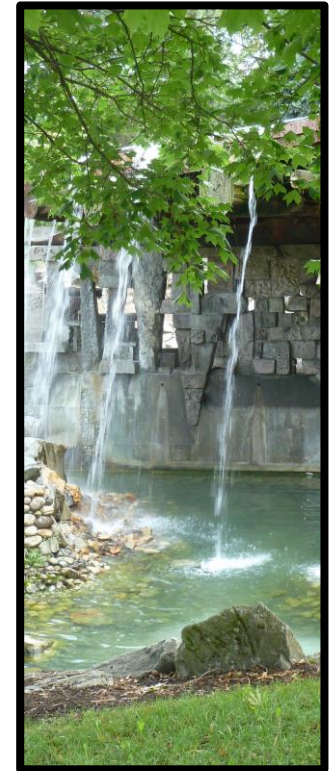


NORTH OKANAGAN'S

VitalSigns®

2013



Contents

Methodology | 2

Board Chair Message | 3

Highlights | 3

Indicators

Community & Seniors | 4

Learning | 5

Environment | 6

Health & Wellness | 7

Housing | 8

Arts & Culture | 9

Gap Between Rich & Poor | 10

Safety | 11

Getting Around | 12

Belonging & Leadership | 13

Work | 14

Acknowledgements | 15

Sponsors | 15



Vital Signs® is intended as a long term initiative of Community Foundations of Canada (CFC). It promotes partnerships with a broad range of community members who contribute their skills, expertise and time in the building of our Vital Signs® report.

This edition will build on our 2011 Vital Signs® report using current statistical analysis and community perceptions, providing a snapshot of the vitality of Greater Vernon.

Our goals are:

- to enhance the Foundation's effectiveness in grant making
- provide information to donors about issues and opportunities
- enable connections between community groups

Community Leadership

Building on our previous report and identification of new trends, community leaders provided advice and recommendations to ensure that Vital Signs® is an effective way to present emerging trends and priorities.

Research

Research was conducted to find information which was statistically significant, locally relevant and timely.

Indicators and Data

- Reflect public interest
- Are based on availability and relevance
- Inspire community action
- Provide a comparison to previous report

Profile of Citizen Graders

- 61% have lived in the area for more than 10 years
- 59% are female
- 28% are under 30 years
- 47% are between 30 and 60
- 25% are over the age of 60

Citizen Graders

Citizens were surveyed for their perceptions of life in Greater Vernon in 11 key issue areas. We went out into the community using student volunteers and conducted an on-line survey to get our data. All together over 460 local citizens provided input to the process.

About The Foundation

Since 1975, The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan (CFNO) has been working with donors and local charitable organizations in an effort to create a strong and vibrant community in the Regional District of the North Okanagan (RDNO).

Our objective is to bring these groups together to take advantage of:

- Donor contributions to CFNO Endowment Funds
- CFNO management of endowments to generate income in perpetuity
- Grants to charities based on need and benefit to the community

**Over \$ 12 MILLION
Total Assets**

**150 +
Endowment Funds**

**\$ 4.5 MILLION
Grants & Distributions**

Grading Chart

In dire need of corrective action	★
Of concern, needs attention	★★
Progress is being made	★★★
We're doing well and headed in the right direction	★★★★
Awesome, our community is the tops!	★★★★★

2013 Report Highlights



Safety

Despite a slight increase in the last year, the overall crime rate has decreased over the last 15 years. Overall we feel safe in our community, but want attention paid to neighbourhood crime prevention strategies, including emergency preparedness.

Health & Wellness

True to our Okanagan lifestyle we embrace physical activity and prioritize recreational facilities. However, we still see challenges in access to physicians and health services.

Housing

Affordable housing and variety of housing options rank high as areas for improvement. Our aging population will generate different demands including smaller living spaces, home adaptations and supported living options.

Arts & Culture

We have experienced a 6.7% growth in the proportion of our population employed in the arts, culture, sport and recreation sectors. Arts and cultural activities can bring the community together, providing an enriching and vibrant place to live.

Gap between Rich & Poor

Our community offers many supports for those in poverty. However, employment with livable wages and affordable housing are issues of concern.

Learning

Increases in high school completion rates and those with post-secondary education are tempered with concerning stats on early education trends.

Work

Compared to the overall provincial rate, our area has realized a low employment growth. Our citizen graders stressed a strong priority for the quality of jobs, as well as the need for more year-round, full-time opportunities.

Environment

The perception is that Greater Vernon is environmentally-friendly and our citizens want this to continue through protection of our land and water. We support various recycling initiatives.

Belonging & Leadership

Residents report a strong sense of feeling included and connected in our community. We support the community through our charitable donations and volunteer time.

Updating the Vital Signs® of Greater Vernon

This is our second Vital Signs® report evaluating eleven key areas of community life in the area. Each indicator within the Vital Signs® report presents its own unique perspective of community. When these indicators are brought together, it provides a bigger picture; a better understanding of the quality of life in our communities.

This report is intended to

Start the Conversation

and

Draw attention to issues in the community

If you, or your organization, want to be a catalyst for community change, we can help. The Foundation can help you give back to your community in a way that is easy, convenient and lasting. We do this by working with our donors to create endowment funds and by using the investment income to make annual grants to the community.

Contact your Community Foundation

Find out more about how we can work together to make this a truly **"SMART & CARING COMMUNITY"**.

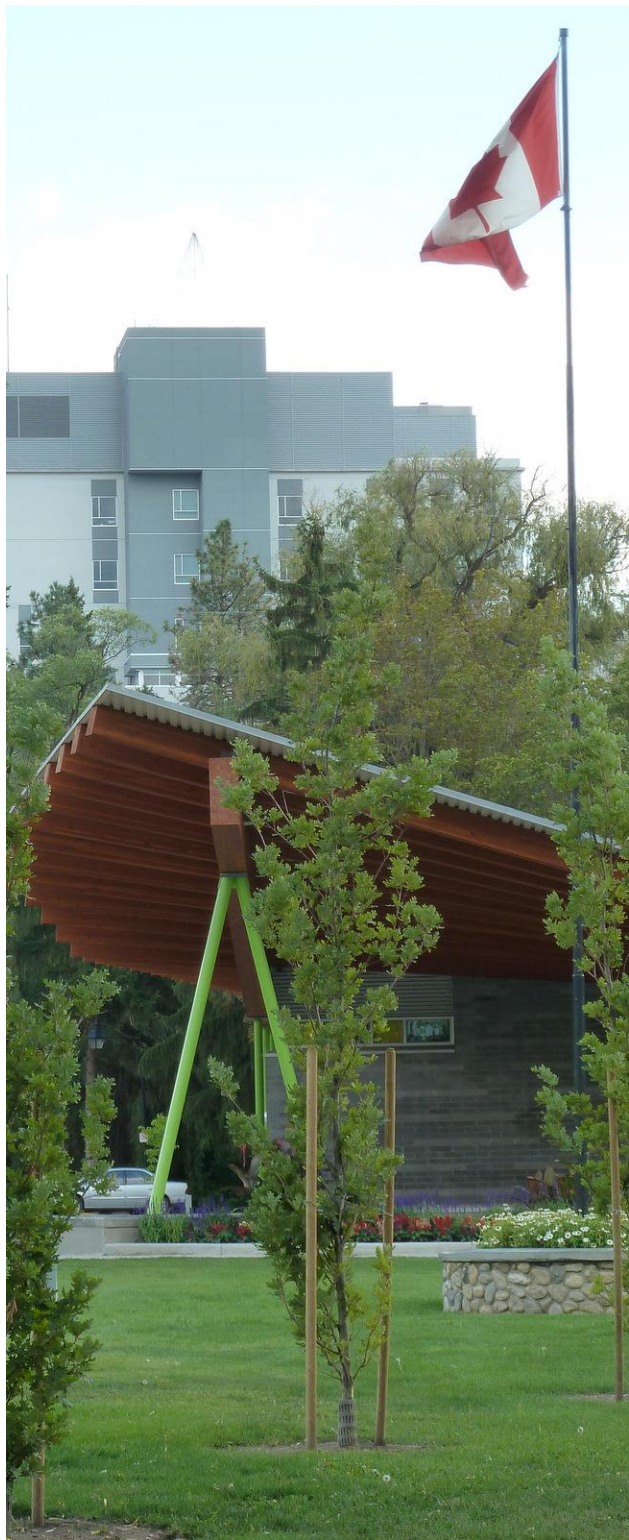
The 2013 report, an expanded version with survey results and links to the original data sources are available online at www.cfno.org.



Michael Tindall
CFNO President



Janice Mori
Project Leader



Our Community

Changing demographics in the region may impact the community's focus on housing, healthcare, work, education, transportation and leisure activities.

5.7%

Population increase in the Vernon Census Area since 2006. This rate compares to Penticton at 2.6% and Kelowna at 10.8%.

47.1

Median Age of our population, an increase of 5.2% since 2001. The median age in BC is 41.9.

22%

Share of elderly persons (65yrs +), while the BC rate is only 15.7%. Our senior population has increased 3.5% since 2001.

14%

Area's population under 15 years of age. This is a 10% decrease since 2001.

Seniors

As a growing demographic in our area, seniors are active and involved in the community. Most concerns center on availability and affordability of appropriate services and housing allowing seniors to age comfortably and independently.

16%

The projected growth in our senior population (2012 – 2017) compared to growth for our total population of only 4.4%

50%

Percentage of those 65+ years who report as being active or moderately active in their leisure time. 26% suffer pain or discomfort, preventing activity.

59%

Percentage of seniors who are not consuming fruits and/or vegetables at least 5 times a day.

3.5%

The poverty rate among our senior-led households. This is up slightly from 2009.

Learning

Learning is highly valued in our community, with a strong desire for more post-secondary choices, including apprenticeship programs.

Learning is important to the social and economic well-being of our citizens. Education provides a foundation, a key to unlocking opportunities, and is a measure of a vibrant and prosperous community. Learning continues throughout our lives and is shaped by the home environment, the education system and institutions in the community, such as libraries, childcare facilities and community centres.

Citizen Grade



36%

Percentage of children entering kindergarten who are considered vulnerable in at least one area of development – social, emotional, physical, language and communication.

22%

Percentage of our Grade 4 students who are below standard in reading, writing and math.

In Grade 7, 24% still do not meet the provincial standard.

82%

The High School completion rate of students in School District 22. The aboriginal student completion rate is 61%.

53%

Percentage of our adult population that has completed some form of post-secondary education. This is up from the 2006 rate of 47.4%.



How the Foundation is helping

Support to the **Literacy and Youth Initiatives Society of the North Okanagan** with a grant to the Teen Junction Renovation project.

Grant to the **NONA Child Development Centre** for their iCommunicate project for children with special needs.

Citizen Feedback

“...help with increasing community literacy - a volunteer program...that would offer help to young children in financial hardship”.

“...employing more aboriginal teachers or bringing elders into the classroom can be effective in engaging aboriginal youth in their education.”



Environment

Our region has been described as a most desirable area to live. By mandate and action, our community is committed to sustainable and environmental stewardship.

Citizen Grade



A healthy and sustainable environment is critical to the well-being of a community. Solid waste management, greenhouse gas emissions, air quality and water usage all contribute to our quality of life.

20%

Decrease in buried waste at our landfill 2009-2011.

21%

Increase in quantity of materials reused or recycled (Blue Bag).

2.4%

Decrease in greenhouse gas emissions 2007-2010. The goal is a 15% reduction by 2015 and 25% by 2030.

17%

Decrease in metered water consumption 2011-2012.

Our average residential usage is 468 litres per person per day, less than the Okanagan average of 675 but higher than the Canadian average of 325.

For its efforts at reducing Green House Gas emissions the Regional District was recently awarded Level 2 recognition by the Provincial/UBCM Green Communities Committee.



How the Foundation is helping

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan has supported environmental projects like the **Allan Brooks Nature Centre**, the **Bishop Wild Bird Foundation's** Sanctuary Garden, the **School District 22's** waterways project and a backyard garden at the **Upper Room Mission**.

Citizen Feedback:

Suggestion to "Separate our household and agricultural water systems".

40% of the citizen graders support expanded recycling programs, including the creation of a compost/green matter pick-up system.



Health & Wellness

Our citizens agree our community encourages a healthy lifestyle. Our top priorities continue to focus on personal health and recreational opportunities.

Community attention to health includes both the physical and mental health of its citizens, as well as facilitating an environment for good lifestyle choices. Good overall health reduces healthcare costs and improves our quality of life.

Citizen Grade



10%

Increase since 2003 in population who reported being physically active during leisure time. At a 67% participation rate, we are 24% higher than the national average!

91%

Percentage of our residents who report their Life Satisfaction as satisfied or very satisfied.

However, 22% perceive most days as quite a bit or extremely stressful.

20%

Smoking rate for our population aged 12 & older.

Although the rate is decreasing, we are still higher than the BC average of 14.5%.

13%

Report not having a regular family doctor (National average is 15%).

Since 2000, our region has seen an 18% increase in the number of family physicians.



How the Foundation is helping

The Foundation recently awarded grants to support the **Shuswap Okanagan Treatment Services Society** and the **North Okanagan Pregnancy Care Centre**.

Recognizing our aging demographic, a grant was given to support Education Workshops by the **Arthritis Society**.

Citizen Feedback

"...(consider) incentives to bring more doctors to our area as most are not accepting new patients or they have long waitlists."

"... Fund initiatives to encourage vulnerable populations in active lifestyle activities."

Hike one of the numerous trails or enjoy a day at one of the over 80 parks in the region.





Housing

Slow gains in affordable, attainable housing options also impact the other issue areas.

Access to stable, safe and affordable housing is one of our most basic human requirements. Key to the vitality of a community is an affordable housing market that creates equity and offers diversity.

Citizen Grade



28%

Percentage of Vernon households who spend 30% or more* of their total income on shelter. It is 52.8% for those who rent.

*considered the threshold measure of housing affordability

6.8%

Rental housing Vacancy Rate in 2013 (apartments and townhouses).

The BC rate is 3.5%.

\$1,053

Average monthly shelter costs for owner households.

\$905

Monthly average for households that rent.

\$332,500

Median single-family house price in 2012, a decrease of 12% since 2008.



How the Foundation is helping

Support for seniors housing with a grant to the **Abbeyfield Houses of Vernon Society** for their hot water tank upgrade.

Participation in the annual **Affordable Housing Forum** with government and concerned organizations.

Citizen Feedback

"... to successfully provide attainable housing for low income populations, it is essential for multiple groups within the community and government to continue to work together."

"More affordable units, smart community planning and transit will help."

Arts & Culture

We have a rich cultural and artistic energy in our community and continue to enhance the experience with new and improved facilities.

Arts and culture play an important role in ensuring a vibrant and enriching lifestyle for our citizens. They inspire us, raise cultural awareness and bring us together. They act as an economic driver by attracting visitors and new residents to our community.

Citizen Grade



3%

Percentage of our workforce employed in the arts and culture industry; a trend that will likely continue as we build and improve the arts and cultural facilities in the area.

20%

Increase since 2006 in the number of persons who identify themselves as artists.

Greater Vernon has a broad range of facilities, including at least nine Art Galleries, one Museum, four Heritage Sites, five Art Studios, two Performing Arts Facilities, two Music Schools, multiple Dance Studios and 26 amazing murals!



How the Foundation is helping

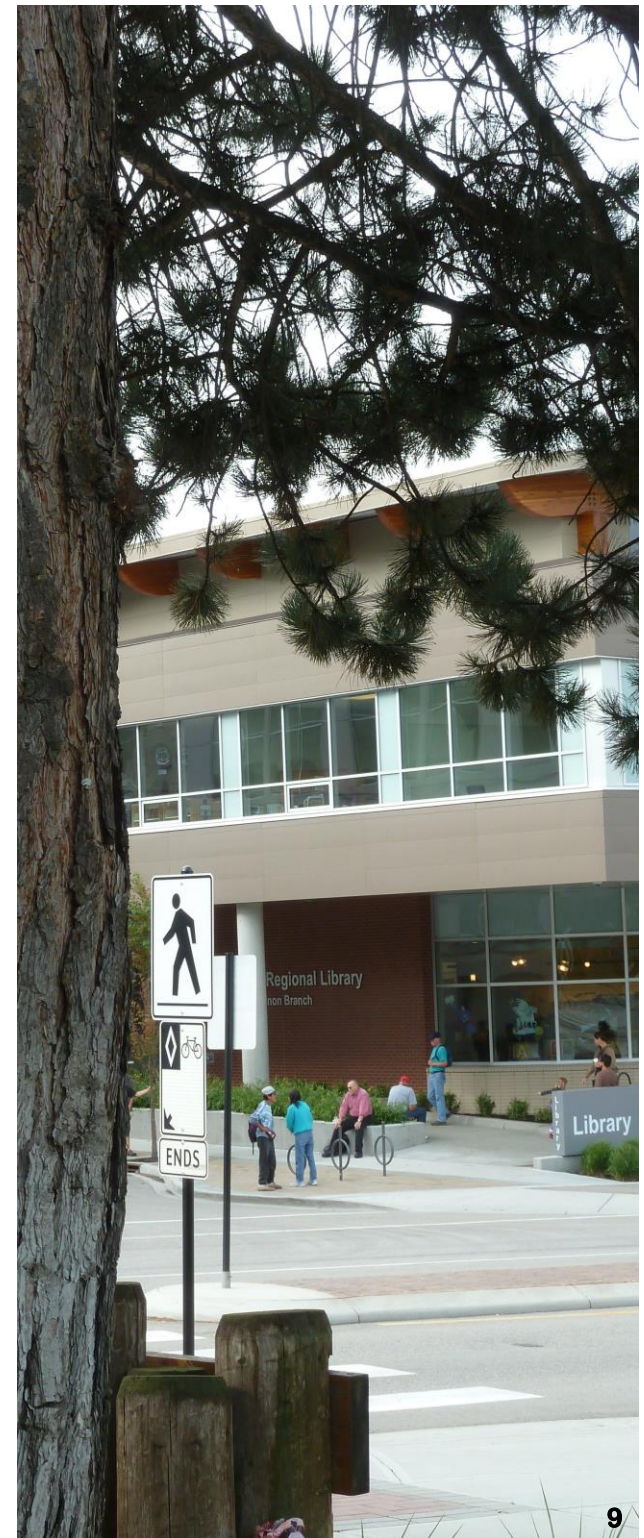
Mackie House and **O'Keefe Ranch** received paint and grants through the Benjamin Moore Community Restoration Program, a partnership with Community Foundations of Canada (CFC).

Greater Vernon Museum & Archives Society was supported with a grant for their restoration of the clock from the 1912 Post Office.

Citizen Feedback

"More arts and cultural programs and activities for youth would give them a sense of belonging and connection to the community."

"We need consistent, long-term funding and investment for community facilities."





Gap Between Rich & Poor

Our citizens are not immune to the economic and housing challenges facing all of BC. The community provides support to our most vulnerable citizens.

Quality of life for some members of our community is affected by the widening gap in income between rich and poor. Income disparities affect health, crime, housing, and prosperity which impact us all. A caring community supports individuals in the greatest need.

Citizen Grade



\$17 - \$18

A living wage* for Thompson-Okanagan

* The amount needed for a family of four with two parents working full-time to pay for necessities, support the healthy development of their children, escape financial stress and participate in their communities.

93%

Decrease in the number of known homeless camps in Vernon since 2009.

15%

Proportion of our households in 2010 considered as Low Income (With an after-tax income below \$38,920).

19% of children and 13% of elderly also live in low income households.

\$62,208

Median 2010 after-tax family income.
BC: \$67,915
Canada: \$67,044

\$24,644

Median income for persons living alone.
BC: \$25,958
Canada: \$25,761



How the Foundation is helping

Over the last few years, the Foundation has made several grants to the **Community Dental Access Centre** including assistance for the purchase of a digital x-ray sensor and sterilizer.

Citizen Feedback

"The daily battles people in poverty face in regards to childcare, education and housing costs are very prominent in Vernon."

"A huge barrier for the working poor often is access and affordability of childcare."

Safety

Citizens generally report feeling safe in the community. This is supported by statistics which show a 25% decrease in the overall crime rate since the late 1990's.

How safe we feel affects the way we socialize and participate in community life. Building a strong sense of safety and security is central to a livable community and our emergency services play a very important role.

Citizen Grade



13%

Increase in number of RCMP members over 5 years. In 2011, 75 members were assigned to the Vernon Census Area.

8%

Decrease in criminal code offences (violent, property and other crimes).

9.7%

Increase in the overall crime severity index* over 2011.

*based on seriousness of crime and sentencing.

31%

Decrease in motor vehicle thefts since 2011.



How the Foundation is helping

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan supported the **Vernon Search & Rescue Group Society** with a grant for their volunteer training and rescue equipment.

Citizen Feedback

"When people get outside and involved in their community, a 'natural neighbourhood watch' is created."

Increase education on emergency protocols.

"With vast community resources that address safety and security issues, Vernon is right on track in creating a safe community."





Getting Around

Although generally our citizens feel they can get around easily and safely, there are issues around affordability and access for some groups.

The ability to get around easily and safely is central to accessing work, education facilities and community activities. Supporting sustainable, alternative methods of getting around provides positive impact to our society, our economy and our environment.

Citizen Grade



9%

Increase in conventional bus ridership reported from 2011 – 2012.

5%

Increase in custom transit (handicap services).

2%

The percentage of workers who report using public transit to get to work, while 9% walk or bike. This means that more than 80% of us still rely on cars.

19%

Increase in transit service hours for the Vernon and Coldstream area since 2006.

62

Number of kilometers of bike lanes in the City of Vernon. This is up from 44 kilometers in 2011.



How the Foundation is helping

The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan provided a grant to the **Brain Trust Association** for a Helmet Safety program in Vernon.

Citizen Feedback

“More bus routes; extend evening bus times.”

“More dedicated bike/walking paths would make it easier for families to safely travel without a car.”

“Need sidewalks on busy thoroughfares like Kal Lake Road.”

Belonging & Leadership

People feel there are many opportunities to be included and connected. Our citizens generously support our community through donations and volunteer time.

Research shows a high correlation between a sense of community belonging and our physical and mental health. Volunteers and community spirit build a healthy, vibrant community. When we get involved by volunteering, voting and donating we feel more connected to society and to one another.

Citizen Grade



74%

Report a strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging in their community; it is even higher for our seniors at 77%.

47%

Volunteerism rate in our region, with an average donation of 156 hours of community time.

\$350

Median amount of charitable donations in 2011.

BC: \$370
CAN: \$260

63%

Voter turnout in the last federal election. Although we are higher than national or provincial levels, turnout continues a downward trend.



How the Foundation is helping

A grant to **The Compassionate Friends-Vernon Chapter** for their Memorial Candle Lighting Service will help us remember children who are no longer with us.

The **Schubert Centre Society** received a grant for their Creative Expressions Activity Program.

Citizen Feedback

“Engage in your community – there are so many opportunities to volunteer.”

Special events like Vernon Winter Carnival, Funtastic, Creative Chaos and the Sunshine Festival give us a chance to be involved in community.





Work

Employment challenges continue to be of concern to our citizens, particularly those under 30.

The vitality of a community can be measured by the quality and nature of employment opportunities. Building a strong, diverse economy that supports competitive wages is necessary for the long term health of the community.

Citizen Grade



\$47,354

Median employment income in the Vernon Census Area for those working year-round, full-time.

BC: \$49,143

25%

Work in sales and service category, while **15%** of our work force is employed in trades-related occupations.

37.5%

Work in the top three industries.

Retail: 15.8%

Health care and social services: 13.6%

Construction: 8.1%

25%

Work part-time.

2.8 % are considered involuntary part-time workers, which is higher than the provincial rate.



How the Foundation is helping

Community Foundations do not provide direct funding for employment. However, in recognition of the work-housing correlation, the Community Foundation of the North Okanagan supports the **Social Planning Council** and the **Vernon & District Community Land Trust** to research and develop affordable housing strategies.

Citizen Feedback

"More full-time, well-paying, year-round jobs"

"Jobs that will encourage young families to move here"

"In Vernon it's hard to afford housing and food on minimum wage."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Vital Signs Project Team & Community Leadership Group

- ❖ Marty Armstrong, CFNO volunteer
- ❖ Dave Fletcher, ED, CFNO
- ❖ Alan Gee, Fulton Secondary School
- ❖ Leanne Hammond, CFNO Consultant
- ❖ Gary Huston, CFNO Director
- ❖ Cindy Lindsay, Community Foundation of Canada (Vital Signs Project Director)
- ❖ Jane Lister, Dean, Okanagan College - Vernon Campus
- ❖ Janice Mori, CFNO Director
- ❖ Melissa Munn, PhD, Okanagan College
- ❖ Annette Sharkey, ED Social Planning Council of North Okanagan
- ❖ Michael Tindall, President CFNO

Research & Survey Network

- Andrew Sharpe, Centre for the Study of Living Standards
- CFNO Staff and Directors
- City of Vernon
- Regional District of North Okanagan
- Mr. Gee's Grade 12 Sociology class, Fulton Secondary School
- Students from Dr. Melissa Munn's Sociology 201 class, Okanagan College: Paula Beech, Hollie Boe, Cayla Brown, Thomas Cinnamon, Adria Couch, Jody Dianocky, Zenia Efimoff, Danby Felker, Chelsea Garner, Brittany Hammerl, Nicole Hamming, Juanita Hyslop, Bronson Kashino, Joe Lanaway, Malcolm Latwat, Olivia Lord, Dilraj Mann, Ashley Paradis, Sonya Sarwar, Amanda Turanski, Sammie Wall

"We found it refreshing that we could experience going out into our community and have firsthand experience of the challenges and successes involved with collecting social data from our community."

We would like to acknowledge our partnership with 25 other community foundations releasing Vital Signs reports this year:

*Abbotsford, BC Burlington ON Calgary AB Cambridge and North Dumfries, ON Cape Breton, NS
Central Okanagan, BC Edmonton, AB Grande Prairie, AB Kingston, ON Kitchener-Waterloo, ON
Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta, AB Lunenburg, NS Medicine Hat, AB Mississauga, ON
Peterborough, ON Prince Edward County, ON, Prince Edward Island South Okanagan, BC
Stratford and Perth County, ON Sudbury, ON Temiskaming, ON
Toronto, ON Victoria, BC Windsor-Essex, ON Wolfville, NS*

Sponsors



NORTH OKANAGAN'S

VitalSigns®

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 Community 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.



The Vital Signs trademark is used with permission from Community Foundations of Canada.



Community Foundation of the North Okanagan
#304, 3402 27th Ave.
Vernon, BC V1T 1S1
Phone: 250-542-8677
info@cfno.org | www.cfno.org