is that makes Victoria a livable and enjoyable community with a high quality of life. Interestingly though, a couple of aspects that are surprisingly absent

from this list, but are often part of what people describe as a healthy or livable community, are cultural diversity and the preservation of heritage.

Clearly, it is important to preserve and indeed enhance these aspects of the Victoria region, while addressing the issues identified earlier.

WHAT MATTERS? VICTORIA'S "COMMUNITY CAPITAL"

So what are we to make of all of this? What matters in Victoria? I suggest the following:

- ♦ A high quality natural environment that is managed sustainably.
- ♦ A high quality built environment that is managed effectively for people and sustainably for the natural environment.
- ♦ A sense of community/belonging and the security that comes with that.
- ♦ A prosperous but affordable community with a decent standard of living and low levels of poverty.
- ♦ Human development that encompasses health and wellbeing, early childhood development and learning and is enriched by the arts, culture and recreation.

One way of thinking about these characteristics is that they represent five forms of "capital" that together create community capital. To this list, I would add the process of governance that enables us to balance these often competing priorities and make decisions.

The concept of multiple forms of

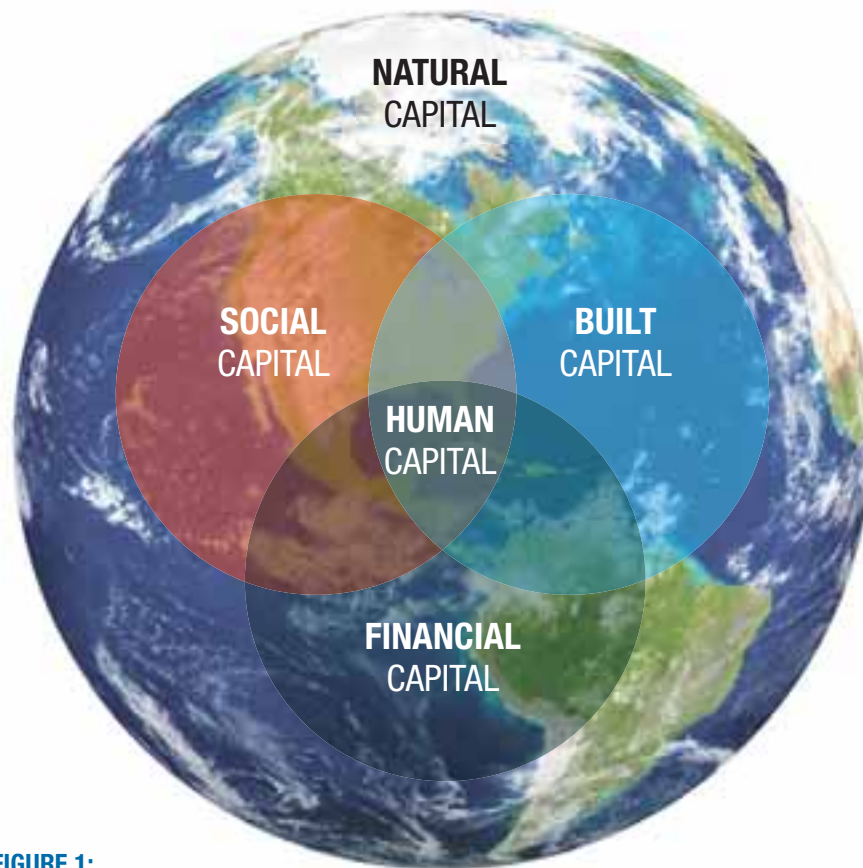


FIGURE 1:
COMMUNITY CAPITAL

Source: Based on Hancock, 2001

capital is a mainstay of "alternative economics" (e.g. Ekins et al, 1992) that was taken up at least 20 years ago by the World Bank (1995). The four forms of capital that were identified (a fifth is sometimes added) are:

- ♦ **Financial or economic capital** — what we usually think of as "capital": money, stocks and bonds, and material things (the latter are sometimes split off, in part, as **built capital**).
- ♦ **Social capital** — often understood as the informal social networks within society that create social cohesion and civiness, but also includes what I call "formal" social capital (the social infrastructure through which we have formalized our relationships with each other, in

the form of the social contract) and "invisible" social capital (the legal, political, diplomatic, constitutional and democratic systems that regulate our interactions and are fundamental to our largely peaceable way of life).

- ♦ **Natural capital** — the Earth, its ecosystems and resources, what are sometimes called the ecosystem "goods and services" that underpin our wellbeing — and indeed our very survival.
- ♦ **Human capital** — our individual level of health, education, creativity, innovativeness, empathy, capacity for caring and so on; the attributes of a well-developed human being.

The relationship between the five forms of capital referred to

¹Hancock, Trevor (2001) "Building Community Capital: People, Partnerships and Human Progress" Health Promotion International 16(3): 275- 280

²Ekins, Paul; Hillman, Mayer and Hutchinson, Robert (1992) Wealth Beyond Measure: An Atlas of New Economics London: Gaia Books

³World Bank (1995) Monitoring Environmental Progress (MEP) A Report on Work in Progress Washington DC: World Bank

“We need to identify and build on our strengths as well as identify and address our weaknesses.”

above is shown in Figure 1, which is a modified version of my original conceptualization. Collectively, these constitute what I call “community capital.”

One important implication of the model is that the health, wellbeing and level of human development of the individual at the centre — which should be our real measure of progress as a community or society — is dependent upon the overlap between the social, financial and built forms of capital. Indeed, if there is no overlap, there is no human capital! On the other hand, the greater the overlap, the greater the level of human capital.

A second implication of the model is that all we do in our economic, social and human development occurs within the limits of the Earth’s natural capital: there is only one Earth. Yet we are behaving as if that simple fact were not the case.

The inclusion of built capital as a separate form of capital is important on two counts: first, because we have built a massive physical infrastructure all over the world — not just cities and buildings but energy, agricultural, transportation and other systems — that are now fundamental to our wellbeing. Second, we in North America and other high-income countries are

80–90% urbanized and spend about 90% of our time indoors; the built environment is now our normal habitat and its quality is vital to our wellbeing.

Above all, the model shows that these forms of capital intersect and interact. Yet we often organize our society and our systems of governance not only as if the environmental, social, human and economic sectors were unrelated, but as if there were no limits to growth. This is a sure-fire way to make things worse, especially in the face of a growing ecological crisis, which in turn will trigger economic, social and human development crises.

So perhaps the most profound and radical implication of this model is the implicit critique of our current economic system, based as it is on a very simplistic and poorly thought out belief that only one form of capital — economic capital — counts. All too often this has led us to build economic capital at the expense of natural, social or human capital (and sometimes, all three), because in our present, distorted system, they don’t matter as much.

This is no longer an acceptable economic model. The challenge for economists, businesses, governments and communities is to devise a new model of capitalism in which all five forms of capital are seen as

equally valuable. Real capitalists in the 21st century are those who will simultaneously grow all four (or five) forms of capital. The challenge for society as a whole is to devise systems of governance that will establish a balance between all these forms of capital, while at the same time prioritizing human development for all.

Municipal governments and local communities are in a position to take the lead on this vitally important issue; indeed, they are already doing so. As noted earlier, they do not measure their progress against GDP, as do higher levels of government, but in terms of quality of life. Moreover, they have led the way on a wide range of environmental and social issues in recent years, from tobacco use to energy efficiency and environmental sustainability to dealing with homelessness and substance abuse.

The challenge for communities and their municipal governments in the 21st Century will be to develop new systems and processes of governance that engage people in devising systems and solutions that build all forms of community capital while maximizing human development that is socially just and ecologically sustainable. The Vital Signs reports provide important information that can help us do that.

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Originally coined by Dr. William Rees and Mathis Wackernagle from the University of British Columbia, the ecological footprint is a measure of human demand on the Earth’s ecosystems. It represents the amount of biologically productive land and sea area necessary to supply the resources a human population consumes, and to assimilate associated waste. Using this assessment, it has been estimated that humanity’s total ecological footprint is **1.5 planet Earths**; in other words, we use the planet’s ecological capacity one and a half times as quickly as Earth can renew them.



ARTS & CULTURE



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHANNE HEMOND

● The Issue

Citizens taking the Vital Signs survey asked for more affordable and accessible arts opportunities.

● The Response

The Greater Victoria Eldercare Foundation's *Embrace Aging through the Arts and Community* program, supported by a Victoria Foundation grant, provides a visual arts program to long-term care residents at Aberdeen Hospital. The Recreation Therapy program, which includes a variety of art media, helps to improve the cognitive and emotional wellbeing of participants and provides them with a sense of belonging to the community. Professional artists regularly come in to assist, and finished artwork is shown in the community at several locations, including the Community Arts Council's Gallery at Cedar Hill Recreation Centre and at the TD Art Gallery Paint-in.

When Vital Signs first reported on [Little Free Libraries in 2013](#), there were an estimated eight book boxes in front yards across the region. As of September 2015, there were 57. Operating on the principle of "take a book, leave a book," they are free for anyone to use. A worldwide movement, Little Free Libraries promotes literacy and provides a gathering place for the community to share their favourite literature and stories. A list of all locations is available online at victoriaplacemaking.ca.





Things to Celebrate:

- Vibrant arts and culture community with diverse offerings
- Strong festival scene
- Variety of quality organizations and venues fostering the arts

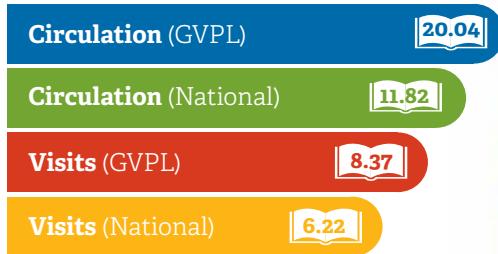


Things to Improve:

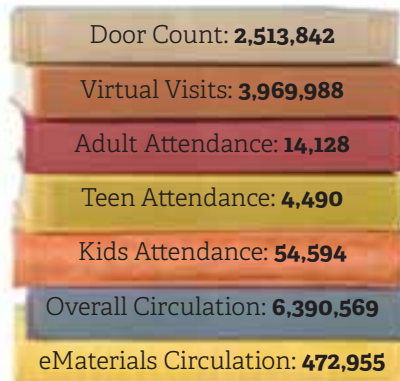
- Offering more affordable arts and cultural activities
- Increasing funding to support arts and culture
- Creating more festivals and community celebrations

LIBRARY USE

In **2013**, the Greater Victoria Public Library was one of the **busiest in Canada**, per capita.



GVPLs **10** branches:



EMPLOYMENT UP IN CULTURAL INDUSTRIES



2.6% of all industry employment was in the cultural industries in **2013**, higher than the provincial and national rates in **2013** and the highest for the region since **2000**.



REGIONAL ARTS FUNDING

Since **2001**, the Capital Regional District Arts Development Service, through its operating grant program, has:



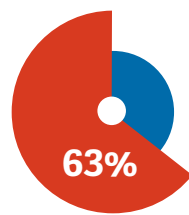
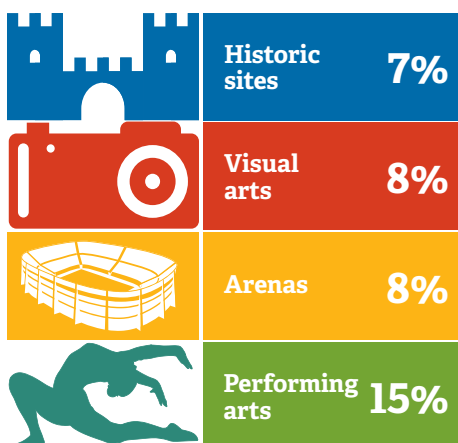
Snapshot of **32** CRD operationally-funded organizations

	2011	2013	Net change
FT staff	118	152	+34
PT staff	506	599	+93
Paid artists	2,229	2,653	+424
Events	1,948	2,285	+337

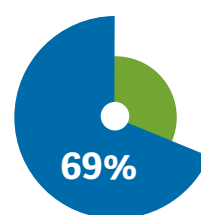
Between **2012** and **2014**, over **\$6 million** in operating grants were allocated to arts organizations in Greater Victoria, with an estimated additional **\$390,000** to **\$495,000** in project grants.

CULTURAL FACILITIES

Greater Victoria residents' attendance at cultural facilities in **2014**:



agree that programs are convenient times



feel the facilities are welcoming



prevented from participation due to cost

FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES



BC is home to **60%** of First Nations languages in Canada with **34** unique languages. In **2014**, there were:



CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

In **2014**, **29%** of Greater Victoria residents reported that they were a member or participant in a cultural, educational or hobby organization.



BELONGING & ENGAGEMENT



PHOTO CREDIT: CATHIE FERGUSON

● *The Issue*

2013 Youth Vital Signs survey respondents were looking for more leadership training and mentoring opportunities.

● *The Response*

The Songhees Academic Youth Leadership group, supported by funding from the Victoria Foundation, provides volunteer opportunities and leadership training for 25 youth participants. The youth are also engaging the wider community with their activities: they held a potluck for 100 people from the Songhees Nation to talk about issues important to them, and more potlucks and workshops for the community are planned.

In June this year, the [District of Sooke](#) received an award from the Province of BC and BC Healthy Communities Society for their age-friendly action plan, which includes securing and supporting options for accessible and independent senior living and promoting barrier-free design in public spaces.





Things to Celebrate:

- Opportunities to get involved in events, festivals and organizations
- Strong sense of community and volunteerism
- City administration efforts to engage citizens



Things to Improve:

- Increasing opportunities to get involved in community and neighbourhood activities
- Improving voter turnout
- Increasing involvement of marginalized groups

VOTER TURNOUT UP LOCALLY

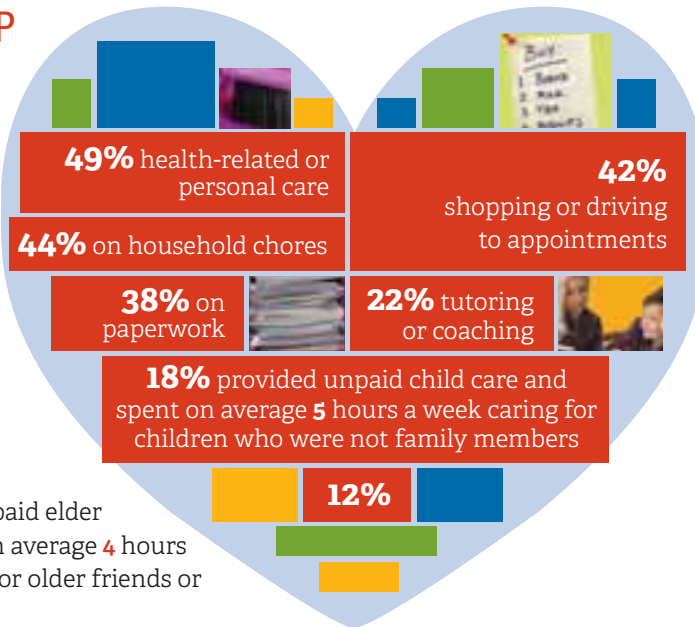
Voter participation in **municipal** elections went up considerably in **2014**, with **98,473** total votes cast as compared to **77,951** in **2008** and **76,086** in **2011**.



Voter turnout for the last three federal elections in Greater Victoria			
	2006	2008	2011
Canada	64.7%	58.8%	61.1%
BC	63.7%	60.1%	60.4%
Victoria	70.8%	67.5%	68.8%

UNPAID HELP

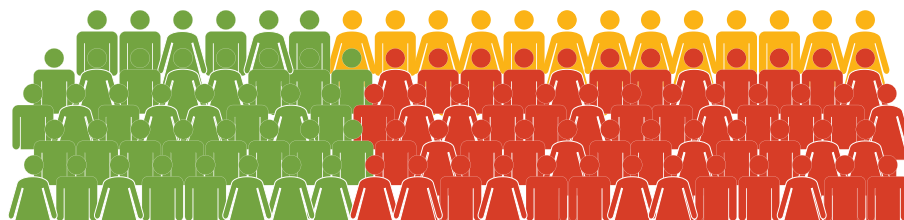
In **2014**, of the Greater Victoria residents who provided unpaid help to others:



12% provided unpaid elder care and spent on average 4 hours per week caring for older friends or neighbours.

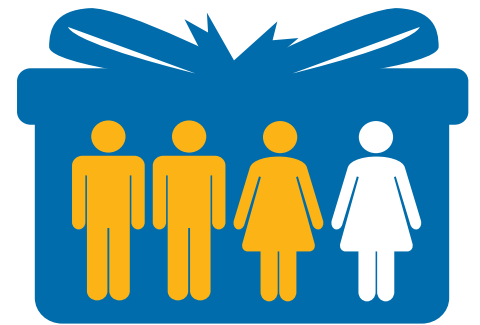
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

While nearly **50%** of Greater Victoria residents felt that local government programs and services made them better off, **38%** said they made no difference and **13%** said they made them worse off.



CHARITABLE GIVING HOLDING STEADY

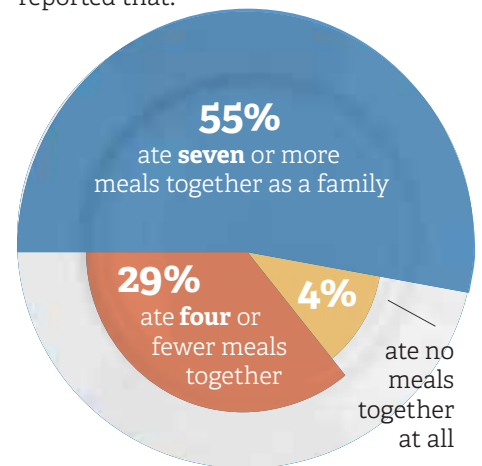
25% of all tax filers in Greater Victoria made charitable donations in **2013**, on par with **2012**, and more than BC and Canada in **2013**.



\$400 was the median donation in Greater Victoria in **2013**, up from **\$390** in **2012**, and the same as BC but much higher than Canada (**\$280**) in **2013**.

FAMILY MEALS

In **2014**, Greater Victoria residents reported that:



VOLUNTEERING

In **2014**, **54%** of Greater Victoria residents volunteered during the previous year. Volunteering and participation in community organizations were highest in the Gulf Islands and lowest in the West Shore.



PHOTO CREDIT: CATHIE FERGUSON

● The Issue

Victoria's Youth Vital Signs consistently reported that youth were looking for more teen-friendly employers and better job training.

● The Response

The Pacific Centre Family Services Association's Skookum Skillz is a free, 12-week program for youth to gain hands-on work experience in the Skookum Café in Colwood. Supported by a Victoria Foundation community grant, it provides weekly training in different skills desirable in the hospitality industry. Youth enrolled in the course learn Food Safe, First Aid, barista training, latte art, knife skills and customer service. They also learn resumé/job readiness skills and take Ready to Rent courses.

Think Local First is an organization that encourages people to patronize local businesses helping to create an economically stronger and healthier region. Two to three times as much money stays in the local economy when goods and services are purchased from locally owned businesses versus non-local companies. They also invest more in local labour, pay more local taxes, spend more time on community-based decisions and create local events. And locally owned companies and employees are statistically more likely to give to local charities.

WHO knew?

GETTING FINANCIALLY FIT IN VICTORIA

Over the past decade, Victoria's high cost of living has been a recurring theme in every Vital Signs report — rising to the top in 2014 when one in four survey respondents said they felt overwhelming stress associated with personal finances and 52.4% of all participants said cost of living was the biggest issue facing Greater Victoria.

As one of Canada's most desirable places to live, the region's living wage is likely to remain high — and so financial fitness is a priority for Victoria families. Here are three tips to help get you in shape:

Spend less than you make.

All good things in personal finance flow from this golden rule — but Victoria's high cost of living means that families need to get creative. Start by tracking everything you spend in a full month and, after pinpointing areas of spending that can easily be trimmed, create a reasonable monthly budget. Cook at home, pack your lunch and download couponing apps — every little bit will help you stash about 10% of your earnings away in savings.

Make the right call on housing.

A home is a place to live and to raise a family, whether you rent or you own (and no matter what neighbourhood you choose). Either way, it ties up a substantial amount of your household income. Take your budget to your financial advisor to have a discussion about the pros and cons of renting vs. buying and how this decision should influence your investing behaviour.

Involve the kids in family finances.

The best financial help any parent can give their child is information and experience. Talk comfortably about money, model good savings behaviour, use monthly allowances as a learning tool and involve your children in household financial decisions so they can learn first-hand that compromise is what money management is all about.

IslandSavings

A DIVISION OF FIRST WEST CREDIT UNION



Things to Celebrate:

- Small business and entrepreneurial support
- Efforts to diversify economy and high technology sector growth
- Economic stability of strong government and post-secondary sectors

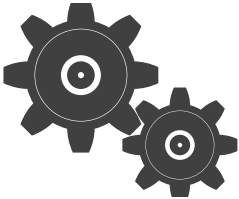


Things to Improve:

- Diversifying the economy
- Increasing job opportunities for new graduates
- Improving supports for entrepreneurs and small business

TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

In **2013**, the tech sector in Greater Victoria generated **\$4 billion** in economic impact.



The technology sector employs an estimated **15,000** people in the region.



There are an estimated **884** technology companies with employees in the Capital Region.

VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

As of September **2013**, there were **19** video game studios in Greater Victoria that generated an estimated:



\$24 million in local spending and provided **240** jobs.



A full-time employee in the local video game industry earns an average of **\$75,000** annually.

WORKING MORE THAN ONE JOB

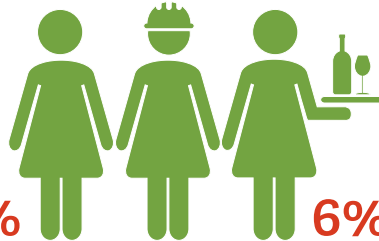
In **2014**, **77%** of Greater Victoria residents reported that they had **one** paid job, **17%** had **two** jobs and **6%** had **three** or more jobs, either full- or part-time.



77%



17%



6%

NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

In **2014**, the value of non-residential building permits in Greater Victoria was **\$218 million**, the same as the previous year.



CRUISE SHIP INDUSTRY

In **2014**, cruise ships brought an estimated **465,000** passengers to the Capital Region.



Cruise numbers		
	2013	2014
Ship calls	203	203
Passengers	481,733	464,838
Direct spending		
Cruise lines	\$55.3m	\$69.1m
Passengers	\$29.3m	\$24.8m
Crew	\$10.1m	\$7.2m
Total economic impact		
Total output	\$181.8m	\$194.8m
Jobs	1,049	1,103
FTE jobs	865	880
Wage income	\$49.8m	\$54.9m

INVOLUNTARY PART-TIME WORKERS

In **2014**, **26%** of all workers in Greater Victoria were involuntary part-time workers (i.e. wanted full-time work but couldn't find it due to poor business conditions or other reasons beyond their control).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

In **2014**, the unemployment rate for Greater Victoria was **5.4%** as compared to **5.2%** in **2013**.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:





ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

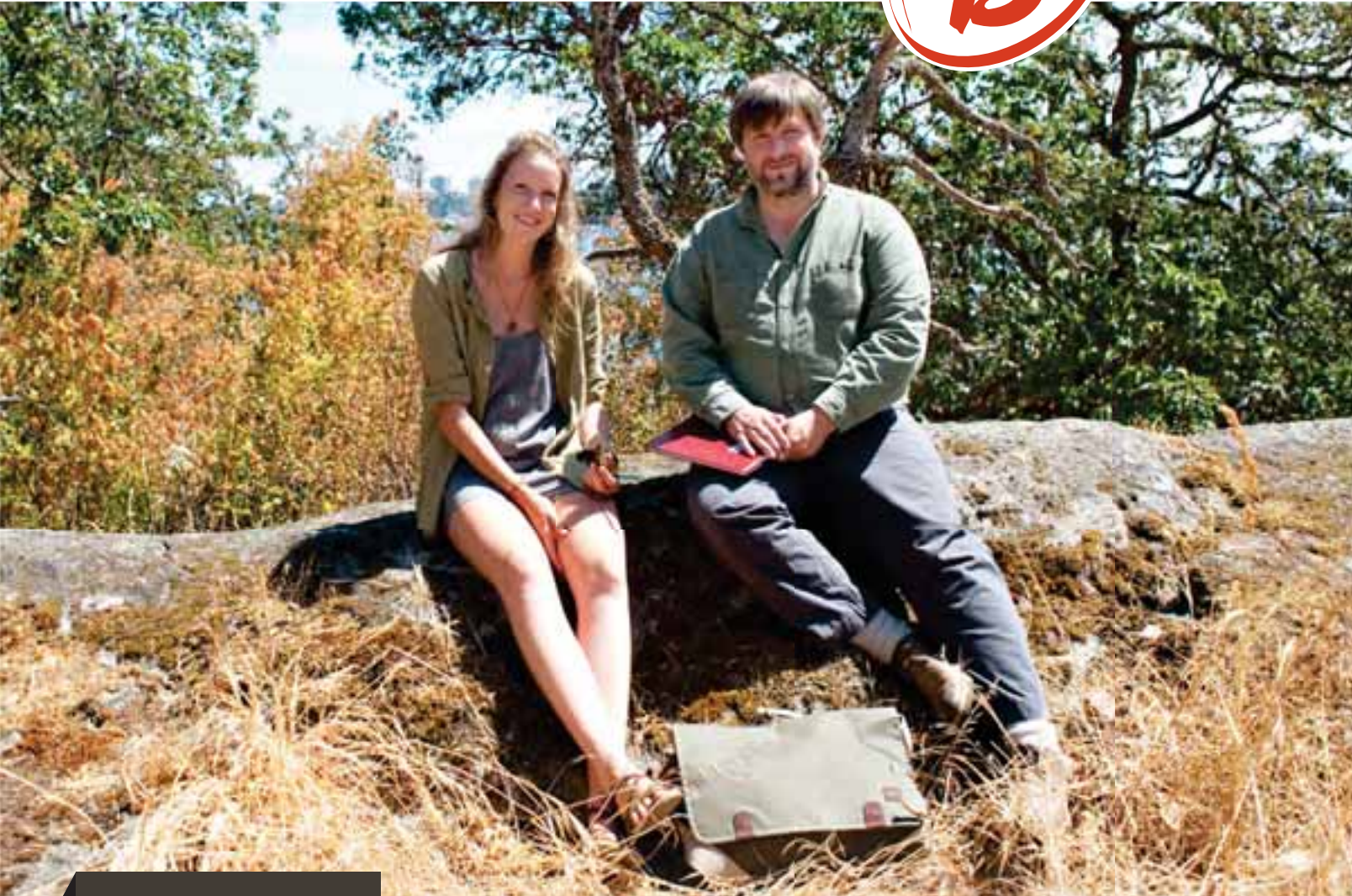


PHOTO CREDIT: CATHIE FERGUSON

● *The Issue*

In 2013 Vital Signs reported that the Capital Region lost significant tree cover between 2005 and 2011, roughly equal to losing Mount Douglas Park every year.

● *The Response*

Habitat Acquisition Trust's Community Conservation Program permanently conserves natural areas through legal agreements and brings Victoria's conservation community together to collaborate on environmental issues. With funding from the Victoria Foundation, HAT will work with three land owners and other conservation partners to permanently protect 24 hectares of natural area through conservation covenants. They will also bring together conservation stakeholders from around the region to introduce new tools to help local governments and environmental organizations plan conservation actions in the Coastal Douglas Fir Zone.

Honey bees are vitally important to our livelihoods, but recently populations have been declining due to a number of factors, including disease, parasites and pesticides. A number of Victoria businesses are involved in beekeeping and harvesting the honey produced, including Chateau Victoria, 10 Acres Bistro + Bar + Farm and The Fairmont Empress Hotel, where over 1 million onsite honey bees produce about 1,134 kilograms of honey annually, much of which is sold at the Empress gift store.





Things to Celebrate:

- Access to farmers markets and locally grown food
- Progressive green initiatives (e.g. cycling, transit, recycling & composting)
- Awareness of environmental accountability and efforts to reduce carbon footprint



Things to Improve:

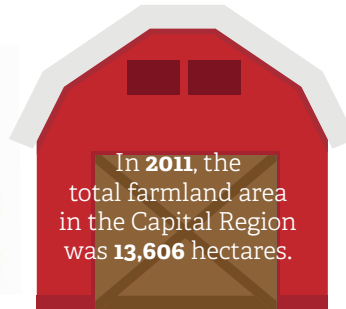
- Addressing sewage treatment
- Reducing our reliance on cars
- Support for local food production

CHANGING FARMLAND USE IN THE REGION

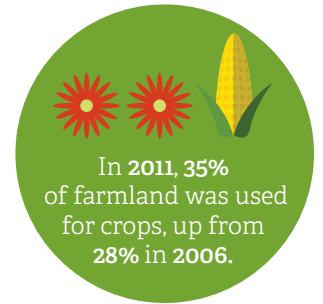


In **2011**, **96,155** square metres of farmland were used for greenhouse flower and vegetable production, up from just over **80,000** square metres in **2006**.

Greenhouse production area in **2011** was:



In **2011**, the total farmland area in the Capital Region was **13,606** hectares.



Between **2006** and **2011**, the number of farms with colonies of bees for honey increased from **60** to **69**. The number of bee colonies dropped from **5,245** in **2006** to **2,438** in **2011**.



PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

In **2014**, **92%** of Greater Victoria residents reported that they had a personal responsibility to help protect the natural environment.



of residents regularly participated in local events to protect the natural environment

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT



AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE

The size of the Agricultural Land Reserve in the Capital Region has decreased by over **600** hectares between **2009** and **2014**.

2009	2011	2012	2013	2014
17,065	16,379	16,382	16,404	16,399

KITCHEN SCRAPS DIVERSION

Since **2015**, all kitchen scraps have been banned from landfill in the Capital Region.





GETTING STARTED IN OUR COMMUNITY



PHOTO CREDIT: CATHIE FERGUSON

● *The Issue*

Vital Signs has reported on the lack of childcare spaces in Greater Victoria for children under five. Improving resources for childcare has been a Board priority for the Victoria Foundation.

● *The Response*

Through a \$500,000 Vital Loan from the Victoria Foundation and Island Savings, Saanich Neighbourhood Place will create a “childcare hub” at Pearkes Recreation Centre. The new facility will create 49 additional childcare spaces, including 24 infant/toddler spots and 25 spots for three- to five-year-olds. Vital Loans provides short-term funding of up to \$500,000 for charities that may not otherwise qualify for a conventional loan.

In 2011, the Greater Victoria region was home to the 13th largest immigration population in Canada, with **60,075 immigrants** accounting for **18%** of the area’s population. Of the top source countries of immigrants to Victoria from 2001-2011, the Filipino and Chinese community have experienced the highest growth of 92% and 44% respectively. In contrast, the largest decreases were seen in immigrants from the Netherlands (-20%) and the United Kingdom (-14%).

**WHO
knew?**



Things to Celebrate:

- General awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity
- Excellent work of organizations and associations to support newcomers
- Availability of programs to support children and newcomers

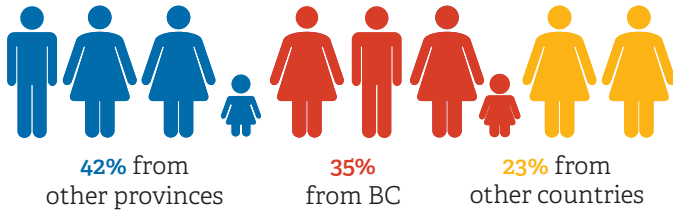


Things to Improve:

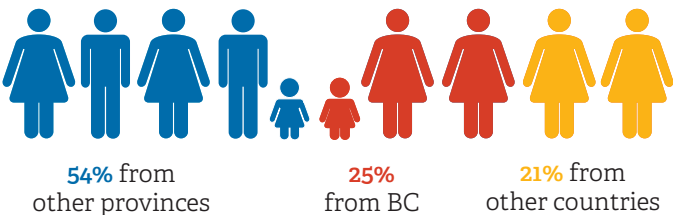
- Access to affordable childcare
- Foreign accreditation recognition
- Access to early childhood development initiatives

NET MIGRATION

2013 - 2014 net migration
3,556 people

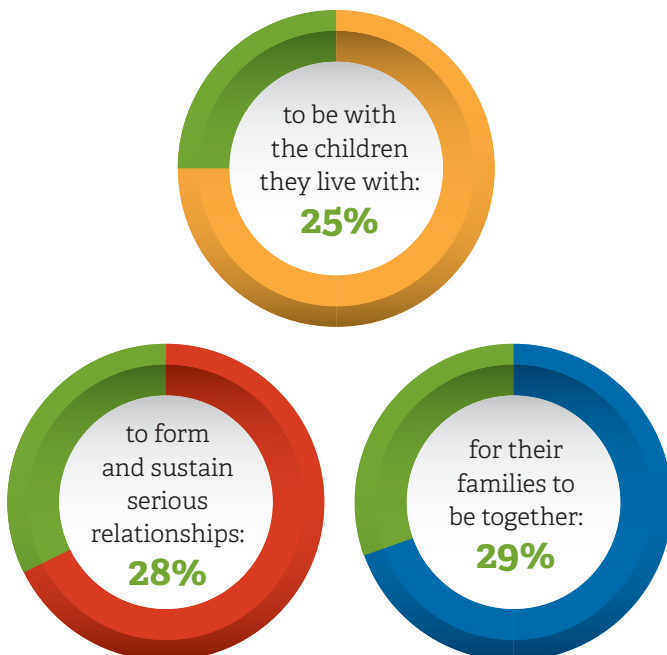


2001 - 2014 net migration
40,713 people



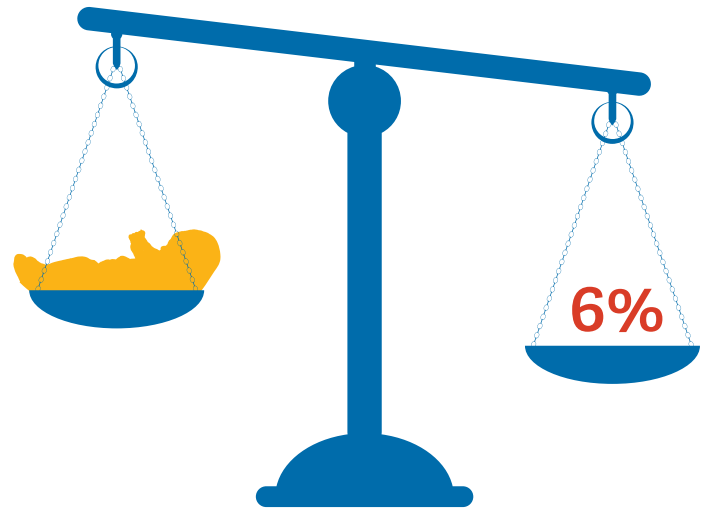
TIME AVAILABILITY

In 2014, Greater Victoria residents reported that they had inadequate to not enough time at all:



LOW BIRTH WEIGHT BABIES HOLDING STEADY

In 2013-14, approximately 6% of live newborns in South Vancouver Island were low birth weight babies. Low birth weight is an important public health indicator, focusing attention on a healthy start to an independent life.



% live newborns weighing less than 2500 grams

	2009 /2010	2010 /2011	2011 /2012	2012 /2013	2013 /2014
Canada	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	6.3
BC	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.9	6.0
SVI	4.8	6.1	5.4	5.6	5.6

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

In 2014, the unemployment rate for youth in Greater Victoria was 10.5%

Unemployment Rates for Youth (15-24)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	14.9	14.3	14.4	13.7	13.5
BC	13.9	14.4	13.7	13.3	11.5
Victoria	11.6	11.5	11.4	11.0	10.5



PERSPECTIVES INSIGHTS & OUTLOOKS

We asked five of Victoria's sector leaders for their thoughts about our changing region.



Bruce Carter
Chief Executive
Officer,
Greater Victoria
Chamber of
Commerce

**Deborah
Curran**
BA, LLB, LL.M
Project
Director, UVic
Environmental
Law Centre;
former Victoria
Foundation
board member

↓ BRUCE CARTER

What do you see as the most significant change in the Capital Region over the past decade?

The Capital Region has seen considerable growth in all areas over the last 10 years, with the addition of density in the core being the most striking. This additional density has encouraged more environmentally friendly transportation and promoted the development of more resident-focused downtown services.

What is Greater Victoria doing well today, and in what ways could it improve?

Greater Victoria has a stable and diverse economy based on a variety of sectors, e.g. Tourism, Technology, Education, Marine Industry and Government Services. As a community, we need to be more willing to adapt and change as conditions warrant. This is particularly true in encouraging real estate investment that results in urban renewal and greater density.

What is your vision for the region 10 years from now, and what steps must we take to get there?

In the next 10 years we are going to see continued competition for balance between the urban and suburban lifestyles. Once the McKenzie interchange is completed, the commute will be safer, but probably not much faster. Consequently, there will be increased interest in living in the core/urban areas of the city, which will create significant demand for high density developments to support families.

What role do you think Victoria's Vital Signs has played in shaping Greater Victoria for the past 10 years?

Vital Signs is an innovative look at many relevant statistics in our region that provide a snapshot of our community. Those statistics and the interpretation of them have provided an important resource for community leaders and community support organizations to make investment decisions.

↓ DEBORAH CURRAN

We have always been lovers of nature and a healthy environment, but the most significant change has been maturing that appreciation into a sustainable regional growth management approach — creating compact, complete, walkable communities with more energy-efficient housing, close to transit, in addition to protecting agricultural land and regional green/blue spaces.

We have the luxury of building on incredible green infrastructure — ocean, mountains, clean air and water — and historic land use patterns of urban villages that are livable and sustainable. We fund the acquisition of parkland, which shows great leadership. And we have one of the best non-auto commute rates in North America. Our challenge is to continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through better land use patterns that minimize car use, increase energy efficiency, and be mindful not to erode good environmental policies.

Building on our strengths, an extensive bike/ped/skateboard network on dedicated streets, frequent and efficient transit, more green buildings, and restored riparian and other greenways corridors. We must build on the successful Regional Growth Strategy and ensure that most new development makes the best use of existing infrastructure in appropriate densities that support neighbourhood commercial centres and transit. Also, water-centric decision-making will be top-of-mind in the future.

Vital Signs acts as an important temperature gauge of how citizens perceive our community. It is an annual reminder of the status of Greater Victoria — what we do well and where we can collectively work together to improve our community.



David Chard
Chair, Urban
Development Institute,
Capital Region
(Victoria) Chapter
President, Chard
Developments



Mary Ellen Purkis
RN, BN, MSc, PhD
University of Victoria
Professor and Dean,
Faculty of Human and
Social Development



Carey Newman
Aboriginal
Artist

↓ **DAVID CHARD**

I see two major changes. First, is the growth of multi-family residential housing, addressing demographic changes and migration to the CRD. Second, is the expansion of Big Box retail, which is changing shopping patterns and creating new transit node opportunities, but also creating challenges for traditional retail areas such as downtown Victoria. Finding a balance between these will be important going forward.

Official Community Plans must be seen as living documents which evolve as needs, communities and economic circumstances change. To enhance the benefits of densification of the downtown core and other developments such as Uptown in Saanich, there will need to be more emphasis on transit infrastructure in the coming years. Also, improving the municipal approval processes for housing development could assist with housing affordability.

As one of the most beautiful destinations in the province, my vision is to see Victoria's inner harbour enriched into one of the most iconic and inviting world destinations. Looking to Victoria's history in the form of water-based transportation, heritage buildings and government and academic institutions, and thoughtful development of the surface parking lots that surround the harbour can only enhance this unique harbour-focused city.

Vital Signs has provided statistical analysis that assists with thoughts, ideas and dialogue for citizens to contemplate, discuss and nurture. As an example, you only need to think back to the 2020 conference and see what that form of brain storming session has actually achieved for Victoria.

↓ **MARY ELLEN PURKIS**

Top of mind responses: rapid growth in population and housing/shopping development in the West Shore area; developing strength of identity within local Indigenous communities with a concurrent, cautious-but-persistent interest in seeking opportunities to work across former, separate, siloed lives; shifting priorities for the delivery of health care services to home and other informal community settings.

We are electing municipal leaders who, despite some rough edges, are promoting dialogue and debate on some long-standing issues (esp. housing for homeless or inappropriately housed people) that have major impact on our communities, despite the fact that, locally, we do not have the capacity to generate sufficient revenue to create a solution. Also, we are experimenting with new models for the delivery of health care and are leading such innovation in BC.

I envision a community that demonstrates a strong network of supports enabling seniors and other vulnerable people to continue to live well and as independently as possible — but through family/friends/neighbours who support that independence. We need not be afraid to try new things — and we need to get much better at talking about our ideas and what we're trying to achieve, linking those goals to the actions we propose taking, to bring citizens along the path, together.

Providing a strong visual record of improvements and on-going challenges, Vital Signs helps in this work of communicating goals and priorities. The annual report provides our community with evidence that we can use as we build a repertoire of actions to improve the quality of life here.

↓ **CAREY NEWMAN**

Something that resonates with me is the growing level of respect and cooperation with local First Nations. This has recently risen in our national consciousness with the events and findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but I also see evidence of progress here in our local communities. Tokenism and lip service are slowly being replaced with the type of earnest and meaningful inclusion that fosters true reconciliation.

Victoria does arts and philanthropy very well. Not only do we have vibrant, well-supported arts organizations and festivals, we also have a wealth of local talent to fill them with beautiful, thought provoking music, imagery and movement. I only wish we had the courage and capability to take a larger role in propelling some of these exceptional artists onto the national or international stage. We often don't recognize what we have until someone else "discovers" them.

I would like to see Victoria exemplify innovative cooperation and active reconciliation. If we expand what we already do well by learning how we can help one another, we can learn that what we give benefits our community and therefore ourselves. By getting business, organizations and individuals to work collectively to confront and solve the issues, and celebrate successes, we could set a new standard for cooperation, and embody the notion of reconciliation.

It plays an important role in bridging the distance between what we know and what we feel. As larger data sources have been scaled back, Vital Signs has grown and transformed. Having a year over year comparison has helped us measure the impacts of our efforts and enabled us to focus on what comes next.



PHOTO CREDIT: DON DENTON

● *The Issue*

Accessibility of dental care for low-income families is a challenge. In 2014 Vital Signs reported that eight per cent of residents rated their access to health care as “poor.”

● *The Response*

Funded in part by a \$25,000 grant from the Victoria Foundation, the ORCCA (Oral Care for Children and Adolescents) dental clinic opened in March and operates from an annex in Sidney Elementary School. It provides dental care for children and youth from low-income families thanks to volunteer dentists and hygienists. The Foundation grant has enabled ORCCA to hire an administrator for six months, after which the organization hopes to secure ongoing financial support.

According to Island Health’s year-end statistical report for 2014/15, on Vancouver Island on a typical day last year, **16 babies** were born, **306 CT scans** were performed, **173** patients underwent surgery in hospital, **961** people visited an emergency department, and **196** were admitted to hospital.





Things to Celebrate:

- Culture of health and wellness
- Many opportunities for physical activity and outdoor recreation
- Quality of care provided by health care professionals

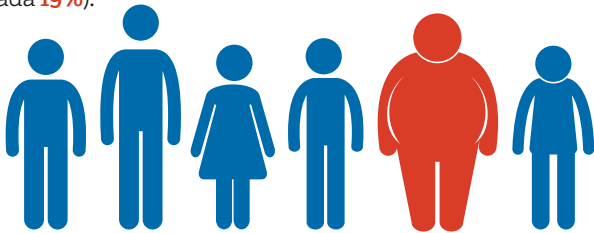


Things to Improve:

- Availability of family physicians
- Access to mental health services
- Wait times for medical procedures

UNHEALTHY BODY WEIGHTS

In **2014**, approximately **17%** of adults on South Vancouver Island reported body mass index levels that classified them as obese, compared **16%** for BC and **20%** for Canada. These numbers are all up from **2013** (South Vancouver Island **12%**, BC **15%** and Canada **19%**).



ADOLESCENT HEALTH TRENDS

In **2013**, most students in grades **7-12** on South Vancouver Island reported good physical and mental health. Fewer students reported trying alcohol, marijuana or tobacco for the first time, compared to 2008. They felt connected to their family, school and community. They had positive plans for the future and were engaged in health promoting behaviours that will help them transition successfully to adulthood.

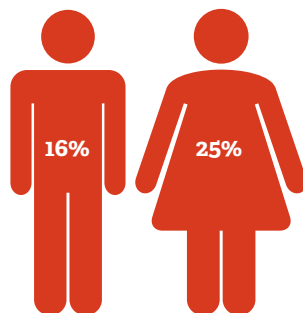
Of those who had ever tried smoking:



In **2013**, **26%** of students reported having oral sex, unchanged from **2008**, but higher than the BC rate (**23%**). Condom use among those who had oral sex was lower in this region than BC as a whole (**11%** vs **17%**).

In **2013**, **77%** of students were online and/or on their phone after the time they were supposed to be asleep.

In **2013**, **21%** of students had at least **one** mental health condition. Females were more likely than males to have at least **one** condition:



Adolescent Mental Health Conditions Reported

DIABETES

In **2014**, **5%** of the South Vancouver Island population reported that they had received a diagnosis of Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes in the past year. In terms of lifetime prevalence, **8%** of people in South Vancouver Island had diabetes at some point in their lives in **2011-12**, compared to **9%** of the BC population.



MOOD DISORDER INCREASES

In **2014**, **14%** of the South Vancouver Island population reported that they had received a diagnosis of a mood disorder in the past year, up from **9.8%** in **2013**. In terms of lifetime prevalence, **28%** of people in South Vancouver Island had depression and/or anxiety at some point in their lives in **2011-12**, compared to **25%** of the BC population.



SHARE OF PEOPLE WITHOUT REGULAR DOCTOR

In **2014**, **17%** of the South Vancouver Island population reported that they did not have a regular medical doctor compared to **15%** for both BC and Canada.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:





PHOTO CREDIT: DON DENTON

● The Issue

Vital Signs reports have shown that rental vacancy rates are declining while costs continue to climb and subsidized units are waitlisted.

● The Response

The Victoria Foundation provided two grants near the end of 2014 to help maintain housing programs. \$110,000 went to the Homelessness Prevention Fund, administered by the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, to allow it to continue into 2016. The fund permits someone in desperate need of money to maintain their housing situation and the ability to receive a one-time grant of up to \$500. \$125,000 also went to the Pacifica Housing-administered Streets to Homes program to help with a funding shortfall. This program is currently able to provide housing for 120 people at a time, who are given a rent subsidy and support to become self-sufficient.

Financial assistance for low-income seniors to pay for accessibility modifications is offered through the [Home Adaptations for Independence](#) program operated by BC Housing. Grants of up to \$20,000 are available for eligible adaptations such as widened walkways, walk-in bathtubs, lever-type door handles, and the installation of elevating devices. To be eligible, a senior must meet income and asset limit requirements, including that the value of their home must be below the average assessed value in that region, which for Victoria means less than \$525,000.





Things to Celebrate:

- Efforts to improve affordability and reduce homelessness
- Legalization of secondary suites
- Diversity of housing options (e.g. rental suites, social housing, assisted living)



Things to Improve:

- Affordability of home ownership
- Affordability of rental housing
- Housing for the homeless

HOMELESSNESS IN GREATER VICTORIA

In Greater Victoria, on the night of February 5, 2014, there were an estimated:

1,167 people in need of shelter, including **70** families and **116** children



Of which, **1,089** people were counted in **87** facilities and **78** people were turned away from a facility

AVERAGE RENTS AND RENTAL VACANCY RATES

In April **2015**, the average rent for a private apartment in Greater Victoria was **\$918**, up from **\$904** in **2014**. The average vacancy rate for the region in **2015** was **1.2%**, well down from **2.7%** in **2014**, despite a net increase of **245** rental units during that time.



Number of rentals increased by **245**

A person working full-time on BC's minimum hourly wage of **\$10.45** would need to spend **50%** of their income to rent a bachelor apartment (**\$716**) in Greater Victoria.

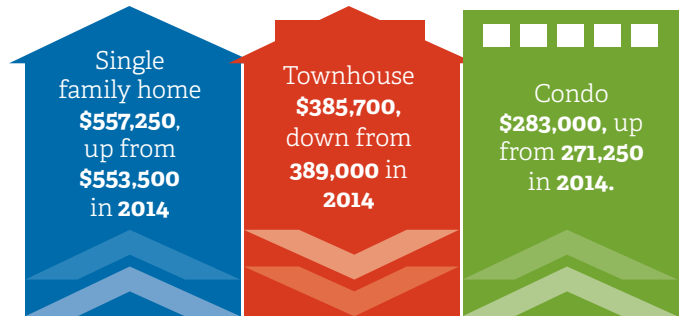


HOUSING PRICES



In May **2015**, **905** properties sold in Greater Victoria, a **27%** increase over May **2014**

Median sale price for Greater Victoria homes in May **2015**:



RELATIVE COST OF HOME OWNERSHIP

In **2012**, the average house in Greater Victoria cost almost **six times** the median family income.

	Ratio of MLS average residential prices to pre-tax median census family income in Victoria CMA					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Canada	4.61	4.42	4.68	4.85	5.02	4.88
BC	6.68	6.70	6.98	7.54	8.12	7.18
Victoria	6.25	6.23	6.12	6.48	6.28	5.93



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

OAKCREST PARK ESTATES LTD.



PHOTO CREDIT: DON DENTON

● *The Issue*

A lack of literacy programs that support overlooked or neglected populations.

● *The Response*

The Victoria Foundation funded the Greater Victoria Public Library's outreach vehicle, so that underserved populations like marginalized adults, First Nations communities, and isolated seniors can enjoy books and resources from the library. The "little library on wheels" travels to locations around the city, allowing people to borrow paperback books, take donated paperbacks, DVDs and CDs, and even get a library card on the spot. Prior to the vehicle, outreach has been provided in a number of locations.

Through their [Continuing Education](#) programs, the University of Victoria, Royal Roads University and Camosun College offer hundreds of adult, part-time courses for the pure joy of learning, as well as for personal and professional development. Some are quite unusual or unexpected. UVic's Fine Arts department offers a technology and society class on Mario versus Minecraft: The History of Video Games. Royal Roads offers Dancing into Wellbeing: A Creative Toolkit for Stress. And Camosun College offers a course for non-Aboriginal students to learn what it means to be Indigenous in Canada.





Things to Celebrate:

- Access to diverse educational opportunities
- High quality dedicated teachers
- High quality institutions



Things to Improve:

- Affordability of post-secondary education
- Financial sustainability of school districts
- Decrease classroom size

HIGH SCHOOL NON-COMPLETION DECREASES

In **2014**, **12%** of the Greater Victoria population, **15** years and older, had not completed high school, lower than the rates for BC (**14%**) and Canada (**18%**).

% population, 15 years and older, who have not completed high school					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	20.4	19.7	19.3	18.5	17.9
BC	16.6	15.8	15.9	14.9	14.3
Victoria	13.0	12.0	12.4	12.4	11.6

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION COMPLETION RISES

In **2014**, **56%** of the Greater Victoria population, **15** years and over, had completed some form of post-secondary education, slightly higher than the **54%** for BC and Canada.

% population, 15 years and older, who have completed post-secondary education					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	51.6	52.5	53.3	53.7	54.2
BC	50.4	52.3	52.6	53.2	53.5
Victoria	54.0	55.0	55.7	54.6	55.7

LIFELONG LEARNING

In **2014**, most Greater Victoria residents reported that there were plenty of opportunities to take courses of interest (**79%**) and formal education courses (**77%**).

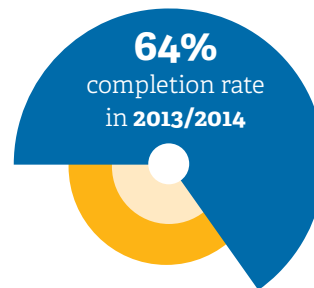


38% reported that these courses were too expensive to take.

ABORIGINAL HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION UP

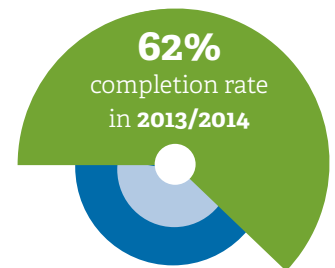
The **six**-year school completion rate for Aboriginal students increased substantially in **two** of the region's **three** school districts from **2009/10** to **2013/14**. This rate is the proportion of first-time grade **8** students who graduate after **six** years.

Greater Victoria (SD61)



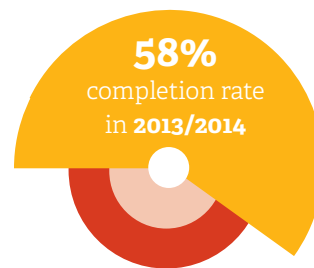
up from **41%** in **2009/10**

BC



up from **51%** in **2009/10**

Sooke (SD 62)



down from **61%** in **2009/10**

Saanich (SD 63)

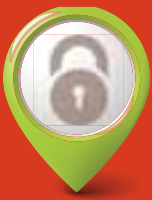


up from **28%** in **2009/10**

UNIVERSITY TUITION

In **2014/15**, the average cost of undergraduate tuition for both UVic and Royal Roads was:





SAFETY



PHOTO CREDIT: LOUISE MACDONALD

● The Issue

The need to reduce bullying in schools continues to be a priority, especially for students often singled out for being different.

● The Response

The Victoria Foundation provided community grants to two programs that aim to make schools safer and more inclusive to groups that are at a higher risk of bullying. Power of Hope Society's SAME! program addresses homophobia and reaches out to Gay Straight Alliances in middle and high schools. Community Living Victoria's VOCYL program develops relationships between youth with and without disabilities, and gives presentations about inclusion to grade six students at local middle schools.

After 13 years of being “on” and processing over 95 million calls, **CREST** will be refreshing its emergency communications system over the next few years. The new system is called **HRO** (pronounced “hero”) to acknowledge users, and celebrate the upgrade being made to help them do their work — keeping you and your families safe.





Things to Celebrate:

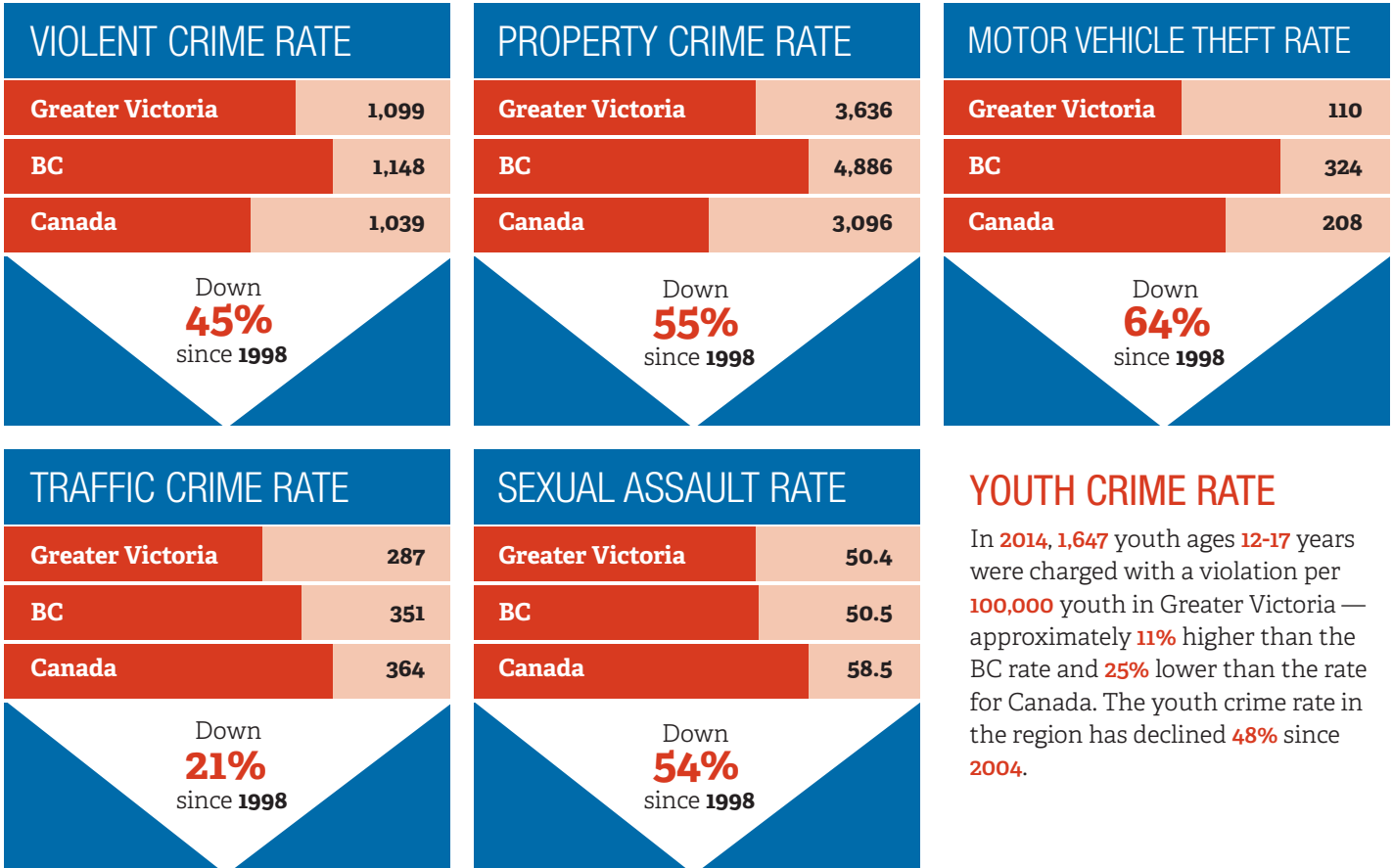
- Safe place to live
- Police presence
- Community policing efforts



Things to Improve:

- Illegal drug use
- Improving emergency preparedness
- Traffic/road safety

CRIME RATES PER 100,000 PEOPLE



YOUTH CRIME RATE

In 2014, 1,647 youth ages 12-17 years were charged with a violation per 100,000 youth in Greater Victoria — approximately 11% higher than the BC rate and 25% lower than the rate for Canada. The youth crime rate in the region has declined 48% since 2004.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

In 2014, 76% of Greater Victoria residents reported that if they had an emergency, people they did not know would help them.



FEELINGS OF SAFETY

In 2014, 83% of Greater Victoria residents reported that they felt at ease with the people in their community. Approximately 65% of residents said that they felt comfortable allowing their children to play outside unsupervised in their neighbourhood.

66% said that they regularly stopped and talked to people in their neighbourhood.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:





PHOTO CREDIT: GABRIELA DANASOVA

● *The Issue*

Vital Signs reports identified a need for more affordable and accessible opportunities for recreation, particularly for children and youth.

● *The Response*

In 2015, several student groups in Vital Youth, the Victoria Foundation's youth-led philanthropy program, chose to award grants to organizations that provide recreation activities to youth with disabilities. St. Michael's University School awarded \$1,250 to the Victoria Therapeutic Riding Association and Oak Bay High School awarded \$1,500 to Recreation Integration Victoria. Each year, through the Vital Youth program, seven local high schools distribute \$2,500 each to charities around the region.

Bear Mountain is home of the Canadian National Mountain Bike Team, the Bear Mountain Bike Park (BMBP) and the Southern Vancouver Island Nature Trails Society (NTS). In August 2015, Bear Mountain hosted BearTrax, an event showcasing some of the world's best freeride mountain bike riders. Beginning in 2016, the bike course will host the annual Canada Cup XC MTB Race. Bear Mountain Resort is a proud funding partner of the Southern Vancouver Island Nature Trails Society (NTS) and its efforts to develop, build and maintain the trail networks within the lands surrounding the community.





Things to Celebrate:

- Plenty of access to sports and recreation facilities
- Availability of outdoor recreation options and beautiful green spaces
- Quality and variety of activity programming for children and adults



Things to Improve:

- Access to low-income programs
- More affordable opportunities
- Improving pathways and bikeways

BEING ACTIVE

In **2014**, Greater Victoria residents who participated in physical activity engaged in the following during a typical month:

49%

vigorous exercise

27%

individual sport

93%

light exercise



14%

team sport

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In **2014**, **68%** of people **12** years and older on South Vancouver Island reported spending their leisure time being active or moderately active.

% of population (**12** years and over) who are active or moderately active in leisure time

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	52.1	53.8	53.9	55.2	53.7
BC	58.3	59.6	61.3	64.0	61.7
SVI	64.0	67.8	61.3	71.1	67.9

YOUTH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In **2014**, **83%** of youth ages **12-19** on South Vancouver Island reported spending their leisure time being active or moderately active.

% of population (**12-19** years) who are active or moderately active in leisure time

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Canada	70.6	71.9	71.3	71.2	70.4
BC	75.3	72.9	76.3	79.1	78.6
SVI	72.6	82.6	76.9	91.2	82.6



SPENDING ON RECREATION

In **2012**, the average household in Greater Victoria reported spending **\$5,208** on recreation, representing **9%** of total consumption. Recreation spending in the region was higher than the provincial average (**\$4,529**) and the national average (**\$3,773**).

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES WELL USED

In **2014**, Greater Victoria residents reported that they used the following quite often or all of the time:

Local park **63%**

Rec centre **28%**

Pool **20%**

Field **14%**

Other **13%**

82%

were very satisfied with their access to parks and recreation opportunities

40% were a member of or participant in a sports or recreational organization.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:





STANDARD OF LIVING



PHOTO CREDIT: DON DENTON

● *The Issue*

According to the 2014 Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey, 14% of adults ate less because there was not enough food, or money for food, at least once in the past year.

● *The Response*

The Victoria Foundation has joined with Greater Victoria Rotary Clubs and 11 Island Thrifty Foods stores to fund a new Food Rescue project: a network of food distribution agencies working together to recover unsaleable but edible food from grocery stores and get it to people in the community who need it most. The first step — a raffle that saw \$100,000 raised and then matched by the Foundation — ran from May to August 2015.

With information on everything from free phones and internet, to foot care and 24-hour washrooms, the [Greater Victoria Street Survival Guide](#), published by the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, provides information on services and resources for people experiencing or at risk of being homeless. Created by a group of volunteers with homelessness experience, it is well used: 2,200 hard copies (water repellent, heavy paper) of the fourth and fifth editions were distributed to 53 agencies serving the homeless and those experiencing extreme poverty.





Things to Celebrate:

- Availability of support services
- Beautiful climate and natural environment
- Year-round access to parks and outdoor recreation

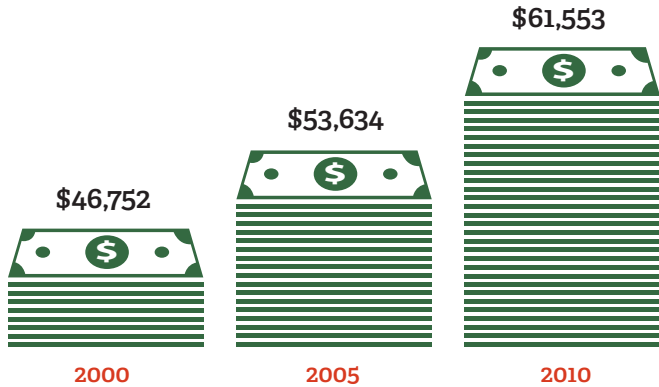


Things to Improve:

- Adoption of a "living wage"
- Affordable housing options
- Supports to transition from poverty to workforce

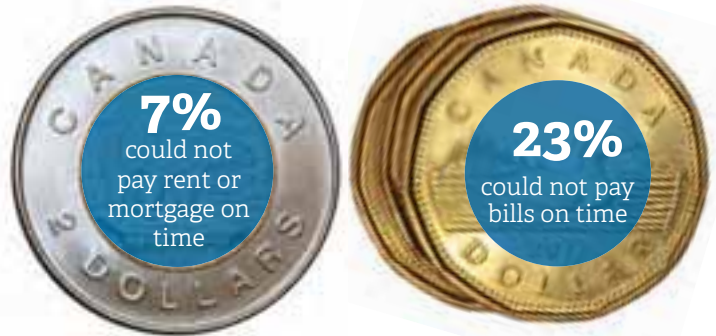
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME INCREASES

In **2010**, the median, before tax, household income in Greater Victoria was **\$61,553**.



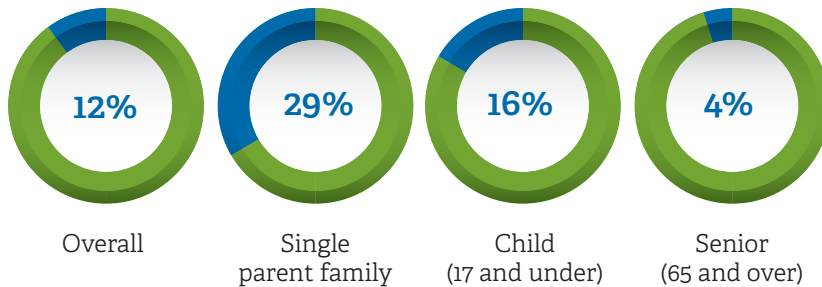
FINANCIAL INSECURITY

In **2014**, Greater Victoria residents reported that at least once in the previous year:



LIVING IN POVERTY

In **2013**, the poverty rates in Greater Victoria, based on the Low Income Measure after tax, were:



These poverty rates have remained stable in the region from **2009** to **2013**.

FOOD BANK USAGE

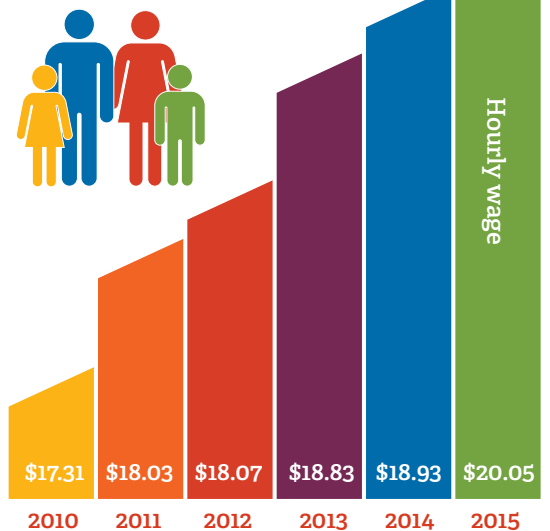
An estimated **16,000** individuals accessed food from the Mustard Seed Food Bank and its partner agencies in Greater Victoria in March **2014**.

	March 2012	March 2013	March 2014
Canada	872,379	833,098	841,191
BC	94,966	94,002	97,369
Victoria	18,110	18,844	16,171



LIVING WAGE INCREASES

In **2015**, the hourly wage required to maintain an adequate quality of life in the Capital Region is **\$20.05**, a **6%** increase from **2014** due largely to rising shelter costs, child care expenses and Medical Services Plan premiums. The calculation of a living wage assumes **two** adults, each working **35** hours per week, year round, while providing a home for two young children.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:





TRANSPORTATION



PHOTO CREDIT: GORDON GRIFFITHS

● *The Issue*

Transportation is difficult for low-income or isolated seniors, particularly those with mobility issues. Without adequate transportation options, many social or cultural activities are inaccessible for this segment of the population.

● *The Response*

Funded by a community grant from the Victoria Foundation, Ballet Victoria's AttenDance program is a companion to its popular Tea for Tutu series that provides access to free ballet performances for seniors. Through AttenDance, Ballet Victoria provides transportation to performances and other social activities for seniors living on their own.

The first ever **Car Free YYJ Day** took over six blocks of Douglas Street on Sunday, June 21, 2015. Over six hours, an estimated 20,000 people attended the event that featured more than 200 vendors and exhibitors and three stages with live entertainment, plus a 7,100-square-foot grassy "park" created with sod right on the asphalt. Other activities included a craft beer garden, a farmers market, a skate park, food trucks and a bike valet service.





Things to Celebrate:

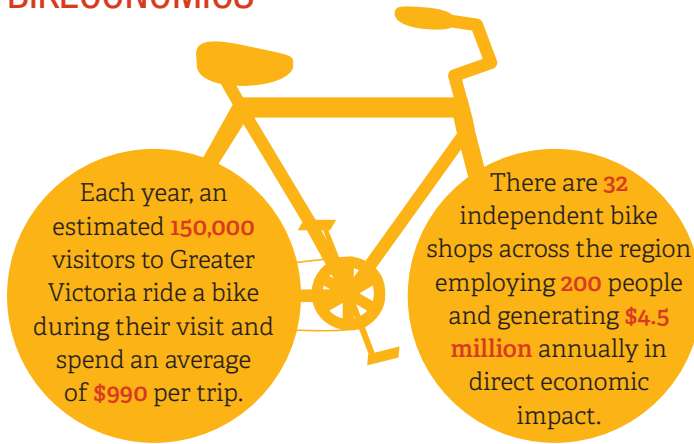
- Good public transit service
- Cycling opportunities and expanding cycling infrastructure
- Easy to get around city



Things to Improve:

- Investment in light rail/rapid transit
- Regional coordination of new transportation infrastructure
- Cycling network and facilities

BIKE ECONOMICS



EVOLUTION OF THE BIKE LANE



The evolution of the bike lane is rapidly shifting gears as more municipalities in the region plan to install additional buffered and protected bike lanes over the next few years.

332km standard bike lane

107km major trails

1km protected bike lane **6.4km** buffered bike lane

There are **446 km** of bikeways in the Capital Region as of July **2015**.

Victoria Regional Transit Commission



BC Transit is always looking for innovative ways to offer sustainable transit solutions for the future. Customers have been asking for fast, direct, and convenient service to improve transit time. That is why it is so exciting to have Phase 2 of the Douglas Street Priority Bus and Bike Lane corridor come to fruition. Lane space was re-allocated to move people rather than vehicles to better reflect the way people use this corridor. During peak times, 50-90 buses per hour use the corridor and account for three per cent of the vehicle traffic while carrying 38 per cent of the people commuting.

The priority lanes, an infrastructure project designed in partnership with the City of Victoria, were created to shorten travel times for passengers, increase the use of public transit, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the number of vehicles on the road. Bus stop locations were modified to best serve passengers who ride along this corridor.

From 3 – 6 p.m., Monday to Friday, bus riders and cyclists heading northbound have quick and efficient access to a speedier commute home with the lanes operating from Fisgard Street to Tolmie Avenue.

Also on weekdays, the priority lane that goes southbound (towards downtown) is open from 6 – 9 a.m. The lane runs from Tolmie to Fisgard enabling commuters on bus and bicycle to quickly get downtown.

Efficient, comfortable, and convenient transportation is an important priority for the Victoria region, and the new priority lanes will help people get to their destinations more efficiently and provide an attractive alternative to using their car. Creating links between buses and bikes also provides efficient options for different types of transportation modes that support our region's future growth.

TRANSIT USE

In **2014-15**, through its conventional transit service, the Victoria Regional Transit System provided:

806,000 service hours

31.3 trips per service hour

25.2 million passenger trips

69.5 trips per capita



Greater Victoria's transit system continues to out-perform similar-sized transit systems in Canada in passenger trips per capita and trips per service hour.

VEHICLES PER HOUSEHOLD

In the Capital Region, close to half of all households have at least one vehicle for every household member.

11% have no vehicles

46% have two or more vehicles

43% have one vehicle



Vehicles per household is an important indicator of mobility as the more vehicles available in a household, the more they are likely to be used as the mode of travel.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



+ Victoria's Vital Signs®

Milestones:

2006-2015



TH

ANNIVERSARY

2006



The BC Ministry of Children and Family Development selects the Victoria Foundation to host and administer a provincial **\$10M Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Action Fund**. Grants are used to support FASD prevention, public awareness, caregiver education and research initiatives aimed at developing a better understanding of the disorder.

Key informant interviews and a community forum are held to obtain input on indicators to be included in the **first Victoria's Vital Signs® report**.

The Foundation hosts and facilitates a **Community Indicator Network** made up of organizations involved in the collection or reporting of indicator data that reflects the wellbeing of the Capital Region. This Network includes representatives from CRD Arts, CRD Planning, CRD Round Table on the Environment, City of Victoria, Community Social Planning Council, United Way, VIHA, Victoria Police, Victoria Real Estate Board and the Victoria Symphony, which collectively coordinate the availability of data, share information, identify gaps and pursue opportunities.

Victoria Foundation granting committee uses Vital Signs for the first time in reviewing **Community Grant applications**.



Victoria's Vital Signs® first launch event includes an engaging presentation followed by questions and answers from the attendees. Panelists include journalist Jody Paterson, Mayor Alan Lowe, environmental lawyer Deborah Curran, and consultant Geoff Thornburn.



Five community foundations across Canada produce Vital Signs reports.



2 gifts of \$1 million each within weeks of the initial launch.

The Foundation's initial Vital Signs report sparks the interest of many donors, including two first time donors that made **gifts of \$1 million each within weeks of the initial launch**. "This is a wonderful tool for making philanthropic choices" is voiced frequently.

2007



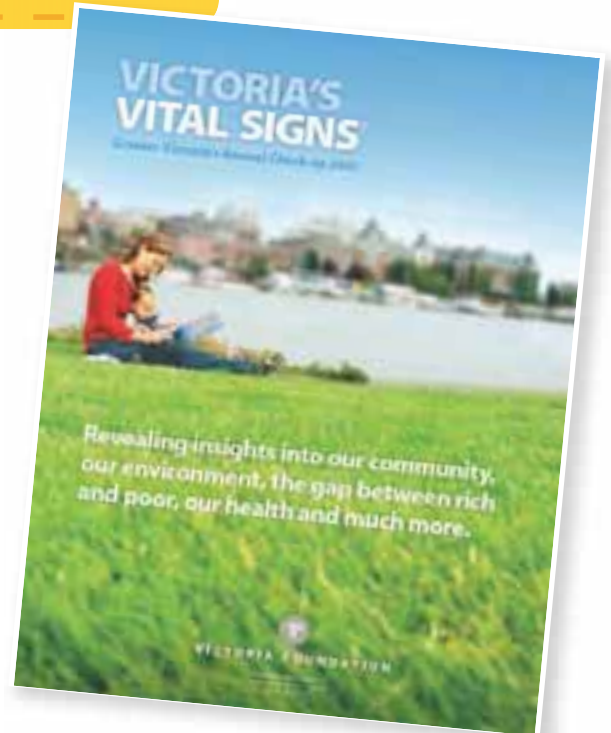
Vital Signs launch event **panelists** include CRD Vice Chair Chris Clement, MLA Rob Fleming and University of Victoria President David Turpin, talking about the latest findings in the report.

“The importance of belonging in a community cannot be understated and is clearly underscored in the Vital Signs report.”

— Jack Shore, Development Manager, Habitat for Humanity Victoria

Vital things we all can do is added to the Vital Signs report.

-
- Contact Volunteer Victoria for a volunteer opportunity for you
 - Give to your favourite charity
 - Learn about a new organization
 - Support youth & leadership development



“Critical thinking and a passion for learning are elements of citizenship that can and should be shared amongst everyone. Victoria’s Vital Signs provided the incentive for UVic to apply for funding that provides free access to post-secondary education for people who face significant challenges in their lives, such as poverty, unstable housing and disabilities.”

— Karen Whyte, Development Officer, University of Victoria, Faculty of Humanities & Office of Vice-President Research, speaking about University 101



University of Victoria

The Victoria Foundation and Community Foundations of Canada co-host the Transatlantic Community Foundation Network in an exploration of Vital Signs and how it can be used in countries around the world.



THE IRVING K. BARBER
British Columbia Scholarship Society

ADMINISTERED BY THE VICTORIA FOUNDATION

The work of Vital Signs introduces the **Irving K. Barber BC Scholarship Society** to the Victoria Foundation and a partnership is formed to manage and award scholarships from \$38 million in endowment funds established by the Province of BC.

\$38 million

Who knew? feature is added to the Vital Signs report.



“Victoria’s Vital Signs® have definitely made a difference in how the Rock Solid Foundation approaches the distribution of its anti-victimization programs. The quoted crime rate reduction is evidence that that the various anti-violence programs being implemented over the past few years in Victoria have been successful.”
— Dorian Brown, Executive Director, Rock Solid Foundation

Local organizations begin using Vital Signs for **strategic planning and advocacy work** including the United Way, the Queen Alexandra Foundation and Leadership Victoria.




2008



Vital Signs launch panelists include retired judge **Ted Hughes**, journalist **Denise Helm**, and economist **John Helliwell**. John leads the audience in singing *The More We Get Together*.



Eight organizations from the Community Indicators Network join together to conduct a wellness survey that results in a **Happiness Index** for the Capital Region. This study is the first of its kind in Canada.




The Foundation commits to looking through a "Vital Signs lens" in assessing future community grant applications.



\$9,315,254

The Victoria Foundation receives \$9,315,254 from 520 new gifts targeted at needs and opportunities identified in Vital Signs.

The 2008 Vital Signs report identifies homelessness/housing and addictions as critical issues. The Victoria Foundation responds with five community grants worth \$173,000 targeting these priorities.



A growing list of organizations use Vital Signs for strategic planning, impact measurement, grant making and more, including the University of Victoria, local school boards and Chambers of Commerce, the Downtown Victoria Business Association, Saanich Community Associations and VIHA.

In 2008 and 2009 respectively, the Kwadacha and Tsay Keh Dene First Nations were awarded significant settlements by BC Hydro and the provincial government for damages resulting from the construction of the Williston Dam in the 1960s. The Victoria Foundation was selected as the trustee for these two settlements.

Victoria's Vital Signs® report is distributed at municipal all candidates' meetings in advance of municipal elections, as well as at the Community Connections Environmental Conference.

The Victoria Foundation co-founds the Every Steps Counts downtown weekly running and nutrition program. In partnership with Victoria Cool Aid Society and Frontrunners Victoria, the program supports the health and self-reliance of people dealing with issues of poverty, homelessness, unemployment, isolation and challenges with mental health and addictions.



The Victoria Foundation Board, influenced by the 2007 Vital Signs report, selects **staying in school** as a priority. Staff subsequently work with community groups through focus groups, site visits and key informants to bring forward five proactive grants in this area totalling \$132,000.

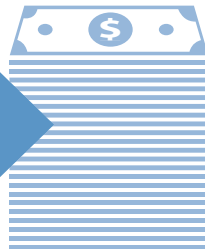


greater victoria coalition to end homelessness
hope has found a home

Following the creation of a taskforce by City of Victoria Mayor Alan Lowe in 2007, the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness is created in February 2008.

Trends To Watch feature is added to the report.

Not including special projects, the Victoria Foundation approves 59 grants totalling \$758,215 across all 11 Vital Signs Key Issue Areas.



“Wellness is Within Reach”

“Wellness is Within Reach,” a booklet filled with useful reminders on what it takes to be healthy and happy, is included in the Vital Signs report.



As a result of Vital Signs, the Victoria Foundation is engaged in many **community partnerships**, including the Vancouver Island Community Research Alliance, the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and CUExpo — an exposition of University and community research hosted at UVic.

2009



Vital Signs features photos of local artists and their works to illustrate key issue areas.



The 2009 Vital Signs report influences the Foundation Board to select **child care and homelessness** as funding priorities.



Audience response "clickers" are used for the first time in the launch presentation to test the audience's knowledge of community issues.



A community forum on the Happiness Index for the Capital Region is held in April with **keynote speaker economist Dr. John Helliwell** from the Canadian Institute of Advanced Research and UBC.



A grant to the **Community Social Planning Council** enables hundreds of bus tickets to be purchased by social service agencies at a two-for-one rate — offered in partnership with the Victoria Regional Transit Commission.

VICTORIA'S VITAL SIGNS®
GREATER VICTORIA'S 2009 ANNUAL CHECK-UP

Victoria's Vital Signs® launch event guest speaker is international runner Dick Beardsley. Scott Dallen is guest speaker for the Youth Vital Signs report.



A collection of statistics, quotes and questions, the '**Happiness**' booklet is included within the Vital Signs report.

The Foundation receives \$3,388,164 from 364 new gifts targeted at needs and opportunities identified in Vital Signs.

Standard of Living key issue area makes its first appearance as Gap Between Rich & Poor is renamed.

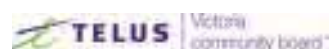
Work issue area is renamed Economy



The 2009 Victoria's Vital Signs® report is awarded the **Gold Award for Excellence in Communications** from the international Wilmer Shields Rich Awards Program.



With financial support from the TELUS Community Board and direction from a youth focus group, a **youth section** is added to the report.



Vital Grant feature added to the report. It would later be renamed *Doing Our Part* and then replaced with *The Issue/The Response* in future reports.



The **Streets to Homes** program is created as a pilot program by the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and the community campaign, I'll Match!, is kicked off with a **\$50,000** matching grant from the Sun Star Fund, which followed with another **\$120,000 grant** to the fund over the next two years.

As a result of Vital Signs, the Victoria Foundation continues to **grow its community partnerships**, working with Every Step Counts, the Victoria Community Funders' Network, and the University of Victoria Standing Committee on Community Engagement.

Almost 1,500 people participate in Vital Signs by completing the questionnaires to prioritize indicators, grade them, and in the case of the youth survey, provide their comments on life in Victoria.



The **Saanich Volunteer Services Society** hosts the consultation and development of an **Integrated Volunteer Data Management System** that now links five volunteer organizations and thousands of clients.



With the support of a **\$20,000** community grant from the Victoria Foundation, the Single Parent Resource Centre pilots its **ESL Childcare Training program**, aiming to create 50 new childcare spaces by 2011. The program provides training to immigrant stay-at-home parents to operate licensed childcare services.



A Victoria Foundation community grant brings a new, innovative service providing online counselling for youth to the region. One-to-one counselling through email enables staff of the **Pacific Centre for the Family and NEED2 Suicide Prevention Education & Support** to advise youth how to reach safe and healthy solutions.

2010

South Island Pride Community Centre Society used the Youth Vital Signs report to plan a successful **youth drop-in program.**

The Foundation introduces the "More than Money" community advisor program that matches volunteers with organizations seeking guidance in areas like strategic planning, finance or communications.

IslandSavings

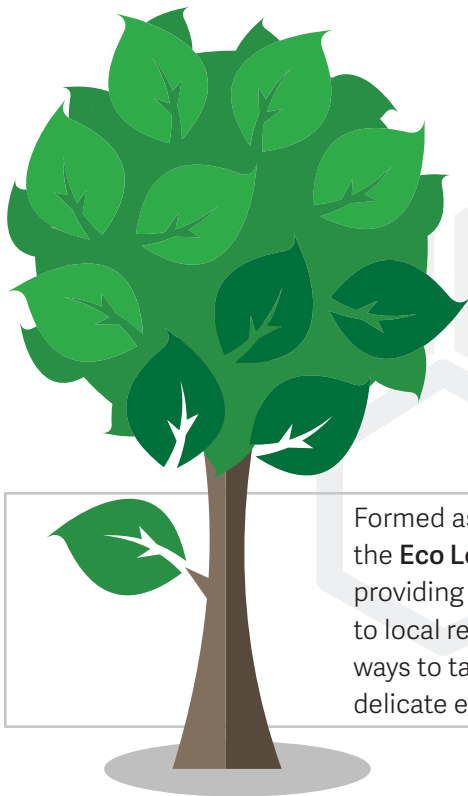
Island Savings becomes a signature sponsor of the Vital Signs report.



Panelists at the launch of this year's Vital Signs report discuss a **five-year retrospective** and include Stephen Andrew from A-News, Jennifer Jasechko from Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, community volunteer David Marshall and CRD Chair Geoff Young.



The **Victoria Foundation Community Leadership Award** is given in recognition of charitable organizations that are achieving positive change. The Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre is the first recipient, recognized for leading social change against sexualized violence in our community over the past 27 years.



Formed as a result of the Victoria Foundation convening environmental groups, the **Eco Learning Hive** is a network of over 25 local environmental educators providing information on more than 40 programs. The online portal houses links to local resources, groups, events, hands-on learning in nature sites and concrete ways to take action on climate change and be effective stewards of the region's delicate eco-system.

\$5,362,952

The Foundation receives \$5,362,952 from 533 new gifts targeted at needs and opportunities identified in Vital Signs.



The Victoria Foundation continues to broaden its **community partnerships** as a result of Vital Signs, with new partners including the City of Victoria City Manager's Advisory Committee, and CanAssist at the University of Victoria.




Almost 1,200 people participate in Vital Signs by completing the questionnaires to prioritize indicators, grade them and provide their comments on life in Victoria.

2011



A **Teen Culture Pass** is created as a result of calls reported in Victoria's Vital Signs® for more affordable access for youth. The Greater Victoria Public Library, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and Royal BC Museum are all participants.



The **Homelessness Prevention Fund** is started at the Victoria Foundation as an initiative of the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness to provide emergency assistance to individuals and families in Greater Victoria who are in financial threat of losing their housing. Grants are used to pay rent, utility bills or damage deposits, and the maximum available amount is \$500.



The Victoria Foundation teams with the CRD Arts Development Service and other partners to commission a study to measure the **economic activity of arts and culture in the region**. Results show industry and patron expenditures resulted in \$170 million GDP in 2011.



As part of the Victoria Foundation 75th anniversary, \$75,000 was granted to projects for the Chinese community.



The Victoria Film Festival receives a grant to commission short films with Vital Signs issue area themes to be screened at the film festival.

TED^x Victoria

Foundation CEO Sandra Richardson presents *Youth in Victoria* Vital Signs talk at **TEDX Victoria**.



Village of 100 feature is added to the Victoria Vital Signs® report for the first time.

\$16,594

After learning about the cutbacks to local prenatal services, the **Victoria Foundation** convenes a collaborative discussion to bring together the **Sooke Family Resource Society staff and KidCare Canada**. A \$16,594 grant was awarded to pilot the use of multimedia resources on parental attachment with expectant families through classes and home visits in the region between Sooke and Port Renfrew.

In response to the 2010 Youth Vital Signs report the Greater Victoria Public Library creates a “Teen Zone” in every library branch, with colourful and comfy spaces complete with Internet access and collections just for teens.



Victoria's Youth Vital Signs is a **stand-alone** report for the first time.

The Victoria Foundation funded **LifeCycles Project Society** runs the Fruit Tree Project to redistribute unwanted fruit. In 2011, volunteers pick 35,000 lbs. of fruit. Also, with a grant from the Victoria Foundation, the **Greater Victoria Compost Education Society** expands its Grow a Row program to benefit more recipient organizations.

Victoria Foundation Community Grant application forms are revised to have applicants identify the Vital Signs indicators that they anticipate impacting as a result of their project. The move further embeds Vital Signs program into operations at the Foundation.

2012



Victoria's Vital Signs® asks: *Do our kids have a healthy future?* Panelists at the report's launch event look to provide some answers, including community planner **Kristina Bouris** from the City of Victoria, Victoria Councillor **Pamela Madoff**, and elite athlete **Adam Campbell**.

YOUTH VITAL SIGNS



Island Savings Credit Union sponsors the **Youth Vital Signs** report for the next three years.



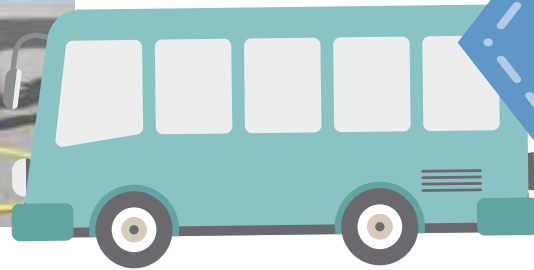
The Victoria Foundation is one of the first in the country to create a **Smart & Caring Community Fund** following a call from the Governor General of Canada, David Johnston, to community foundations across Canada to work toward a smart and caring nation. Physical literacy is selected to be the fund's initial focus because findings from local and national Vital Signs reports indicate Canada's children are less active and at greater risk from childhood obesity than ever before. A grant to Pacific Sport Victoria enables the Pacific institute for Sport Excellence to bring the *ABCs of Physical Literacy* program to 175 children at the Cridge Centre for the Family, teaching fundamental movement skills that will help them to build confidence and adopt active lifestyles. With support from Victoria Rotary and other partners, the program has expanded to additional locations, reaching more than 3,000 children annually.

\$15,000

A \$15,000 grant to the SmartStart program at the **Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre** helps staff coordinate a program to match newcomer children and youth with volunteers in homework clubs and one-on-one tutoring to increase success in their new schools.



As a result of Vital Signs, BC Transit and CRD representatives meet with West Shore youth about bus service.



Sports and Recreation is added to the report this year, becoming the 12th key issue area.



Victoria Foundation Community Grants Fund is renamed **Vital Victoria Fund.**



Vital People is launched on CHEK TV. Using Victoria's Vital Signs® as a lens, the weekly series profiles charity and non-profit projects and the people behind them making a difference in our community.



In February, Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria, in conjunction with members of Victoria's Community Centre Network, launch a film festival contest designed to engage local youth and teens in educating their peers and the wider community about the negative impact of bullying. 2015 marked Victoria's fourth annual **Youth United Anti-Bullying Film Festival.**



2013



Victoria's Vital Signs® report includes a feature article on food security in the region asking, "Do you know where your next meal is coming from?"

For the first time survey respondents are asked to grade only each subject area, not individual indicators



Things to Celebrate / Things to Improve feature added to the report

The Issue—The Response feature added to the report

Quality of Life questions are included in the Vital Signs survey for the first time.



Arts & Culture

Second arts and culture economic impact study shows an increase in spending to \$177 million from \$170 million in 2011

\$1.6 million

A new **Food Funders Group** begins as an offshoot of the region's Community Funders Network, and in their first year collectively grants \$1.6 million to support 93 local food security projects.

*** Quality of Life in Greater Victoria**
Participants in this year's Vital Signs survey were generally very positive about their quality of life and feelings of connectedness to their community.

- 90%** agreed or strongly agreed that they feel supported by loving family, companions and/or friends.
- 89%** agreed or strongly agreed that they would describe themselves as happy.
- 82%** rarely or never feel uncomfortable or out of place because of religion, skin colour, culture, race, language, accent, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- 79%** see it likely or somewhat likely that they will be living and working in Greater Victoria 10 years from now.
- 76%** rarely or very rarely felt lonely over the previous week.
- 62%** agree or strongly agree that they participate actively in their community.
- 67%** agree or strongly agree that they have the opportunity to make a difference in their community.
- 66%** feel they know their neighbours well enough to ask for help or offer assistance.
- 72%** rated their general sense of physical well-being as high.
- 80%** rated their general sense of mental well-being as high.
- 82%** feel very or somewhat connected to the community.
- 78%** agreed or strongly agreed that they are happy in their job and satisfied with work.
- 68%** are satisfied or very satisfied with work and home.

52 VICTORIA'S VITAL SIGNS



Vital Loans

In February, the Foundation and Island Savings launch **Vital Loans**, a program that provides financial support in the form of short-term loans to charities on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Pacific Opera Victoria is the first recipient with a \$150,000 loan.



Victoria Foundation donors fund a six-month pilot program to open **Our Place** for lunch on Saturdays and Sundays.

The Victoria Foundation holds two focus groups, conducts individual interviews and convenes two round-table discussions that result in a **Collaborative Road Map for Achieving Food Security in the Capital Region**. The outcomes map identifies the need to better use existing facilities and programs to create a more effective food system, generate more partnerships and revenue-generating capacity, and improve food literacy.



After modifying a beta version introduced in 2012, the Victoria Foundation launches **Victoria's Community Knowledge Centre**, an online knowledge hub that extends and complements the impact of Victoria's Vital Signs® by highlighting the innovative and effective solutions that local organizations are undertaking to address issues raised in the report.

The Victoria Foundation funded the Sooke Seniors Activity Society to help run the **Seniors Helping Seniors in the Community bus**. In place for 30 years, this service provides low-income seniors with transportation to local events and outings to enhance their health and reduce isolation, using the Society's own bus, allowing them to participate and attend various activities where no other practical means of transportation is available.

The Victoria Foundation funded the **Burnside Gorge Community Association's Youth Self Sufficiency program** which supports youth aged 18 to 19 transitioning out of government care, or those having little family support, by increasing financial capacity, employability and self-reliance.

2014



The Victoria Foundation partners with Community Foundations of Canada and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing to conduct the **Victoria Capital Region Community Wellbeing Survey**. A total of 2,239 residents provide detailed information on their quality of life. Results are presented in the 2014 Victoria's Vital Signs® report.



Ian Bird, CEO of Community Foundations of Canada, is the keynote speaker at the October launch of Victoria's Vital Signs®



Trenholme & Company sponsors the *Economy* key issue area.



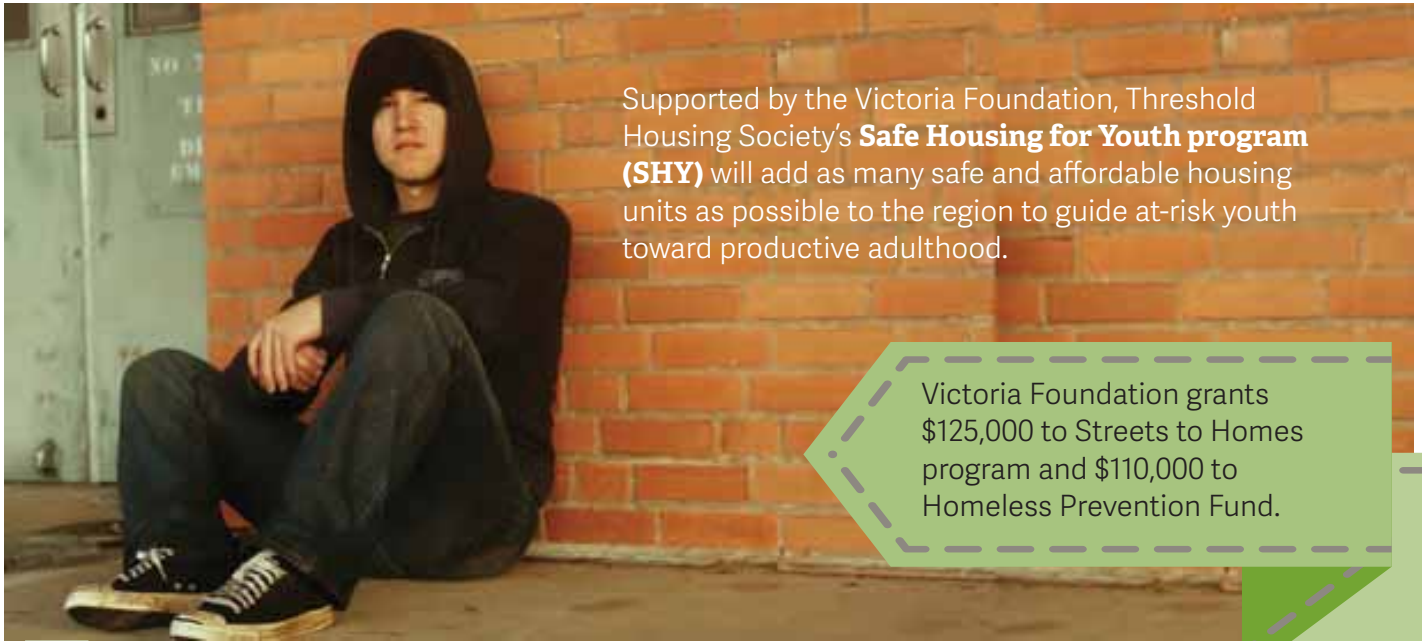
Recently introduced by **Vancity credit union**, the Fair & Fast Loan is an alternative to a conventional payday loan. Qualified members can access up to \$1,500, but unlike similar short-term loans that can charge up to 600% in annual interest rate fees, the Fair & Fast loan charges just 19%.



Urban Systems sponsors of the *Transportation* key issue area.

With support from the Victoria Foundation, the Mustard Seed and 25 other groups form the **Greater Victoria Food Share Network** and are collaborating to produce an action plan to shift emergency food distribution to a sustainable model focused on health and nutrition and poverty reduction.





Supported by the Victoria Foundation, Threshold Housing Society's **Safe Housing for Youth program (SHY)** will add as many safe and affordable housing units as possible to the region to guide at-risk youth toward productive adulthood.

Victoria Foundation grants \$125,000 to Streets to Homes program and \$110,000 to Homeless Prevention Fund.

\$170,134

10th anniversary of the Foundation's **Vital Youth** program. To date, students at eight local high schools have granted \$170,134 to 108 different charities.

In response to Vital Signs survey results calling for more community involvement opportunities for youth, the Victoria Foundation provides a grant to Volunteer Victoria's **Youth on Boards** project. In the first year, more than 90 existing board members and 125 youth attend training, 60 of whom commit to being a first-time board member.

After learning about youth mental health concerns in Victoria's Vital Signs®, the **Victoria High School Vital Youth committee** organizes a Mental Health Week for their peers and for parents.



With only one-third the number of childcare spaces available for the number of children under five years of age in our region, the Vital Victoria Fund addresses a board-mandated priority of funding programs that increase childcare spaces. A grant of \$43,404 helps create the **Full o' Beans Preschool** at Saanich Neighbourhood Place, in their quest to create a childcare hub within the Gorge Tillicum community.



Legal Rights
FOR YOUTH



Addressing a key issue identified in Victoria's Youth Vital Signs report, the Justice Education Society expands one of its websites, called **LegalRightsForYouth.ca**, which provides information about the law for youth ages 13 to 21.

2014

Victoria Foundation funding enables the **Victoria Conservatory of Music** to expand their collection of sheet music into a community-wide music library/resource centre accessible to all. In collaboration with School District 61, the project opens doors to the District's extensive Choral Octavo collection. Both organizations' annotated collections of scores are available for loan to individuals and community groups.



Vital People begins monthly publication in the **Times Colonist**. The full-page section appears in the *Islander* on the last Sunday of every month and profiles local projects and organizations working to improve the region and the lives of the people living here.

\$22,000

Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society receives \$22,000 to deliver 20 train-the-trainer workshops to local youth service organizations using Equitas' Play it Fair! curriculum, which promotes concepts like fairness and co-operation.



A love of reading leads Harry and Mary Morrow of Victoria to leave a legacy for literacy in our community. Through a generous bequest gift upon Harry's death, the Victoria Foundation creates a **Literacy Fund** supporting literacy skills in our region which, in turn, can positively impact employment, housing and health situations for the most marginalized citizens.



A Victoria Foundation donor supports an advertising campaign that encourages more people to become volunteer drivers in their community, ultimately providing seniors with increased access to supported transportation.

Funded in part by a grant from the Victoria Foundation, the **ORCCA (Oral Care for Children and Adolescents)** dental clinic opens in an annex in Sidney Elementary School to provide oral health care to children and youth from low-income families.



2015

Oakcrest Park Estates marks six years as Housing key issue area sponsor for Victoria's Vital Signs® report



CREST marks six years as Safety key issue area sponsor for Victoria's Vital Signs® report



28 community foundations across Canada release Vital Signs reports on October 6. Community Foundations of Canada releases its third national Vital Signs report, examining the importance of "belonging" in communities across Canada.

Saanich Neighbourhood Place is approved for a \$500,000 Vital Loan from the Victoria Foundation and Island Savings to further develop its childcare hub at Pearkes Recreation Centre, creating 49 additional childcare spaces.



The Victoria Foundation Board of Directors established the **Food Security Fund** with \$100,000.

Rotarians for Food Rescue is a collaboration of local Rotary clubs, the Victoria Foundation and the 11 local Thrifty Foods stores. The project will see perishable food items move from grocery stores and other sources to the vulnerable populations in the CRD through the Food Share Network.



The Province of BC creates the **Learning Fund for Young Adults** to help youth who've spent at least a year in government care with costs related to post-secondary education or vocational training. The Victoria Foundation will administer the fund.



+ Methodology

CITIZEN OPINION SURVEY

This year **2,009** citizens added their voices to Victoria's Vital Signs by assigning grades, choosing their top three things to improve and adding their comments on three things to celebrate in each of the 12 Key Issue Areas. They were also asked questions about quality of life, happiness and connection to community, and took the time to provide over 9,000 comments on the issue areas.

The online survey, conducted by The Praxis Group, is based on a "self-selected" respondent population. Data is accurate plus or minus 2.2% 19 times out of 20. Most market research involves much smaller samples of around 400 and a margin of error plus or minus 5% 19 times out of 20. A recent comparison conducted by another community foundation found that the responses from a random sample telephone survey and the online survey revealed no significant differences between the two methodologies.

An invitation to participate in the survey was advertised on two local radio stations throughout the survey period, and promoted through many websites, social media channels, online newsletters (Volunteer Victoria, Downtown Victoria Business Assoc., Coalition to End Homelessness, etc.), libraries and in local media coverage.

EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR:

BUSINESS →	30%
GOVERNMENT →	20.2%
NON-PROFIT/CHARITY →	20.2%
RETIRED →	19.8%
STUDENT →	5.7%
UNEMPLOYED →	4.3%

HAVE LIVED IN GREATER VICTORIA:

MORE THAN 10 YEARS →	72.2%
6 TO 10 YEARS →	12.9%
1 TO 5 YEARS →	12.8%
LESS THAN 1 YEAR →	2.1%



GRADING

Grading of the issue areas is based on a report card scale.

- A** Excellent, stay the course
- B** Good, but improvements could be made
- C** Average performance, suggest additional effort be made to address these issues
- D** Below average performance, additional work is required
- F** Failure, immediate action is required

INDICATOR DATA SOURCES

Community Foundations of Canada retains the International Institute for Sustainable Development to develop common indicators for Vital Signs communities and to obtain data from Statistics Canada and other institutional sources.

Greater Victoria is an umbrella term that applies to different geographical areas, depending on the indicator. It can refer to the Capital Regional District, Victoria Census Metropolitan Area or South Vancouver Island Health Service Delivery Area.

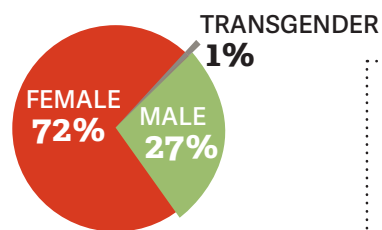
For a full list of indicators, data sources and geographies used in this report, go to www.victoriafoundation.ca

INDICATOR SELECTION

Four factors influence the indicators that are published in Vital Signs each year:

- As part of a national initiative of community foundations publishing Vital Signs reports, we agree to publish indicators related to a common set of issue areas.
- We use citizen responses to our survey to gauge what our community generally thinks are priorities to report on.
- Local experts from a range of Greater Victoria organizations help us ensure the indicators are relevant, accurate and comprehensive.
- The availability and accessibility of reliable data is critical. Vital Signs uses secondary data collected from established national, provincial and local sources.

GRADER PROFILE



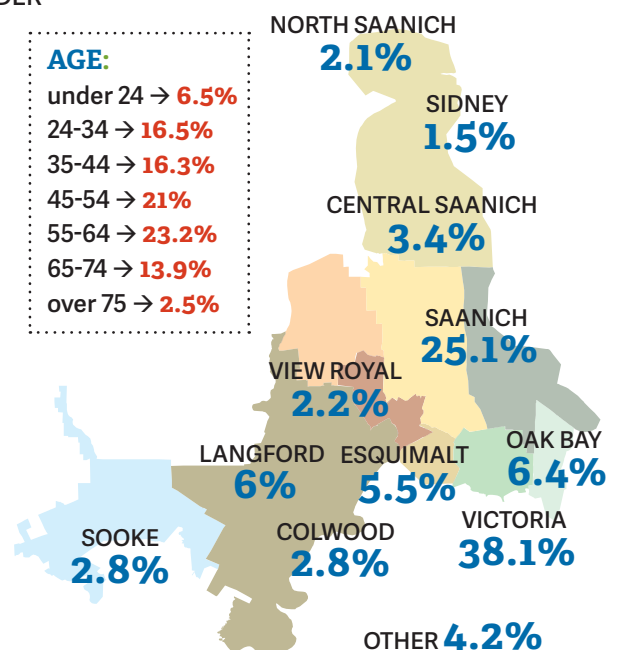
HOUSEHOLD INCOME:

under \$20,000 →	9.1%
\$20,000-49,999 →	24.6%
\$50,000-79,999 →	24.4%
\$80,000-109,999 →	19.3%
\$110,000 →	22.6%

AGE:

under 24 →	6.5%
24-34 →	16.5%
35-44 →	16.3%
45-54 →	21%
55-64 →	23.2%
65-74 →	13.9%
over 75 →	2.5%

WHERE THEY LIVE:



+ Acknowledgements

Our thanks to all of the individuals and organizations that helped to create this report, including the board and staff of the Victoria Foundation for their guidance and continuing support, and to our sponsors and donors whose generosity makes production and promotion of this report possible. We are grateful to all those who provided data and to the many individuals who participated in our surveys.

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SUBJECT AREA SPONSORS



RESEARCH SOURCES

- Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
- BC Healthy Communities Society
- BC Housing
- BC Ministry of Agriculture
- BC Ministry of Advanced Education
- BC Ministry of Education
- BC Statistics
- BC Transit
- Bear Mountain Resort Community/The Westin Bear Mountain Golf Resort & Spa
- Camosun College
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Canadian Index of Wellbeing, University of Waterloo
- Canadian Institute for Health Information
- Canadian Urban Library Council
- CivicInfo BC
- Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria
- Capital Region Beekeepers Association
- Capital Region Emergency Service Telecommunications (CREST)
- Capital Regional District (CRD), Aboriginal Initiatives
- CRD Arts Development Services
- CRD Parks and Environmental Services
- CRD Regional Planning Services
- Downtown Victoria Business Association
- Elections Canada
- First Peoples' Cultural Council
- Food Banks Canada
- Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness
- Greater Victoria Harbour Authority
- Greater Victoria Placemaker Network

- Greater Victoria Public Library
- Island Health Authority
- McCreary Centre Society
- Mustard Seed Food Bank
- Office of the Seniors Advocate
- Provincial Agricultural Land Commission
- Royal Roads University
- Statistics Canada
- Think Local First
- University of Victoria
- Urban Systems (in partnership with CRD)
- Value Chain Management International Inc.
- VIATeC
- Victoria Real Estate Board

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- Boulevard Magazine
- Community Foundations of Canada
- International Institute for Sustainable Development
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- 98.5 The Ocean
- Boulevard Magazine
- Black Press
- KISS 103.1
- Times Colonist



Vital Signs is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life. Special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the Vital Signs concept and Community Foundations of Canada for supporting a coordinated national Vital Signs initiative. For more information visit vitalsignscanada.ca.

Building stronger Island communities together.



IslandSavings

GIFT

PROGRAM

WHEN YOU'RE PART OF A COMMUNITY, YOU WORK TOGETHER. Through our Growing Island Families Together (GIFT) program, we support initiatives that empower families and strengthen communities. That is why we are proud to once again partner with the Victoria Foundation to bring focus to the wellbeing of the community of Greater Victoria through the *Victoria's Vital Signs*® report. By working together to increase the quality of life for families on the Islands, we are building a brighter future for generations to come.

islandsavings.ca/JoinUs

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