



WATERLOO REGION'S
VitalSigns[®]
PRIORITY REPORT

EXAMINING THE PRIORITIES OF OUR COMMUNITY | **2014**



THE KITCHENER
AND WATERLOO
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

BELONGING & LEADERSHIP

Our sense of connection with one another is strengthened when we contribute to our community by voting, volunteering or donating. When we feel like we belong to our community we are more likely to feel accountable and more likely to step up in a leadership capacity.



THE BIG PICTURE

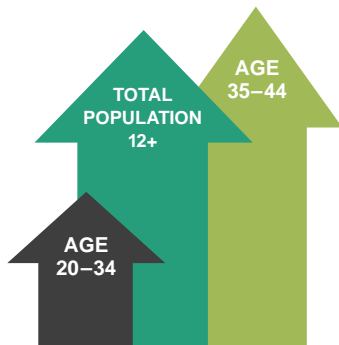
Although our community's subjective sense of belonging appears to be improving, the growth of our community donation levels have not kept pace with our rapid population growth. We are still waiting to see the positive outcomes associated with our increased subjective feelings of belonging.



In the past 17 years, our population has grown by 24% while our donor base has grown by just 1%.

Donor growth not keeping pace with population

*Source: CANSIM Table 111-0001



Sense of community belonging on the rise

Although improving, those aged 20-34 still report a sense of belonging significantly lower than the community.

*Source: CANSIM Table 105-0501 (Data for 45-64 age group was unreliable and could not be reported)

Sexual orientation impacts sense of belonging



54.2% of those who identify as being straight or heterosexual have a strong sense of belonging compared to only 36.9% of those in the community who identify as being gay, lesbian, bisexual or other-identified.

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS



46% of residents who have an annual income of less than \$40,000 have a strong sense of belonging



60.8% of residents who have an annual income of \$120,000 or more have a strong sense of belonging

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS

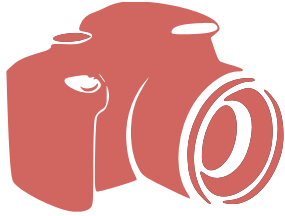
GETTING AROUND



Did you know that simply getting out and walking around your neighbourhood can increase your sense of community belonging?

ARTS & CULTURE

Participating in arts and cultural activities such as music festivals, art galleries or live theatre offers us an opportunity to show our creative side and nurture our soul. Culturally rich communities are more likely to have proud populations and are better able to attract and retain great talent.



THE BIG PICTURE

Employment in culturally related industries has rebounded from a very significant drop in 2012. Although our residents report low usage levels of local cultural facilities, they do report being engaged in cultural activities. This suggests our community is travelling to other cities for arts and culturally related events. Despite the fact that Waterloo Region has numerous free festivals each year, attendance seems to be income-related.



Participation in cultural activities VS. use of cultural facilities

Although our residents reported low usage rates of cultural facilities within the Region, their participation in cultural activities (regardless of geographical location) was much higher. This indicates that our residents are active in arts and culture but do so outside of the Region.

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS

Significant increase in arts, culture, recreation and sport employment numbers

After a drop of approximately 2,400 jobs from 2011 to 2012, employment in the cultural sector has rebounded with an increase of 1,900 jobs in 2013.



*As with all population data, please account for sampling errors.
Source: CANSIM Tables 282-0114 and 282-0010

How income impacts cultural activity attendance

\$40,000
\$120,000

Fewer than 50% of residents with an annual income of less than \$40,000 attend cultural activities.

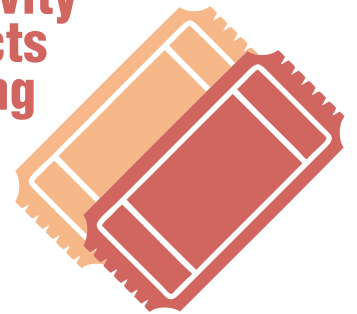
Over 70% of residents with an annual income of at least \$120,000 attend cultural activities.

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS

How cultural activity attendance affects sense of belonging

71.6%

of residents who attend cultural events report a stronger sense of belonging to our community.



*Source: 2013 CIW CWS

CULTURAL FACILITY USE



Concerned about parking? There are over 500 free parking spots in our uptown/downtown cores, giving us access to many of our community's arts and culture activities.

WATERLOO

GETTING STARTED

Getting started as a new Canadian, as a young person entering the workforce or as a young family can be challenging in the Region. Assisting these groups helps create a more vital community and can make a lasting improvement for all.



THE BIG PICTURE

Many of our young adults have failed to achieve a solid connection to work. Many are in part-time, low-paying positions. If this population sub-group is unable to secure meaningful work, they are less likely to develop a strong sense of belonging to our community. In addition, wages for those new to Canada continue to lag behind those born in Canada.



Almost one in five of our population are local university or college students

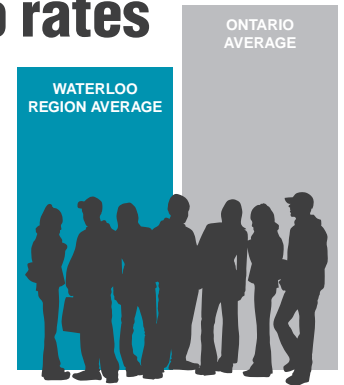
Over 60,000 full-time and 33,000 part-time students are enrolled in our three post-secondary institutions.

*Source: Association of Universities and Colleges

Number of regional licensed child care spaces lag behind Ontario rates



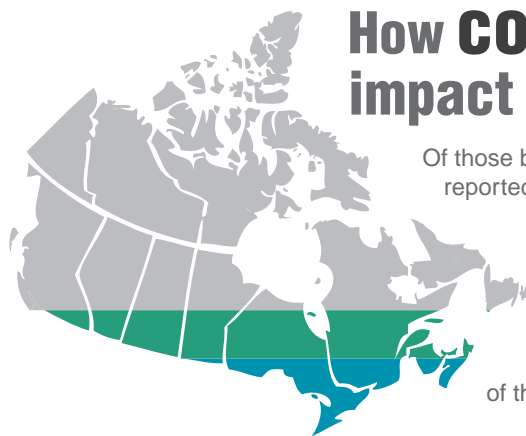
*Source: OMBI 2012, Region of Waterloo



Regional youth unemployment rates lower than Ontario average

While the Region's youth unemployment rates track the provincial trends, local rates remain considerably lower than the Ontario average.

*3-month averages for youth aged 15-24 years. Source: CANSIM Tables 282-0109 and 282-000



How country of birth can impact employment earnings

Of those born in Canada, **26.3%** reported earning over \$120,000 per year compared to just 21.2% of those not born in Canada.

Of those born in Canada, only **16.7%** reported earning less than \$40,000 per year compared to 23.3% of those not born in Canada.

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS



Grand River Transit offers subsidized passes for individuals on low income through the Transit for Reduced Income Program. The passes are less than half the regular adult monthly rate and can be accessed through The Working Centre or Lutherwood.

CULTURAL FACILITY USE

WATERLOO

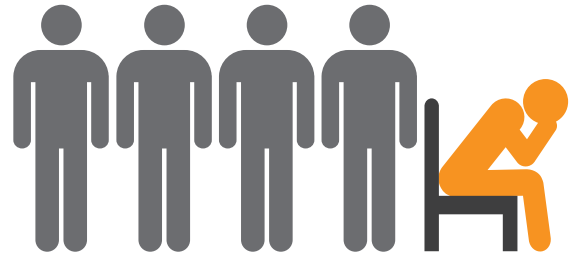
HEALTH & WELLNESS

Physical health and active lifestyle are important contributors to the quality of life in our community. Overall health is affected by many socio-economic factors including income, education and housing.



THE BIG PICTURE

A significant number of residents in our community struggle with mental health issues and higher levels of stress. Our community tends to lead a more sedentary inactive lifestyle.



1 in 5 people experience quite a lot of stress



More residents self-rated their mental health as 'fair or poor' than across the province or country

*Source: CANSIM Table 105-0501

*Source: CANSIM Tables 105-0105 and 105-0501

Income levels can impact satisfaction with physical wellbeing



ONLY 56.4%

of those earning less than \$40,000 per year report feeling satisfied with their physical wellbeing.

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS



More than 25% of our population has a disability that limits their activity

*Source: CANSIM Table 105-0501

Satisfaction with leisure time encourages a stronger sense of belonging

*Source: 2013 CIW CWS



The Working Centre recently launched a Community Access Bikeshare (CAB) program to provide short-term bicycle rentals on a very affordable basis. For a low annual fee members can now access well-maintained bikes in uptown Waterloo and downtown Kitchener.

VITAL SIGNS PRIORITY AREAS

In last year's 2013 full WRVS report, we examined all 11 issue areas as well as an economic context to understand the bigger picture. Focus groups, our Expert Panel and our data consultant helped us understand our community's most pressing issues. This year and next, we will take the time to dive deeper into these areas with our WRVS Priority Reports.

Announced at the October 2013 launch event, our community's Priority Areas for 2013–2015 are Belonging & Leadership, Arts & Culture, Getting Started (in life and/or in Canada) and Health & Wellness. In addition, Getting Around was highlighted as a special focus. Whatever issues a member of our community may face in these areas, they are only exacerbated by issues with access or transportation.

Data for this report was obtained from the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Community Wellbeing Survey (CIW CWS), the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI) and Statistics Canada (CANSIM) amongst other sources. For more information and to access full data tables please visit:

www.wrvtalsigns.ca



Inspired to make change happen?

Interested in how you can help make a difference in these areas of community need? Check out www.cckwr.ca, The Foundation's online platform designed to connect community needs to those who can help make a difference.

Funded by:



THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation wishes to extend our sincerest thanks to the many organizations and individuals that provided information, guidance, data or in any way assisted in the creation of this year's report. We are especially grateful to the dynamic community leaders of our Expert Panel for their guidance and to our community partners for their support.

Expert Panel

Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries

Kristine Allison

University of Waterloo

Ryan Connell

Creative Enterprise Initiative

Roger Farwell

Region of Waterloo Strategic Planning

Lorie Fiozie

UW Social Innovation Generation

Sean Geobey

Community CarShare

Jason Hammond

Muslim Social Services

Sabira Hudda

WLU Student Union

Chris Hyde

UW Propel Centre for Population Health Impact

Leia Minaker

Waterloo Regional Police Service

Shaena Morris

WLU Student Publications

Bryn Ossington

Region of Waterloo Public Health

Katherine Pigott

Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council

Anthony Piscitelli

Waterloo Region's Vital Signs® Photo Contest Judge
Shubhagata Sengupta

Photo Contest Winners

A special thank you goes out to the photographers who submitted photos for our annual *Waterloo Region's Vital Signs* photo contest. You can find all the winners featured on the WRVS website at www.wrvitalsigns.ca

First Prize: Brent Wettlaufer

Second Prize: Julie Schmidt

Third Prize: Elizabeth Clarke

Waterloo Region's Vital Signs® Project Team

Chelsea Arnott

Ernie Ginsler

Bethan Llewellyn

Brendan M. Sheehan

Rosemary Smith



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: www.vitalsignscanada.ca



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA

www.communityfoundations.ca

A special thank you goes to the following organizations for their leadership and generous financial support in making this year's *Waterloo Region's Vital Signs* a reality:

THANKS!



WATERLOO REGION
RECORD

Community
Partnerships
Program

Welcome to the 2014 edition of *Waterloo Region's Vital Signs*® (WRVS) – the Priority Report. Since 2007, The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation has aspired to inspire civic engagement, to provide focus for public debate and to mobilize philanthropy around community need. As a Community Foundation, WRVS helps us focus on the most challenging issues facing our Region. Whether it is setting strategy at the Board level, improving the impact of our grant work or building relationships and knowledge, *Vital Signs* is a tool for learning, for change and for action.

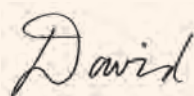
As you can see, the Priority Report you hold in your hands is a departure from our previous editions of *Vital Signs*. This year's report is an opportunity to share the data in a more concise, readable and accessible way. The end result is a visual report that the entire community can read and understand. Our friends at Quarry Integrated Communications helped us improve our previous booklet-style format and throughout the report you will find data presented via a new infographic-style approach.

Last year, we were proud to partner with the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) housed at the University of Waterloo to complete the first ever Waterloo Region Community Wellbeing Survey (CWS). Look for CWS information throughout this report and in next year's 2015 Priority Report.

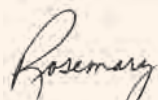
It is through informed action and empathetic passion for our community that we can truly make this Region the best place to live, work, play and raise a family. Join us as we explore the most pressing issues facing our community and seek to find ways for each of us to make an impact.

Only together can we make a lasting difference.

Sincerely,



David Brennehan



Rosemary Smith



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THE KITCHENER
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