

X 1 snapshot of our community

X 10 key areas

X 157 survey responses

SUNSHINE COAST'S

VitalSigns[®] **2011**



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SUNSHINE COAST'S

VitalSigns® Methodology

Vital Signs is a snapshot of our Community that presents our challenges and celebrates our accomplishments. We hope this report will stimulate the Sunshine Coast community to make the Coast the best it can be. The power of Vital Signs is that it not only reports on key areas that are measurable, accountable and of interest to the community, it also gives the community the opportunity to participate in a survey to voice its opinions on these areas.

Community Engagement

Goals

- To raise awareness of important key areas in our community, to encourage the community to get involved and to stimulate debate and actions to continue to improve our quality of life.
- To build community capacity through shared knowledge for good decision-making.
- To build a platform for good decision-making in grant support in the community and give direction for charitable donations on the Sunshine Coast.

Process

- A management team was selected from the community made up of one person with expertise in each key area.
- The key areas were selected by agreement with other Community Foundations across Canada also producing a Vital Signs report and by our own management team.
- Each management team member conducted a study group made up of six to ten community members with expertise in the respective areas. These groups suggested a number of sub-areas that were thought important to the community. These sub-areas were then presented to researchers to determine if data was available in order to produce indicators.
- Indicators that were measurable and accountable were presented to the Vital Signs management team and Foundation Board members and from their input, four to six indicators for each key area were selected to

make up this report.

- The general public was invited to complete a survey to voice their opinions on the key areas, the results contained in this report.

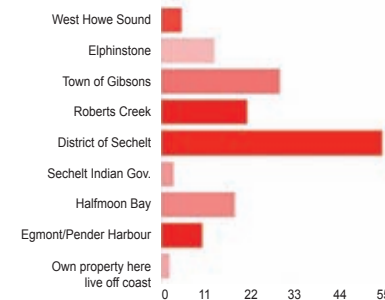
Research

Data from national sources was researched and reported by the Centre for the Study of Living Standards in Ottawa.

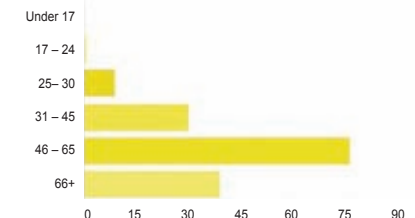
Data from national, provincial and local Sunshine Coast sources was researched and reported by SPARC-BC (Social Planning and Research Council of BC). A significant amount of local Sunshine Coast data was researched and reported by Vital Signs manager Catharine Esson, in consultation with community experts.

Survey Demographic Information

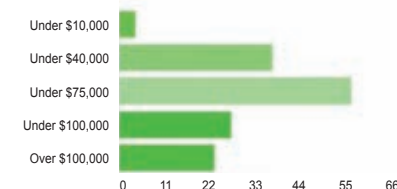
1) Where do you live?



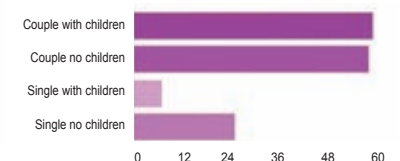
2) Please identify your age.



3) Please identify your household income range.



4) What is your family status?



Expanded indicator data tables, complete with data sources, are available on the Foundation website, www.sccfoundation.com. Click on the Sunshine Coast Vital Signs button to access the detailed reports.

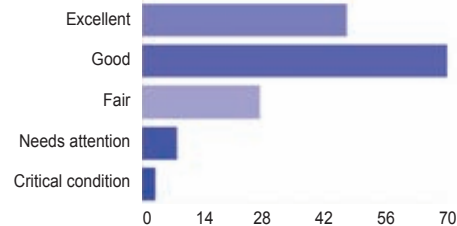
Community Survey

One hundred and fifty-seven Sunshine Coast residents completed the online survey which was available to the public from August 19 to August 29, 2011.

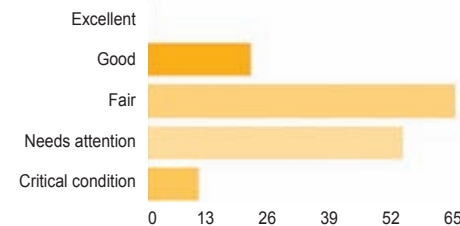
2011 Community Survey Highlights



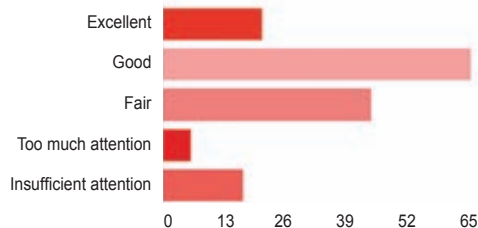
1) How would you grade your level of satisfaction with ARTS & CULTURE on the Sunshine Coast?



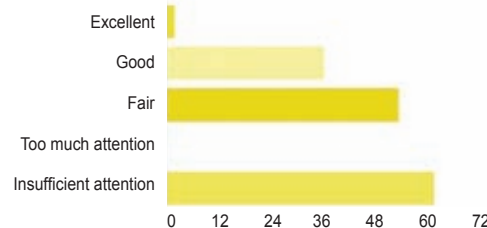
2) How would you grade the Sunshine Coast's overall ECONOMIC HEALTH?



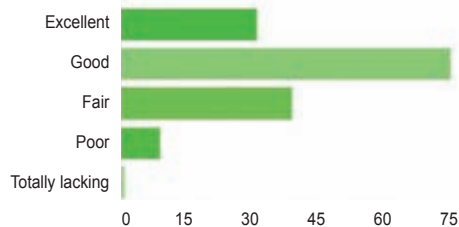
3) How would you grade the Sunshine Coast community's response to ENVIRONMENTAL concerns?



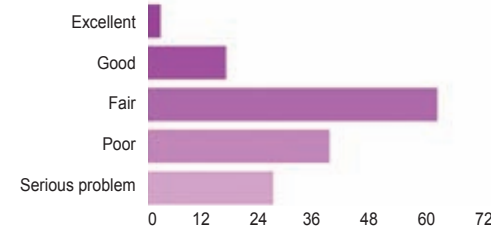
4) How would you grade the Sunshine Coast community's response to the needs of LOW INCOME individuals and families?



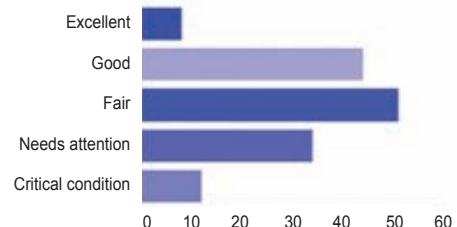
5) How would you grade the availability of resources on the Sunshine Coast to address your HEALTH AND WELLNESS needs?



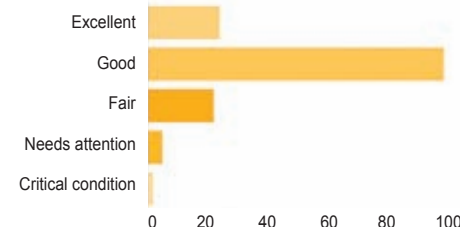
6) How would you grade the availability of HOUSING options on the Sunshine Coast?



7) How would you grade the Sunshine Coast community's ability to meet your EDUCATION AND LEARNING needs?



8) How would you grade the Sunshine Coast when it comes to SAFETY?



Building on the success of Vital Signs 2009, the SCCF is pleased to present Vital Signs 2011.

The Sunshine Coast Community Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization that brings together people who care about the Sunshine Coast community. Our mission is

"To contribute to the quality of life on the Sunshine Coast by building endowments, making strategic grants and inspiring community leadership."

Each fall, Community Foundations from across Canada prepare local report cards for, and about, their communities. In B.C., we are joined in partnership with six other rural Community Foundations in producing Vital Signs 2011 in a collaborative program called "Building Vitality in Rural Communities." It is our hope that this Vital Signs report will advance our mission by inspiring community leadership, better informing our donors about funding opportunities and helping us to make appropriate and strategic granting decisions.

An important goal of this report is to provide accurate, measurable data. This proved to be a challenge because we did not want to simply rely on Statistics Canada data that is now several years old, and the 2011 census data will not be available until the spring of 2012. The Sunshine Coast community rose to meet this challenge by providing us with local data based on statistics from the past three years (2008-2010), and the end result is a solidly factual and up-to-date report. We hope that this will be a starting point that will enable us to track trends over the years, and we would like to encourage local organizations to keep their own data and to share it with us.

The process of producing this report was profoundly collaborative. More than 60 community volunteers, all experts in their respective fields, contributed their knowledge and experience. Thanks to all the Sunshine Coast residents who took the time to complete our on-line survey, the results of which are summarized on this page. The Foundation board and Vital Signs management team provided support and leadership. To everyone involved, we would like to express our sincere thanks. Together we can *"Build a Better Community for Tomorrow. Today."*



Peter W. Bogardus
Q.C., Board Chair



Catharine Esson
Vital Signs Manager



Don Basham
Vital Signs Manager



Our Community

The big story in this year's Vital Signs is the aging population of the Sunshine Coast, a demographic shift that has accelerated in recent years. In 2010, the median age in the SCRD was 50.4 years old, making us the second oldest of all regional districts in B.C. and among the ten oldest census districts in Canada. The greying of the Sunshine Coast has both positive and negative effects that are seen throughout this report.

Population

The Sunshine Coast's population grew fairly steadily over the past 20 years and by 2010 had almost reached 30,000 people. However, during the past decade the age distribution has shifted dramatically so we now have a much older population. In 2000, less than 12% of our population was in the 55- to 64-year-old age group. In 2010, more than 20% of the population was in that age group. This has been caused both by an increase in the number of older adults and a decrease in number of younger adults and children.

Population per age group:

Age Group	1990	%	2000	%	2010	%
0 - 14	4056	19.8	4748	18.3	3805	12.7
15-24	2049	10.0	2488	9.6	3265	10.9
25-34	2768	13.5	2288	8.8	1770	5.9
35-44	3565	17.4	4127	15.9	3374	11.3
45-54	2205	10.8	4429	17.1	5307	17.7
55-64	2375	11.6	3077	11.9	6095	20.3
65-74	2199	10.7	2763	10.7	3488	11.6
75 +	1280	6.2	2004	7.7	2880	9.6
TOTAL	20,497		25,924		29,984	

Regional Socioeconomic Index

The Sunshine Coast ranked second best among 26 regional districts in B.C. in the Regional Socioeconomic Index. This index, compiled by B.C. Stats, is a weighted composite of statistics measuring crime, health, education, human economic hardship, children at risk and youth at risk. These statistics are described more fully in later sections of this Vital Signs report.

Immigration and migration

The Sunshine Coast receives a steady flow of newcomers both from other countries and from other Canadian communities.

The net migration to our community is between 300 and 600 people per year, with the majority moving here from other parts of B.C. Fewer than 100 people per year immigrate here from other countries, and they tend to be well educated and have strong language skills. From 2007 to 2009, 236 new immigrants indicated their intended destination was the Sunshine Coast. 91.5% spoke either English or French. 69.9% were between the age of 25 to 64 and 75.8% of those individuals had a post secondary education. The 41 adults enrolled in a local ESL program in 2010-2011 originated in 15 different countries.



How the Foundation is helping

- Since the Foundation's inception in 2003, it has created 27 endowments with total contributed capital of over \$750,000.
- Since its inception in 2003, the Foundation has donated \$116,000 to 104 community projects on the Sunshine Coast in a wide variety of charitable areas.



Our Community *(continued)*

Charitable Donations

About 23% of Sunshine Coast tax filers declared charitable donations in 2009, which is slightly higher than the national and provincial rates. In 2009, the median charitable donation for our region was \$340, compared to the median donations of \$360 for B.C. and \$250 for Canada. This was a 70% increase from 2001, when the median donation for the Sunshine Coast was \$200.

Provincial gaming grants

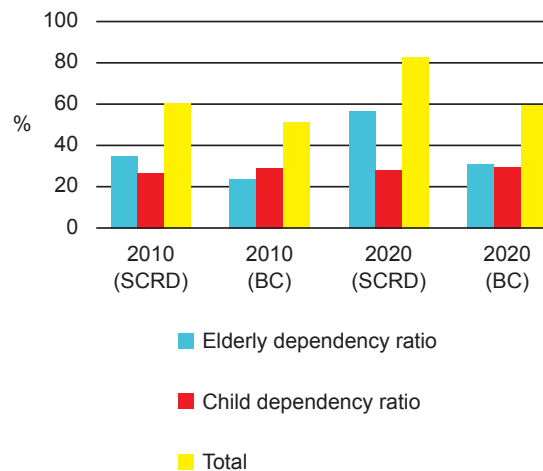
Community organizations on the Sunshine Coast have suffered disproportionately from cutbacks to the B.C.'s Community Gaming Grants program. At its high point in 2008-09, the Sunshine Coast received \$1,026,113 in gaming grants, or 0.66% of the total for B.C. In 2010-11, the Sunshine Coast received \$541,115, or 0.40% of the total for B.C. The hardest hit categories of organization are the arts, human and social services, parent advisory committees, and safety organizations.

B.C. Ferries

Ferry fares increased by 12.7% from March, 2009 to December, 2010. Vehicle traffic on the Langdale-Horseshoe Bay ferry run has decreased gradually over the past five years, but it remains a very busy route which carried 1,107,080 vehicles and 2,571,126 passengers in the year ended March 31, 2011. In the year ended March 31, 2007, the Langdale run carried 1,130,558 vehicles and 2,626,258 passengers.

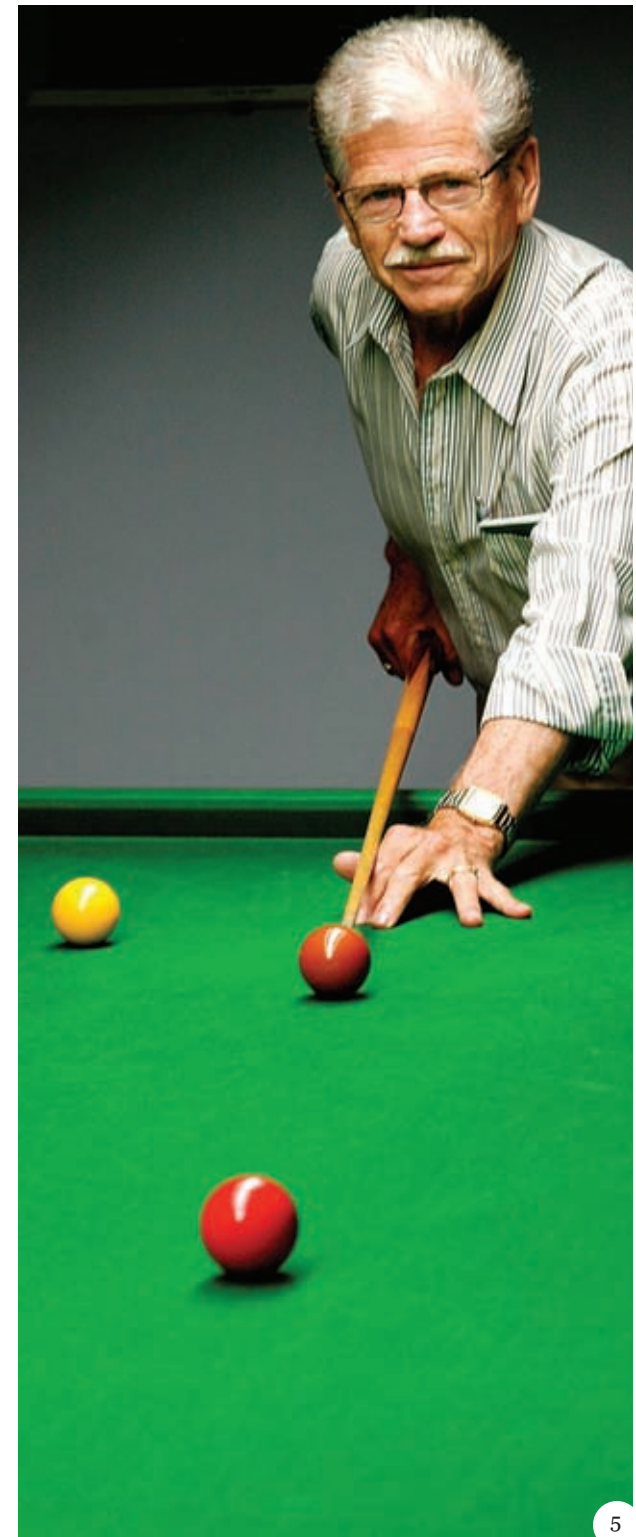
Projected Dependency Ratios

In 2020, B.C. Stats projects that the combined elderly and child dependency ratios for the Sunshine Coast will reach 82%. The elderly and child dependency ratios compare the number of seniors and children in a community to the number of people of working age (18-64).



Did You Know

- At least 384 non-profit organizations on the Sunshine Coast rely, at least in part, on volunteers.
- The Sunshine Coast's median age of 50.4 is 10 years higher than the median age for B.C. of 40.8 years.



Learning

Our school population is shrinking, with the decline in elementary student enrollment predicted to continue at least until 2015. At the same time, in recent years there has been an increased focus on early childhood learning both from the school district and from other community organizations. Success by 6, Strongstart, SPARK, and all-day kindergarten are all examples of recent initiatives in early education.

Grade 12 graduation

Grade 12 graduation rates in School District 46 have improved over the past five years. In 2009/10 our six-year completion rate was 79.2%, very close to the provincial average of 79.7%. In 2005/06 our completion rate was 73.7%, well below the B.C. average of 80.2%. The six-year completion rate is the proportion of students who graduate within six years of starting Grade 8.

Vulnerability in early childhood

In 2010, 32.6% of Sunshine Coast kindergarteners were rated as vulnerable on at least one scale of the Early Developmental Instrument. This was an improvement from the very high levels of 2007-09, when 41.7% of Sunshine Coast children were rated as vulnerable, but still higher than the 2010 provincial average of 30%. The EDI assesses school readiness on five scales: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication and general knowledge.

Number of K-12 students

Enrollment in School District 46 continued to decline in 2010/11 with a total of 3,299 students, 2.7% fewer than in 2009/10 and 13% fewer than in 2006/07.

Composite Learning Index

The Canadian Council on Learning's Composite Learning Index combines 26 different statistics to measure a community's progress in lifelong learning. In 2010, the Sunshine Coast's average CLI score was 72, two points lower than it was in 2006. By comparison, the average score for all communities in Canada rose from 73 in 2006 to 75 in 2010.

Library use

Local libraries are seeing substantial growth in the use of public access workstations. In 2010 the Sechelt library provided 12,000 public workstation sessions, up 30% from 2009, and Gibsons provided 8,851 sessions in 2010, fewer than in 2009 but up 6% from 2008.

Post-secondary studies

Capilano University is the post-secondary school of choice for Sunshine Coast students, with 33.7% of Grade 12 grads who go on to post-secondary institutions in BC enrolling at Cap U within three years of graduation. UBC is in second place, enrolling 12.4%. More than 60% of Sunshine Coast grads continue on to post-secondary studies, but many of them wait several years before doing so. The class of 2009 had the highest level of post-secondary entry in the past five years, with 42.1% of grads starting their post-secondary studies immediately after high school.



How the Foundation is helping

The Foundation's endowments include the Gibsons Landing Fibre Arts Festival Endowment. This fund was created in early 2011 with assets remaining when the Festival Society was dissolved and includes, as its priority, a scholarship for Sunshine Coast students entering a post-secondary institution to study fibre arts.

Did You Know?

In 2010/11, 91 students took courses on-line through SPIDER, School District 46's distance education program. This was a 400% increase from 2009/10, when 22 students used SPIDER.



Environment

The Sunshine Coast has improved its performance on several environmental issues, gradually reducing our per capita rates of landfill disposal and water consumption and increasing our use of transit. However, even with reduced consumption, water supply remains a major issue as our population grows. Invasive plants are of increasing concern.

Water use

Sunshine Coast water consumption was down to 524 litres per person per day in 2010. That is 9% less than in 2008, when water use was 578 litres per person per day. Summer consumption (627 litres per person per day in 2010) is much higher than winter, but down from 691 litres in summer 2009. These figures include commercial as well as residential water use. In all of B.C. water consumption is about 490 litres per person per day, not including industrial or agricultural uses.

Residential disposal and recycling

In 2010 the Sunshine Coast recycled or diverted 9,570 tonnes of solid waste, up from 8,841 tonnes in 2009. That equals .32 tonnes recycled per person in 2010, or 42.4% of the total waste. Since 1990, we have reduced our per capita amount of landfilled waste by 45.9%.

Bus ridership

Total ridership on Sunshine Coast Transit in 2010 was 502,000 rides, slightly down from 2009 (504,000 rides) but up 5% from 2008 (477,500 rides).

Traffic volume

In 2010 the average traffic on Highway 101 north of Gibsons was 9,781 vehicles per day, an increase of 2.5% since 2005. Near Brooks Road north of Sechelt, highway traffic averaged 3,005 vehicles per day, an increase of 5% since 2005. In both locations the weekend traffic in 2010 was almost identical to 2005 weekend traffic, with all the traffic increase due to Monday to Friday travel. Traffic was highest from May to September. The peak traffic of the year was on Fridays in August, with 12,459 vehicles per day on the highway north of Gibsons, and was the lowest on Sundays in February with 6,662 vehicles per day.

Endangered species

The Sunshine Coast is home to five species on the provincial Red List (species that are extirpated, endangered or threatened in B.C.): the Northern Goshawk, laingi subspecies; the Common Wood-nymph, incana subspecies (a butterfly); the Western Painted Turtle, Pacific Coast population; the Northern Abalone (a shellfish) and the Threaded Vertigo (a snail). Another 38 local species are on the Blue List of species of special concern.



How the Foundation is helping

In 2011, the Foundation provided funding for a handicapped-accessible trail project in Sechelt's Hidden Grove trail system and a trail project in the Chapman Creek trail system.



Did You Know?

Invasive plants that compete with indigenous species are a very significant threat to biodiversity on the Sunshine Coast. New invaders to watch out for include Giant Hogweed, Orange Hawkweed, Japanese Knotweed, Butterfly Bush, Tansy Ragwort, Gorse, and Daphne.





Health and Wellness

The Sunshine Coast is a very healthy place, statistics indicate. But anecdotally, local health professionals report some concerns: a need to attract new doctors to replace imminent retirements, a lack of housing for people with mental illness, health inequities in the aboriginal population, low vaccination rates for HPV and some pockets of preventable diseases such as mumps, measles and tetanus.

Composite Index of Health

In 2010, the Sunshine Coast was one of the healthiest parts of the province (ranked the third best out of 26 regional districts), according to the Composite Index of Health compiled by B.C. Stats. This index is based on life expectancy at birth, teen pregnancy rates, infant mortality rates, and potential years of life lost due to premature deaths.

Public recreation facility use

The SCRD's public recreation facilities are well used, according to counts of membership usage (visits by card-holding members plus drop-in admissions). In 2010, total membership usage for all five rec facilities was 189,460, up 10% from 2009. Membership usage at the busiest facility, the Sechelt Aquatic Centre, was 114,482, up 6% from 2009. In addition, there are many programs, camps, school groups, rentals, and other facility uses not included in the membership usage statistics.

Youth alcohol and drug use

Alcohol and drug use by youth is high in our region, according to a 2008 survey of high school students in the North Shore/Coast Garibaldi health area. Asked about their substance use on the

previous Saturday night, 31% reported using alcohol and 14% marijuana. By comparison, in the same survey across B.C., only 26% of teens reported using alcohol and 12% marijuana. Asked what drugs they had ever used, 15% of high school students in our health area responded that they had used prescription pills (without a doctor's consent), 10% hallucinogens, 8% ecstasy, 8% mushrooms, 4% cocaine, 4% inhalants, and 3% amphetamines.

Children in Care

The Sunshine Coast has a high proportion of children in the care of the Ministry of Children and Families, ranking tenth highest out of 26 regional districts. In December 2010, the rate was 15.3 children in care per 1,000 population, compared to 9.2 per 1,000 for all of B.C.



How the Foundation is helping

In 2011, the Foundation provided funding for a mental health conference on the Sunshine Coast for the B.C. Schizophrenia Society and a wheelchair path for the Sunshine Coast Hospice Society.

Did You Know?

Seniors needing health care have:

- no access to trained overnight caregivers
- no private intermediate and long term care housing options
- no ability to transfer here from other communities due to bed shortages for Sunshine Coast residents.



Young Adults

The 2009 Vital Signs Report identified several issues of concern for young adults on the Sunshine Coast. VOICE, a new organization of young adults, was formed in response. For the 2011 Vital Signs Report VOICE conducted an on-line survey gathering 89 responses from Sunshine Coast residents younger than 45. While this survey does not represent all the Coast's young adults, it is the first data available that specifically addresses the concerns of this shrinking age group.

Numbers of young adults

The proportion of young adults in the Sunshine Coast population has declined over the past twenty years. In 1990, 6% of the Coast's population was aged 25 to 29, but in 2010 only 2.4% were in that age range. The trend was similar for 30 to 34-year-olds: they have declined from 7.1% of the population in 1995 to 3.5% in 2010. The mid to late 20s is the age when the Coast's population loss is greatest. The percentage of people on the Coast who were born between 1966 – 1970 (now aged 40 to 44) has consistently increased, but in younger age groups their numbers dropped when they were aged 20-30 and then gradually increased when they were in their 30s.

Entertainment

The lack of night life is a major issue for respondents to the VOICE survey: 88% said they are not satisfied with the evening or night-time events and establishments available on the Coast. Asked what type of establishment they would go out to, the top choice was a music venue (chosen by 69%), followed by late night café (53%), bar with entertainment (51%), restaurant (46%), dance club (45%), theatre (37%), and sporting event (29%). Many respondents chose more than one type of entertainment.

Education

There is a strong desire for more post-secondary education on the Sunshine Coast. In the VOICE survey, 93% of respondents said there need to be more local options for post-secondary education and training, and 57% said they would pursue further education or training on the Coast if it were available.

Housing cost

While 84% of respondents to the VOICE survey said they currently have suitable housing, the majority reported spending more than 30% of their household income on housing (the maximum that is considered affordable). Half of the respondents said the amount they could realistically spend on housing was less than \$850 per month.

Barriers to employment

In the VOICE survey, respondents identified the following barriers to working in a satisfying job in their desired field: the compensation is too low for the cost of living (52%), the positions on the Coast are filled (46%), the job doesn't exist on the Coast (46%), or there is not an appropriate employer (37%).



How the Foundation is helping

In 2010, the Foundation facilitated a workshop to address the issues facing young adults on the Sunshine Coast that resulted in the creation of VOICE, a young adult organization dedicated to attracting, retaining and engaging young adults.



Did You Know?

Because of the Sunshine Coast's shortage of child care spaces for children under three, many parents are registering their children for child care before they are born.





Housing

Affordable housing, both for renters and mortgage holders, is an ongoing issue on the Sunshine Coast. As well, there is a lack of special needs housing such as subsidized housing, emergency housing, and seniors' housing.

House prices

Median house prices on the Sunshine Coast more than doubled from 2000 to 2010, rising 132% in Gibsons, 147% in the District of Sechelt, and 168% in rural areas near Sechelt. This was a faster price rise than in the province as a whole. Local house sales dropped in 2008-09, as they did in the Lower Mainland. Sales rebounded temporarily in late 2009 when interest rates dropped, but slipped downwards again in 2010 as the buyers' market continued. The MLS Benchmark House Price representing a "typical" detached house was \$312,598 in June 2005, rose steadily to \$433,539 in June 2008, then dropped and rebounded several times during the recession, hitting a record high of \$457,777 in July 2010. It was \$432,244 in July 2011.

Off-Coast ownership

About 54% of the Sunshine Coast's residential housing stock (including raw land) is owned by non-locals. This amounts to about 6,538 housing units. The majority of off-Coast property owners (78%) live in Metro Vancouver, 15.4% live elsewhere in Canada, 5.2% live in the U.S. and 1.4% live in other countries.

Residential building permits

New home construction on the Sunshine Coast has been in decline for several years. In 2005 there were 272 permits issued for single family homes on the Sunshine Coast. The number of permits remained fairly steady for two years, then dropped sharply to 180 permits in 2008 and continued its decline. Only 164 permits for single-family homes were issued in 2010, and fewer permits were issued during the first half of 2011 than during the first half of 2010.

Transition House space

Increasingly, the Yew Transition House has been forced to turn people away for lack of space. From July 2010 to June 2011, the Yew Transition House could not accommodate 116 women and 42 children, compared to the same period in 2008-09 when it could not accommodate 24 women and 14 children. Yew Transition House is the only first stage transition house on the Sunshine Coast. It accepts at-risk women and children for a maximum of 30 days.



How the Foundation is helping

In 2004, the Foundation provided funding for a community forum to explore issues around affordable housing, and again in 2008 for a follow up forum to help move the affordable housing initiative forward. The Foundation continues to support the principles of affordable housing on the Sunshine Coast.

Did You Know?

There are only 266 social housing units in the Sunshine Coast Regional District. As of June 2011, 93 households received rental assistance from Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters and 80 received assistance from the Rental Assistance Program.



Arts and Culture

Volunteers are crucial to the continuing vibrancy of the Sunshine Coast's arts and culture sector: at least 48 arts organizations rely partly or wholly on volunteer efforts.

Gaming grants for arts and culture

As noted in the "Our Community" section of this publication, cutbacks to B.C.'s Community Gaming Grants program have affected many Sunshine Coast organizations. The arts were particularly hard hit. In 2007-08, the province gave \$69,000 in arts grants on the Sunshine Coast, which amounted to 7.8% of the total grants to Sunshine Coast organizations. This percentage has declined steadily since then, and in 2010-11 the province gave only \$28,440 for the arts, or 5.3% of the total Sunshine Coast grants.

Local government support

Local governments have greatly increased their grants for arts and culture. The Sunshine Coast Regional District more than tripled its arts grants in 2011, to a total of \$44,350. The District of Sechelt also made a major increase in arts and culture grants this year: \$97,700, up from \$49,300 in 2010. Gibsons granted \$28,393 to the arts in 2007 and has increased that grant steadily since then, to a total of \$35,888 in 2010 (Gibsons' 2011 grant totals are not yet available).

Diversity and strength of arts sector

There are 48 arts and cultural organizations listed on the web site of the Sunshine Coast Volunteer and Information Centre, and 63 locations listed on the Coast Cultural Alliance's Purple Banner Index. Some well-established arts events routinely sell out their venues, such as the Coast Recital Society concerts, which had 1,890 attendees for seven events in 2010-11, and the Festival of the Written Arts, which had a total attendance of 8,588 in 2008, 8,356 in 2009, and 8,717 in 2010.



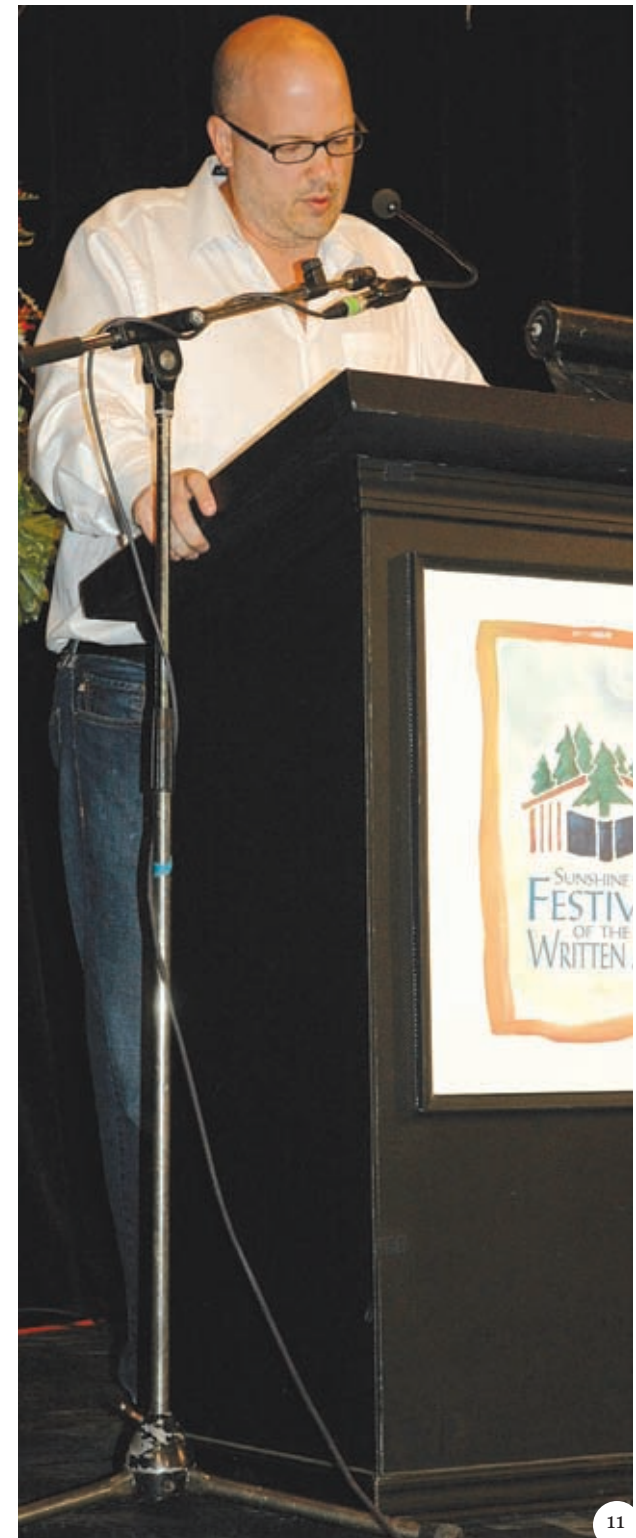
How the Foundation is helping

In 2011, the Foundation provided funding for nine projects to seven arts and culture organizations on the Sunshine Coast and established the Cunliffe Heritage Endowment to support programs and activities of the Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives.



Did You Know?

Art sales totaled more than \$30,000 during the first annual Sunshine Coast Art Crawl in 2010. Visitors signed in for more than 6,500 visits to 75 local studios and galleries during the Oct 23-24 weekend.





Low income

No longer is it cheaper to live on the Sunshine Coast than in metropolitan areas. For a two-parent, two-child family where both parents work full time, the living wage here is \$18.80 for each parent. That is as high as Metro Vancouver's living wage (\$18.81), and slightly higher than Metro Victoria's (\$18.03).

Food Bank usage

Visits to the Sunshine Coast Food Bank have risen 39% in the past two years, from 8,758 visits in 2008 to 12,146 visits in 2010 (one visit represents one person provided with food for a week). More single people are now using the food bank. In the first half of 2011, 110 to 120 single people visited the food bank each week, compared to 80 per week in 2008.

Government income subsidies

The percentage of children and working age adults collecting welfare on the Sunshine Coast has increased since 2008. In 2010 the Sunshine Coast welfare rates for employable adults, children, and single parent families were almost identical to the rates for all of B.C. Our senior citizens are better off. In 2010, only 0.9% of Old Age Security recipients on the Sunshine Coast received the maximum income supplement, while 3.1% of all B.C. seniors received the maximum OAS supplement.

Leisure access scholarships

More people are using the Leisure Access Scholarship program, which provides a discount for low-income families to participate in SCRD recreation programs and services. In 2010, 999 recreation patrons used the scholarship, compared to 141 in 2008 – an increase of over 600%.

Homelessness

A 2007 survey by the Schizophrenia Society identified 240 homeless individuals on the Sunshine Coast. Of these people, 77% had addiction issues and 71% had mental health issues, indicating that many had a dual diagnosis.

Poverty rate

In 2009, 20.4% of Sunshine Coast families were classified as low income, and the young were worse off than the old. Only 6.9% of seniors were living in low income families, while 26.9% of children were in low income families. Since 2000, the poverty rate has improved for all these categories.

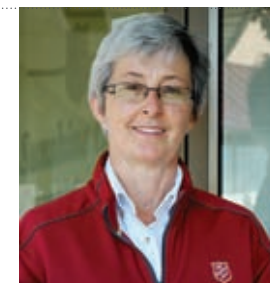


How the Foundation is helping

In 2010, the Foundation provided funding to the Sunshine Coast Food Bank and established the Tomorrow Project Endowment (SC Community Services) in support of female entrepreneurship. In 2011 the Foundation established the SC Endowment to Support Youth in Sports through KidSport.

Did You Know?

In 2010 the Sunshine Coast chapter of KidSport distributed 113 \$200 grants to help youths participate in 12 different sports. This was more than double the number of KidSport grants in 2009.



Safety

The Sunshine Coast is a safe community. Crime rates have dropped. We have very active, largely volunteer emergency organizations. And in a composite index based on 11 different indicators of crime, the Sunshine Coast is ranked the third best out of 26 regional districts in B.C.

Fire department calls

Volunteer fire departments are increasingly being called on for emergencies other than fire. Since 2000 the Gibsons and Sechelt Volunteer Fire Departments have had fairly steady numbers of calls for fires (between 80 and 120 calls each year for all types of fires). Calls for medical aid remained fairly constant at around 30 until 2007, but have increased dramatically since then to 102 calls in 2010.

Numbers of crimes

In almost every category of crime reported by the Sunshine Coast RCMP, the number of offences was lower in 2010 than in 2008. The category of crimes against person, including murder, sexual assault, assault, criminal harassment and uttering threats, dropped 34% (318 offences in 2010 compared to 482 offences in 2008). Motor vehicle accidents causing property damage dropped 31% (253 offences in 2010 compared to 365 in 2008).

Indicators of crime

B.C. Stats uses 11 different indicators of crime to create a composite ranking of regional districts. Based on 2007-2009 data, the Sunshine Coast ranked third best out of 26 regional districts, with very low rates of serious violent crime, serious property crime, motor vehicle thefts, and illicit drug deaths. We ranked more poorly, in the worst 10 regional districts, for non-cannabis drug offences and the number of serious crimes per police officer.

Emergency program volunteer hours

The Sunshine Coast's three Coast Guard Auxiliary units spent 194 person-hours responding to emergencies and close to 6,000 person-hours training in 2010. On land, Sunshine Coast Search and Rescue spent 357 person-hours responding to emergencies and over 2,500 person-hours training. Both these organizations, as well as the Emergency Social Services and Emergency Communications groups, increased their training time for volunteers by 50% or more in 2010.



How the Foundation is helping

In 2011, the Foundation provided funding for team jackets for Sunshine Coast Search & Rescue.

Did You Know?

Our volunteer fire departments are expected to train for and respond to a much greater variety of challenges than in the past, including assisting the BC Ambulance Service, confined space rescue work, hazardous materials response, high and low angle rope rescue, automobile extraction, and water rescue.





Economic Health

The recent worldwide recession hurt the Sunshine Coast economy, including the forest industry and construction, and employment has not yet rebounded to pre-recession levels. However, there are now signs of economic recovery.

Employers

Howe Sound Pulp and Paper, the largest business on the Sunshine Coast, laid off 110 workers in April 2009, cutting its work force to 440 employees. Since then, HSPP has gradually expanded and currently employs 480 people. Small business, which is more prevalent on the Sunshine Coast than in B.C. as a whole, has been volatile since 2008. The number of business locations employing up to 19 people dropped 21% from 2008 to 2009, grew 29% in 2010 and then fell by 2.9% in the first half of 2011, arriving back at levels very close to 2008.

Unemployment

The Sunshine Coast's EI rate hit a high in 2009, when 439 people received regular employment insurance benefits. By May 2011 the number had dropped to 270. This could be because employment increased, unemployed people left the Coast or benefits expired. In 2009-10 the Sunshine Coast had the second lowest rate of regular EI recipients in the province, with 1.4% of our population collecting those benefits, compared to 2.1% for all of B.C.

Gross domestic product

In 2010 the Sunshine Coast's GDP was \$592 million, or only 0.39% of the provincial GDP. In 2002 the Sunshine Coast accounted for 0.76% of B.C.'s GDP, but its contribution has

declined every year since, despite the Coast's share of B.C.'s population remaining at about 0.65%.

Economic activity

Some economic sectors have suffered more in recent years than others. Construction was hit hard, as shown by the dramatic drop in building permits in 2008 (see the Housing section). Forestry has decreased. The annual timber harvests in the Sunshine Coast Forest District (including Powell River) declined 29% between 2006 and 2009, then increased 33% in 2010. By contrast, local retail sales rose from \$266 million in 2000 to a projected \$335 million in 2011, and retail sales actually increased during the recession. Hotel room revenues (not including B&Bs) increased from \$5.7 million in 2006 to \$8.5 million in 2010. And from 2008-2009, when hotel room revenues for all of B.C. dropped 11.8%, Sunshine Coast room revenues increased 11.3%.

Succession planning

Many local businesses do not have a succession plan, according to a survey conducted by Sunshine Coast Community Futures in February 2011. Of the business owners who intended to sell or transfer their business in the future, 75% had not identified a successor.



How the Foundation is helping

In 2010 and 2011, the Foundation provided funding for the Coast Cultural Alliance Arts Crawl, a project to encourage tourism and support Sunshine Coast artists.

Did You Know?

During the month of July 2011, the Sunshine Coast Employment Centre web site got almost 30,000 hits, representing 7,245 different visitors.



Acknowledgements

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Eric Pinfeld (Coast Reporter)

Photos

Cathie Roy, Ian Jacques

Building Vitality in Rural Communities – A Vital Signs Toolkit

A resource guide funded by the Government of Canada through Canada's Rural Partnership with resource materials provided by the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC)

Special thanks to:

The Staff at SC Community Services Society

The Staff at SC Regional District

The SC Volunteer Centre

The SC Credit Union

VOICE

Areas of Study Groups

Also, special thanks to the over 60 community experts who participated in the areas of study consultations.

Funding Partners





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