

2018

COLUMBIA VALLEY'S

# VitalSigns

*balancing*  
**ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL**  
*sustainability*



*Vital Signs, taking the pulse of Canadian communities.*



# Thank you Columbia Valley residents for lending your voice.

## *What is the purpose of Vital Signs?*

Publishing Vital Signs is a strategic decision made by the Columbia Valley Community Foundation. Our goal is to build community knowledge around which issues are of greatest concern to our communities, what our most pressing needs are, and what strengths we must continue to develop.

Furthermore, the Vital Signs report is a means to engage Community Foundation donors by identifying community priorities, and inform the grantmaking process to help make community impact where it is needed the most. Vital Signs provides an opportunity to delve deeper into issues of concern by inspiring and informing community conversations and encouraging innovative community projects. Vital Signs is more than a one-off snapshot of our valley communities; it provides a benchmark against which to measure our progress and results in the future.

We also hope that the information within the Vital Signs report may be helpful to a wide range of organizations and community residents, for a large variety of uses. It is our desire to share community information, to encourage community discussions, to evoke response and diverse opinions and, ultimately, to foster the best possible decision making for the benefit of our communities.

## THANK YOU TO THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED MAKE THIS REPORT POSSIBLE:

### Vital Signs Team

Tess Bekkering  
Laurie Klassen

### Vital Signs Survey & Report Review

Netwaves Communication (Nicole Trigg)  
Gaby Zezulka, PhD

### Design

Slumber Fight Design (Nathan Siemens)

### Photography

Painted Sun Photography  
Vanessa Jeakins Photography  
Chris Conway Photography (Cover Photo)

*We appreciate the ideas and support from our Community Advisory Committee:*

Kayja Becker	Alison Bell
Susan Clovechok	Kerry Colonna
Jessica Fairhart	Monica Fisher
David Goldsmith	Purnima Gosavi
Mike Gray	Ursel Mauthner
Michele Neider	Wendy Rockafellow
Ryan Watmough	Karel Wood

COLUMBIA VALLEY'S

# VitalSigns



### About Vital Signs

*Vital Signs*® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. *Vital Signs* is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada and with special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the Vital Signs concept. For more information visit: [www.vitalsignscanada.ca](http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca)

### About our Community Foundation

*"For Good. For Community. For Ever."*  
We have been bringing donors to the table as community builders since 2001. Together we are building a vibrant and caring community where everyone is valued, contributes and feels they belong. Through the Vital Signs research and reports, we identify important local issues and ensure our donors are investing in programs that create lasting impact and change.

2018

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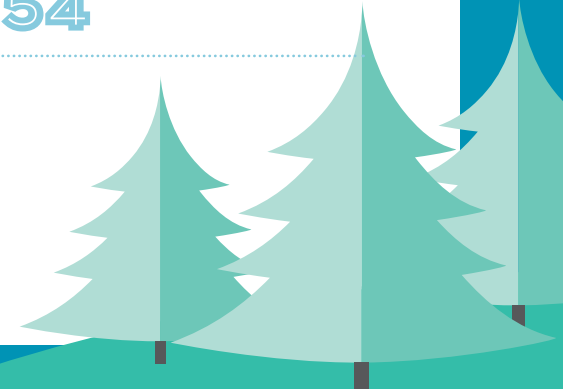
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# UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS & VITAL SIGNS

## LETTER from the CHAIR

In 2015, United Nations (UN) member countries adopted a set of universal goals with the intention of shifting the world toward a more sustainable path by the year 2030. The agenda identifies **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** that target economic, social, and environmental development. The goals intend to:

- *End poverty,*
- *Protect the planet, and*
- *Ensure that no one is left behind.*

### Connection to Vital Signs

The work of community foundations already connects to many of the 17 SDGs. As part of an international movement, community foundations have an opportunity connect our efforts locally to a broader vision to improve the world around us.

*“By aligning our Vital Signs data and stories with the Sustainable Development Goals, we are connecting the local to the global to measure change and impact at all scales.”*

*Rebecca Hurwitz, Executive Director, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust*



The grassroots approach of Vital Signs to collect data, spark conversation and inspire civic engagement offers a unique tool to benchmark the progress of well-being in communities against a set of global targets.

In each section of the 2018 Vital Signs report, the issue areas will be linked to a Sustainable Development Goal. We are excited to see where our commitment to these goals lead our Columbia Valley communities as we strive for a better world in 2030.

The Columbia Valley Community Foundation has been a vital part of helping people give back to their communities for 17 years. Through our stewardship of gifts from citizens and organizations, we have been able to grant over \$725,000 since our inception to meet a variety of community needs.

The Columbia Valley Community Foundation is very proud to present the second Vital Signs report to our communities. In our 2016 report, work and earning topped the list of concerns for Columbia Valley residents – and for good reason. The 2016 Vital Signs report revealed a troubling disparity between employment income and housing costs. In 2018, the number one issue area identified by our residents is the environment. Most of us live here for the natural beauty of our area and we are grappling with sustaining our environment while providing meaningful work opportunities for our future. This has provided the theme for our 2018 report; “Balancing Economic and Environmental Sustainability”.

A strong community is a reflection not only of its past, but also its future. Our hope is that this report will continue to help inform and guide not only the decisions we make as a Foundation, but those of individuals and other organizations working in support of our community’s well-being. We are not providing answers in this report. Vital Signs is meant to initiate conversation and provide a framework to prototype new initiatives for our communities; and connecting the Vital Signs issue areas with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals gives our communities specific goals to work towards. Connecting community goals with a global agenda is inspiring.

This Vital Signs report could not have been completed without the dedicated effort of our Vital Signs committee and the more than 650 Columbia Valley citizens who committed their time by completing the Vital Signs survey. We are extremely grateful to all who participated. The result is a report that provides a portrait of our community at this moment in time.

We ask that you read the report and consider the issues raised and the feedback provided by the participants, and then step forward and help make our communities a better place to live.

Respectfully Yours,  
*Roberta Hall*  
*Chair, Columbia Valley Community Foundation*



*Columbia Valley Vital Signs 2018 combines information from a wide variety of credible and reliable sources. This includes the following:*

## COLUMBIA VALLEY COMMUNITY SURVEY

677 community surveys were received. The survey comprised 46 questions, including a combination of multiple selection and open-ended questions. The survey was open from June 1 to July 7, 2018.

To capture resident responses throughout the Columbia Valley, the Vital Signs team conducted 9 “Vital Cafés”, spending 3 or more hours in 8 different coffee shops in the Columbia Valley, from Canal Flats to Spillimacheen. An additional “café” was conducted at the Invermere Public Library. These events were advertised prior to the actual date to encourage residents to participate. The Vital Signs team spoke with hundreds of residents during these events and the highest survey completion spike was 150 survey responses following the Vital Café at Kicking Horse Café.

The Vital Signs team also completed the following: distributed hard copy surveys to East Kootenay Employment Services; personally visited businesses in downtown Invermere; sent the survey link to local employers and non-profit organizations; and promoted on social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Additionally, promotional “tear-off” sheets were created and distributed directing respondents to the Columbia Valley Community Foundation website.

## Statistical data provided by:

### COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA

Community Foundations of Canada, through their data partner, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, compiled Statistics Canada and Elections Canada information and provided context statements for our community.

### COLUMBIA BASIN RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Rural Development Institute (RDI), at Selkirk College in Castlegar, is a regional research centre with a mandate to support decision making by Columbia Basin communities through provision of information.

### COLUMBIA VALLEY FOOD BANK, CHAIR'S REPORT, 2018

Annual summary provided by the Columbia Valley Food Bank.

### FACILITY PROFILE, INVERMERE & DISTRICT HOSPITAL, 2016-17

This profile provides an overview of the services provided at the Invermere & District Hospital.

### KOOTENAY REAL ESTATE BOARD (KREB)

Provision of average sale price of residential single family detached homes for 2013, 2014 and 2015.

## LAKE WINDERMERE AMBASSADORS WATER QUALITY MONITORING RESULTS (2018)

Every summer season, Lake Windermere Ambassadors measure water quality at three sites on Lake Windermere, as well as bacteria levels at three public beaches and water chemistry & tributary flows at one of the major inflows to the lake (Windermere Creek).

## LOCAL HEALTH AREA PROFILE, WINDERMERE 2017

The profile provides an overview of the Windermere Local Health Area (LHA)

## REGIONAL DISTRICT OF EAST KOOTENAY (RDEK) COLUMBIA VALLEY TRANSIT RIDERSHIP REPORT

This report provides Columbia Valley Transit ridership statistics for 2016 and 2017.

## REGIONAL DISTRICT OF EAST KOOTENAY (RDEK) 2016 AND 2017 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ANNUAL SOLID WASTE REPORT

This report, published annually for the last 7 years, provides information on the Central, Elk Valley, and Columbia Valley landfills.

## REGIONAL DISTRICT OF EAST KOOTENAY (RDEK) 2017 ORGANICS SUMMARY AND VOLUNTARY ONLINE SURVEY

This report is a summary of the composting pilot project conducted from August–October 2016 and results of a voluntary online survey.

## STATE OF CLIMATE ADAPTATION (AREA F) REGIONAL DISTRICT OF EAST KOOTENAY 2017

Highlight of trends and impacts related to the local climate and surrounding environment. Includes results of a voluntary resident survey conducted by RDEK and Rural Development Institute (RDI) in November and December 2017. Four (4) State of Climate Adaptation reports were completed in the Columbia Basin. This was the only report completed in the Columbia Valley.

## WILDSAFE BC INVERMERE ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Prepared by the Wildsafe BC Community Coordinator. Data included in this report were selected based on the following specifications:

- Current and relevant (the most recent data have been included in this report.)
- Straightforward and understandable
- Quantifiable

Eight (8) Community Vitality Areas and Indicators were selected and graded by the Community Advisory Committee on the basis of relevancy, measurability, and ease of future and current data collection.

## 2018 COLUMBIA VALLEY VITAL SIGNS REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

*Our main findings across the 8 Issue Areas of this report are:*

### 01: ENVIRONMENT

Our natural environment is key to attracting and retaining residents. We take care of our environment, but could do more to divert waste and ensure our land and water is used and managed responsibly. Increased wildfire activity has emphasized the need for local air quality monitoring.

### 01a: ENVIRONMENT – FOOD & AGRICULTURE

There is strong support for local food producers in our region and many residents grow some of their own food. Access to nutritious food for all of our residents is a priority.

### 02: HEALTH & WELLNESS

Residents noted access to specialist health care and transport to medical appointments as concerns in the Columbia Valley.

### 03: BELONGING & QUALITY OF LIFE

Philanthropy, volunteerism, and a sense of inclusion are strong in the Columbia Valley.

### 04: WORK & EARNING

Support for new businesses and access to housing are identified as priorities for this issue area.

### 05: HOUSING

Finding affordable housing is a challenge for many Columbia Valley residents. AirBnB and other short-term rental companies are reducing long-term rental options.

### 06: GETTING AROUND

Columbia Valley residents continue to rely heavily on personal vehicles to get around. Almost no options for transit out of the community. Accessibility within our communities is a priority.

### 07: LEARNING

92% of survey respondents consider themselves lifelong learners.

### 08: SAFETY

Columbia Valley residents feel very safe in their communities and crime incidents continue to decrease.

## How to use this report:

### READ

*Take the time to read this report and ponder what the data means to our community.*

### SHARE

*Share this report with family, friends, neighbours, co-workers, and elected officials. This report is available in print or online at [www.valleyfoundation.ca](http://www.valleyfoundation.ca)*

### DISCUSS

*When you read this report, what surprised you? What stood out? What will the Columbia Valley look like in 2, 5 or 10 years?*

### ACT

*If you or your organization are motivated by what you read, use this report as a starting point for action and consider the data when strategic planning. Review the Vital Actions in each Issue Area.*

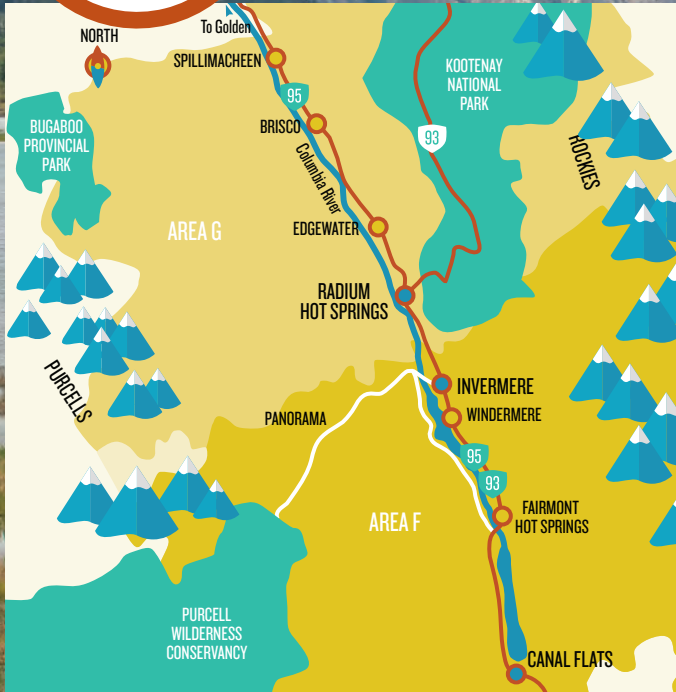
### SUPPORT

*There are many worthy organizations in the Columbia Valley that could benefit from your participation and/or financial support.*

### CONTACT US

*The Columbia Valley Community Foundation knows the issues and the organizations in our community. If you are looking for ways to make a difference, we can help. Contact us at [www.valleyfoundation.ca](http://www.valleyfoundation.ca) or call 250.342.2845*

**our AREA**



**COLUMBIA VALLEY**

*I love it here and wouldn't want to be anywhere else.*

*Community Survey Respondent*

{ 1 }

17

**UNIQUE COMMUNITIES**  
There are seventeen (17) individual communities across the Columbia Valley, each with its own history, lore, vibrancy, and concerns.

*Spillimacheen is our most northerly community, and Canal Flats is the most southerly.*

**VITAL WATERWAY**  
Our region is located at the Headwaters of the Columbia River. Winding uninterrupted through all of our communities, this waterway connects us recreationally, economically, culturally, and environmentally.

**mountain ranges**

*Our communities are nestled between the majestic Purcell Mountain Range to the west and the Rocky Mountains to the east.*

*We occupy a portion of the Rocky Mountain Trench, a striking physiographic feature that extends from Montana to the Yukon.*

*Two unique First Nations peoples reside in the Valley. They are the Shuswap Band of the Secwepemc Nation, and the Akisq'nuuk First Nation of the Ktunaxa First Nation.*

3

*Three (3) communities in the Valley - Radium Hot Springs, Invermere, and Canal Flats - are incorporated. Twelve (12) unincorporated communities exist within Electoral Area F and Electoral Area G.*

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**Community Snapshot**

2016 CENSUS

**9,479**

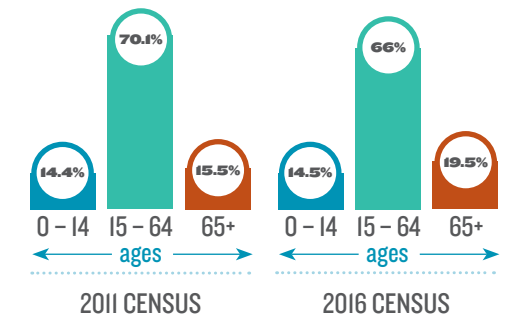
total resident population

**6.2%**

Increase from 2011

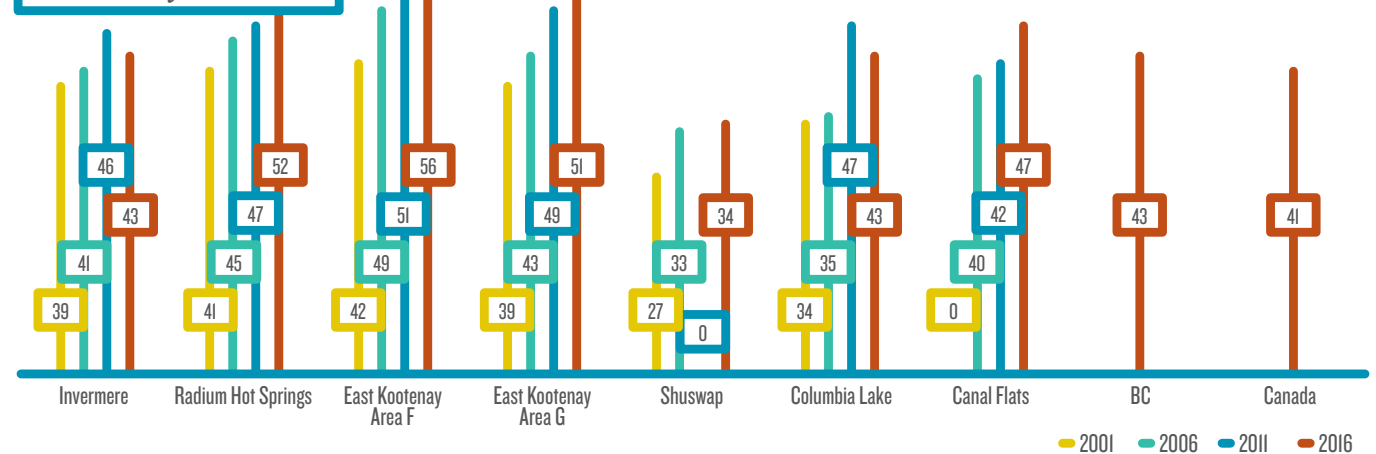
COMMUNITY POPULATIONS	2001	2006	2011	2016
Electoral Area G	1,635	1,563	1,412	1,462
Radium Hot Springs	583	735	777	776
Shuswap (IRI)	176	169	293	319
Invermere	2,858	3,002	2,955	3,391
Electoral Area F	3,356	2,939	2,635	2,726
Columbia Lake (IRI)	165	153	131	140
Canal Flats	754	700	715	665
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>9,527</b>	<b>9,261</b>	<b>8,918</b>	<b>9,479</b>

**PERCENTAGE of POPULATION BY AGE**



**47** **MEDIAN AGE OF COLUMBIA VALLEY RESIDENTS**  
Provincial Median Age: 43  
National Median Age: 41

**MEDIAN AGE by COMMUNITY**





**PROFILE**  
of  
SURVEY  
RESPONDENTS

*Community Snapshot*

**Who Lives Here:**

The overall population of our community has increased **6.2%** to a total year-round population of 9479

Our median age is **47** years of age

**TAGALOG** emerged as the #4 mother tongue of our residents

**3.3%** of our population identify as a visible minority, an increase from 1.9% in 2011

**Mother Tongue**  
*(percentage of population)*

- 91.8%** English
- 3.4%** German
- 2.4%** French
- 1.4%** Tagalog

Other languages in our communities (in ranked order):  
**ABORIGINAL**  
**SPANISH**  
**ITALIAN**  
**PUNJABI**  
**CHINESE**  
**ARABIC**

**3.3**

*Percentage of Population Identifying as a Visible Minority (Increase from 1.9% in 2011)*

Source: 2016 Stats Canada Census

**ABORIGINAL IDENTITY IN PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS**

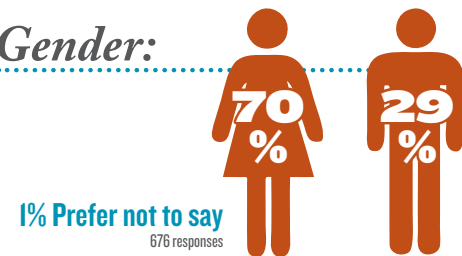
*(Total Number in Columbia Valley)*

**365**  
*Metis*

**295**  
*First Nations*

Source: 2016 Stats Canada Census

**Gender:**



**Age:**

- 1%** Under 18 years
- 6%** 18 - 24
- 13%** 25 - 34
- 17%** 35 - 44
- 18%** 45 - 54
- 26%** 55 - 64
- 18%** 65 years or more
- 1%** Prefer not to say (676 responses)

**Identify as Visible Minority:**

- 7%** Yes
- 90%** No
- 3%** Prefer not to say (676 responses)

**Location of Respondents:**

- 7%** Canal Flats
- 16%** Fairmont
- 9%** Windermere
- 1%** First Nations
- 42%** Invermere
- 2%** Panorama
- 3%** Wilmer
- 10%** Radium
- 4%** Edgewater
- 4%** Brisco
- 2%** Spillimacheen

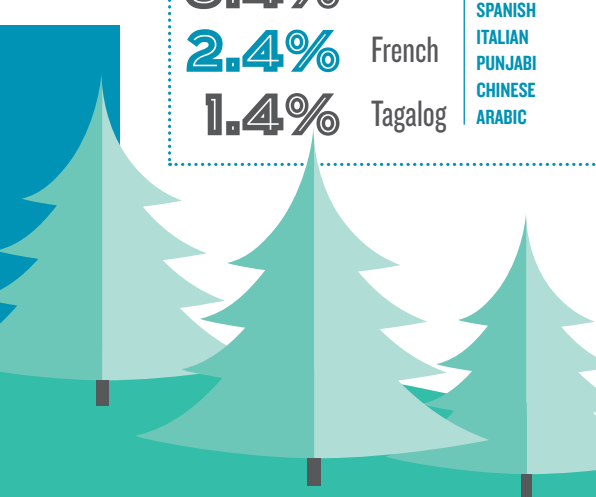
677 responses

**Identify as Indigenous:**

- 5%** Yes
- 94%** No
- 1%** Prefer not to say (676 responses)

**How long have you resided in the Columbia Valley?**

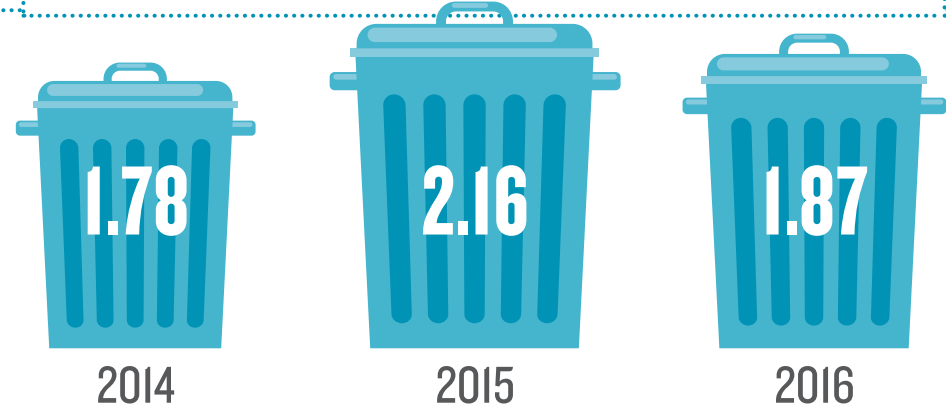
- 6%** Less than 1 year
- 16%** 1 - 5 years
- 15%** 6 - 10 years
- 15%** 11 - 16 years
- 47%** More than 16 years (555 responses)





**WASTE GENERATION per DWELLING**

*in tonnes*

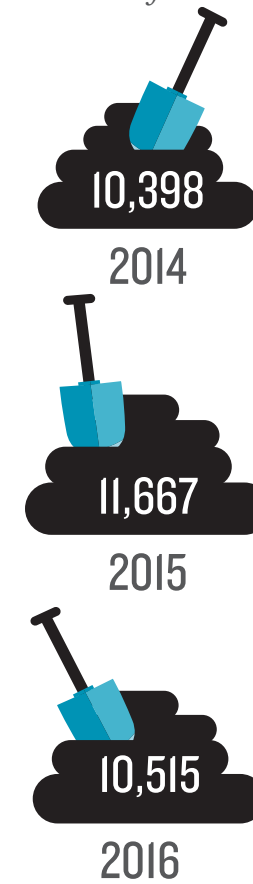


Source: 2016 RDEK Environmental Services Annual Report

**TOTAL WASTE BURIED**

*in tonnes*

*Columbia Valley Landfill*



Source: 2016 RDEK Environmental Services Annual Report

**35-40**

years

*Total life expectancy of the Columbia Valley landfill*

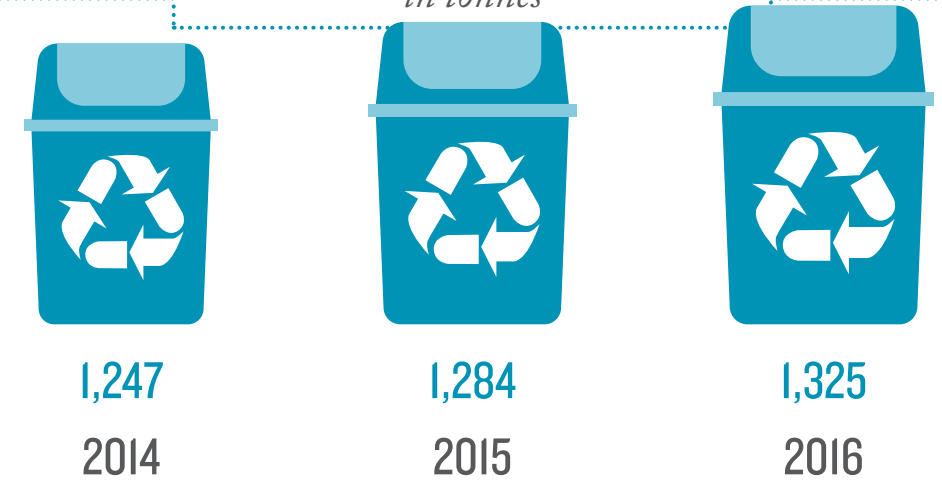
Source: 2016 RDEK Environmental Services Annual Report



*Columbia Valley Recycling*

**TOTAL RECYCLING**

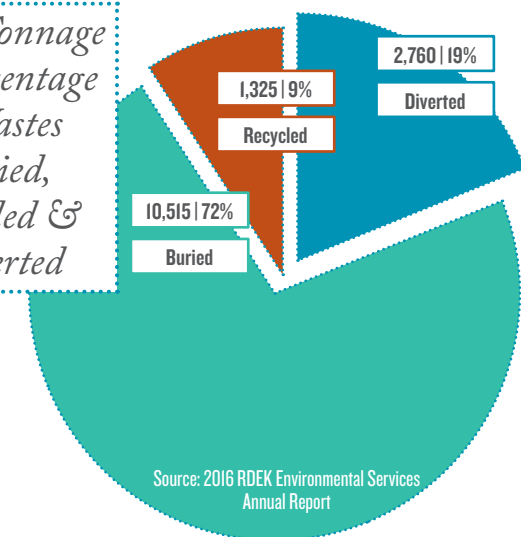
*in tonnes*



*Columbia Valley Recycling*

Source: 2016 RDEK Environmental Services Annual Report

*Total Tonnage & Percentage of Wastes Buried, Recycled & Diverted*



Source: 2016 RDEK Environmental Services Annual Report

**2,322**

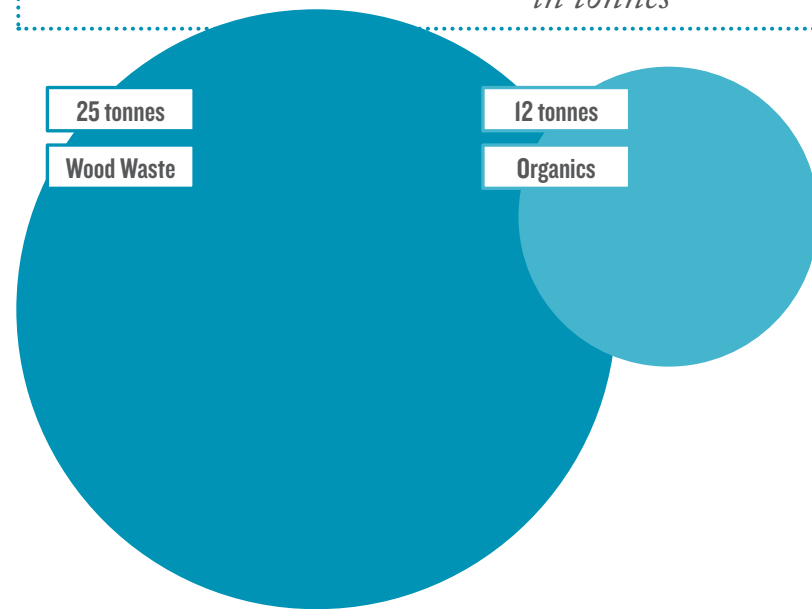
NUMBER OF VISITS TO RE-USE SHED AT COLUMBIA VALLEY LANDFILL (2017)



## Columbia Valley Compost Test Project

3-month pilot project (August – October 2016)  
2 pick-up locations at WINDERMERE LANDFILL & HOME HARDWARE

### AMOUNT COLLECTED IN 2016 COMPOST PROJECT *in tonnes*



#### Vital Actions:

- Support waste management improvements
- Recycle and divert waste from the landfill including waste at work

#### COMPOST TEST PROJECT VOLUNTARY SURVEY RESULTS

Source: 2017 Organics Project Summary



## Human Wildlife Interactions

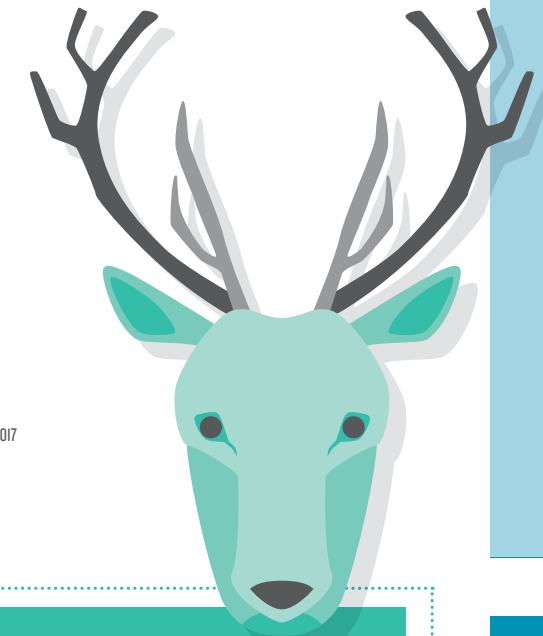


**4** NUMBER OF BEARS DESTROYED WITHIN INVERMERE, 2017

#### Reports to Wildlife Alert Reporting Program (WARP)

57 Black Bear reports  
3 Grizzly Bear reports  
31 Deer reports  
3 Cougar reports  
1 Coyote reports

Source: Wildsafe BC Invermere Annual Report 2017



#### Vital Actions:

- Support waste management improvements particularly with garbage and fruit.
- Support Bear Smart initiatives including updated bylaws to improve enforcement, proper composting techniques and commercial waste storage.
- Support a regional working group; linking communities in the Columbia Valley experiencing similar issues.
- Support and participate in fruit gleaning programs including building a database of fruit tree owners and educational opportunities surrounding fruit gleaning.

**11** BYLAW WARNINGS ISSUED IN DISTRICT OF INVERMERE





### AVERAGE ANNUAL & SEASONAL TEMPERATURE CHANGES

	Annual	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Fairmont (since 1979)	+3.0°C	not available			
Golden (since 1902)	+1.9°C	+3.2°C	+1.5°C	+2.1°C	+0.6°C
Cranbrook (since 1909)	+1.8°C	+2.5°C	+1.6°C	+1.8°C	+1.1°C

Annual and seasonal average temperature trends for Fairmont, Golden and Cranbrook, in degrees Celsius per century. Results that are not statistically significant (reliable) are in italics.  
Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017



### PRECIPITATION TRENDS

	Annual	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Fairmont (since 1979)	+4 mm	not available			
Golden (since 1902)	+50 mm	-11 mm	+29 mm	+35 mm	+23 mm
Cranbrook (since 1909)	+130 mm	-15 mm	+60 mm	+43 mm	+21 mm

Annual and seasonal total precipitation trends for Fairmont, Golden and Cranbrook, in millimetres per century. Results that are not statistically significant (reliable) are in italics.  
Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017

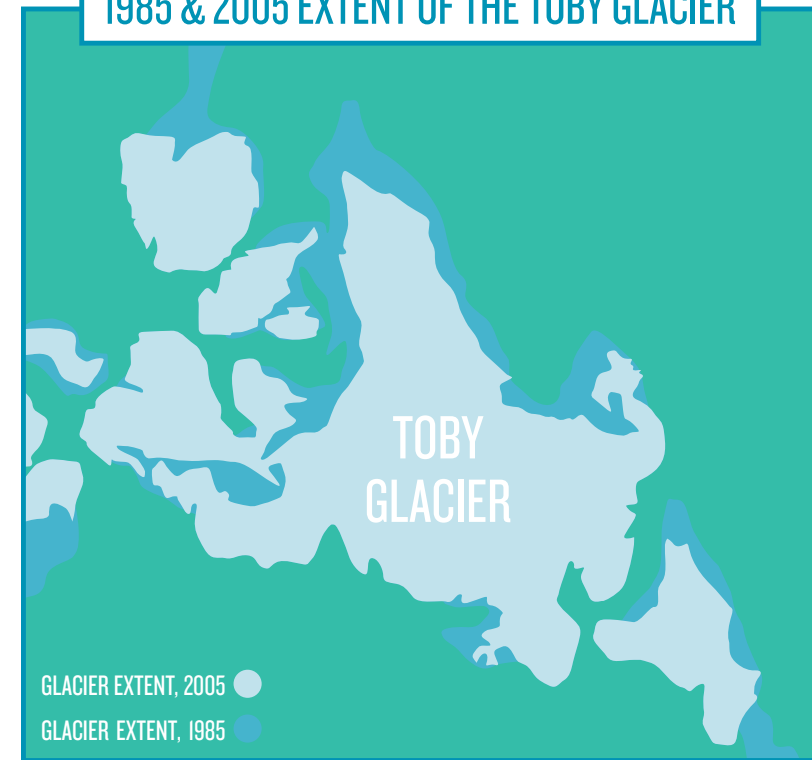
### Trends:

“Both annual and seasonal average temperatures are rising in Area F and surrounding areas, with winter warming at a faster rate than other seasons. This could have negative implications for snow-related tourism, local ecosystems and infrastructure. Annual precipitation is also increasing, but the trend is not consistent across seasons. The trend toward higher average precipitation in the spring could have implications for flood risk, erosion and debris slides.”  
State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017

### Vital Actions:

- Green your commute.
- Use energy wisely.
- Buy organic or local food – or grow your own food.

### 1985 & 2005 EXTENT OF THE TOBY GLACIER



# 20

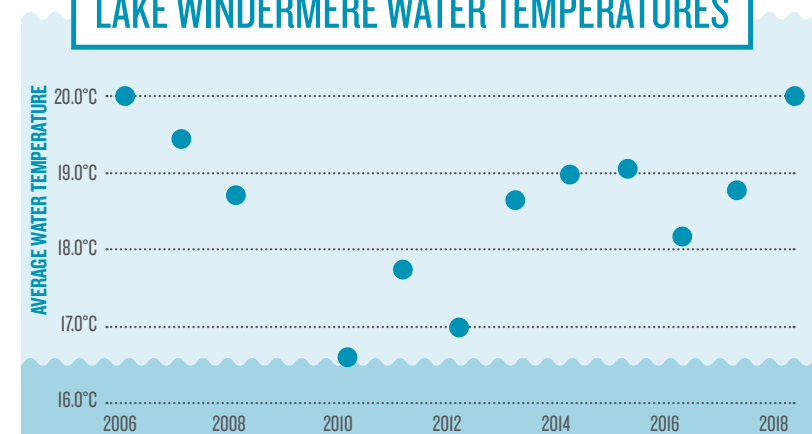
*Decrease in glacier extent in the Canadian Columbia Basin (1985-2005)*

Declines in glacier extent and glacial meltwater has implications for reduced summer stream flow and higher summer water temperatures in the many area water bodies that receive glacial flow.

Local stewardship groups have begun monitoring streams within the Columbia Valley

Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017

### LAKE WINDERMERE WATER TEMPERATURES



Source: Lake Windermere Ambassadors Water Quality Monitoring Results

The Lake Windermere Ambassadors measure water temperature at three sites on the lake. Data is collected once per week in the summer months (June - September). The points on the graph above represent the average of these measurements. Before 2011, data collection was less consistent, so values should be interpreted with

caution. The average temperature of the water has been gradually increasing since about 2010. Data is collected between approximately 8 am - 1 pm. The morning is when water is the coolest, while the afternoon to early evening is when it is the hottest; therefore, the maximum temperature of the water is not captured, just its

average morning temperature. It's quite likely that on hot summer days, the temperature of the water has exceeded the Ministry of Environment recommendations for aquatic health. Lake Windermere temperature results regularly exceed 15°C—the objective set by Health Canada for drinking water sources.

# 17

## AVERAGE OF EXTREME HEAT DAYS

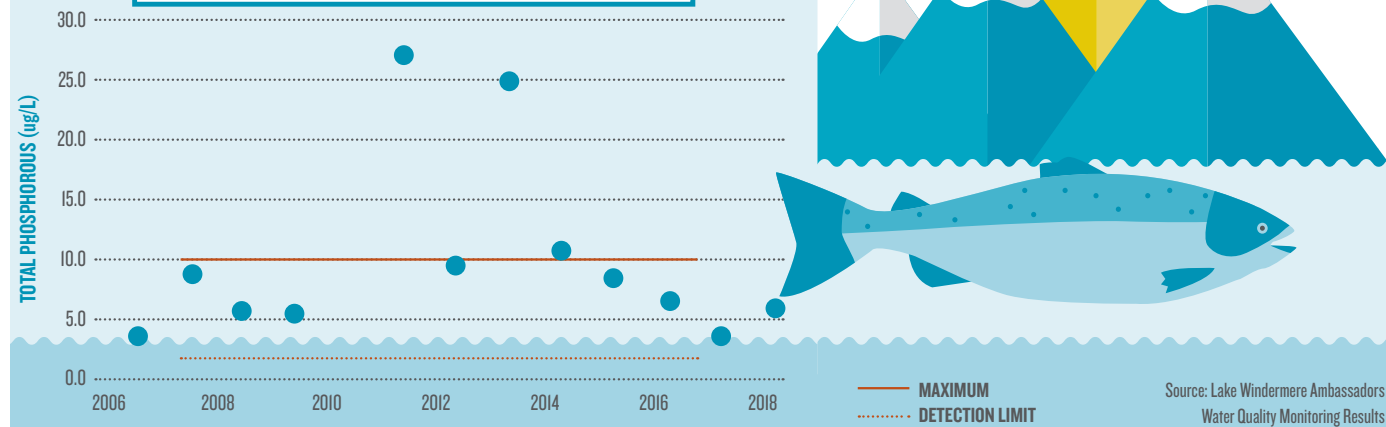
TEMPERATURE ABOVE 30°C

FROM 1997 – 2016 (AVG. FROM 1979 – 1996 = 11 DAYS)

Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017



### LAKE WINDERMERE PHOSPHOROUS CONCENTRATIONS



This graph shows the average total phosphorous concentrations in the lake water since 2006. In 2011 & 2013, the values greatly exceeded the Ministry of Environment's recommended maximum. This is likely because of landslides and debris flows that occurred during these years.

Total phosphorous is measured approximately once per month in the summer (June - September). Phosphorous is also measured during April (ice-off), however these results are not included in this graph. Excess levels of phosphorous can lead to excessive algae growth. Lake Windermere is naturally oligotrophic, meaning "low in nutrients". Values above the recommended maximum for phosphorous put the lake at risk of developing algae growth, which could impact drinking water quality, recreation, and fish & wildlife.

Excess levels of phosphorous can lead to excessive algae growth. Lake Windermere is naturally oligotrophic, meaning "low in nutrients". Values above the recommended maximum for phosphorous put the lake at risk of developing algae growth, which could impact drinking water quality, recreation, and fish & wildlife.

#### Vital Actions:

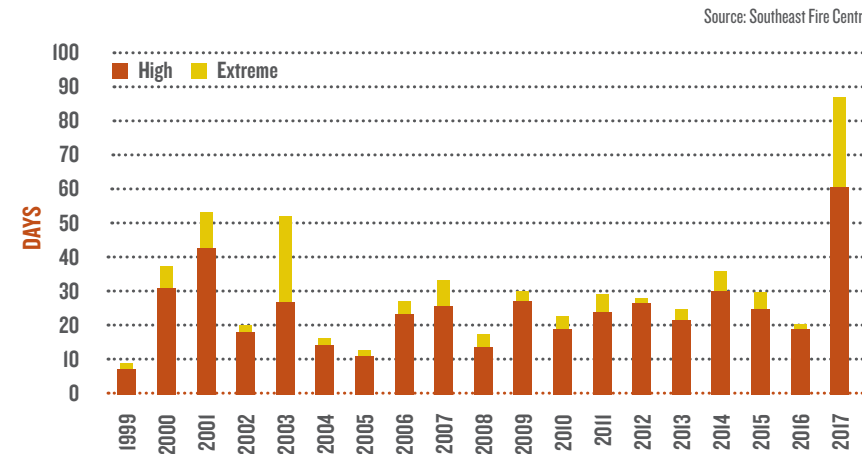
- Conserve as much water as possible. All communities around Lake Windermere get their water either from the lake, its tributary streams or wells. The more water used for our own purposes, the less left over to fill and help cool the lake.
- Plant trees such as willows or shady plants near waterways. Shade helps keep water temperatures cool and reduce sediment erosion.
- Avoid boating in shallow areas, which disturbs lake bottom sediments.
- Reduce phosphorous levels by:
  - Reduce or eliminate use of fertilizers for lawn and garden. Avoid fertilizing within 30 metres of open waterways.
  - Use cleaning detergents and solvents that are phosphate-free.
  - Minimize erosion of sediment and surface run-off. Plant riparian vegetation with strong root structures to help hold stream banks in place. Avoid paving large surfaces of land that cause surface run-off into waterways; soil is a natural filter and can help trap nutrients and other pollutants that may enter water.
  - Any water supply wells between Spillimacheen and Canal Flats that are no longer being used may be candidate wells for the Provincial Groundwater Observation Well Network and the Living Lakes Canada Columbia Basin Groundwater Monitoring Program.

WATER



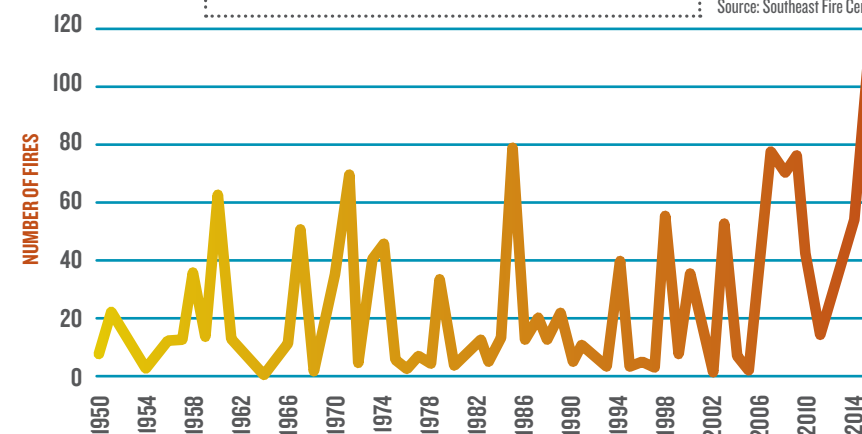
### NUMBER OF DAYS IN HIGH & EXTREME DANGER CLASSES

average of Toby Hub, Palliser & White River stations



### FIRES GREATER THAN 1 HECTARE

in Southeast Fire Centre



**20**  
AVERAGE NUMBER OF FIRES PER YEAR  
TWO-THIRDS ARE LIGHTENING CAUSED

Source: State of Climate Adaptation - Area F - RDEK 2017

**1,300**

Average of hectares burned annually  
Between 1919 - 2017

Source: State of Climate Adaptation - Area F - RDEK 2017

**31,346**

NUMBER OF HECTARES BURNED IN 2017  
HIGHEST SINCE 1919  
APPROX. 3.0% OF THE TOTAL LAND AREA IN THE REGION

Source: State of Climate Adaptation - Area F - RDEK 2017

WILD FIRE



29

NUMBER OF INTERFACE FIRES SINCE 1950  
(FIRES WITHIN 2 KM OF ADDRESS POINTS)  
5 OCCURRED IN 2008, 3 IN 2017

Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017

6

NUMBER OF YEARS WITH CAMPFIRE BANS (SINCE 2000)

Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017



77

NUMBER OF DAYS ON A CAMPFIRE BAN  
LONGEST IN RECORDED HISTORY

Source: State of Climate Adaptation – Area F – RDEK 2017

WILD FIRE

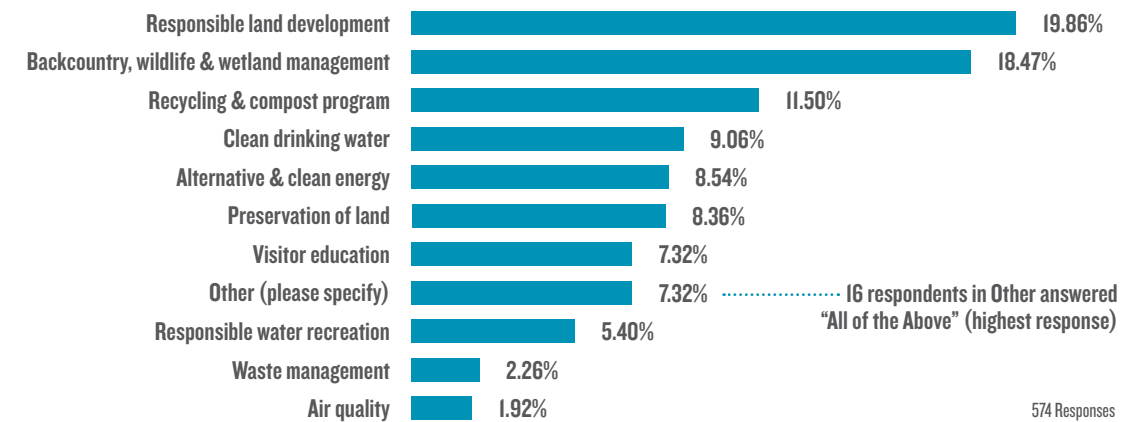
**Vital Actions:**

- Wildfire risk reduction to reduce interface fire risk and establish priority fuel treatment areas.
- Personal emergency preparedness.
- Air quality – Our area lacks access to air quality data. Support initiatives to quantify seasonal air quality to better understand the potential impact of wildfires on human health.

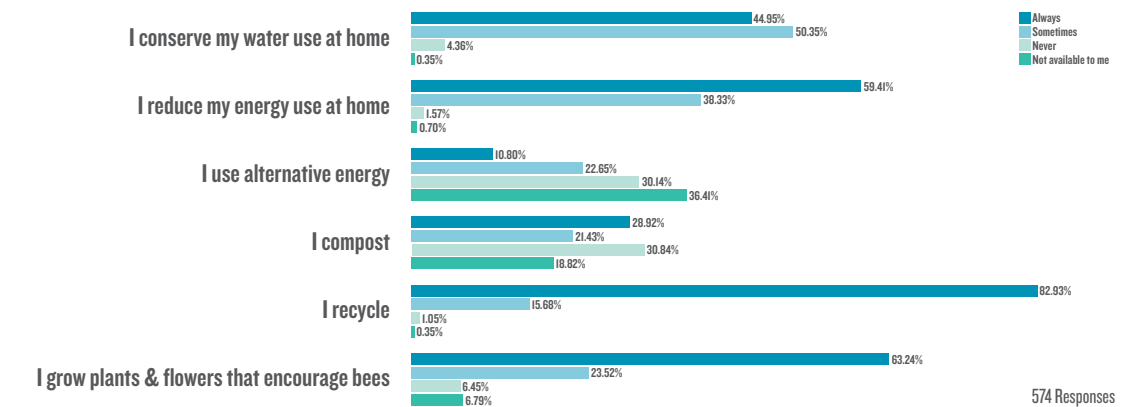


Community Survey Results

What is your top priority to improve the environment in the COLUMBIA VALLEY?



ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES



WHAT COULD THE COMMUNITY DO TO PROMOTE CONSERVATION MEASURES?

Improved waste/recycling/compost programs  
140 responses

25%

Education  
135 responses

24%

OTHER RESPONSES

- Don't know: 127 (22%)
- Support alternative energy and conservation projects: 29 (5%)
- Support for tax incentives/grants/rebates: 24 (4%)
- Backcountry management/enforcement: 20 (3%)

ALSO

- Limit development
- Water use restrictions
- Community gardens
- Enough is done already



## Drought Tracking

The BC drought index is comprised of 4 core indicators: Basin snow indices, seasonal volume run-off forecast, 30 day percent of average precipitation; and 7-day average streamflow. Tracking began in 2010. (Area F includes portions of the Upper Columbia Basin and East Kootenay Basin.)

34

Average of dry days annually (since 2011)

33

Average of very dry days annually (since 2011)

70

Number of dry days in 2017 (Upper Columbia Basin)

0

Number of very dry days in 2017 (Upper Columbia Basin)

42

Number of dry days in 2017 (East Kootenay Basin)

28

Number of very dry days in 2017 (East Kootenay Basin)

Source: State of Climate Adaptation - Area F - RDEK 2017

### GROWING SEASON

191 DAYS

Average growing season length in Area F

- Highest = 228 days 2015
- Lowest = 146 days 1982

Source: State of Climate Adaptation - Area F - RDEK 2017

### TOTAL LAND CROP AREA IN COLUMBIA VALLEY

Source: 2016 Census of Agriculture

1,656

Hectares (Area F and Area G)

### PERCENTAGE DECREASE OF CROP LAND FROM 2011 CENSUS

Source: 2016 Census of Agriculture

19.8%

### PERCENTAGE DECREASE OF CROP LAND FOR BC FROM 2011 CENSUS

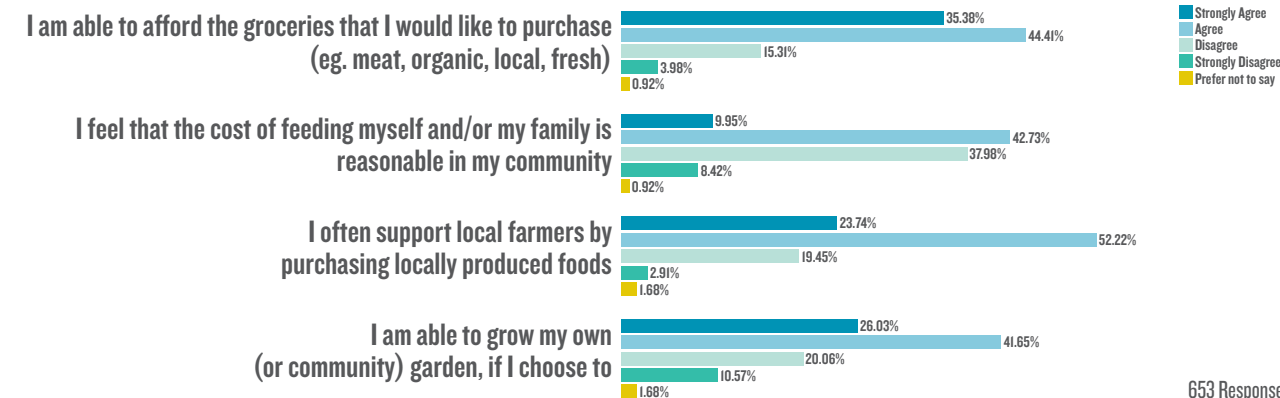
Source: 2016 Census of Agriculture

3.14%



## Community Survey Results

### ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES



### BACKYARD FOOD PRODUCTION

49%

Percentage of Area F residents who grow or raise some of their own food (of those responses, most grow less than 10% of their own food)

174 respondents  
November & December RDEK Online Survey

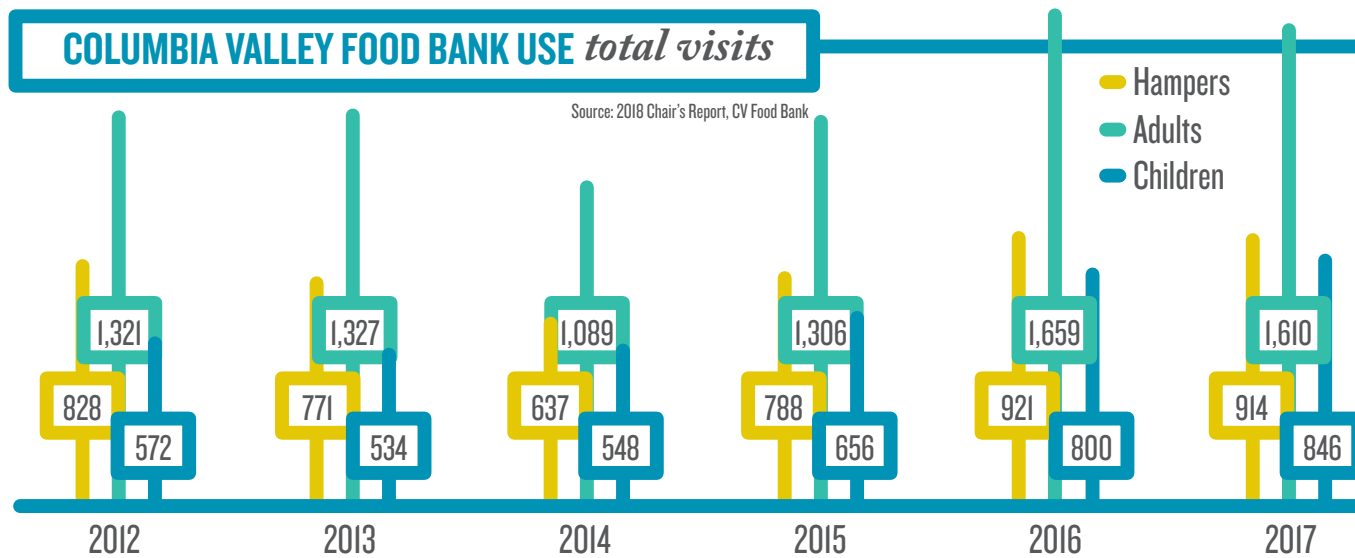
### ACCESS TO NUTRITIONAL FOOD

Do you have access to enough nutritious food to meet your dietary needs?



COLUMBIA VALLEY FOOD BANK USE *total visits*

Source: 2018 Chair's Report, CV Food Bank



Food growing skills should be available to anyone who is interested in having a garden.

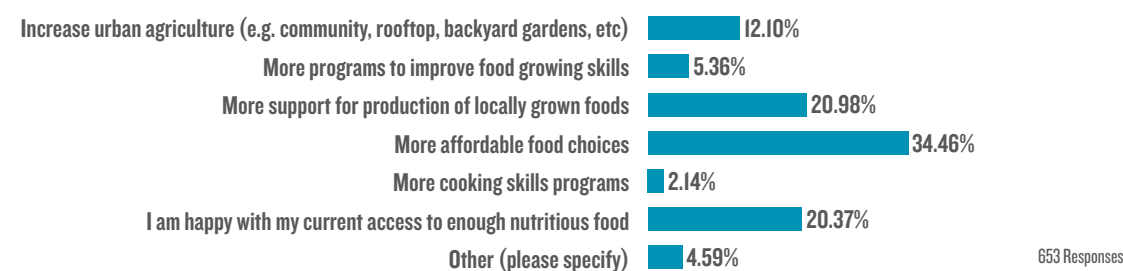
Community Survey Respondent

Very sad to have lost our farmers market in Edgewater.

Community Survey Respondent

Community Survey Results

What is your top priority to increase access to enough nutritious food?



Windermere Local Health Area Profile

9,002

2017 Population of Windermere Local Health Area (does not include First Nations communities)

Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

83

Life Expectancy in Windermere Health Area (this is the same as the life expectancy for BC, 2011-2015)

Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

1.0

Population Density per square km

3.5 people per square km – Interior Health region

5.1 people per square km – BC

(lower densities indicate a rural area that typically has lower access to health services)

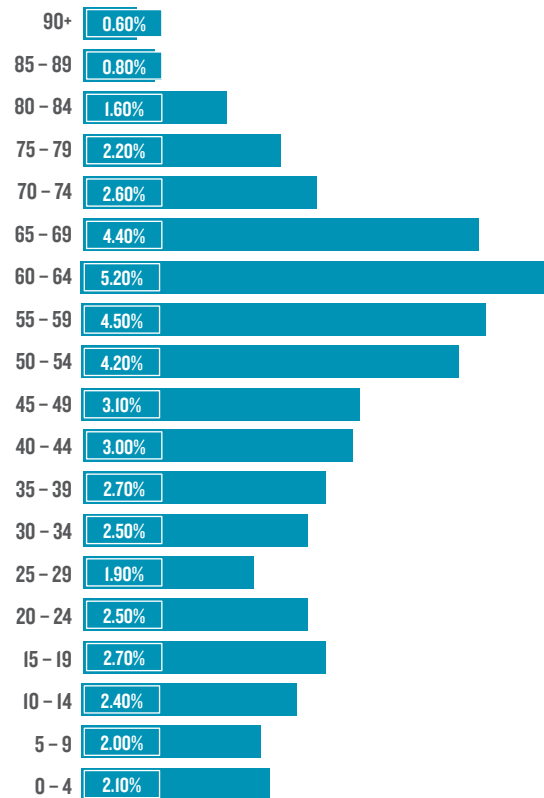
Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

POPULATION PYRAMIDS

Population pyramid for Windermere Health Area. A pyramid with a wide base indicates a younger population, while a top-heavy pyramid indicates an aging population with a longer life expectancy.

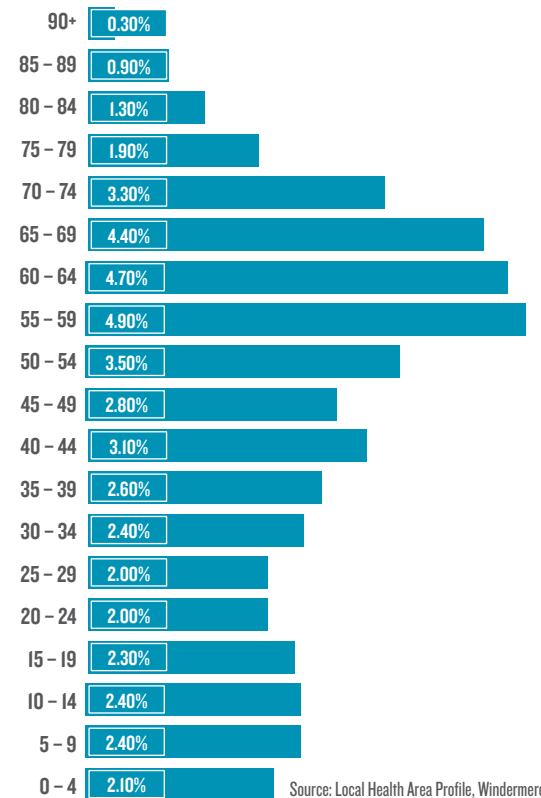
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION

Female



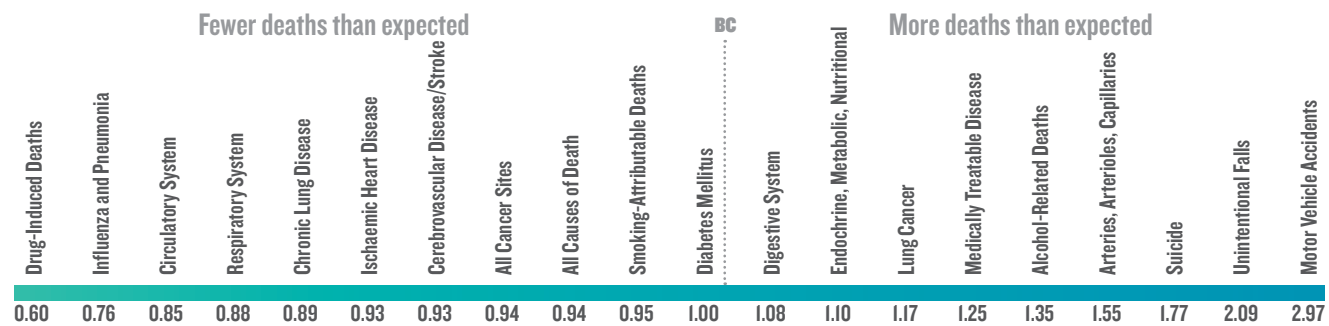
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION

Male



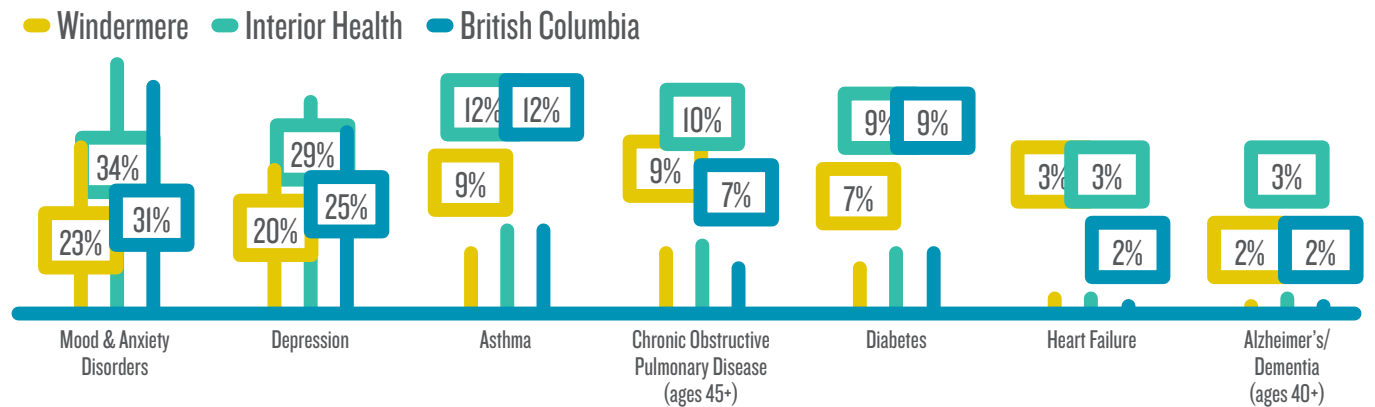
Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

STANDARDIZED MORTALITY RATES Windermere Local Health Area 2011-2015



Source: Table B - Mortality Statistics by Local Health Area British Columbia 2011-2015, Annual Report 2015 BC Vital Statistics Agency

CHRONIC DISEASE CRUDE PREVALENCE RATES in Windermere Local Health Area 2015/2016

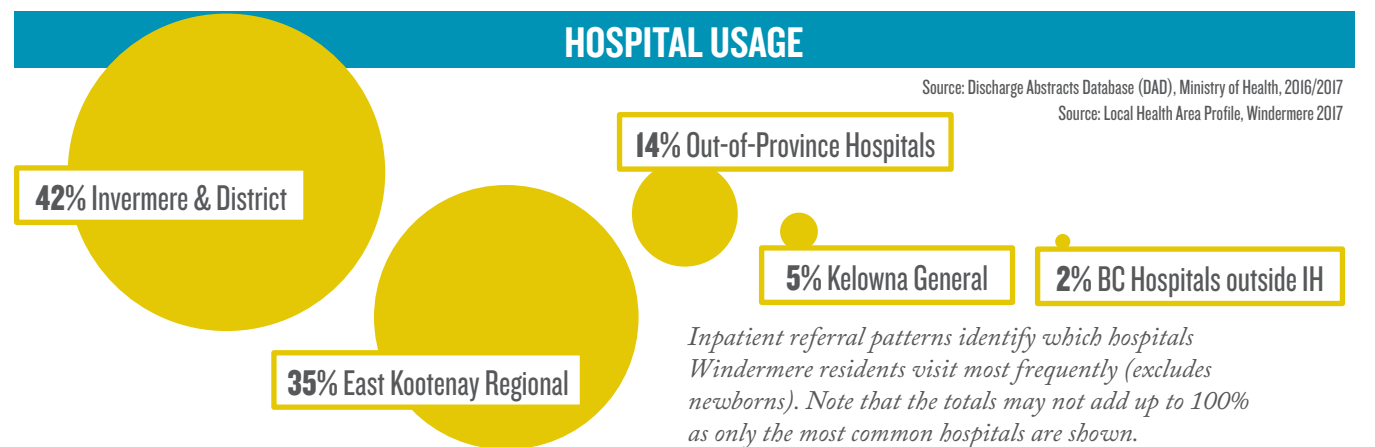


Chronic diseases are long-term conditions that usually progress slowly over time. The chronic diseases displayed above represent health conditions affecting many Interior Health residents over one year of age unless indicated otherwise. As the IH population ages, the prevalences of these diseases is expected to grow. The

2010 WHO Global status report on noncommunicable diseases identifies primary risk factors including: tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, raised blood pressure, physical inactivity, raised cholesterol, obesity, unhealthy diet and raised blood glucose levels.

Source: Chronic Disease Registry, Ministry of Health, 2015/2016

HOSPITAL USAGE



Inpatient referral patterns identify which hospitals Windermere residents visit most frequently (excludes newborns). Note that the totals may not add up to 100% as only the most common hospitals are shown.

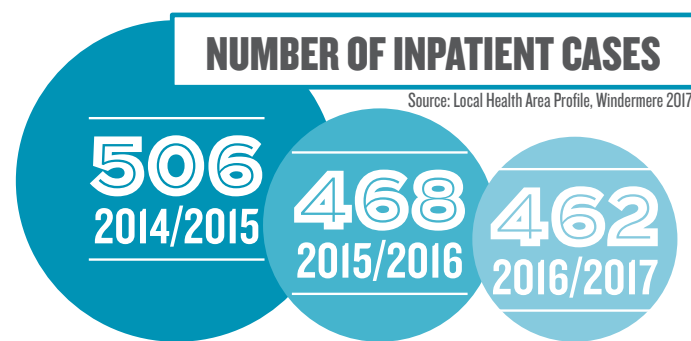
Source: Discharge Abstracts Database (DAD), Ministry of Health, 2016/2017  
Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

*Invermere & District Hospital*

*Invermere & District Hospital*

**NUMBER OF INPATIENT CASES**

Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017



**8** NUMBER OF HOSPITAL BEDS 2016/2017

Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

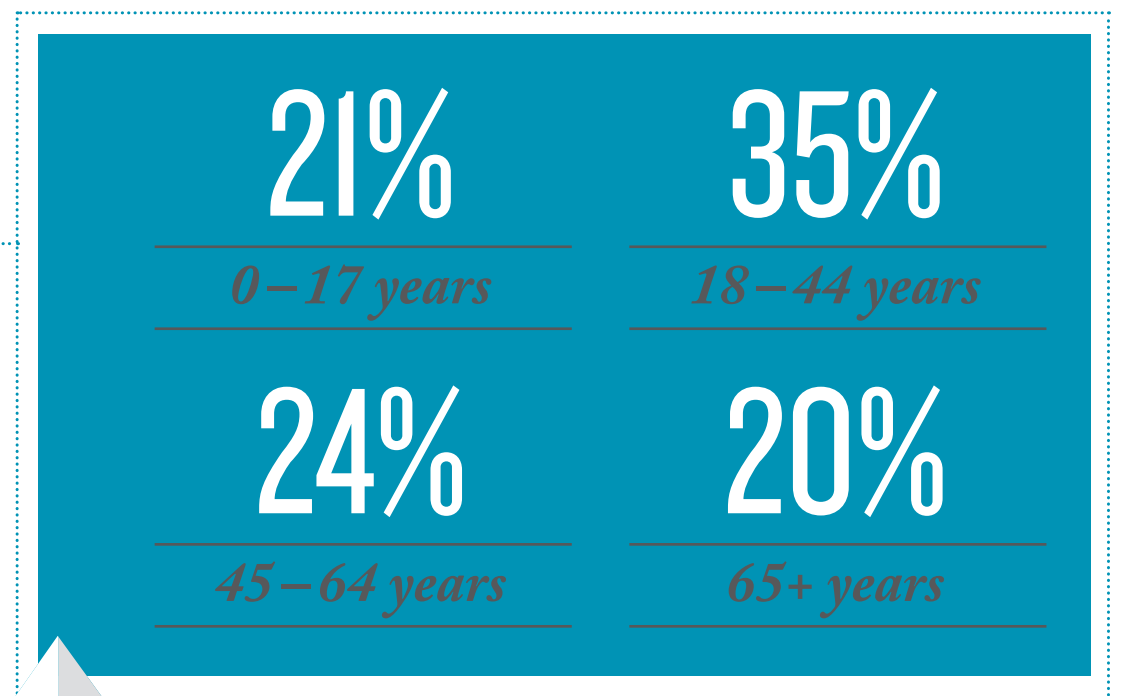
**UNSCHEDULED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS**

Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017

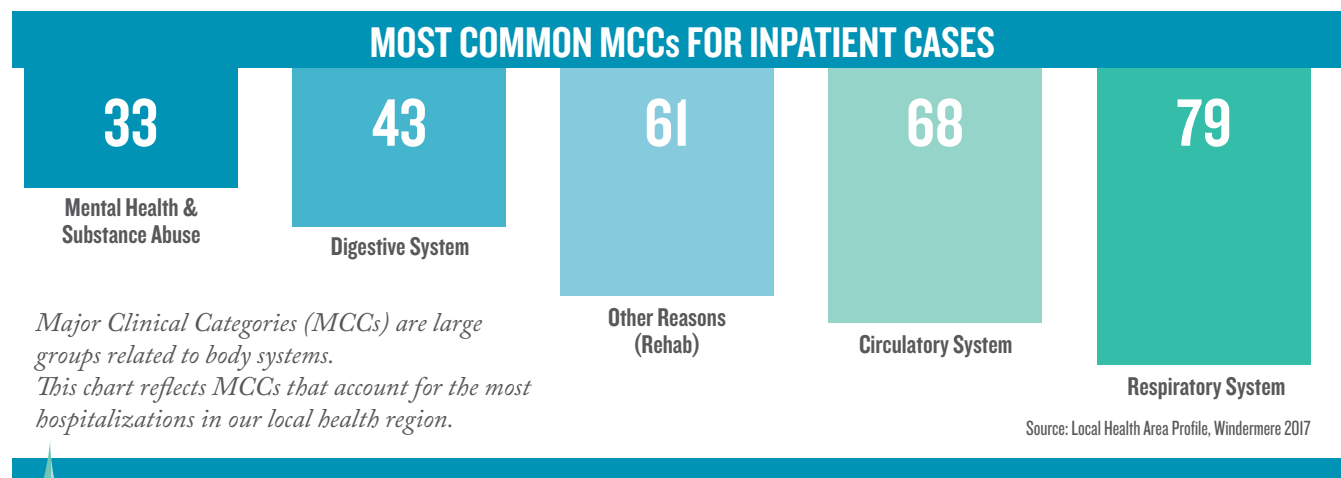


**PERCENTAGE OF EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS BY AGE**

Source: Local Health Area Profile, Windermere 2017



**MOST COMMON MCCs FOR INPATIENT CASES**



*Invermere & District Hospital*

28

NUMBER OF DELIVERIES AT INVERMERE DISTRICT HOSPITAL, 2017/18  
(THIS IS AN INCREASE OF 10 DELIVERIES FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR)

Source: Facility Profile, Invermere & District Hospital 2016/17



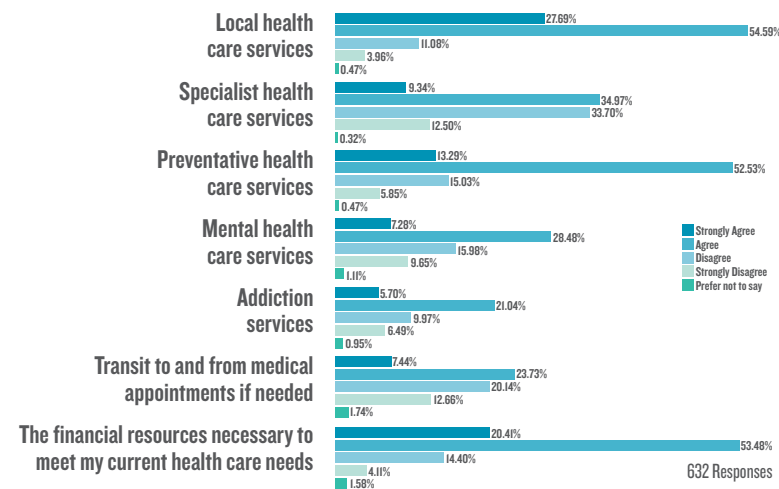
50

NUMBER OF DELIVERIES AT EAST KOOTENAY REGIONAL HOSPITAL (FOR WINDERMERE RESIDENTS), 2017/18  
(THIS IS A DECREASE OF 2 DELIVERIES FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR)

Source: Facility Profile, Invermere & District Hospital 2016/17

*Community Survey Results*

I HAVE TIMELY ACCESS TO...

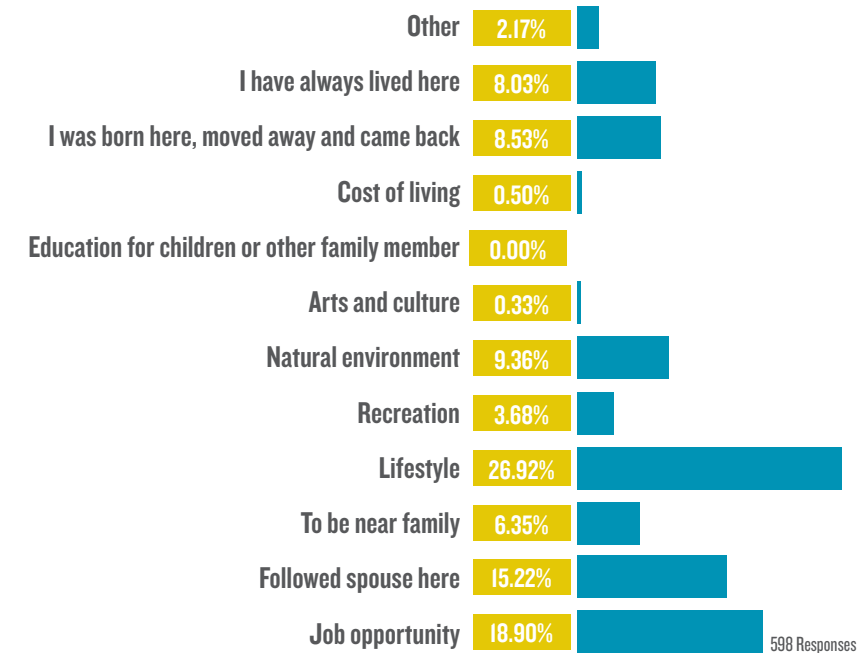


*Vital Actions:*

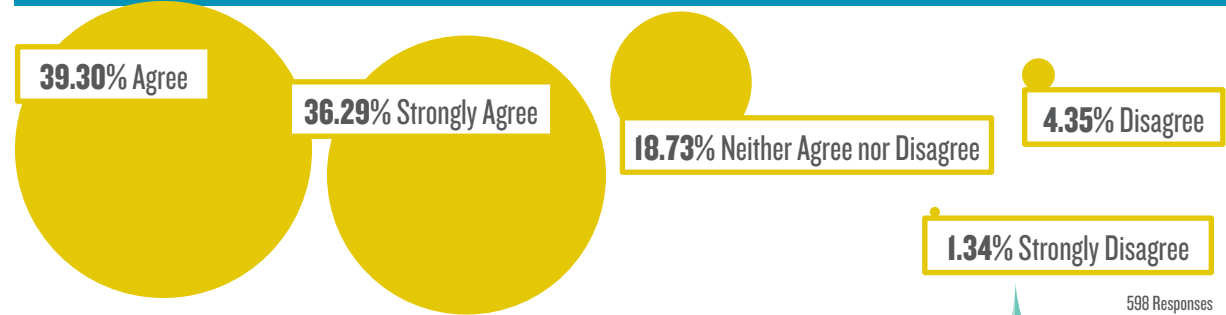
- Support/create healthy living programs in the community (in schools, workplaces, etc.).
- Support local agriculture.
- Use active transportation.
- Support healthy aging programs.

*Community Survey Results*

WHAT WAS YOUR PRIMARY REASON FOR MOVING HERE?

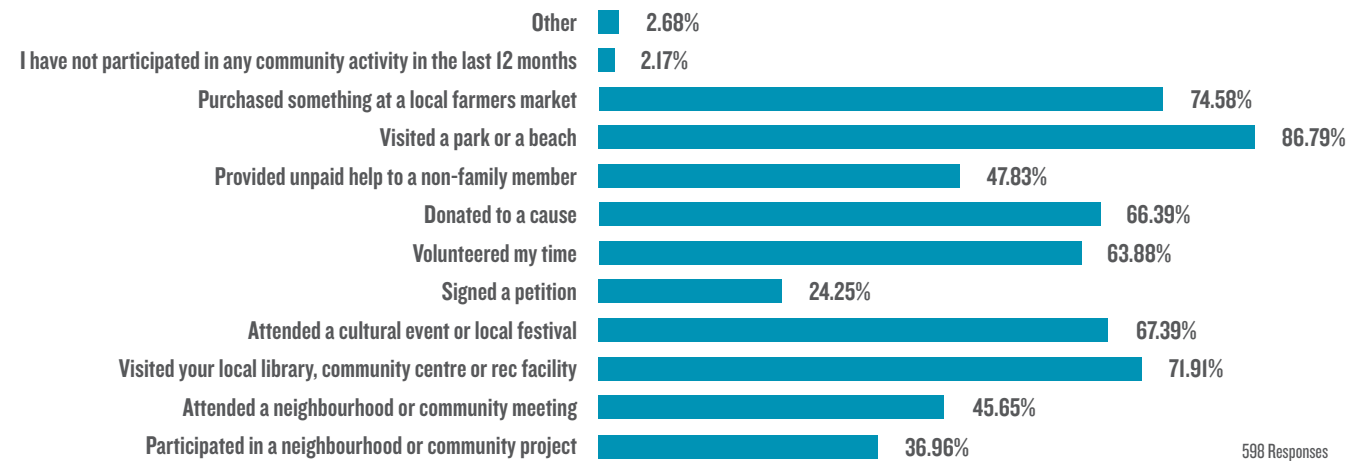


I FEEL THAT I BELONG HERE AND THAT I'M ACCEPTED BY MY COMMUNITY

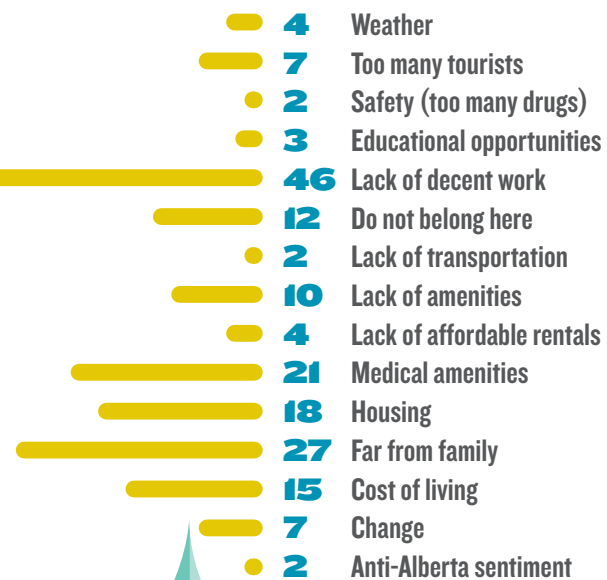




*Please indicate if you have done any of the following in the Columbia Valley in the last 12 months.*



**WHY WOULD YOU LEAVE THE COLUMBIA VALLEY?**



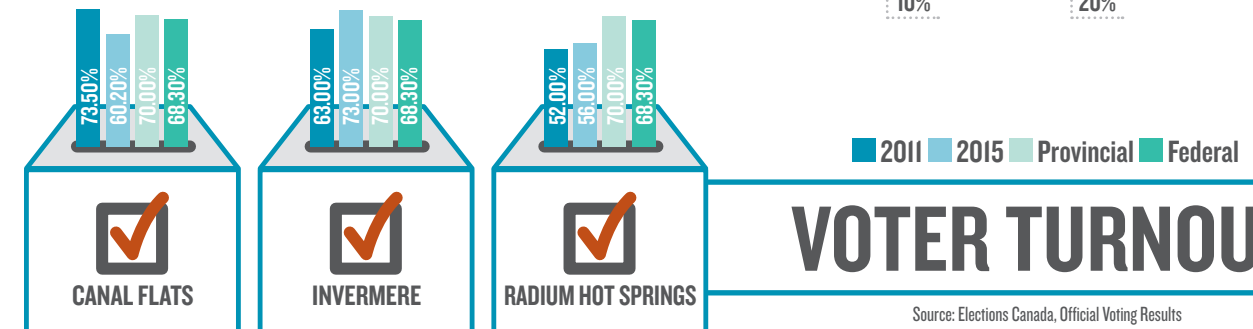
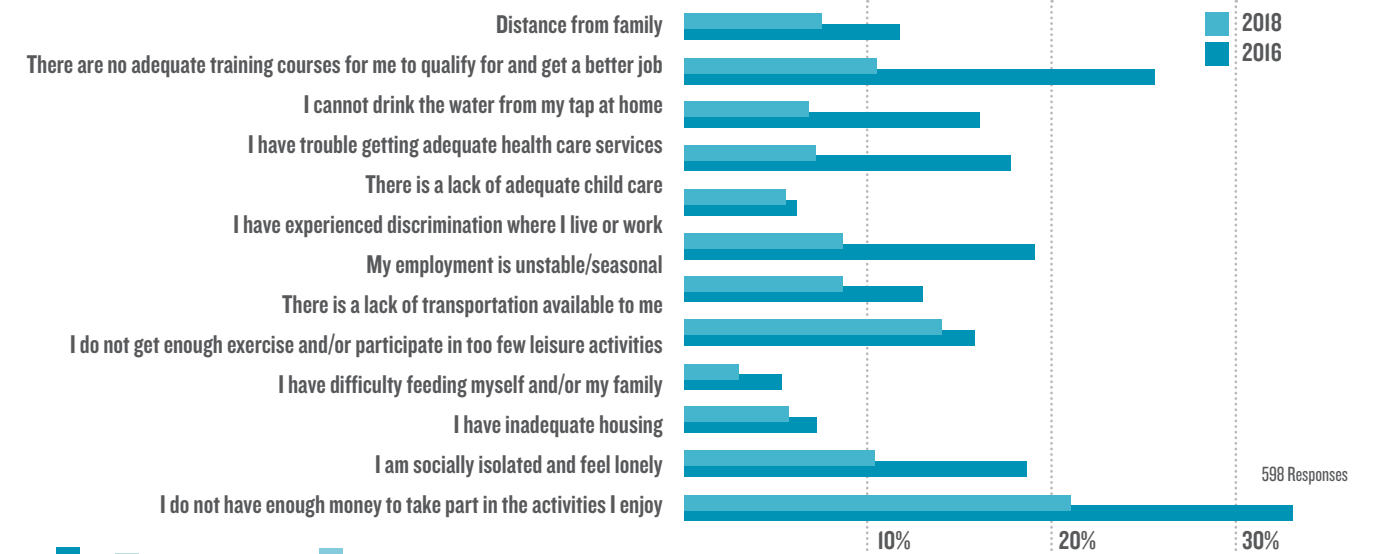
*Have you considered leaving the Columbia Valley permanently?*

**41% YES**

**59% NO**

598 responses

*What challenges affect your quality of life here in the Columbia Valley?*



**VOTER TURNOUT**

*Vital Actions:*

*In August 2017, the Columbia Valley Community Foundation held a community conversation on belonging. Here are some of the ideas that came out of this conversation to encourage belonging in our communities:*

**ENGAGE REALTORS, PROPERTY MANAGERS & HOUSE CHECKERS TO WELCOME NEW PEOPLE**

- "NEW" style Welcome Wagon
  - Mayor writes a letter of welcome
  - Basket of local products
  - Cater to type of family
- List of volunteer opportunities
- Community Guide
- Calendar of Events
- Involve realtors, council, volunteers, community associations, schools and doctors

**COMMUNITY SHARED MEALS**

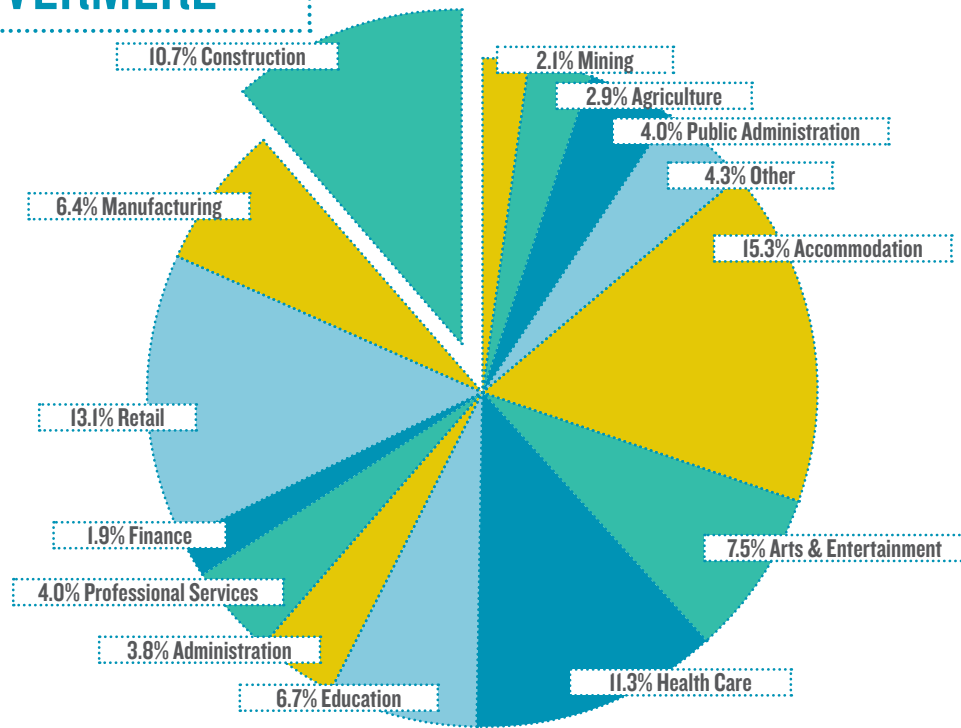
- Welcome Dinners
  - Small home meals or large community meals for holidays
- CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES ON A MORE VISIBLE LEVEL**
- Multicultural day
  - Becoming aware of languages spoken in Valley
  - Food lessons from heritage recipes
  - Inclusivity of First Nation Communities
  - Understanding our shared heritage of the geographic place

# LABOUR FORCE *by* INDUSTRY

November 2017

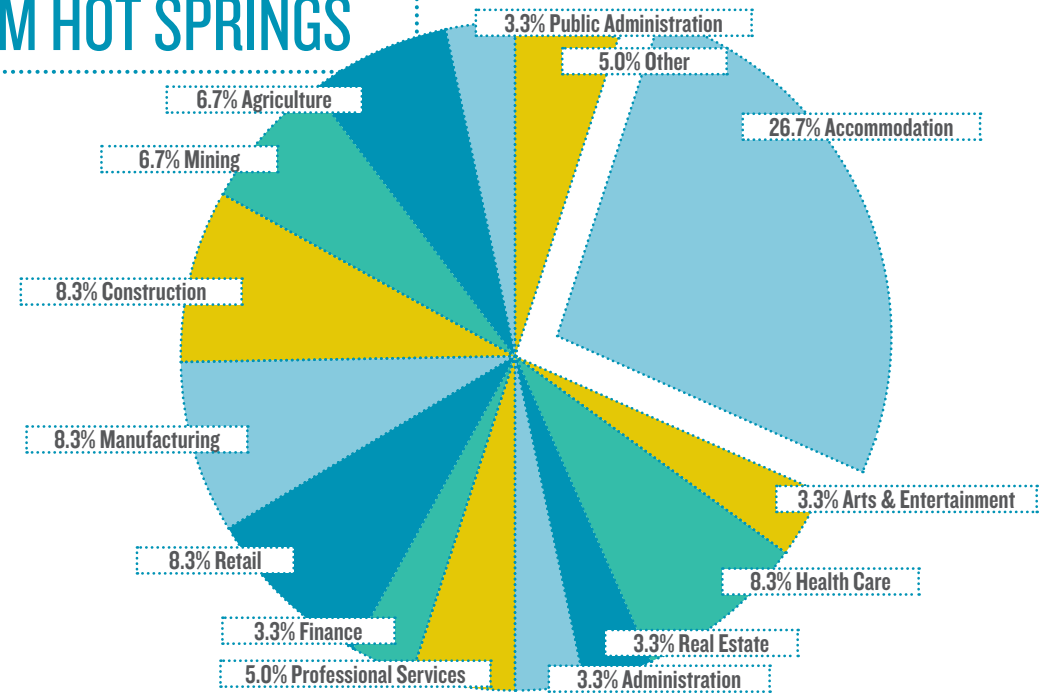
## INVERMERE

Source: townfolio.co



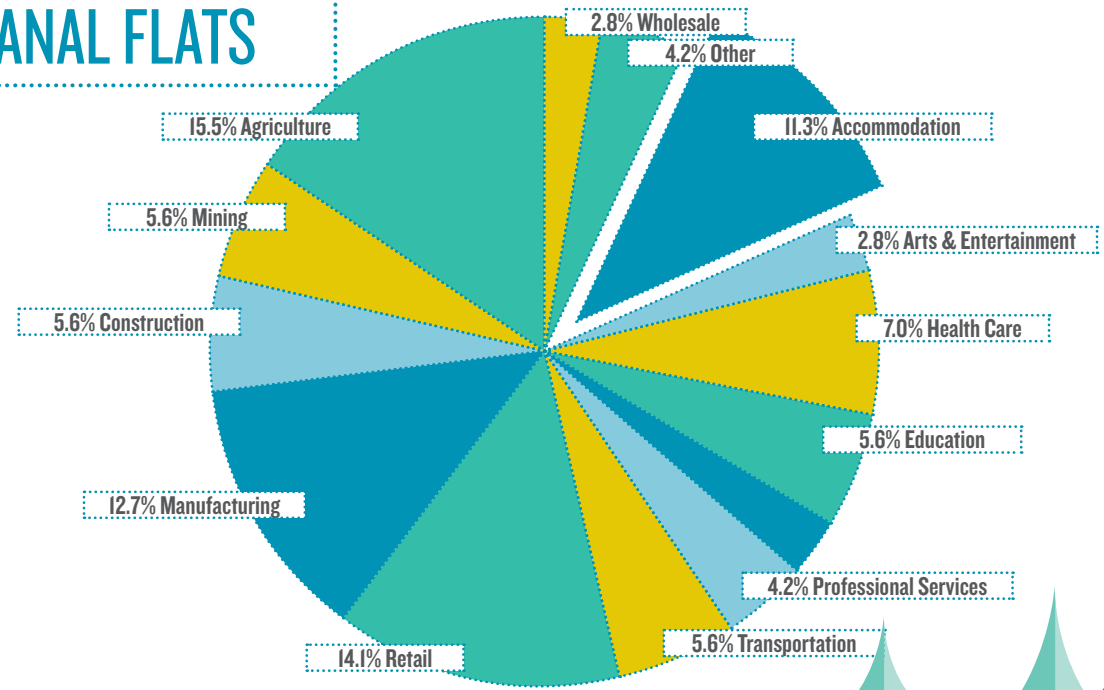
## RADIUM HOT SPRINGS

Source: townfolio.co



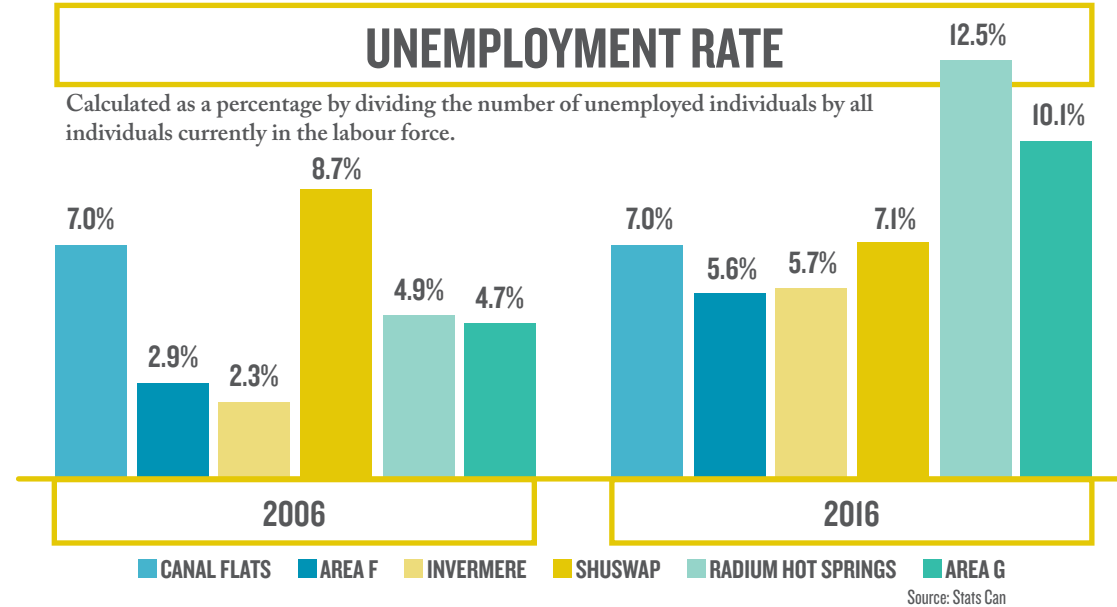
## CANAL FLATS

Source: townfolio.co



### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Calculated as a percentage by dividing the number of unemployed individuals by all individuals currently in the labour force.



### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY GENDER

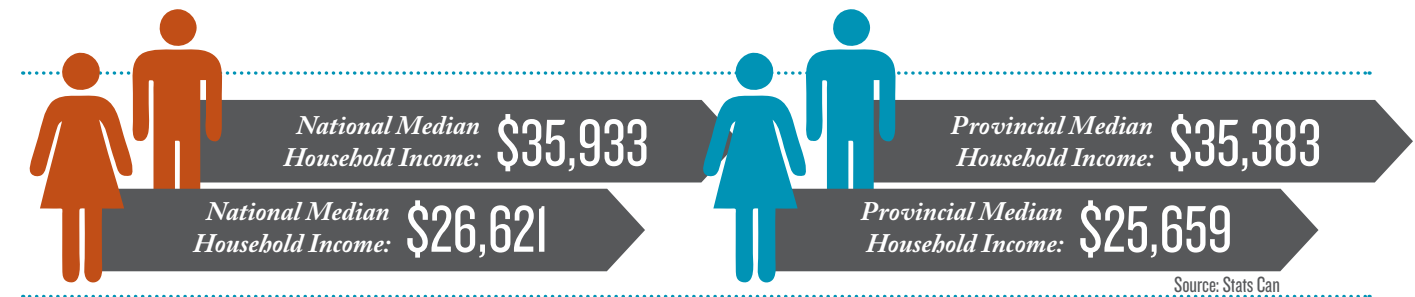
	Female	Male
CANAL FLATS =	\$23,181	\$37,760
RDEK AREA F =	\$26,880	\$40,107
COLUMBIA LAKE =	N/A	N/A
INVERMERE =	\$28,557	\$39,776
SHUSWAP =	\$27,136	\$29,248
RADIUM HOT SPRINGS =	\$27,168	\$45,284
RDEK AREA G =	\$25,813	\$43,162

Source: Stats Can

### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

CANAL FLATS =	\$57,504
RDEK AREA F =	\$70,967
COLUMBIA LAKE (IRI) =	\$40,512
INVERMERE =	\$65,331
SHUSWAP (IRI) =	\$52,352
RADIUM HOT SPRINGS =	\$78,976
RDEK AREA G =	\$57,984

Source: Stats Can



**\$61,348**

National Median Household Income

Source: Stats Can

**\$61,280**

Provincial Median Household Income

Source: Stats Can

### # of SELF-EMPLOYED Individuals

CANAL FLATS =	45
RDEK AREA F =	365
COLUMBIA LAKE =	10
INVERMERE =	365
SHUSWAP =	25
RADIUM HOT SPRINGS =	50
RDEK AREA G =	195

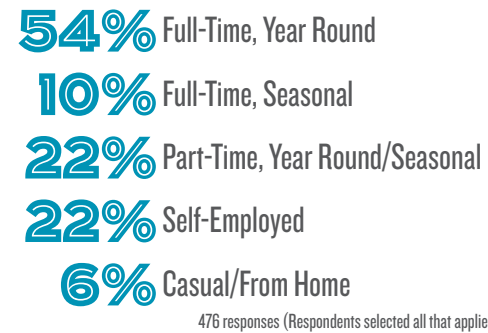
Source: Stats Can

## Community Survey Results

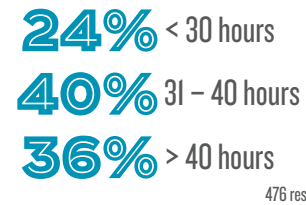
Respondents earning a pay cheque in Columbia Valley:



Pay cheque comes from work that is:



How many hours do you work per week on average?



**31%** I WORK MORE THAN I WOULD LIKE TO

**62%** I AM SATISFIED

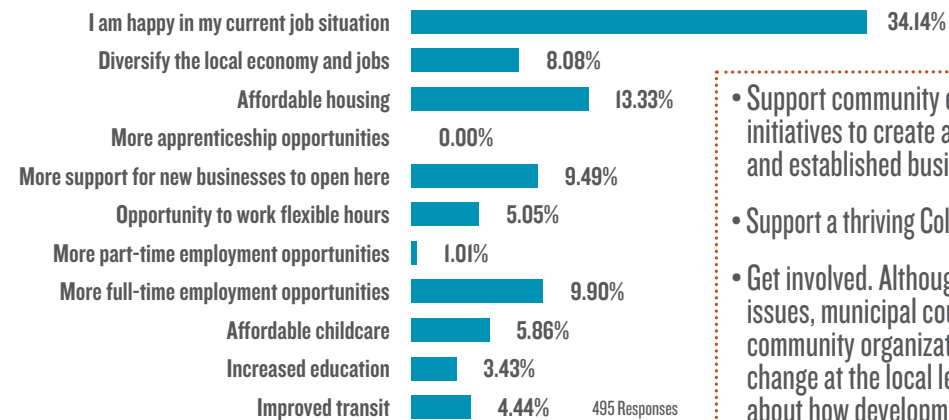
**7%** I WORK LESS THAN I WOULD LIKE TO

ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE AMOUNT OF HOURS THAT YOU WORK PER WEEK? 476 Responses

I am employed in my chosen career/vocation in my community:



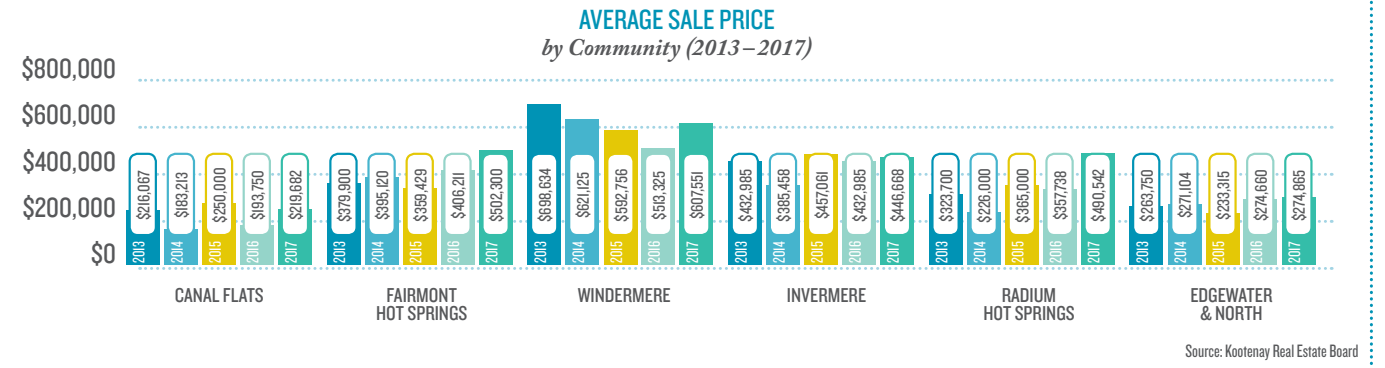
What is your top priority to increase your opportunity to work & earn in the Columbia Valley?



### Vital Actions:

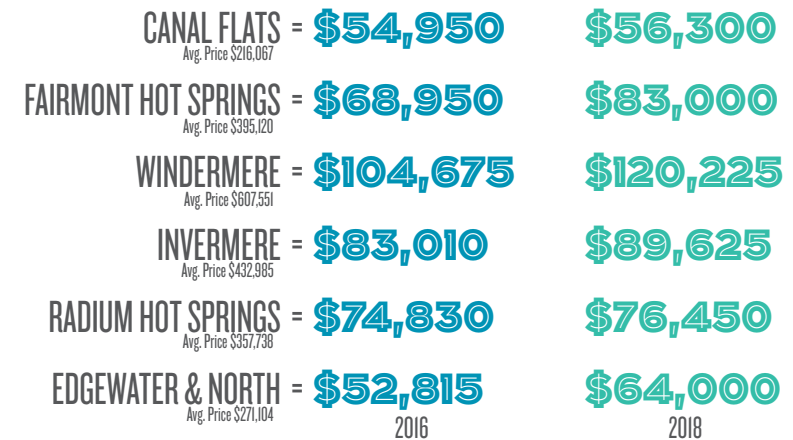
- Support community economic development by supporting initiatives to create a welcome atmosphere for both new and established businesses and to create quality jobs.
- Support a thriving Columbia Valley economy by shopping local.
- Get involved. Although affected by global and national issues, municipal councils, citizens, business leaders and community organizations know it is important to make change at the local level. We can make important decisions about how development occurs in our own communities.

## COLUMBIA VALLEY HOME PRICES



## GROSS ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME REQUIRED TO PURCHASE A HOME

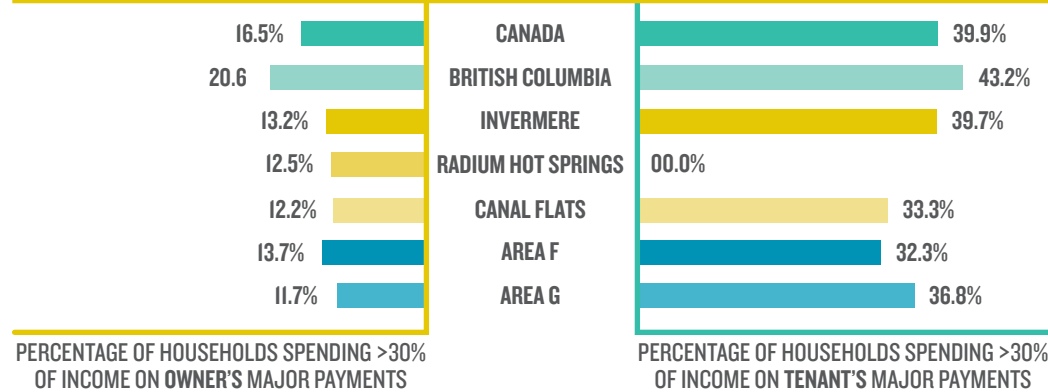
Used median house price per community, 10% down, 5-year fixed mortgage at 3.5%, other debt payments at \$500/month, heating costs at \$200/month and property tax at \$2000/year.



Source: Kootenay Savings Mortgage Calculator

### GROSS SHELTER INCOME RATIO

Source: Stats Can 2015



## Housing Community Survey

#### Survey Respondent – Current Living Situation

- 13.89%** Person living alone
  - 3.72%** Person living with parents/extended family
  - 2.91%** Person living with friends
  - 31.66%** Person living with spouse or partner
  - 20.52%** Person living with spouse or partner, no children at home
  - 21.97%** Person living with spouse or partner, with children at home
  - 3.88%** Single parent with children at home
  - 1.45%** Other
- 619 Responses

#### Is the home that you live in (here in the Columbia Valley)...?

- 14.38%** Rented by you or someone you live with
  - 81.42%** Owned by you or someone you live with
  - 1.62%** Staff housing
  - 0.16%** Health or specialty care facility
  - 0.81%** Subsidized housing
  - 1.62%** Other
- 619 Responses

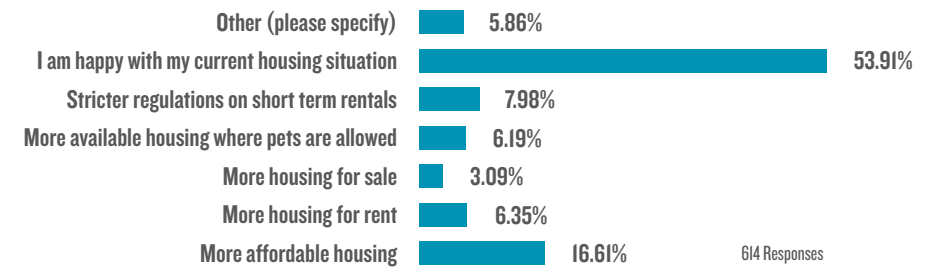
#### What % of your gross monthly income goes to housing costs at your primary residence?

- 34.36%** Less than 30%
  - 27.69%** Between 30% and 40%
  - 15.15%** Between 40% and 50%
  - 13.84%** More than 50%
  - 8.96%** Don't know
- 614 Responses

**57%**

Number of survey respondents who spend > 30% of gross monthly income on housing costs

### What is your top priority to increase your opportunity to find safe and acceptable housing in your community?



Do short term/vacation rentals (i.e. Airbnb) in your community form a threat to your housing needs?

**24% YES**  
**76% NO**

614 Responses

Airbnbs have taken all the rentals in the valley. It isn't fair to those who do not want to buy (not everyone plans to stay forever) let alone if you have a pet. The house we rent has mold. There's nowhere to live.

Community Survey Respondent

People should have the right to do what they want with their own home, i.e. short term rental.

Community Survey Respondent

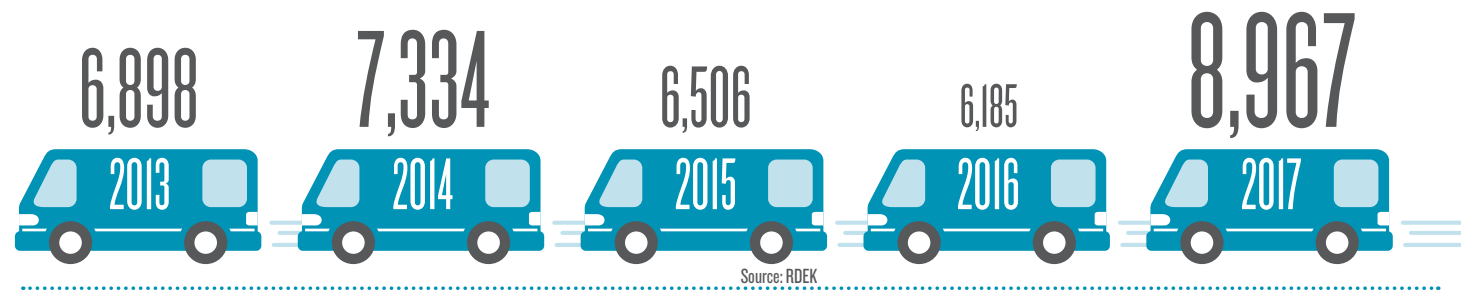
Give Landlords more rights to kick out non-rent payers and those who damage their homes. That is why we don't rent our home; it takes many months and a big headache to get someone out and the tenants can do \$10,000 damage and, sure, take them to court, but you can't get blood from a stone. So this is a big reason for shortage of rentals, particularly pet rentals. Landlords need more rights, not tenants.

Community Survey Respondent



COLUMBIA VALLEY TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

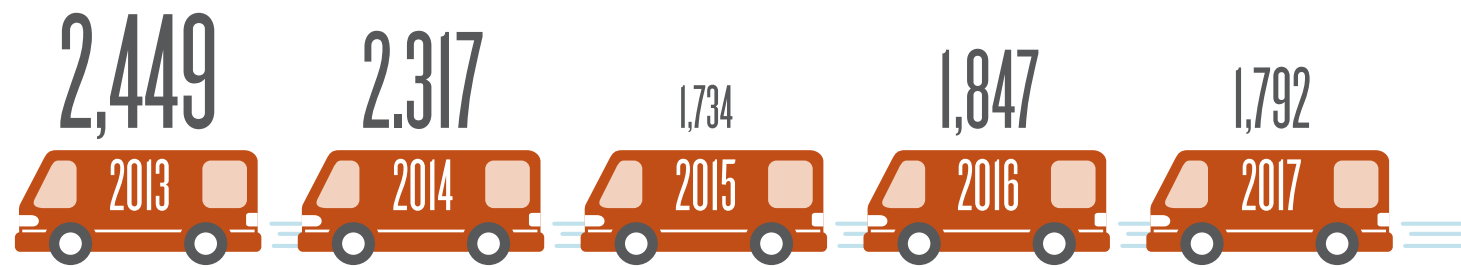
# of passengers annually



Source: RDEK

COLUMBIA VALLEY HEALTH BUS RIDERSHIP

# of passengers annually



Source: RDEK

58%

2017 percentage of "non-medical" riders on health bus (same as 2015)

Source: RDEK

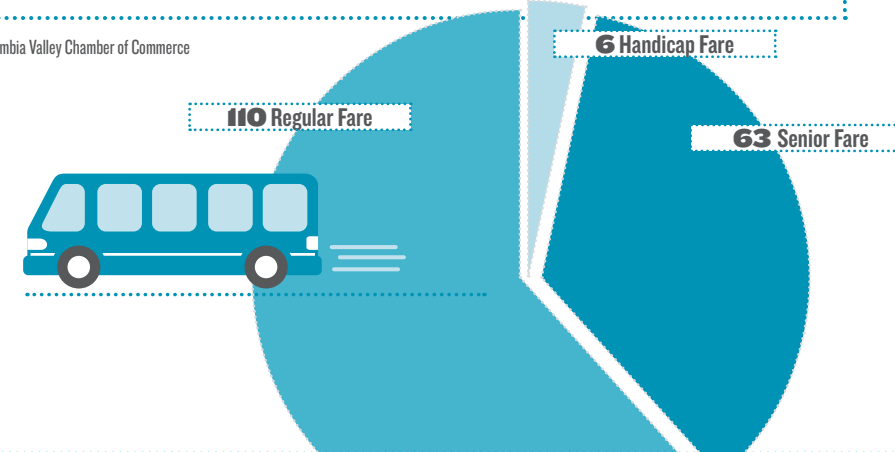
47%

2017 percentage of riders originating in Golden (51% in 2015)

Source: RDEK

CALGARY CONNECTOR BUS SERVICE

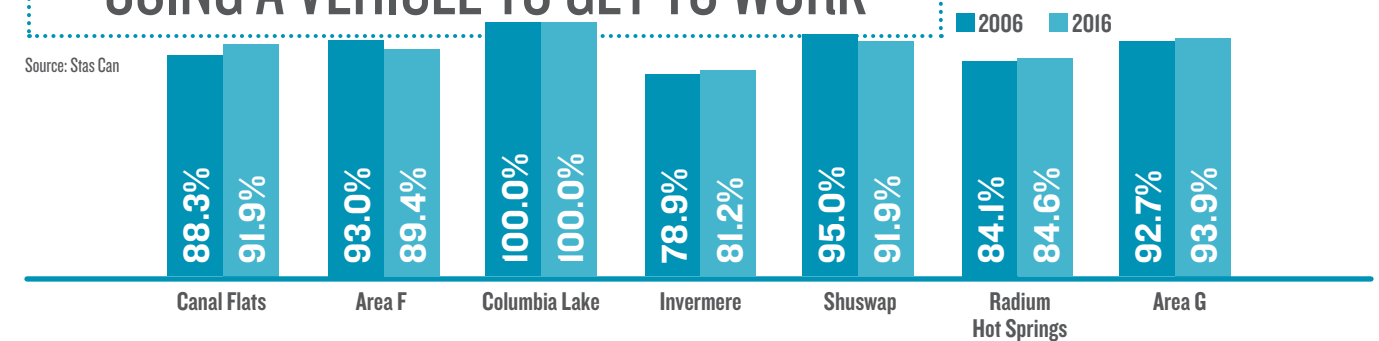
Source: Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce



From August 2017 to August 2018, the Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce ran the "Calgary Connector" bus service to Calgary. In response to the loss of Greyhound service in our community, this service offered bi-weekly service to Calgary in a 24-passenger van. Due to lack of ridership, this service was discontinued as of August 30, 2018. The total ridership was 179 passengers.

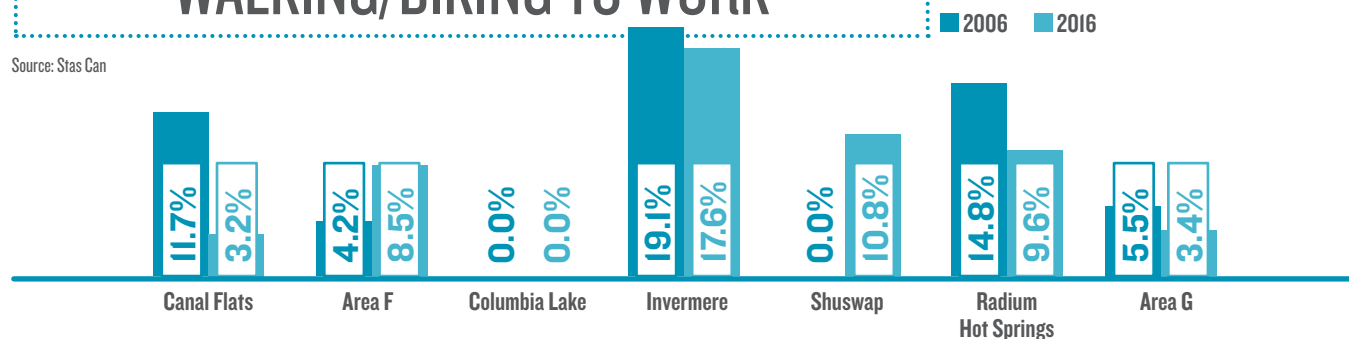
USING A VEHICLE TO GET TO WORK

Source: Stas Can



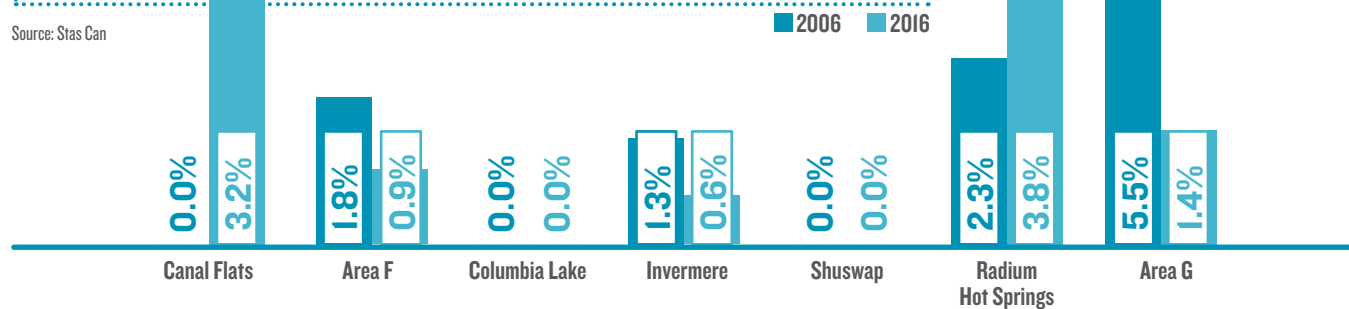
### WALKING/BIKING TO WORK

Source: Stas Can



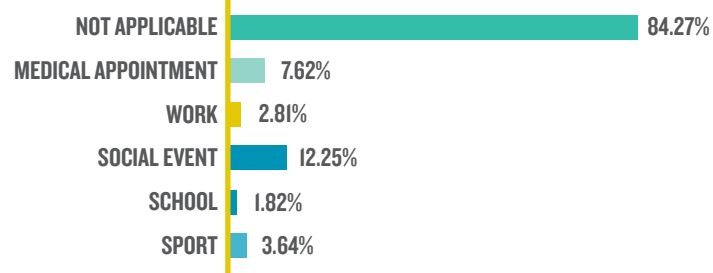
### PUBLIC TRANSIT TO WORK

Source: Stas Can

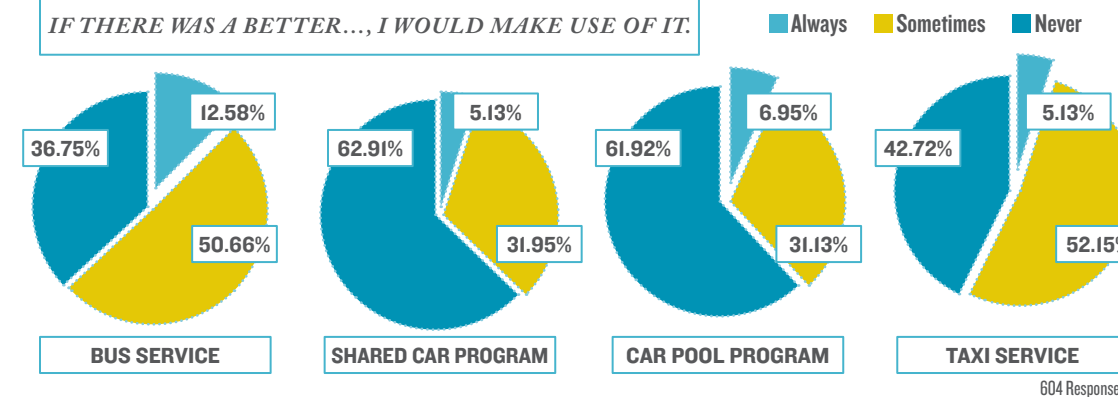


## Getting Around Community Survey

I MISSED... BECAUSE I HAD NO WAY TO GET THERE. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY) 604 Responses



IF THERE WAS A BETTER..., I WOULD MAKE USE OF IT.



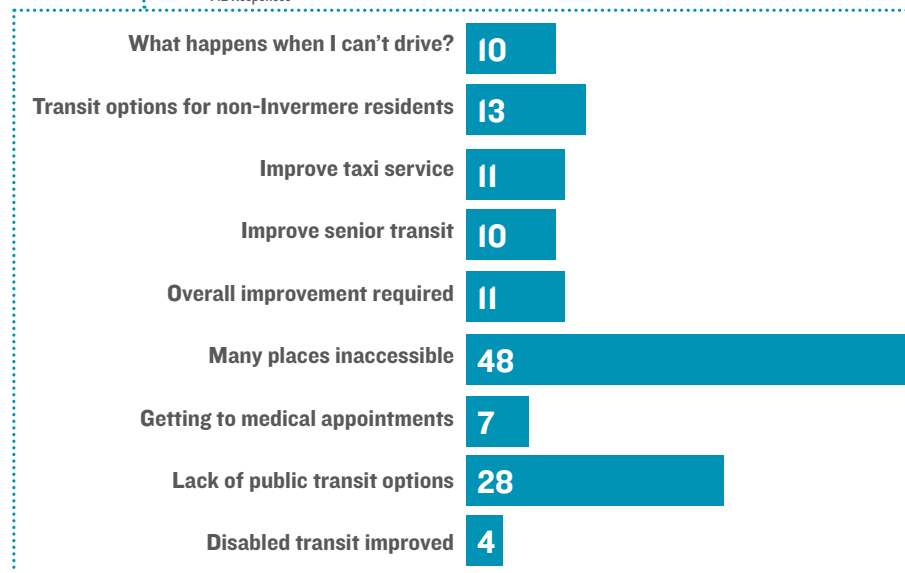
Are you concerned about accessibility within our communities?

46% YES  
54% NO

640 Responses

If yes, please specify:

142 Responses



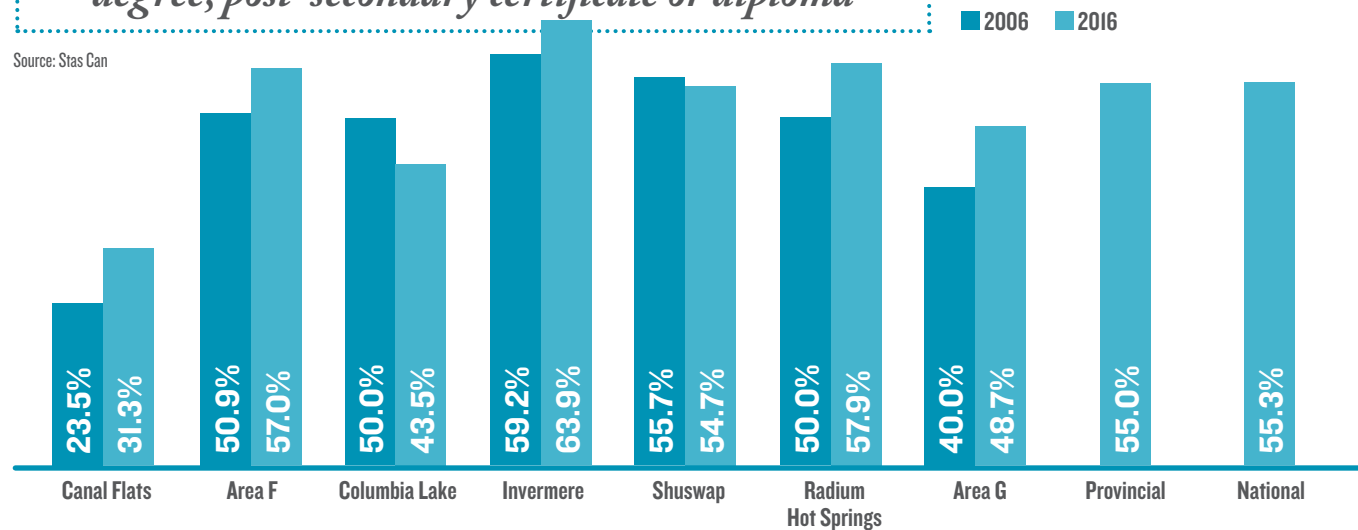
### Vital Actions:

- Support ride-sharing programs like Kootenay Ride Share, <https://kootenay.ride-share.org/> or Kangaride, <https://www.kangaride.com/> for long-distance ride sharing.
- Support transportation initiatives that include walking, cycling and public transit.
- Support initiatives that enhance accessibility for residents with mobility issues.



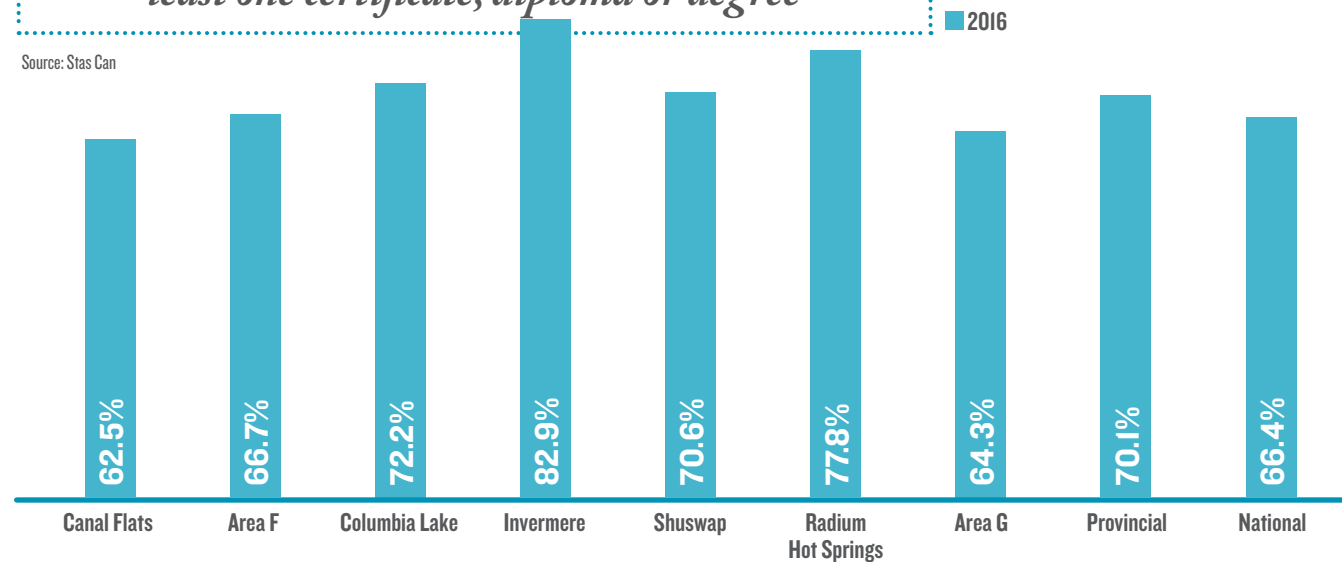
Percentage aged 15 and over with university degree, post-secondary certificate or diploma

Source: Stas Can



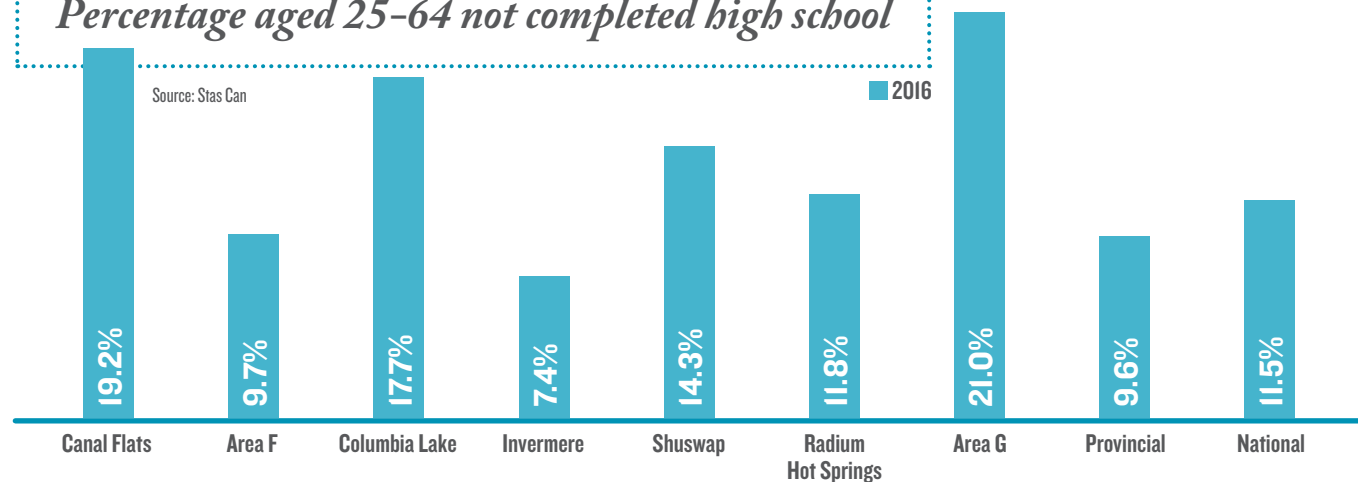
Percentage of Indigenous populations with at least one certificate, diploma or degree

Source: Stas Can



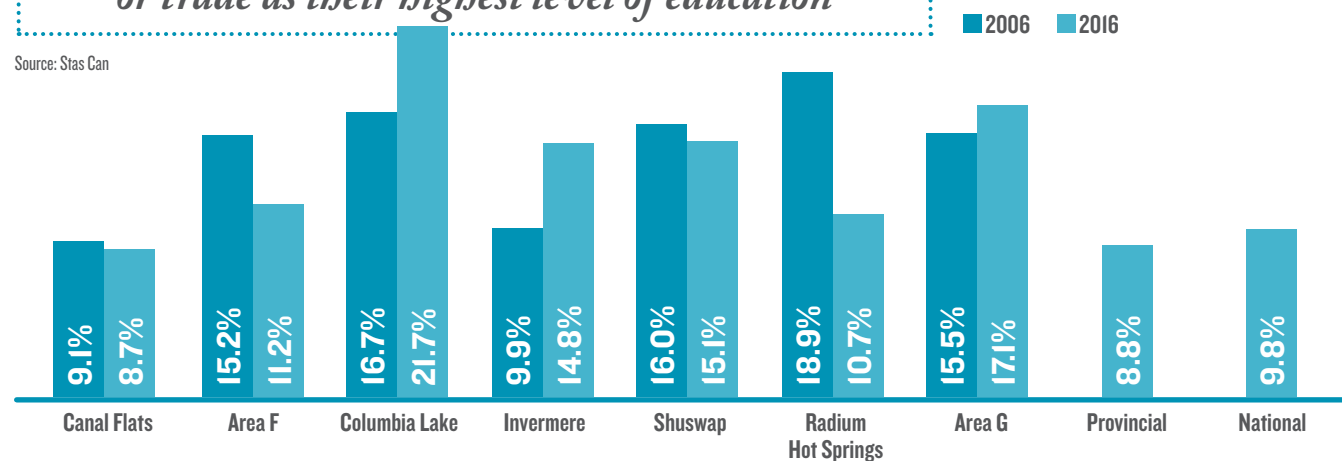
Percentage aged 25-64 not completed high school

Source: Stas Can



Percentage aged 15 and over with apprenticeship or trade as their highest level of education

Source: Stas Can

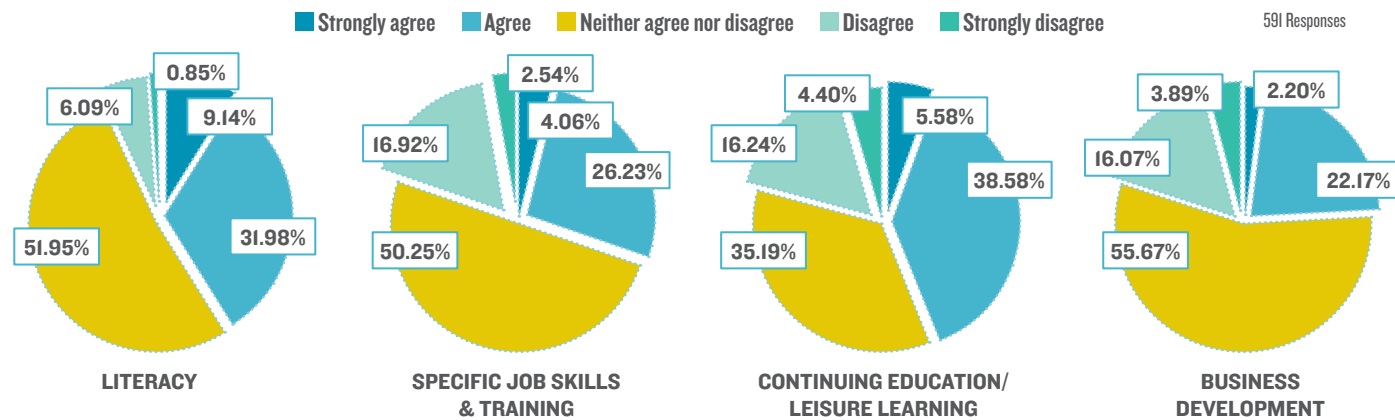






## Learning Community Survey

I AM SATISFIED WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES:



92%

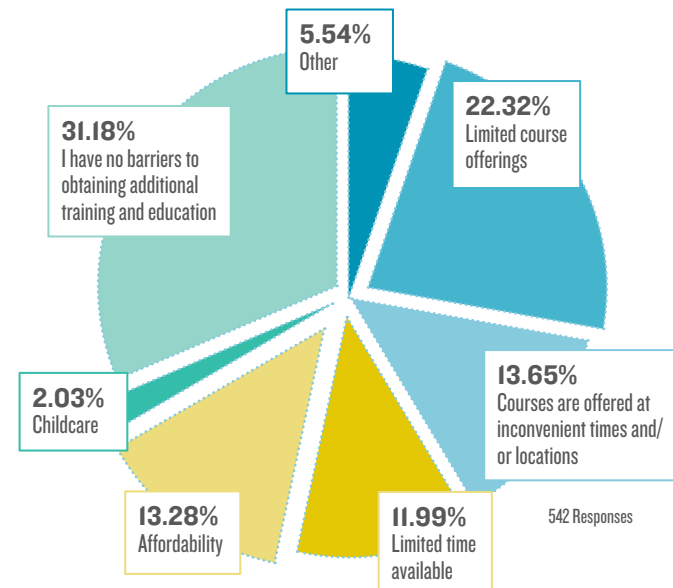
Percentage of survey respondents who consider themselves "Lifelong Learners"

591 Responses

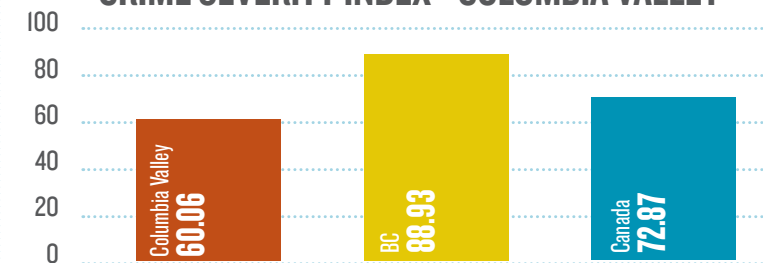
### Vital Actions:

- Share course ideas with the local College of the Rockies.
- Promote conversation between local employers and educational institutions to create recruitment and training opportunities.

WHAT ARE YOUR BARRIERS TO OBTAINING ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION?



### CRIME SEVERITY INDEX ~ COLUMBIA VALLEY



Crime Severity Index is the number of police reported incidents for each offence x weight of each offence (all added together), divided by the population and standardized to 100. 1998 was the first year this calculation was used nationally.

Source: Stats Can



67.2%

DECREASE OF THE CRIME SEVERITY INDEX IN THE COLUMBIA VALLEY FROM 1998

Compared to a decrease of 46.7% provincially and a decrease of 38.7% nationally

Source: Stats Can

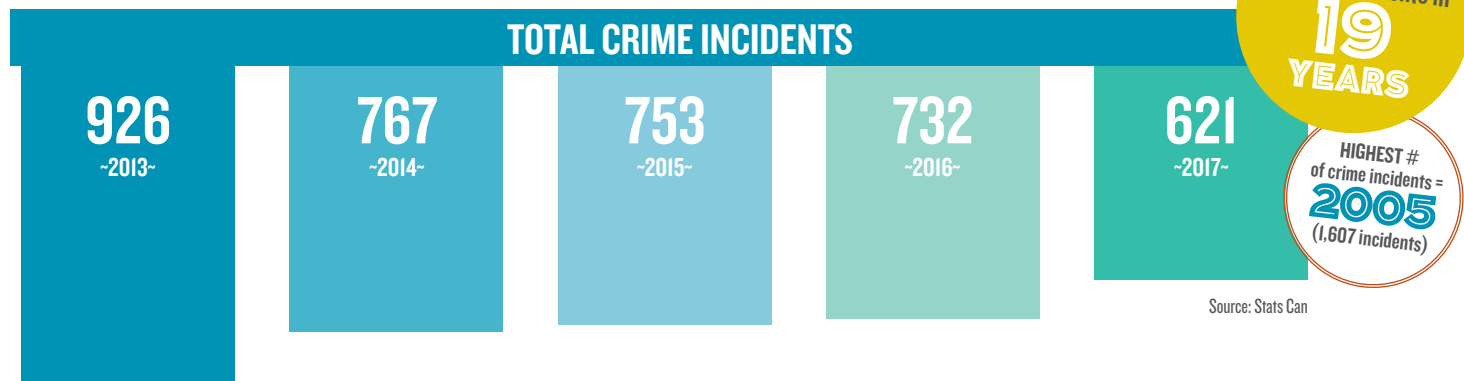
22.4%

DECREASE OF THE CRIME SEVERITY INDEX IN THE COLUMBIA VALLEY FROM 2016

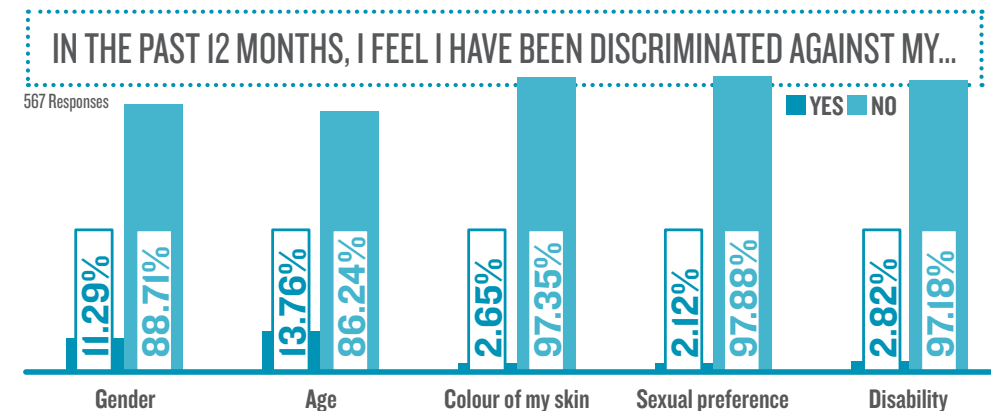
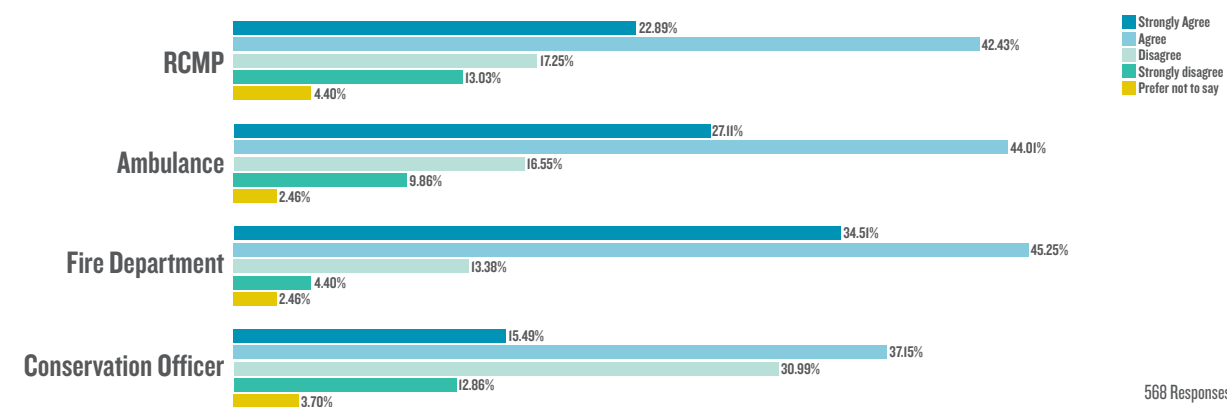
Compared to a decrease of 5.0% provincially and an increase of 1.7% nationally

Source: Stats Can

## Safety Community Survey



### OUR FIRST RESPONDERS ARE WELL-POSITIONED TO HELP ME IF THE NEED ARISES



DO YOU FEEL SAFE WALKING ALONE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD AFTER DARK?

YES 87.32%  
NO 12.68%

568 Responses

47%

Percentage of respondents who stated "Wild Animals" as the reason for feeling unsafe walking alone after dark.

72 Respondents

## Community Survey Responses

Comments about life in the Columbia Valley by Survey Respondents

224 responses

It's a challenge to integrate into this community as I feel that the social culture is not accepting of new residents.

*There is a dire need for Men's Services in the community.*

**I love it here, I grew up here but find it expensive to reside here.**

*This is a very biased questionnaire. I will no longer be filling it out again.*

My concern is the overuse of our outdoor activities from tourism. It is a fine balance, we need tourism to support our community but what are we going to do to preserve our lake and trails from overuse and damage from over-development.

**I LOVE MY COMMUNITY (EDGEWATER).**

Please address the vacation rental situation. It is making it stressful to find affordable long-term/year-round rentals.

**WHAT AN AMAZING PLACE TO LIVE WITH WONDERFUL PEOPLE! WE ARE ALL SO FORTUNATE!!**

**I WORRY THAT THERE WILL NOT BE ENOUGH SEASONAL WORKERS AND TEMPORARY RESIDENTS POLLED WITH THIS SURVEY TO SHOW THE LACK OF ACCESS TO TEMPORARY, AFFORDABLE RENTALS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSES FOR PURCHASE AND THE LACK OF LIVING WAGE JOBS IN THE VALLEY.**

*There is a loneliness due to work schedules and isolation that is undeniable. I don't know what the solution for this is.*

*This is a special place to live and work. Let's all look after it and the people who grace this space.*

**I'm looking forward to seeing growth here but I hope it stays reasonable and that the community feel stays connected and we don't lose a lot of our recreational land.**

*Invermere needs some camping sites within walking distance from downtown to bring more people into town and support local businesses. Keep promoting winter activities that bring people into town. It is critical to a healthy community to have healthy businesses.*

**Access in this region is being squeezed by conservancy groups and other such groups.**

**WE NEED A DIVERSE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE THAT IS LESS RELIANT ON TOURIST DOLLARS.**

*I'm concerned about the aging population, likely related to the fact that there are minimal career opportunities for young families. The valley needs to be a bit more pro-development to alleviate the lack of quality jobs.*

**KEEP IT FROM BECOMING ANOTHER CANMORE OR BANFF.**

I am leaving Invermere to grow professionally and to hopefully bring those new experiences and skills back to the community one day. I know that I want to raise my future children here and hope that when the time comes I will be able to offer them a fulfilled, active and healthy life in a small mountain community like Invermere.

*The housing long-term rental market is an honest big concern for many in my social groups (we are generally the young professionals, we have resided here for over 10 years but are not quite able to buy yet).*

*After much research we found the CV - we love it here - close enough to big city if you need it. Our biggest problem is our full-time population is not large enough to sustain all what we need to support a vibrant tourist / resort community in the summer season. We build up the full-time residency (15,000), businesses will then thrive year-round. Summer then becomes a bonus!!*

**GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, TOUGH PLACE TO MAKE A LIVING.**

**BEST PLACE ON EARTH TO LIVE AND RAISE A FAMILY!!**

— { *End Notes* } —

# THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read this report.  
Thank you to all of the survey respondents and other individuals who participated in the creation of this report by offering their opinions and stories. You are deeply appreciated.

## *About Vital Signs*

Vital Signs® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada and with special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the Vital Signs concept.

For more information visit: [www.vitalsignscanada.ca](http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca)



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF CANADA

COLUMBIA VALLEY'S

# VitalSigns

This Vital Signs project is only possible because of the financial support of:

Columbia Basin **trust**



## *About our Community Foundation*

*"For Good. For Community. For Ever."*

We have been bringing donors to the table as community builders since 2001. Together we are building a vibrant and caring community where everyone is valued, contributes and feels they belong. Through the Vital Signs research and reports, we identify important local issues and ensure our donors are investing in programs that create lasting impact and change.

### *Columbia Valley Community Foundation*

PO Box 991  
Invermere, BC  
VOA 1K0

250.342.2845  
[info@valleyfoundation.ca](mailto:info@valleyfoundation.ca)  
[www.valleyfoundation.ca](http://www.valleyfoundation.ca)



COLUMBIA VALLEY'S

# VitalSigns

2018

THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THIS  
PLACE AMAZES ME EVERY DAY.

*Community Survey Respondent*



COLUMBIA VALLEY  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION