



2020 The North Okanagan's  
**VitalSigns**<sup>®</sup>



# Welcome to Our 2020 VitalSigns® Report

## Message From the Executive Director & Board Chair

Once again, the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan is proud to share the VitalSigns report with our region. The goal of the VitalSigns program is to better understand the communities that comprise the North Okanagan – Vernon, Coldstream, Lumby, Spallumcheen, Armstrong, and Enderby.

Much has changed in the past few years: the housing and homelessness experiences once more common in larger urban centres hit the North Okanagan, as did the opioid crisis. It can be difficult to make sense of these changes in our community, country, and internationally. Much of how we understand challenging issues is influenced by what we read on social media, or how an issue affects us or our loved ones.

We have also now lived through a full year of the COVID-19 pandemic. While statistics on how the virus has impacted our lives are just starting to emerge, one thing is clear – our world has been forever changed. Governments, funders, and everyday citizens have had to grapple with how to maintain work, home, and personal lives in these unprecedented times. Stay tuned for Vital Updates as local data on the social impacts of the pandemic starts to become available.

As a funder, the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan is approaching \$20 million in assets, designed to sustainably meet community needs in perpetuity. The year 2020 saw the need for immediate help rise to a level never seen before. Food security, shelter needs, and mental health demands rose sharply, and the tools needed to meet those needs had to respond accordingly. Our approach to the crisis demanded innovative new ways of doing things, an increased sense of collective responsibility, and a balanced commitment to a place-based community response in a critically important global context.

Needs will change over time, but your community foundation will always be here to support the service providers, non-profit organizations, and community citizens working hard to make the North Okanagan a safe and rewarding place to live, work, and play. The connection between donors who care and causes that matter has never been so clear, and continues to be our guiding purpose. We hope the VitalSigns program and this report provide you with information that grows your awareness of the issues and significant trends in the North Okanagan. We invite funders, community leaders, and everyday philanthropists to embrace your power and the role we each play as we move forward on this journey together.

The VitalSigns steering committee is comprised of Leanne Hammond, Annette Sharkey, and Maggie Hodge Kwan. Many community leaders also contributed to this report by sharing data and providing subject specific expertise. Thank you to Tannis Nelson, Kevin Poole, Micki Materi, Zee Marcolin, Angela Broadbent, Selena Russell, Dauna Grant, Leigha Horsfield, Kelly Johnson, Jane Lister, Kelly Fehr, and Shawna Baher.

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan acknowledges that the geographic scope of this report is within the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of the Syilx Nation and the Secwepemc Nation.



**Leanne Hammond,**  
Executive Director



**Mike Nolan,**  
Board Chair

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# About the VitalSigns® Program

VitalSigns® is a national program led by local community foundations and coordinated by Community Foundations of Canada (CFC). VitalSigns® leverages community knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities and support action towards improving the quality of life. For more information, please visit [www.communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs](http://www.communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs).

## Why a VitalSigns® Report?

By compiling local information and tracking it over time, we deepen our knowledge and understanding of the North Okanagan region. This report is a valuable tool for our foundation, as well as local government, community groups, and residents. It provides a basis from which to celebrate our community's assets and to develop innovative solutions to build a stronger North Okanagan.

## How is the Report Organized?

The VitalSigns® report format captures trends on issues that are important to the quality of life and health of a community, in its broadest definition. This report is divided into ten distinct issue areas that contribute to our community's vitality, arranged alphabetically. In each of the issue areas, 4-5 indicators are evaluated using relevant data. Wherever possible, the data show whether there is improvement or decline from previous years, or how the North Okanagan region compares to the province and the country.

## Data

Much of the data within this report was collected by CFCs data partner, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). Where possible, it has been verified by local subject matter experts in each issue area (see page 2). Additional information was provided by local individuals, organizations, and publications. All data sources are listed on page 27.

## Indicator Selection

In November 2016, the VitalSigns® steering committee convened seven focus groups designed to bring together community champions working in a number of different sectors. Through discussion and a follow-up survey, community champions weighed in on the most pressing indicators to track and update in future reports. Post-report publication, in November 2017, community leaders were once again brought together. These leaders offered useful feedback on indicators and recommended a handful of changes. This explains differences between the 2017 and 2020 reports.

## What is the North Okanagan Region?

For the purpose of this report, the North Okanagan is defined as the cities of Armstrong, Coldstream, Enderby, Lumby, Spallumcheen, and Vernon, the Regional District of the North Okanagan electoral areas B, C, D, E, and F, and the Okanagan 1 and Enderby 2 reservations.

All efforts have been made to focus on data from this area, but occasionally narrower or broader geographic areas are measured. This will be noted.

## Community Foundations of Canada

Community Foundations of Canada oversees the development of all 191 community foundations across Canada. CFC coordinates the VitalSigns® program, including the publishing of local and national reports. They provide support to all communities participating in the program via community engagement, data collection, and reporting.

Indicators were also selected and prioritized based on the following guidelines:

### Indicator Characteristics:

- Does the indicator interest the general public?
- Does the indicator inspire action?
- Does the indicator report on a trend or issue that individuals or communities can do something about?
- Does it reveal a strength or weakness of the North Okanagan?




### Data Selection

- Is it understandable and measurable?
- Is it publicly available or can it be easily collected?
- How current is the information?
- What is the frequency of collection (for future use)?

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent the world's collective vision for a thriving and sustainable planet. Canada is one of 193 countries participating in this United Nations initiative. The SDGs are universal and apply to all people and communities everywhere. Within the 17 SDGs, there are 169 targets. Canada has signed on to achieving these goals at home and abroad. At the community level, the SDGs are an opportunity to focus and coordinate collective efforts to address problems beyond the community scale, such as climate change, which can only be addressed if communities and cities unite in common action. Visit [globalgoals.org](http://globalgoals.org) for more details.

## Find These Icons Throughout This Report to Learn How the SDGs and Targets Relate to VitalSigns® Key Issues.

SDG	GOAL	ACTION & LINKS	Pg.
	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	HOPE Okanagan: Helping Out People Exploited – Grant to increase support of people on the street, in particular women being sexually exploited.	16 17 18 21
	End hunger, achieve food security, and promote sustainable agriculture	Salvation Army Food Bank – Grant Enderby & District Community Resources – Grant Good Food Box – Fill the Gap – Grant	11 15 18
	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Vernon Men's Shed – Grant CMHA Community Education & Family Support – Grant CMHA – Suicide Prevention – Grant Cycling Without Age – Grant	10 12 14 15 16 17 19
	Ensure equitable, quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities	Literacy Society of the North Okanagan – Grant Launch Okanagan Financial Literacy – Grant Okanagan Regional Library – Grant	8 9 19
	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Archway Society for Domestic Peace (Women's Shelter) – Grant HOPE Okanagan – Grant	21 22
	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Clean water and sanitation are often taken for granted in our area – find out how you can help by protecting this vital resource	11 28
	Ensure access to affordable, sustainable, and modern energy for all	Vernon Restholm: Solar Panels – Grant Find out more about clean and sustainable energy options	28











### SDG #3 - Good Health and Well-Being

This goal aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages. **Men's Shed** is a program to build meaning and well-being into men's lives by engaging hands, hearts, and minds. This innovative program is offered through a partnership with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Vernon. First created in Australia, the idea behind Men's Shed was to create a place for retired men to gather, meet, build vital friendships, and undertake purposeful activities.

"Men have long attributed identity, relationships, self-worth, and even their daily schedule to their profession and career. When that ends abruptly on retirement, the change can be difficult to deal with for many men," says Lyle Enns, one of the founders of the Vernon chapter. "Local 'Sheds' offer mature men an outlet to get together for a coffee, build any number of projects in a common shop, exchange and grow their skills, and support other community organizations with their work. It just so happens that we remain happier and healthier as a side benefit." For more information see the feature on page 14.

### SDG #5 - Gender Equality

This goal speaks to achieving gender equity and empowering all women and girls. The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan and our donors have a longstanding history of supporting programs that support women leaving abusive situations, programs aimed at preventing violence and helping to heal. **Archway Society for Domestic Peace** (previously known as Vernon Women's Transition Society) is an important local organization that offers a wide range of supportive services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Services include; safe shelter (transition house program), counselling, child and youth advocacy, outreach services, and collaborative community projects. To find out more go to <https://archwaysociety.ca/>.

<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all	Junior Achievement BC: Bright Futures – <b>Grant</b> Junior Achievement BC: Business Education Programs – <b>Grant</b> Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) Grants 2020	8 9 20 21 28
<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation	Investment Readiness Fund Sustainable Recovery Grants Partnership Capacity Building Grants	8 12 17 28
<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	Reduce inequality within and among countries	Brain Trust Canada: brain injury counselling – <b>Grant</b> Independent Living Vernon – <b>Grant</b> Vernon & District Association for Community Living – <b>Grant</b>	19 28
<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable	Vernon Native Housing Society – <b>Grant</b> Independent Living Vernon – <b>Grant</b> Vernon & District Association for Community Living – <b>Grant</b>	9 10 13 17 21 22
<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Land to Table (L2T) includes farmers, food processors, distributors, consumers, and others who collaborate to develop a food system that is sustainable and accessible. For information on other innovative programs, see Bonus Links	15 28
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION 	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Sustainable Environment Network Society (SENS) – <b>Grant</b> See Bonus Links	11 28
<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER 	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development	Kingfisher Interpretive Centre: Salmon Stewardship Program – <b>Grant</b> Ecosystem and Watershed Stewardship – <b>Grant</b>	28
<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND 	Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, forests, land, and biodiversity	Allan Brooks Nature Centre: Nature and habitat conservation and environmental education for all ages – <b>Grant</b>	11
<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels	Archway Society for Domestic Peace – <b>Grant</b> Restorative Justice Programming Through CMHA Vernon – <b>Grant</b>	10 22 28
<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Leveraging Funding Opportunities Through Partnerships With: Community Foundations of Canada, The Government of Canada, United Way, Central Okanagan Foundation, Community Foundation of the South Okanagan, Purppl Social Enterprise Accelerator	28

## SDG #9 - Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

The focus of this goal is to build resilient infrastructure and foster innovation. Collaboration is often the first step towards doing things better than before. The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan has been delighted to participate in two exciting programs that highlight the potential of leveraging funding and new ideas:

1. **Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund** (SEA Fund) is a collaboration between Community Foundations, United Way, and Interior Savings Credit Union to build the capacity of local charities to develop more sustainable, long-term revenue streams. By pooling resources with other funders and partnering with experts in social enterprise, we can help build capacity in a more strategic and sustainable way.
2. The government of Canada's **Investment Readiness Program** launched in 2020 to help social enterprises explore, grow, and flourish across Canada, contributing to solving pressing social, cultural, and environmental challenges. From farmshare co-ops to after-school arts programs, social enterprises serve the needs of communities across the country. To find out how the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan is involved with this innovative social change opportunity check out [www.cfno.org](http://www.cfno.org).

## SDG #14 - Life Below Water

The best thing about the Okanagan is our natural environment. UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #14 – Life Below Water – speaks to conserving and sustainably using our oceans, seas, and marine resources. In the Okanagan it also extends to our rivers and lakes! Check out the [Kingfisher Interpretive Centre](http://www.kingfishercentre.org/) and their interactive, hands-on salmon hatchery program. You can find it at [www.kingfishercentre.org/](http://www.kingfishercentre.org/).

## SDG #15 - Life on Land

SDG #15 – Life on Land – looks to protect and promote terrestrial ecosystems, forests, land, and biodiversity. In the North Okanagan, the [Allan Brooks Nature Centre](http://www.abnc.ca/) does a wonderful job of educating children and adults alike, on the importance of respecting the land and nature's amazing creatures. For more information, have a look at their website at [www.abnc.ca/](http://www.abnc.ca/).

**Let us know what YOU are doing!**

We would be happy to feature your activities/actions on our website ([cfno.org](http://cfno.org)) or [Facebook page](#). Thank you for being part of the solution!

# Report Highlights

## Arts & Culture

The arts and culture sector continues to grow, as evidenced by employment in cultural occupations, government spending on the arts, and the development of the Greater Vernon Cultural Centre.

## Belonging & Leadership

North Okanagan residents care for their communities, and donate to and otherwise support local charities. Civic engagement has waned slightly, though, with most North Okanagan communities seeing decreased voter turnout in the last municipal election.

## Environment

Many of the Sustainable Development Goals focus on our environment, which is influenced by both individual choices and policies and laws at all levels of government. It is encouraging to read of fewer water quality alerts and better air quality, thanks to the efforts of both groups.

## Getting Around

Most North Okanagan residents commute to work by car, perhaps because of insufficient public transit options in communities outside of Vernon. Post-secondary students make good use of transit, including the area's most popular route – the UBCO Connector.

## Health & Wellness

Many measures of health and wellness in the North Okanagan are on par with our provincial counterparts. It is worth noting that incidences of depression, mood disorders, and heavy drinking have increased in the region, and the opioid crisis is an ongoing health concern.

## Housing

Like much of the province, the North Okanagan has seen housing prices increase while vacancy rates decrease. This puts a squeeze on residents, and especially on renters. New non-profit housing units and new housing starts have been recorded, but more of both types of housing are required to meet current needs.

## Income Gap

Overall, child and senior's poverty rates in the North Okanagan have decreased slightly in recent years, but remain higher than the provincial average. The North Okanagan has fewer higher income earners as compared to neighbouring Central Okanagan and to the province.

## Learning

A change was observed regarding early childhood vulnerability, which has increased meaningfully in both the Vernon and North Okanagan-Shuswap school districts. Left unchecked, early childhood vulnerability can lead to educational and social concerns as children age.

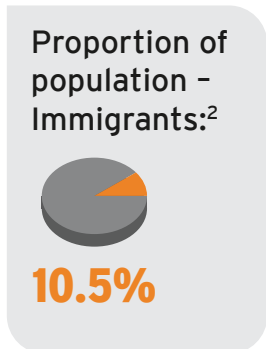
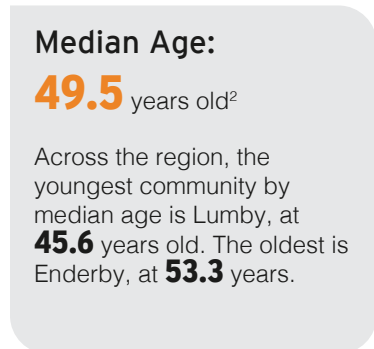
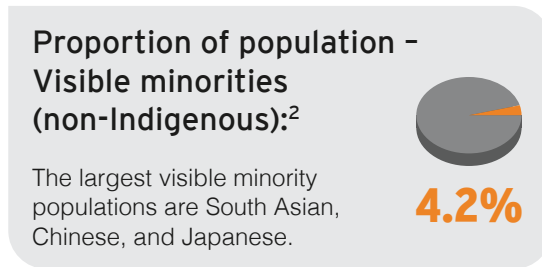
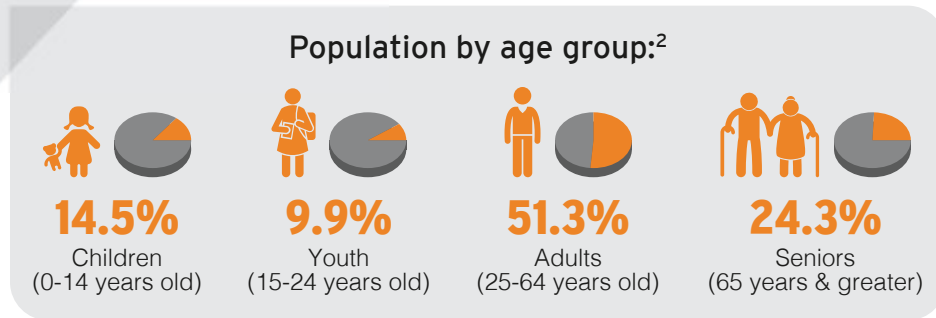
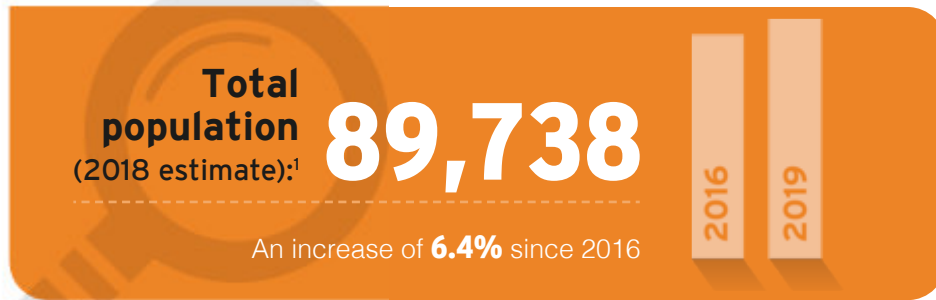
## Work & Economy

Many encouraging statistics have been recorded in recent years, including increased business licensing, increased non-residential construction values, and increased median incomes. These measures will be monitored closely through pandemic recovery.

## Safety

Safety indicators are likewise encouraging, as communities across the region generally reported lower overall crime rates, crime severity rates, and motor vehicle thefts over the long-term. Reported sexual assaults have increased in the short term.

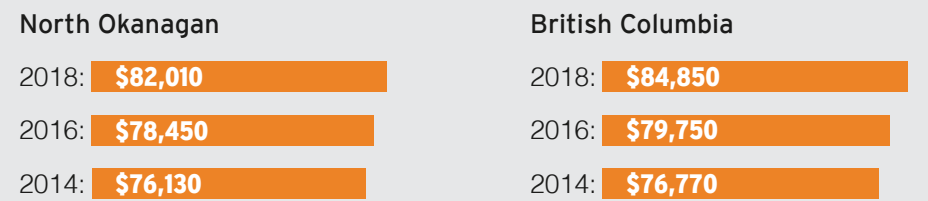
# The North Okanagan at a Glance



## Employment by industry:<sup>2</sup>



## Median family income:<sup>4</sup>



# Arts & Culture



829,616

Number of items borrowed

In 2019, the North Okanagan branches of the Okanagan Regional Library recorded 829,616 items borrowed. Given that there are 26,699 registered borrowers in the North Okanagan, each borrower averaged 31 items per year. This is an increase over 2016's 822,816 items borrowed.<sup>5</sup>

870

Employment in cultural occupations

In 2011, 825 members of the North Okanagan's workforce were employed in cultural occupations (art, culture, recreation, or sport). This increased by 5.3% to 870 by 2016.<sup>2</sup>

\$1.18 million

Government spending on arts and culture

The Regional District of the North Okanagan is the primary local funder for the arts and culture sector in Greater Vernon, allotting \$1.18 million dollars in 2018, to supporting cultural initiatives and ongoing operating funds for arts and culture organizations.<sup>6</sup>

22

Arts and culture facilities

There remain 22 key cultural facilities in the North Okanagan, including museums, libraries, galleries, performance venues, historic buildings and sites, and natural sites. See the Progress Report for news on Greater Vernon's upcoming cultural centre.<sup>7</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

The Greater Vernon Cultural Plan, developed in 2016, recommended the creation of a multi-purpose cultural facility that would house not only the Vernon Museum and Archives and the Vernon Public Art Gallery, but would offer performance space as well. This recommendation was carried forward by the Regional District of the North Okanagan (RDNO) and, during the 2018 municipal election, residents of Vernon, Coldstream, and RDNO Electoral Areas B and C passed a referendum allowing the Regional District to borrow up to \$25 million to construct the proposed **Greater Vernon Cultural Centre**. The next step in the process? Before construction can begin, the RDNO needs to raise \$15 million to supplement any loans needed to build the centre.



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE





# Arts & Culture



## Arts in the North Okanagan

The ARTS include a wide variety of creative disciplines including:

- Literature (including drama, poetry, and prose)
- Performing Arts (including dance, music, and theatre)
- Media and Visual Arts (including drawing, painting, filmmaking, architecture, ceramics, sculpting, and photography)



**The COVID 19 crisis has impacted us all in different ways. A renewed focus on Arts & Culture programming in our community helps many of us feel connected and provides a creative outlet to nurture our well-being.**

## Why are ARTS Important?

The arts have been highly impacted by COVID-19. Not only were most performance venues shut down due to provincial safety regulations, arts & cultural groups also had to cancel their main fundraising events or quickly move them online.

While we all recognize how important the arts have been in keeping us entertained and bolstering our spirits during the pandemic, the financial impact of reduced revenue on the arts & culture sector is just starting to be assessed.

**When Winston Churchill was asked to cut arts funding in favour of the war effort, he simply replied, "then what are we fighting for?"**

## Health and Arts

There is a lot of evidence that art is good for your physical and mental health. Art therapy can help with self-expression, manage pain, and even reduce fatigue, stress, or anxiety.

A grant from the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan was made to the **Sing for Your Life Foundation**, a group committed to improving the health and wellbeing of older Canadians who live at home or in residential care, through music. Their fun, interactive programs improve the lives and care of older people, including those affected by dementia, and their caregivers. While temporarily paused during the pandemic, programming will provide new opportunities and multiple positive impacts!

*"My mood is always lifted. I tend to self-isolate and get depressed - a vicious circle. The club really helps me."*

– Bette, participant, Silver Song Group

*"Initially I went to the Silver Song Group as a means of providing an opportunity to socialise, for my wife. Little did I realise that I would stay and enjoy the singing, and that we would both benefit from the therapy which the sing-a-long provides."*

– Angus & Beryl, participants, Silver Song Group



# Belonging & Leadership



254

Registered charities

Thirteen million Canadians volunteer time and talents to support charities and nonprofits, and help those in need. Without the support of community volunteers, the activity level of the charitable sector in the North Okanagan would grind to a halt. There are 254 registered charities in the North Okanagan all of which rely on volunteer boards; many further rely on volunteers to deliver their programs and services.<sup>8</sup>

\$440

Charitable donations

In 2017, 1 in 5 North Okanagan tax filers gave a charitable donation. The median amount was \$440, an increase over 2016 (\$420) and 2015 (\$390). The national average in 2017 was \$300, and the provincial average was \$460.<sup>10</sup>

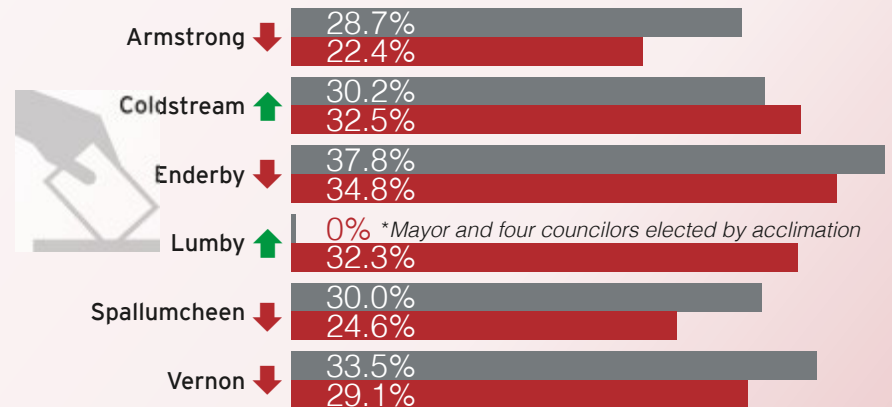
72.8%

Sense of community belonging

Nearly three-quarters of residents of the Okanagan Health Service Delivery Area, which includes the North Okanagan, reported a somewhat strong or strong sense of community belonging in 2015 and 2016, an increase over 2014's 65.4%. The current rate is slightly higher than the provincial average of 71.6% and the national average of 68.4% – both rates the highest they've been in the last decade.<sup>9</sup>

Voter turnout, municipal elections<sup>11</sup>

2014 2018



## PROGRESS REPORT

Through the Cammy LaFleur Street Outreach Program, hosted by Turning Points Collaborative, a new group of people who care about the future of Vernon have come together to share their experiences and to care for some of the community's most vulnerable. The group is called the **Vernon Entrenched People Against Discrimination (VEPAD)**, and is comprised of individuals with experiences of homelessness, poverty, and/or substance use issues. Recognizing that the broader community is often misinformed about street entrenched populations, VEPAD convenes entrenched people and their allies to stand against hatred and discrimination and to help build a better understanding of the experiences of marginalized people.



# Environment



**20**  
Water quality alerts  
In 2018, there were 20 water quality alerts issued in the North Okanagan. Of these, 11 were boil water advisories and 9 were water quality advisories. This is a decrease over 2016's 38 water quality alerts.<sup>13</sup>

**6.7**  
Air quality: Average PM<sub>2.5</sub>  
Air quality is measured by concentration of particulate matter micrograms (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), with an ideal reading of 6 micrograms or fewer. In 2016, there was an average concentration of 6.7 particulate matter micrograms per PM<sub>2.5</sub>. This is an improvement over 2014's average reading of 7.3, and closer to the 2016 national average of 6.4.<sup>14</sup>

**18**  
Species at risk  
Within the Regional District of the North Okanagan, there are 18 native and/or endemic species currently at risk. Rated "Red" on the BC List, these species are extirpated, endangered, or threatened. One third of species on this list are birds, including the Western Grebe, Swainson's Hawk, and two owls.<sup>15</sup>

**30.2%**  
Proportion of protected lands, in hectares  
There are approximately 750,000 hectares of land in the North Okanagan. Of these, 69,001 hectares are in the Agricultural Land Reserve, 32,865 are classified as Sensitive Ecosystems, and an additional 125,000 are protected as parks or Environmentally Sensitive Areas.<sup>16,17,18</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

In 2017 we profiled Patchwork Farms, a community farm located on the grounds of the **Kalamalka Garden** at **Okanagan College** Vernon campus. Since that time Kalamalka Garden, K'nmałka? Sənqâłtən, has blossomed into an Indigenous garden. In 2020, the garden has become an instructional site filled with both food and ornamental plants indigenous to the Okanagan territory. The garden offers a hands-on opportunity to learn more about the plants used for eating, medicinal, and traditional purposes since time immemorial. The garden is also an act of reconciliation, acknowledging and appreciating that the land has been stewarded responsibly by the region's indigenous community.



# Getting Around



18 - 26

Average commuting time in minutes

The 2016 census reports on median commuting time. Residents of Vernon have a median commute of 18 minutes, while residents of the broader North Okanagan face a median commute of 26 minutes. These increased over 2011, much like the provincial increase from 25 minutes in 2011 to 26 minutes in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

\$16,391,000

Government spending on road services

In 2018, the City of Vernon spent more than \$16 million on road transportation projects. This is an increase over the \$15,193,000 spent in 2017.<sup>20</sup>

## Mode of Transport to Work

In the North Okanagan, the following are the most to least used modes of transportation to work:<sup>2</sup>

83.0% Vehicle (driver)

7.3% Active transportation (walked or biked)

5.5% Vehicle (passenger)

1.3% Public transit



553,000

Public transit ridership

In 2018, ridership on BC Transit's conventional and fixed routes totaled 553,000. Route 90, the UBCO Connector, is the most popular route, with 123,000 passenger trips per year.<sup>12</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

Commuting by bike is a smart way to build exercise and time outdoors into your day while also reducing the number of cars on the road. But what about biking just for the joy of it? Seniors and less able-bodied people can now get in on the fun thanks to the **Cycling Without Age** program.

Cycling Without Age utilizes special rickshaw-type bikes and volunteer pilots to safely support seniors in enjoying the community by bike. Getting out in the fresh air, enjoying the rail trail, and reducing isolation – what could be better? While this program was paused during the pandemic, immunization offers the hope that the program can resume in time for summer 2021.



## Getting Around



Safe and reliable transportation became an immediate need for seniors and others, once the COVID-19 pandemic hit our community. Programs supporting and managing community members to get around are essential during regular times, and now there is an even greater need to continue supporting these initiatives.

### Helping Seniors Remain Independent

Many seniors living on their own require additional support to shop for their basic needs. COVID-19 made this need even more critical.

With funding from the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan and United Way, **Nexus BC** runs a volunteer driving program to help seniors remain independent by offering regular trips to local shopping centres, doctors' appointments, and other such outings.

During the pandemic, NexusBC stepped up to provide additional service by delivering groceries and prescriptions to seniors, so they weren't forced to venture out and risk exposure to the virus. Whether its a drop off at the door, a quick visit with a mask, or checking in over the phone, the service allows opportunity for community building, connecting isolated seniors with others, and ensuring no one's need go unmet.

**Vernon & District Association for Community Living – we get around with a little help from our friends!**

The Community Foundation was pleased to provide a grant towards a wheelchair accessible van. The foundation was happy to leverage our funding with an additional grant from the Kathleen & Monty Foster Trust held at the Vancouver Foundation.

### Transportation Issues For Working Parents

When the school district announced it would no longer be able to provide bus transportation from school to afterschool care, Maven Lane knew there was a big problem for the little people. Working parents can't just leave their places of employment when school gets out to run their child to afterschool care. For many parents that would take an hour out of their work day, and for others who don't own a car, it would be impossible.

A grant from the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan, combined with funding from the Kathleen & Monty Foster Trust held at the Vancouver Foundation, has now solved that problem with the purchase of a passenger van that picks the children up at school, and transports them safely to Maven Lane's afterschool care program.



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



# Health & Wellness



**81.18**  
Life expectancy from birth

Vital Statistics data from 2017 offers a life expectancy rate of 81.18 years for residents of the North Okanagan, a slight decrease over the 81.35 projected in 2016. This is more than one year less than the provincial life expectancy rate of 82.28 years.<sup>21</sup>

**87.0%**  
Proportion of the population with a regular doctor

Across the Okanagan Health Service Delivery Area, which includes the entirety of the North Okanagan, 87.0% of residents have a regular health care provider. This is an increase over our reporting in 2017, which saw 82.0% of residents attached to a medical doctor. Provincially, 83.0% of residents have a health care provider.<sup>22</sup>

**15.0%**  
Smoking rate, daily or occasionally

The smoking rate has held steady at 15.0% across the Okanagan Health Service Delivery Area. In comparison, 17.0% of the broader Interior Health Region reports smoking daily or occasionally.<sup>22</sup>

**31.0%**  
Prevalence of depression

Incidences of depression have increased slightly in Vernon, from 29.3% in 2014-2015 to 31.0% in 2016-2017. Armstrong, Spallumcheen, and Enderby are holding at 29.0%, on par with the rate across Interior Health but higher than the provincial rate of 26.0%. Diagnosed mood and anxiety disorders have also increased slightly in Vernon, from 33.0% to 35.0%, while rates in Armstrong and Spallumcheen are holding and Enderby has decreased by a percentage point to 32.0%. Provincially, 31.0% of the population has a mood or anxiety disorder.<sup>22</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

On page 10, we reported that **72.8%** of residents feel a strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to the community. Belonging is one of many social determinants of health, a group of social and economic factors that influence the differences in health observed across individuals and groups. Feeling a sense of belonging and inclusion is important for both physical and mental health. For retired men in the region, there is a new venue to connect, socialize, and plug into the community: the **Men's Shed**.

The Men's Shed offers men a place to come together, talk over a cup of coffee, learn and share carpentry and building skills, and support local non-profits through the projects they undertake. The Men's Shed has built tables for a summer camp, furnishings for a retreat centre, and benches for community members to purchase. More importantly, participants are also building community and increasing their sense of identity and self-worth.

**+16.0%**  
Projected change to senior population

Greater Vernon's senior population (65 years and greater) is expected to grow 16% by 2023. A similar growth rate of 17% is projected for Armstrong and Spallumcheen, while in Enderby, the senior population is projected to grow by 27% by 2023.<sup>22</sup>



**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



# Health & Wellness



**19.7%**  
Heavy drinking

Our 2017 report noted a heavy drinking rate of 16.0%. Heavy drinking is defined as having 5 or more drinks (for males) or 4 or more drinks (females) on one occasion at least once a month in the last year. The 2017 Okanagan Health Service Delivery Area rate of 19.7% is an increase, and is higher than the provincial rate of 17.0%.<sup>23</sup>

## COVID Context

1 in 5 Canadians say they are drinking more since the pandemic began. 21% say they drink at least once per day. They say they drink more due to stress and boredom (34%), no regular schedule (29%), and loneliness (23%). 1 in 10 report drinking less.

**29.0%**  
Proportion of population regularly eating recommended fruits and vegetables, 12 years and over

Canada's food guide has recently changed, and now recommends making half of all meals vegetables and fruit. Only 29.0% of Okanagan residents eat 5 or more servings of vegetables per day, close to the Interior Health and British Columbia rate of 31.0%.<sup>22</sup>

## Land to Table

**Land to Table** (L2T) is a growing regional network including farmers, those who gather and harvest traditional foods, food processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, chefs, consumers, and waste managers as well as non-profit organizations, government agencies and academic institutions.

This diverse group is inspired by the idea that a well-connected and coordinated network can unite under a common vision to develop a food system that is economically prosperous, environmentally sustainable, and socially accessible. For more information, go to <https://landtotablenetwork.com>.

**24**  
Opioid overdose deaths

Due to a dramatic rise in opioid overdose deaths, BC has declared a public health emergency. In 2012 one person died in Vernon from an overdose, as compared to 24 in 2018, 14 in 2019, and 26 in 2020.<sup>35</sup>

## Taking the Naloxone Challenge

Giving naloxone reverses an overdose from opioids. Naloxone training, together with the kits, is free through **Interior Health**. In fact, 2019 saw the Greater Vernon business community take up IH's region wide Naloxone challenge.

Various businesses and groups are undertaking the training and challenging others to do the same. Groups who have risen to the challenge include the staff at Prospera Credit Union, Nixon Wenger Lawyers, and Kal Rotary and Canadian Mental Health Association volunteers.



(Roger Knox/Morning Star)

**Vernon-North Okanagan RCMP Supt. Shawna Baher (from left), Annette Sharkey of the Social Planning Council of North Okanagan, Emelia Gazsity, Interior Health substance use and mental health clinician, and IH chief medical officer Dr. Karin Goodison display naloxone kits.**



# Housing



**\$420,000**

Median home price

In July 2019, the median price of a single-family home was \$420,000, an increase of 10.8% since we reported a median price of \$379,000 in 2017. Across the entire Okanagan, the average residential home sold for \$521,000.<sup>24</sup>



**46.2%**

Percentage of renters spending more than 30% of income on shelter costs

As of 2016, there were 8,570 renter residences in the North Okanagan. Of these, 46.2% spend more than 30% of their household income on shelter costs (rent and utilities), compared to 16.1% of homeowners. Housing is considered precarious when owners or renters pay more than 30% of their income on shelter, as a loss of income could mean a subsequent loss of housing.<sup>2</sup>



**1.5%**

Rental vacancy rates

Vernon's rental vacancy rate continues to decline, from 1.9% in 2016 to 1.5% for both 2017 and 2018. The rental vacancy rate is the percentage of available units in a rental property that are vacant at a particular time. Provincially, the 2018 rental vacancy rate was 1.4%.<sup>25</sup> A healthy vacancy rate is considered to be around 3%.



## PROGRESS REPORT

To lessen some of the stress of easing out of foster care at age 18, and to transition youth into living on their own, **Vernon Native Housing Society** now has five fully furnished studio suites in their new Thunderbird Manor affordable housing complex. CFNO was pleased to provide a grant to help young people with stable housing, to enable them to succeed in their future plans of going to school or getting a job.



**151**

Homeless Count

In 2019, there were 151 people tallied in the Vernon homeless count, down from 161 in 2018 and 2017's 153 people.<sup>25</sup>



**1** NO POVERTY



**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING





# Housing



98

Number of new non-profit affordable housing units

There have been 98 new non-profit affordable housing units constructed in the North Okanagan, a significant increase over 10 units in 2016. My Place (52 units) and Our Place (46 shelter beds) were opened in 2019 to assist people who are homeless. In addition, BC Housing has confirmed funding to build an additional 157 units for low income individuals, seniors, and families.<sup>26</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

As part of BC Housing's commitment to reducing homelessness across the province, funding was provided for the creation of Our Place, housing for people experiencing homelessness. **Turning Points Collaborative Society** (formerly the John Howard Society of the North Okanagan) operates the building, overseeing the 52 bachelor suites and offering additional services including meals, life skills training, access to counselling, and support in seeking employment. A unit housing an individual rents for \$375 per month, perfectly in line with the shelter allowance provided to those on Income Assistance. Couples pay \$570 per month. Units contain a kitchenette and a washroom, and the building offers shared laundry, a common room, and a commercial kitchen.



448

Number of new housing starts

New housing starts have increased every year since 2011. Our last report noted 325 new housing starts in 2016. This was followed by 398 in 2017 and 448 in 2018. This figure is inclusive of family homes, semi-detached, row homes, and apartment units.<sup>25</sup>



\$375

Shelter allowance for individual on Income Assistance

The shelter allowance for an individual on Income Assistance has remained static for more than a decade at \$375 per month.<sup>27</sup>



\$895 & \$903

Median monthly shelter costs

Monthly shelter costs have risen between 2011 and 2016. For North Okanagan homeowners, costs have increased by 12.4%, from \$796 to \$895. Renters in the region have faced a similar hike (8.8%) from \$830 to \$903.<sup>2</sup>



# Income Gap



15.1%

Poverty rate, after tax

The North Okanagan's 2016 poverty rate of 15.1% represents a very slight decrease over 2014's 15.3%. This follows the North Okanagan's trend of minor decreases to the poverty rate every year since 2011. Provincially, the poverty rate declined from 16.4% in 2014 to 15.5% in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

20.2%

Child poverty rate

Reflecting the overall poverty rate, the child poverty rate has also decreased slightly between 2014 and 2016. In 2014, 20.6% of North Okanagan children 0-17 years old lived in low-income families, compared to 20.2% in 2016. The 2016 provincial child poverty rate was 20.3%.<sup>28</sup>

15.5%

Senior poverty rate

The senior poverty rate measures the number of residents ages 65 years and greater living in poverty, as defined by the Low-Income Measure. In the North Okanagan, the most recent senior poverty data demonstrates that 15.5% of seniors live in poverty, compared to 14.9% provincially.<sup>2</sup>

\$710

Income assistance, maximum monthly for single person

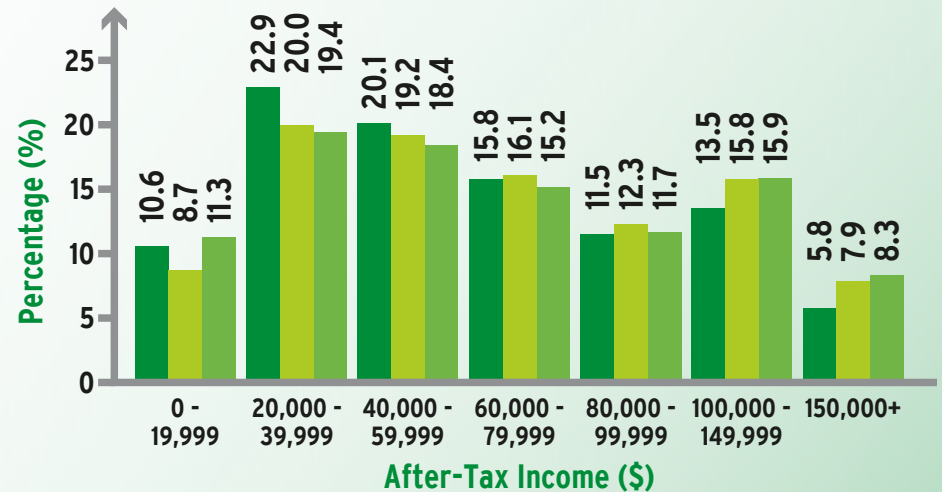
After an increase from \$610 to \$710 per month in 2017, the maximum monthly income assistance rate for a single person in British Columbia has remained static.<sup>27</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

Thanks to a partnership between the **Vernon Salvation Army** and both Save on Foods locations, food that previously ended up in the landfill is now being received by the food bank, local non-profit organizations, and local farmers. Food Banks BC funded the purchase of a new refrigeration truck and additional refrigeration equipment for the Salvation Army, after successfully piloting similar programs in larger cities across the province. Grocery stores are restricted in that they can't always sell their produce and other fresh foods even while the food is still consumable. This food recovery program ensures that the food is diverted from the landfill and ends up on local tables – a win-win!

## After-Tax Income Groups



This chart illustrates the 2016 North Okanagan household after-tax income distribution (with Central Okanagan & BC).<sup>2</sup>

- North Okanagan
- Central Okanagan
- British Columbia



# Learning



**26%; 30%**  
Vulnerability rate

There have been no updates to the Early Development Instrument (EDI) data since our last report, when the EDI demonstrated that 26.0% of Kindergarten children in SD#22 (Vernon) and 30.0% of Kindergarten students in SD#83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap), were vulnerable in one or more developmental domains. Developmental domains include physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, communication skills, and general knowledge.<sup>29</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

Learning begins when a baby is born, and various programs across the region support families in learning through play and in engaging early with skills including literacy and numeracy. The **Okanagan Regional Library**, Vernon branch, recently offered support to engage even more young learners by introducing an American Sign Language (ASL) Storytime. A bilingual event, ASL Storytime is available to speakers of both English and ASL through the work of a Librarian and a Deaf Storyteller. In addition to sharing stories, there are also rhymes, songs, puppets, and more designed to engage preschool to early elementary aged children. Hearing children are offered exposure to a new language (ASL), while deaf children are more inclusively able to participate in storytime. All children reap the benefits of access to early literacy skills.

**83%**  
High school completion rate

In the 2017-2018 school year, the six-year high school completion rate was 83.0% for BC resident students in both SD #22 (Vernon) and SD #83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap). This measure counts students who graduate high school within six years of entering Grade 8. The 2017-2018 provincial average was 89.0%.<sup>30</sup>

**50.4%**  
Population 15+ with post-secondary education

The proportion of the population ages 15 years and over with completed post-secondary education (certificate, diploma, or degree), has seen a minor increase since our last report: from 49.7% to 50.4%. A provincial increase was also noted, from 53.8% to 55.0%.<sup>2</sup>

**64%; 67%**  
Indigenous high school completion rate

In the 2017-2018 school year, the six-year completion rate for Indigenous students was 64.0% in SD#22 (Vernon) and 67.0% in SD#83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap). Provincially, the six-year completion rate for Indigenous students was 70.0%.<sup>30</sup>

## Helping Students in Need

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan works with donors to provide over \$70,000 in scholarships and bursaries each year, to students in the North Okanagan going on to post-secondary education and training. We are pleased to work closely with School District #22, Okanagan College, and UBC Okanagan to provide support to students seeking education to secure a brighter employment future.



# Work & Economy



**4,015**  
Business licenses issued

The City of Vernon issued 4,015 business licenses in 2018, an increase over the 3,794 reported in 2016. This makes 2018 the busiest year in business licensing since 2008.<sup>20</sup>

**12**  
Business bankruptcies

Business bankruptcies in the Thompson-Okanagan economic region, which includes the North Okanagan, decreased from 25 in 2016 to 12 in 2018. This marks a 52% decrease. During the same time period, personal bankruptcies decreased by 9.3% from 695 to 630.<sup>31</sup>

**57.1%**  
Employment rate

In 2018, the employment rate in the Thompson-Okanagan economic region was 57.1%. Provincially, the employment rate was 61.8%, very similar to the national employment rate of 61.6%.<sup>32</sup>

**6.1%**  
Unemployment rate

The lowest unemployment rate in a decade in the Thompson-Okanagan economic region was in 2018 at 6.1%. Likewise, the provincial unemployment rate of 4.7% was the lowest rate in a decade, and the same is true of the national unemployment rate of 5.8%.<sup>32</sup>



## PROGRESS REPORT

With a declining unemployment rate in the Thompson-Okanagan, Vernon has been impacted by a skilled labour shortage. As the community ages and workers retire, there is a gap between the labour an employer needs and the available local resources to fill that need. The **Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program** is designed to support skilled immigrants in settling in rural and northern communities. Nearly two-thirds of skilled immigrants settle in metropolitan areas, but rural communities have much to offer to immigrants – and vice versa. As one of 11 participating communities across the country, and one of only two British Columbia program participants, Vernon and Community Futures North Okanagan started welcoming foreign skilled workers to the community beginning in early 2020.

By halting a huge portion of immigration and travel, the needs of communities, provinces, and the country for skilled and unskilled workers will grow in the coming year.



**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



# Work & Economy



**\$49,940**  
 Median earnings for persons working full year, full-time

Between 2011 and 2016, the median earnings for North Okanagan residents working full year, full-time increased by 12.7%, from \$44,320 in 2011 to \$49,940 in 2016. Assuming a 35-hour work week, the region's median hourly wage is \$27.44. The median annual wage for British Columbia in 2016 was \$53,940.<sup>2</sup>

**39.0%**  
 Proportion of women in managerial positions

In Vernon, the proportion of women in managerial positions has steadily risen, from 34.5% in 2006 to 37.1% in 2011 and, most recently, to 39.0% in 2016. This exceeds the provincial rise, from 35.8% in 2006 to 38.6% in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

**Women are still earning less than men  
 ...Time to address this issue.**

## COVID Context - Gendered Impacts on Work

As women tend to be concentrated in jobs hardest hit by isolation measures, a higher proportion of Canadian women lost their jobs in the early stages of the pandemic. Women accounted for 63% of the one million jobs lost as of March 2020, and 70% of losses by workers aged 25 to 54. The pandemic has magnified challenges for women as many felt disproportionately responsible for childcare and online home schooling. Research is just now emerging that suggests working women have been set back decades by the gender imbalance of the pandemic's impact.<sup>37</sup>

**12.8%**  
 Education in trades

Across the North Okanagan, 12.8% of the population 15 years and older has a trades certificate or diploma. This compares to 8.8% provincially. In 2018, the total BC population working in the trades was 426,000.<sup>36</sup>

**\$89,964,000**  
 Non-residential construction value

The value of all industrial, commercial, and institutional/government building permits issued in the City of Vernon and the North Okanagan Regional District exceeded \$89 million, an increase of more than \$440,000 over 2016.<sup>33</sup>

## COVID Context - Employment

Employment and the economy have always been big focal points of our community but since the COVID-19 pandemic hit our province, our concerns have grown. Creating and sustaining employment opportunities, while recruiting a diverse workforce are the focus of many large and small organizations.



# Safety

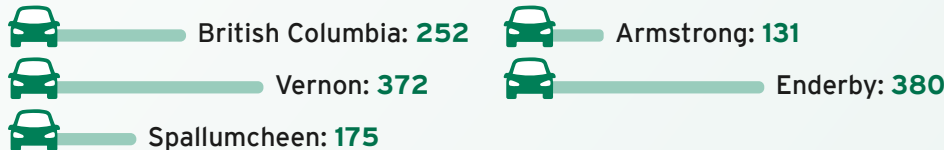


39.0 - 134.0

Crime severity rate

The crime severity rate measures the severity of a crime by the rate of incarceration and the average incarceration period for that crime. The higher the number, the more serious crimes committed. In 2018, British Columbia's crime severity rate was 87.7, a slight decrease from 2016's 93.6. In the North Okanagan, Vernon saw a significant drop in the same time period, from 157.0 to 134.0. Enderby also saw a decrease, from 93.6 to 76.6, while crime severity rose slightly in Armstrong from 52.0 to 55.9 and slightly in Spallumcheen, from 28.2 to 39.0.<sup>34</sup>

## 2018 Motor Vehicle Thefts per 100,000 population<sup>34</sup>



Motor vehicle thefts have decreased across all of the above geographies since 2016.

99

Reported sexual assault rate, per 100,000 population

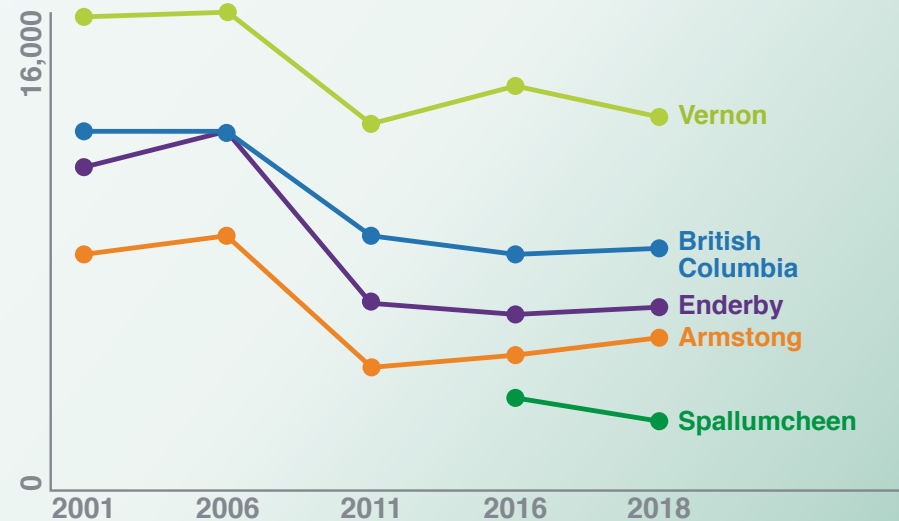
In 2018, for every 100,000 people in the North Okanagan, 99 sexual assaults were reported. Though this remains a 50% decrease over two decades ago – when rates peaked – it is an increase of 44% over 2016's 63 assaults per 100,000 population. This trend is echoed in provincial and national statistics as well, though not as dramatically – British Columbia saw an increase of 27.0% and Canada, 26.1%.<sup>34</sup>

## Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate Partner Violence calls have increased during the pandemic, with increased pressure falling on the organizations who help those in dangerous situations. Local organizations face immediate need to adapt their programs to online, and to find ways to offer virtual support and connection to vulnerable people in dangerous situations.

“COVID-19 has created a crisis within a crisis. When ‘stay-at-home’ virus protection health recommendations were issued, women and children became targets of domestic violence at an even higher rate than pre-pandemic. With rising stress levels, domestic violence spiked and demand for support rose at the same time; programming had to pivot to virtual versus in-person support.” Micki Materi, Archway Society for Domestic Peace.

## Overall Crime Rate



Note: The overall crime rate measures the number of reported crimes per 100,000 population.<sup>34</sup> Historical Spallumcheen crime data was not available.



# SPECIAL REPORT: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & CONTRIBUTION

## About This Research

As one of many community foundations across the province and across the country, the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan benefits from the work our peers do. Case in point: the Vancouver Foundation has been conducting research on community belonging and participation for nearly a decade.

In June 2019, the Vancouver Foundation partnered with Mustel Research to investigate the state of community participation across the province. Nearly 8,000 British Columbians were surveyed, including 446 from the North Okanagan. We're pleased to share our region's survey results. For provincial results, please visit the Vancouver Foundation's website at:

<https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/our-work/initiatives/vital-signs>

## Individual Impact



How much impact do you believe you can have in making your community a better place to live?

Big impact:	<b>21.1%</b>
Moderate impact:	<b>31.1%</b>
Small impact:	<b>38.5%</b>
No impact at all:	<b>7.9%</b>
Prefer not to say:	<b>1.4%</b>

Interestingly, female respondents were much more optimistic than male respondents about the degree of impact they can have: **56%** of female respondents believe they can make a big or moderate impact, compared to **45.6%** of male respondents.

Another surprise? Of the survey respondents 35 years and younger, **43.8%** believe they have only a small impact in making their community a better place in which to live.

## Attendance at Community Events



Thinking about the last 12 months, please indicate if you have done any of the following in your community:

Visited a local library, community centre, or recreation centre:	<b>74.4%</b>
Donated to a cause:	<b>71.3%</b>
Provided unpaid help to a non-family member:	<b>58.5%</b>
Volunteered time to an organization:	<b>52.6%</b>
Signed a petition:	<b>50.2%</b>
Attended a neighbourhood or community meeting:	<b>36.3%</b>
Attended an event put on by a cultural or ethnic group different than yours:	<b>25.4%</b>
Attended a faith-based service/activity:	<b>23.3%</b>
Participated in a neighbourhood or community project such as neighbourhood clean-up or community garden:	<b>19.3%</b>

## Perceptions



I feel like I have a voice in what happens in my community.

Strongly agree and agree:	<b>50.7%</b>
Disagree and strongly disagree:	<b>46.4%</b>

Seniors (65 years and greater) have the most confidence in having a voice in their community, with **61.5%** choosing to agree or strongly agree.



I am an activist (a person who behaves intentionally to bring about political, community or social change).

Strongly agree and agree:	<b>34.0%</b>
Disagree and strongly disagree:	<b>59.9%</b>

Those least likely to see themselves as activists are in the 45-64-year-old age bracket – **64%** disagreed or strongly disagreed.



I feel welcome in my community and feel like I belong here.

Strongly agree and agree:	<b>83.6%</b>
Disagree and strongly disagree:	<b>11.8%</b>

Community members born outside of Canada were slightly less likely to feel a sense of welcome and belonging – **78.4%** agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

# SPECIAL REPORT: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & CONTRIBUTION

## Community Involvement

**Would you like to be more involved in your community?**

Yes: **41.7%**

No, I am satisfied with my current level of involvement: **58.3%**

### Those most likely to want to get involved?

Female survey respondents, residents who have lived in the region for **10** years or less, single parents, and people ages **44** and younger.



**Those that indicated an interest in being more involved were asked about what is preventing them from doing so. The Top five responses:**

Work or school obligations: **57.6%**

Time pressure/not enough time: **43.4%**

Family obligations: **38.3%**

Don't know how to get more involved: **28.2%**

Personal finances: **21.3%**

**How do we use this information to inform our actions and create opportunities?**

## Giving Back in the Workplace

**Do you mentor anyone or are you being mentored by anyone in your field or place of work?**

Mentor: **21.1%** Mentored: **3.7%**

Both: **13.1%** Neither: **34.4%**

Not Applicable: **27.5%**



**In the past year, did you participate in either of these activities through your workplace?**

Fundraising: **11.2%** Volunteering: **8.3%**

Both: **20.8%** Neither: **26.8%**

Not Applicable: **33.0%**

## Informal Community Participation

**Do you participate in any of the following?**

Book exchange: **24.2%** Community garden: **5.2%**

Clothes swap: **22.8%** Toy share: **5.4%**

Tool or Garden shed: **4.8%** Carpool: **10.2%**

Other: **4.0%** None: **56.3%**

## Local Government Participation

**Thinking of your local/municipal government, which, if any, of the following public participation or engagement processes did you participate in the past year?**

Completed a survey on a municipal issue: **50.5%**

Provided feedback on a community project or initiative: **32.9%**

Attended a public consultation or open house: **23.7%**

Spoke at or attended a meeting at City Hall: **14.4%**

Did not do any of the above: **34.1%**

Those least likely to have engaged in local government are residents under 35 year of age – nearly half (**47.4%**) chose “Did not do any of the above.”



**For those that did participate in local government initiatives, the top three reasons were:**

Believe in civic engagement: **36.3%**

Feel I can make a difference/my voice will be heard: **24.2%**

Connection to the issue/personally affected: **21.9%**



# SPECIAL REPORT: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & CONTRIBUTION

## Giving Money



There are many ways to give, and North Okanagan residents make good use of each.

### Thinking of financial contributions, which of the following, if any, have you done in the past year?

Purchase of goods (i.e. cookies, chocolates) to support a cause:	<b>63.3%</b>	Donated to a crowdfunding campaign:	<b>14.4%</b>
Spontaneous giving such as a donation given at the till of a retailer:	<b>57.0%</b>	Door-to-door donation:	<b>13.6%</b>
Online donation:	<b>39.7%</b>	Mail-in donation:	<b>12.2%</b>
Fundraised on behalf of charity or cause (includes walks/runs):	<b>31.6%</b>	Automatic monthly donations on credit cards:	<b>11.9%</b>
Giving on the street to individuals in need:	<b>31.0%</b>	Sent money to support family members in my country of origin:	<b>6.6%</b>
Donated to my church or place of worship:	<b>17.2%</b>	Phone-in donation:	<b>4.4%</b>
Donation via social media site:	<b>15.7%</b>	Sent money to my country of origin to support a charity/cause (no tax receipt issued):	<b>3.2%</b>
		Have not made a financial donation in the past year:	<b>8.6%</b>

### Top five reasons for making donations:

Believe in giving back:	<b>45.5%</b>
Connection to a cause:	<b>29.8%</b>
Connection to an organization:	<b>12.4%</b>
Asked by a family/friend/co-worker:	<b>7.1%</b>
To receive a tax receipt:	<b>2.1%</b>

### Top five reasons for not making donations:

Financial reasons:	<b>47.1%</b>
Don't believe funds will be well used:	<b>21.3%</b>
Believe it is responsibility of government:	<b>8.7%</b>
Don't believe donations will have an impact:	<b>8.0%</b>
Don't know about opportunities:	<b>4.1%</b>

## Giving Time



In the past year, have you engaged in any volunteering activities, or any activities where you are giving your time to an organization, community, or cause?

Yes: **64.2%** No: **35.8%**

Female respondents were more likely to volunteer (**68.0%**) than male respondents (**58.0%**).

### Top five reasons for volunteering:

Believe in giving back:	<b>45.3%</b>
Connected to a cause/personally affected:	<b>17.5%</b>
Connected to an organization:	<b>16.8%</b>
Being with like-minded people/social connections:	<b>9.6%</b>
Career development/networking:	<b>4.7%</b>

Respondents who had volunteered in the past, expressed a slight preference for one-time or short-term volunteering (**44.3%**) over an ongoing volunteer commitment (**36.2%**).

### Top five reasons for not volunteering:

Lack of time:	<b>41.8%</b>
Not interested in general:	<b>19.4%</b>
Health reasons:	<b>14.0%</b>
Can't find an opportunity that interest me:	<b>7.7%</b>
Financial reasons:	<b>7.1%</b>

# SPECIAL REPORT: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & CONTRIBUTION

## Social Media And Advocacy



**How often do you share or post content on social media to raise awareness or advocate for an issue you care strongly about?**

Frequently: **10.2%** Occasionally: **38.6%**

Seldom: **36.0%** Never: **15.2%**

**Have you ever attended a political or social cause event, rally, or protest because you saw it publicized on a social media platform?**

Yes: **22.1%** No: **77.9%**

**In the past year, did you use social media to organize and/or find in-person community events and meet-ups (for example, a neighbourhood Facebook page used to advertise barbeques or block parties)?**

Yes: **44.1%** No: **55.9%**

Female respondents and those ages 35-44 years old are most likely to use social media for this purpose, while respondents ages 65+ are the least likely.

**Do you belong to any private online groups (e.g. neighbourhood, sports club, parent support group, etc.)?**

Yes: **60.8%** No: **39.2%**

## Key Takeaways

### 1. North Okanagan residents are engaged in their community.

Volunteering and financial giving are evolving. Some traditional forms of social participation are waning (for example, some service clubs are facing declining membership), but residents make their voices known online, in local government processes, and in support of issues they care about.

### 2. There are many different ways to contribute, from social media advocacy to neighbourhood-level organizing to local government participation to one-time or ongoing gifts of time and/or money.

It may not be reasonable to expect long-term financial and time commitments, from residents who are offered many different ways to contribute both time and money.

### 3. Volunteering and community participation are influenced by financial and time pressures.

Survey data demonstrates that single parents, those from households making \$80,000 or less, and renters are the most interested in being more involved in their community but also face financial and time barriers – perhaps working multiple jobs or shouldering more responsibilities at home.

### 4. Social participation is more likely when individuals have a personal connection to an issue or organization.

When respondents were asked why they volunteered and why they make financial donations, a personal connection to the issue/organization was one of the most cited reasons. This may present an opportunity to organizations looking to further engage community members.

### 5. There are many different ways to fundraise, and having many options increases the likelihood of citizen participation.

Residents were polled about the different ways they have made financial donations in the past year, and were given 14-different response options. We are asked to give online, by friends, by neighbours, at cash registers, and in many other ways. Matching the right giving venue to the right person may be a key to fundraising success.

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### Vital Conversations

#### Engaging the Community on Issues That Matter

A Vital Conversation is a community discussion that brings together community leaders, representatives from local government, and members of the public for open dialogue about issues that matter to people in our region. Watch for more information at [CFNO.org](http://CFNO.org) and on our [Facebook page](#).

### About Us

Community foundations are charitable organizations dedicated to improving communities in specific geographic areas. We do this by pooling the charitable gifts of donors to create endowment funds and using the investment income to make grants. Community foundations also provide leadership – monitoring our area's quality of life and convening people, ideas, and resources to help build stronger and more resilient communities. A community foundation is truly a charity for all charities!

The Board of Directors is proud of the impact the Foundation has had on our communities. Successful investment of our capital assets has allowed us to distribute income of excess of \$7 million over the past 44 years. These distributions have supported a broad range of charitable organizations in our region.

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