

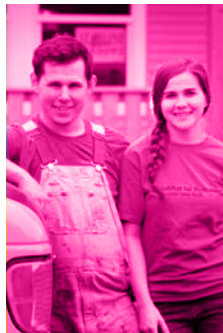
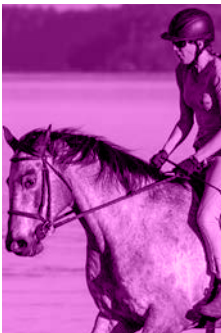
COMOX VALLEY'S

# VitalSigns<sup>®</sup>

2016



# Building Community Vitality





## Welcome to the first edition of Comox Valley's Vital Signs report

Vital Signs® is a community checkup 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)

### BUILDING COMMUNITY VITALITY

- Vitality takes long-term resources for long-term solutions, so working collaboratively with funders, local service agencies and donors ensures vital futures for communities
- Vitality comes from all corners of a community, so investing in the widest possible range of organizations and initiatives is important
- Vitality needs leadership, so community foundations are committed to creative, collaborative approaches to stimulate new ideas, build participation and strengthen community philanthropy.



and opinion survey data gathered from a cross section of 1024 residents of the Comox Valley.

Our hope is that this report will be a catalyst in engaging citizens, businesses, institutions, community organizations, and policy-makers in making decisions and taking actions that serve to enhance the quality of life for all residents of the Comox Valley.

While this is our first Vital Signs report for the Comox Valley, the Vital Signs program has been operating in some communities for over a decade or more under the auspices of the Community Foundations of Canada, the umbrella organization of the 191 community foundations across Canada. We anticipate that there will be subsequent Vital Signs reports produced every few years to identify changes in each of ten issue areas.

We hope that you find this report both interesting and useful in your planning and decision-making. Backing up the information given in the report are two supporting documents that may be useful to those wanting to dig a bit deeper into the results. These documents are freely available from the Comox Valley Community Foundation.

We are grateful to all those who contributed to this report including all persons who completed our survey. You are contributing to our community's vitality and each resident's quality of life!

Harry Panjer  
Chair, 2016 Vital Signs

Jody Macdonald  
Project Manager, 2016 Vital Signs



Dr. Norman Carruthers  
President, Comox Valley  
Community Foundation



Elizabeth Shannon  
President, Comox Valley  
Social Planning Society



Lindsay McGinn  
Community Impact Officer,  
North Island, United Way  
Central and Northern  
Vancouver Island

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Comox Valley's first Vital Signs report. This report is produced by the Comox Valley Community Foundation in conjunction with its partners: the United Way of Central and Northern Vancouver Island and the Comox Valley Social Planning Society; and its sponsors, the four Rotary Clubs of the Comox Valley, the Comox Valley Record, Comox BIA, First Insurance, Comox Coach and Shuttle, CVRD, and Comox Valley Photographic Society.

Our vision is to present a snapshot of many dimensions of our community supported by two sources: hard statistical data gathered from national, provincial and local sources,

## How to read this report

- 1 ISSUE AREAS:** This report covers ten issue areas that should be considered when assessing the overall health and vitality of a community.
- 2 RESEARCH FINDINGS\*:** The statistics were collected with the assistance of Community Foundations of Canada and SPARC BC. Reliable sources such as Statistics Canada were used with an emphasis on the most current and geographically specific data possible. Existing data from a variety of local, provincial and national sources were also used.
- 3 COMMUNITY VOICES\*:** During the months of May and June, 1024 citizens from Comox Valley completed an online survey on their perceived quality of life. The idea was to capture a wide variety of peoples' opinions regarding key quality of life issues and priorities for action within the region. The top priorities are survey respondents' most commonly reported priorities for each issue. Survey results are also displayed on a scale from -10 to 10. These were based on agree/disagree-type statements, converted to the following numerical scores: Strongly Disagree (-10 points), Disagree (-5 points), Neutral (0 points), Agree (+5 points), Strongly Agree (+10 points). Economic comfort levels were determined by respondents indicating if they always (high), sometimes (medium) or never (low) generally have enough money to buy the things needed to live well.

\* Sources and detailed statistical and survey data reports can be found online at [cvcfoundation.org](http://cvcfoundation.org).

## How to use this report

**START CONVERSATIONS:** Use the information in this report to talk about what's behind the data and what people are experiencing in our community.

**ACT & SUPPORT:** If you are moved by what you read, think of ways that you can participate. There are numerous organizations in our community working to improve it that could benefit from your participation and/or financial support.

**CONTACT US:** We know the issues and organizations in our community. If you are looking for ways to make a difference, we can help.

**REQUEST A SPEAKER:** If you want to learn more about Comox Valley's Vital Signs, contact us to arrange a presentation for your group or organization.

**FIND OUT MORE:** Learn more about the many organizations in our community working to improve it, and ask how you can help, too.



## Table of Contents

- 1 How to read this report
- 2 Community Profile
- 4 Arts, Culture & Recreation
- 6 Economy & Work
- 8 Environment & Sustainability
- 10 Gap Between Rich & Poor
- 11 Getting Around & Transportation
- 12 Health & Wellness
- 14 Housing
- 16 Leadership, Civic Engagement & Belonging
- 18 Education & Lifelong Learning
- 20 Food



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

## K'ómoks First Nation History

Comox is an Anglicization of K'ómoks, which is derived from the Kwakw'ala term, kw'umalha, meaning "plentiful, rich, or wealthy". The K'ómoks First Nation have inhabited central Vancouver Island from the height of the mountains to the Eastern coastline and adjacent islands in the Salish Sea since time immemorial. K'ómoks First Nation members are Kwakwaka'wakw and Northern Coast Salish people and their language and spiritual practices are tied to the lands, waters, and resources that are found in the K'ómoks area.

The lives of KFN people have changed dramatically from pre-contact times to the present. The quality of KFN people's lives has varied dramatically through time as well. In terms of diet and health, in pre-contact times KFN diet was varied and nutritious; obesity and diabetes—major health concerns among modern Aboriginal populations—were probably unknown. Most diseases we know today—measles, flu, mumps, chicken pox, etcetera—did not exist in the Americas prior to contact, and they would have been entirely unknown to pre-contact KFN people. On the other hand, during pre-contact times, long term exposure to smoky fires in the past would have caused respiratory and sight problems.

In terms of personal security, in pre-contact times levels of interpersonal violence were high, while now KFN people live in one of the safest places and times in human history. In terms of personal satisfaction with life, in pre-contact times a wide range of social roles or specializations were open to most KFN people. KFN territory abounded with resources, and people could live comfortable lives become respected largely through their own hard work and achievement. In modern times there is a similarly broad range of roles and specializations that KFN people can train and excel in. However, Aboriginal people in Canada have an extraordinarily high rate of suicide, partially reflecting the social dislocation Aboriginal people experience being caught between modern and traditional social and cultural systems.

The very concept of a quality of life would have varied greatly in the past compared to modern day. And depending on which attribute one considers, that quality of life may have improved, deteriorated or remained similar. —*Jesse Morin PhD, Archaeologist, Ethno-historian, Heritage Consultant*



**K'ómoks First Nation members: 331**

**Residing on reserve: 92**

**Elders 55 and over: 34**

**Youth 18 and under: 18**

## The Comox Valley

The Comox Valley is a region on the east coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, that includes the City of Courtenay, the town of Comox, the village of Cumberland, the K'ómoks First Nation, Denman and Hornby islands, and the unincorporated settlements of Royston, Union Bay, Fanny Bay, Black Creek and Merville.

Median family income 2013

**\$72,600** **\$74,150**  
Comox Valley BC

Crime Rate per 100,000 2015

**7,374** **8,799**  
Comox Valley BC

### Crime Severity Index

Measures frequency and severity of crimes. More serious crimes are assigned higher weights and have a greater impact on changes in the index.

Comox Municipal **32.8**

Comox Valley Rural **36.6**

Courtenay Municipality **91.6**

British Columbia **94.7**

### Population Projections

	2016 population projection	2036 population projection	change
Total	66,135	81,219	15,084 (23%)
Children & Youth (0-19)	12,246	15,529	3,283 (27%)
Seniors (65+)	16,638	22,759	6,121 (37%)

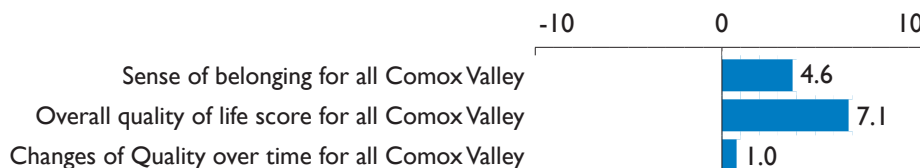
### MEDIAN AGE

Comox Valley	<b>48.3</b>
Comox	<b>49.1</b>
Courtenay	<b>46.5</b>
Cumberland	<b>38.2</b>
Area A	<b>53.9</b>
Area B	<b>50.1</b>
Area C	<b>48.1</b>



## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on the Comox Valley*

**"I love living in the Comox Valley."** – [Electoral Area B resident]



### TOP 5 DETERMINANTS OF A GOOD COMMUNITY:

1. environment
2. health and wellness
3. arts, culture & recreation
4. the economy and work
5. cost of living



# ARTS, CULTURE & RECREATION

## Arts, Culture & Recreation

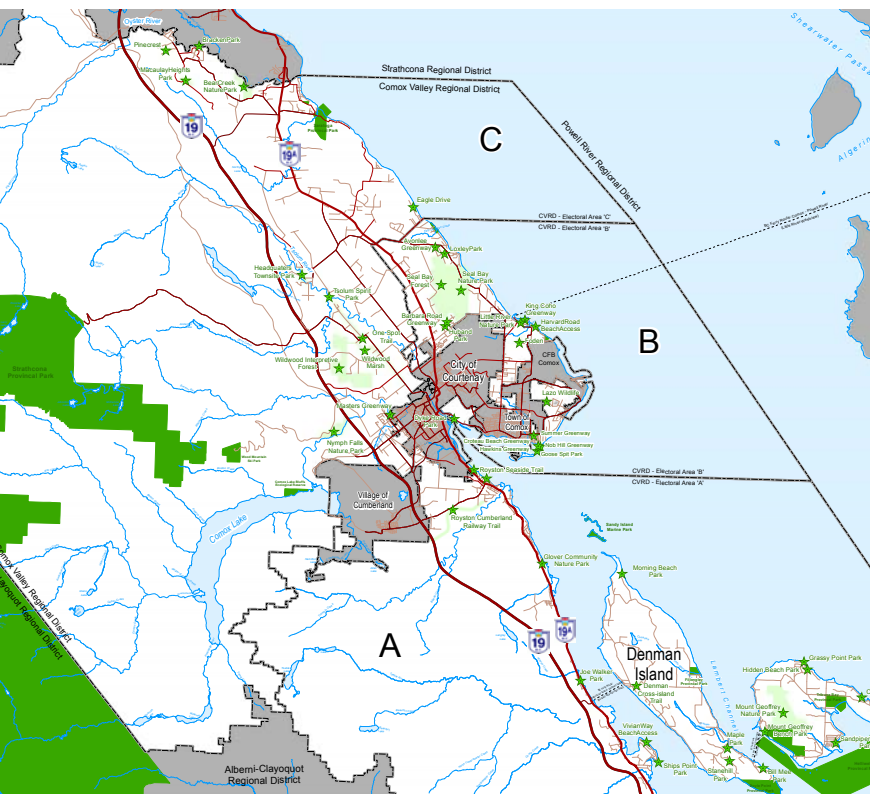
The experience of arts, culture and recreation is important to the well-being of individuals and the larger community. Arts, culture and recreation impact our local economy and tourism, as well as our health, well-being and sense of belonging. Cultural capital can be defined as the myriad of relationships, activities, artistic expressions and social/cultural events that contribute to the diversity and richness of community life.

## Visits to Museums and Galleries 2015



**75,591 visits**  
up from 71,864 visits in 2014

★ CVRD Parks    ■ Provincial Parks



## Library Items circulated 2015



**12.2 per resident**  
Comox Valley



**6.5 per resident**  
Vancouver Island

## Library Program attendance per 1000 residents

**133**  
Comox Valley

**133.7**  
Vancouver Island

## Hiking Trails

The Comox Valley Regional District manages over

**100 kms**

of forested trails.

## Parkland Hectares per 1000 people

**9.2**

Town of Comox



**7**

City of Courtenay



**66.3**

Village of Cumberland



**4**

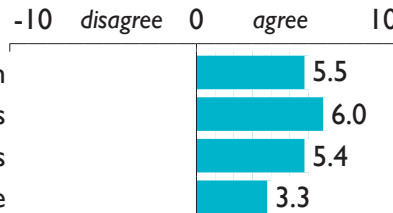
National Standard



## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Arts, Culture & Recreation*

**“More innovative ways of encouraging participation in art and sports programs at low cost [are needed].”** – [Cumberland resident]

There is an adequate supply of sports and recreation  
 There is adequate availability of outdoor recreation options  
 I have plenty of access to arts and cultural activities  
 Sports and recreation opportunities are affordable

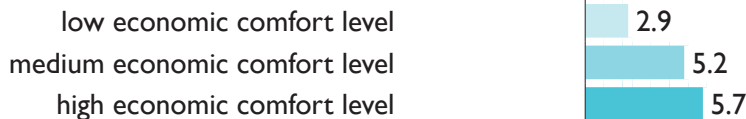


1. Expansion of parks & trails
2. More affordable sports & recreation programs
3. More festivals & community celebrations

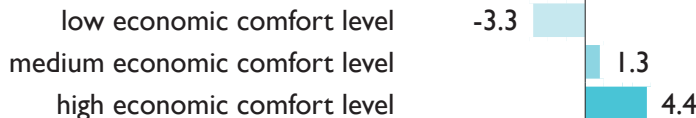
### Responses by economic comfort level

I have plenty of access to arts and cultural activities

-10 disagree 0 agree 10



Sports and recreation opportunities are affordable



## RECREATION FACILITIES & SPACES MOST COMMONLY ACCESSED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

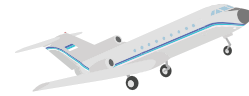
1. Local beaches
2. CVRD Trails (Goose Spit, Seal Bay, Nymph Falls, Grassy Point, etc.)
3. Municipal Parks and Playgrounds
4. Provincial Parks (Strathcona, Kitty Coleman, Helliwell, etc.)



# ECONOMY & WORK

## Economy & Work

A healthy economy is the engine of prosperity. Quality of life, in all its aspects, is greater for all residents when the economy is strong. Businesses and residents have greater resiliency when the economy is robust and vibrant. Every community desires to be a location where people want to live, engage in meaningful work, and pursue their passions.



Airport Traffic  
# of YQQ passengers

<b>318,830</b>	<b>351,530</b>
2014	2015

Labour Force Participation Rate  
(25-54 years old) 2013

<b>87%</b>	<b>85%</b>
Comox Valley	British Columbia

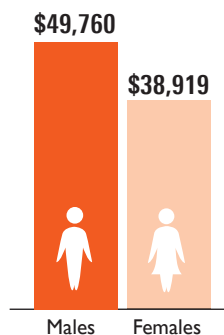
Building Permits (millions of \$)

	2014	2015	% change
Comox Valley	\$122.8	\$147.3	↑20%
BC	\$11,076.7	\$13,125.2	↑19%

## Top five industries

- 1 Retail trade (14.3%)
- 2 Health care & social assistance (12.8%)
- 3 Public administration (9.6%)
- 4 Construction (8.5%)
- 5 Educational services (7.8%)

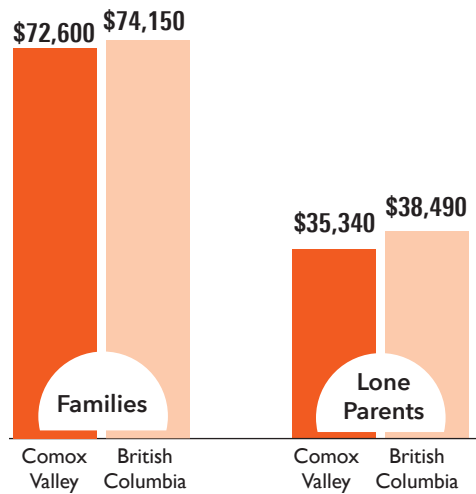
## Gender Pay Gap



Using the most current data available about differences in annual earnings for men and women, we can see that income disparity between genders is pronounced in the Comox Valley. A gap of **\$10,841** in annual earnings translates into an overall earning difference of **\$271,025** over a 25 year time frame—placing female workers at a significant income disadvantage when compared to their male counterparts.



## Median family income 2013



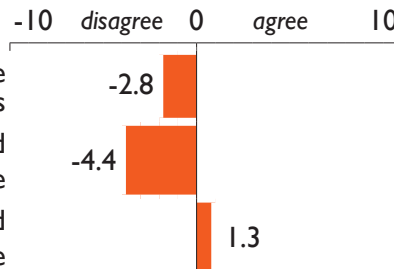
“Comox Valley residents earn less income when compared to the provincial median income. Moreover, finding employment can be a challenge in the Comox Valley—the unemployment rate for Comox Valley residents was higher than for British Columbia residents in both 2006 and 2011, with the rate increasing a considerable amount over that time period. These factors combined warrant ongoing efforts to build an economy that is more inclusive and equitable.” – Scott Graham, Associate Executive Director, SPARC BC

## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Economy & Work*

“The few and far between full-time, year-round jobs with a livable wage tell the whole story” – [Comox resident]

“Sustainable, environmentally friendly opportunities, not just any new business for sake of creating jobs” – [Courtenay resident]

There are adequate employment opportunities for me & my family members  
 Quality jobs for young professionals are created here  
 New businesses are encouraged & supported here



### top priorities

1. More full-time, year-round jobs
2. More middle to high wage opportunities
3. More support for new businesses to open here

## WHERE SURVEY RESPONDENTS WORK

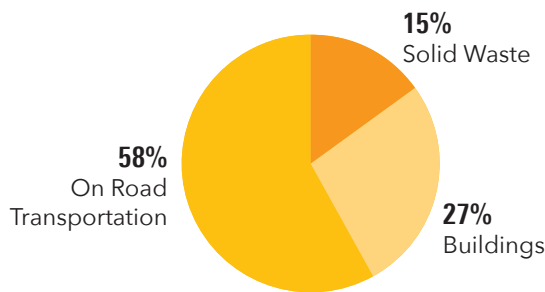
- 40% work within Comox Valley
- 31% not applicable (retired, etc.)
- 13% work in another island community
- 8% work off island, in BC
- 8% work out of province/country

# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

## Environment & Sustainability

We depend on, and are stewards of the natural environment. It provides the essentials of life, inspires us, and is critical to our health and vitality. It is important to take the necessary steps to protect, preserve and appreciate our urban, rural and natural surroundings.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Sources 2010



More Solid Waste is Diverted from Landfill

48%	51%	52%	52%	54%
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014

Outdoor Air Pollutant (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) Levels

	Comox Valley 2014	2015	Provincial Objective
Daily (based on 98th percentile)	30.6	36.5	25
Annual	9.0	8.6	8

Level (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)

"There is no safe limit of air pollution. PM<sub>2.5</sub> especially in large spikes, can have immediate effects on someone's health. However, the major impact of ongoing exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub>, even in low doses, is its contribution to the progression of chronic diseases. The goal with monitoring pollutants such as PM<sub>2.5</sub> is to ensure the pollutants are kept as low as is reasonable. Any improvements in air quality will result in reduced health impacts, especially for cardiovascular and lung health."  
– Dr. Charmaine Enns, Medical Health Officer

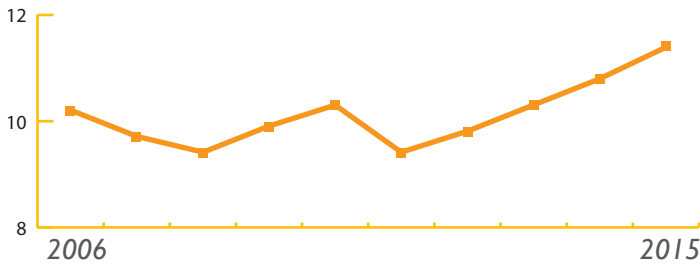
**FUN FACT:** The Village of Cumberland started billing for actual water usage in the Spring of 2014. Water demands, both average day and maximum day, have significantly decreased over the past 10 years. In 2015, both the average day and maximum day demands were less than 60% of the demand in 2005. This reduction occurred even as the Village's population grew by an estimated 30%.



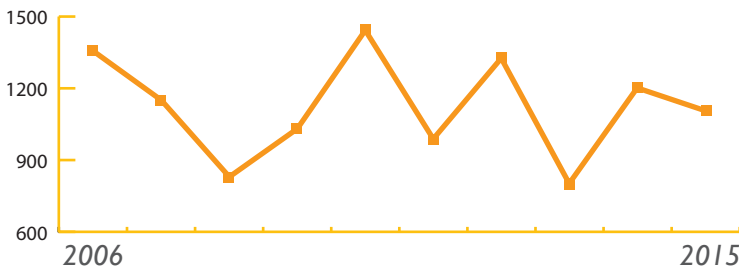
Daily consumption of water  
(litres per capita)

2011	528
2012	535
2013	496
2014	501

Mean Annual Temperature (degrees celsius)



Annual Precipitation (mm)



Number of Boil Water Advisory Days

**58** 2014/2015      **21** 2015/2016



K'ómoks Estuary

The **2nd** most valuable estuary in BC.  
 Sea-grass ecosystems are globally significant carbon sinks, an important method for mitigating climate change.  
**80%** of recreationally-caught fish rely on these ocean nurseries at some point in their life cycle.

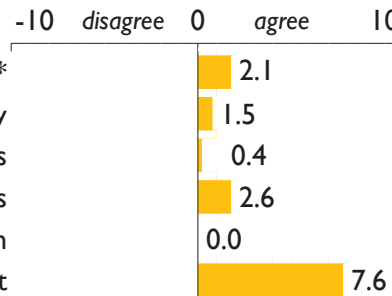
Project Watershed has restored nearly **6,000 m<sup>2</sup>** of sub-tidal and intertidal eelgrass.

## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Environment & Sustainability*

“Water. Protecting waterways, water conservation and improved drinking water quality are all connected and vital” – [Comox resident]

“I love it here but have serious misgivings raising my family here when from October to May the air quality in Cumberland can be toxic” – [Cumberland resident]

- There is good air quality in the Comox Valley\*
- There is good drinking water in the Comox Valley
- There are good supports for water conservation efforts
- There are good waste management and recycling services
- There is an environmentally responsible sewage system
- I have a responsibility to protect the natural environment



\*Cumberland residents scored -3.0 on perceptions of air quality

### top priorities

1. Improved health & protection of local rivers, streams & lakes
2. Improved drinking water quality
3. Options for alternative energy

# GAP BETWEEN RICH & POOR

## Gap Between Rich & Poor

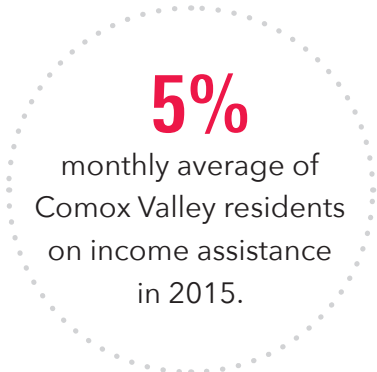
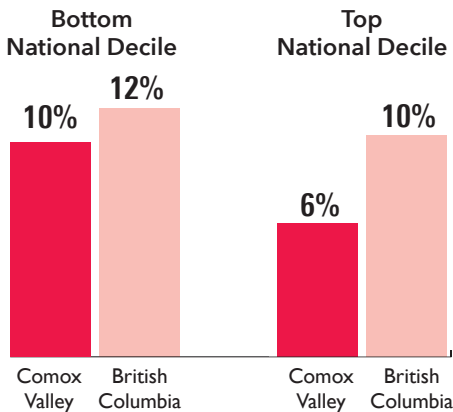
When there is a large gap between the rich and poor in our community, we are all affected. When all citizens, especially the most vulnerable, have adequate resources to ensure that their basic needs are met, then individuals, families, and communities are more healthy and resilient.



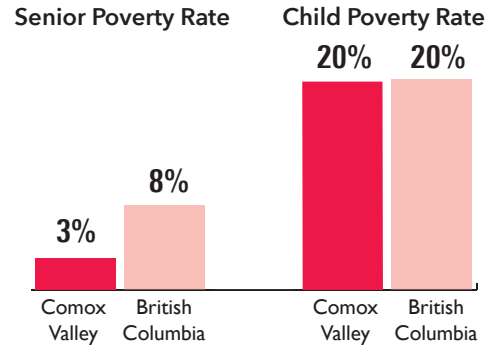
### Overall Poverty Rate 2013



### Income Inequality 2010

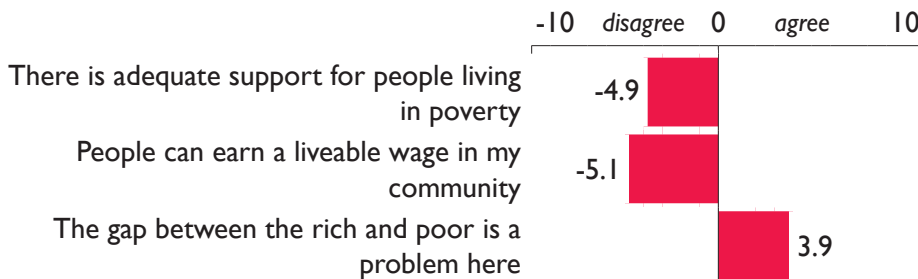


### Poverty Rate among Children & Seniors 2013



## COMMUNITY VOICES

Your thoughts on the Gap Between Rich & Poor



### top priorities

1. More affordable housing
2. More job creation initiatives
3. Supports to transition from poverty to workforce
4. Higher minimum wage



# GETTING AROUND & TRANSPORTATION

## Getting Around & Transportation

A wide variety of accessible and affordable transportation options is necessary to properly support the diversity, health, economy and environmental sustainability of our community.



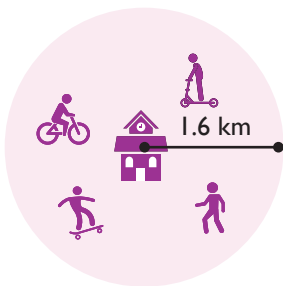
Sustainable Transportation of Employed Commuters  
(Transit, Walking or Biking)

**11%**  
Comox Valley  
Regional  
District

**20%**  
Vancouver  
Island

**21%**  
British  
Columbia

Elementary school student transportation & proximity to school



**53%**  
who live within 1.6 km  
are driven to school  
*(the nationally socially accepted  
distance for active travel)*

City of Courtenay

**2.9 km**  
of bike lanes



Town of Comox

**7.3 km**  
of bike lanes

Conventional Bus System

**595,857** | **585,826**  
2014/2015 | 2015/2016  
↓ -2% change

HandyDART ridership  
**36,062** | **29,526**  
2014 | 2015  
↓ -18% change  
335 unmet trip requests 2015/16

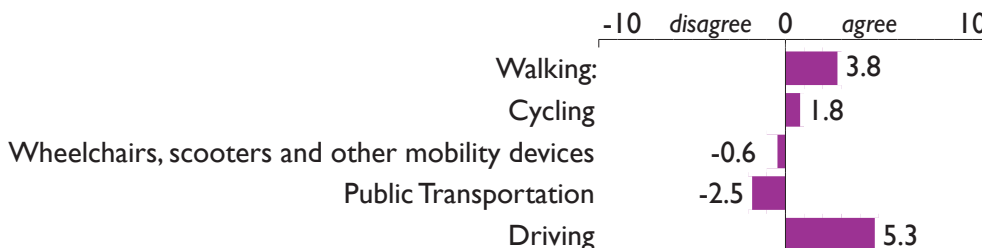
Comox Valley Bike to School / Work Week 2016 – **570** persons biked to school or work, totalling **23,560 kms**

## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Getting Around & Transportation*

**“Hornby and Denman Islands need across island transportation”**  
– [Electoral Area A resident]

**“Redesigned streets for safe multi use”** – [Cumberland resident]

Our community has adequate infrastructure for accessing my daily needs by:



### top priorities

1. More frequent bus runs
2. Improved cycling network and facilities
3. Improved transportation services for individuals with limited mobility





# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Health & Wellness

Good physical and mental health are vitally linked to, and affected by virtually all the issues raised in the Comox Valley's Vital Signs report. Adequate income, stable and appropriate housing, a safe and walkable neighbourhood, strong social networks, and a high level of education all enhance the health of our community members. The absence of some or all of those factors contributes to the likelihood of a community resident experiencing, for example, diabetes, depression, or obesity.

## Life Expectancy at Birth

	 Female	 Male
<b>CV</b>	<b>84.0</b>	<b>80.2</b>
<b>BC</b>	84.5	80.4



## General Practitioners & Specialists per 100,000 people

	General practitioners	Specialists
<b>Comox Valley</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>92</b>
Vancouver Island	155	105
British Columbia	119	103



**1 in 4**

Have Depression or Anxiety in the Comox Valley

## Prevalence of Chronic Diseases per 1,000 people 2012 & 2013

Comox Valley		British Columbia	
Depression/Anxiety	<b>250.9</b>	Depression/Anxiety	213.2
Hypertension	<b>177.6</b>	Hypertension	184.9
Asthma	<b>117.6</b>	Asthma	105.3
Osteoarthritis	<b>60.7</b>	Osteoarthritis	62.1
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	<b>59.4</b>	Diabetes	60.0

Obesity (18+ years)

	2013	2014
Vancouver Island	13%	18%
British Columbia	15%	16%

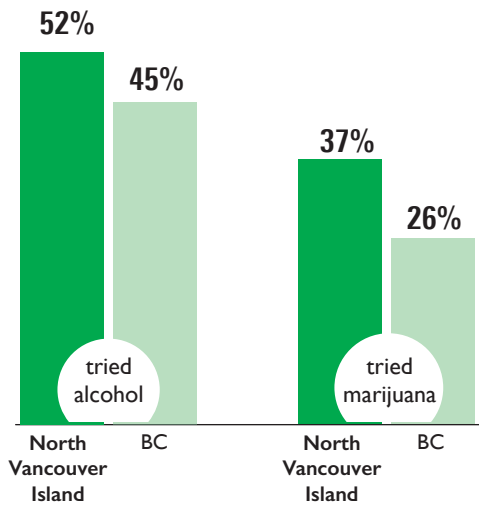
People with Mobility Limitation/Disability 2011

Comox Valley	28%
British Columbia	22%

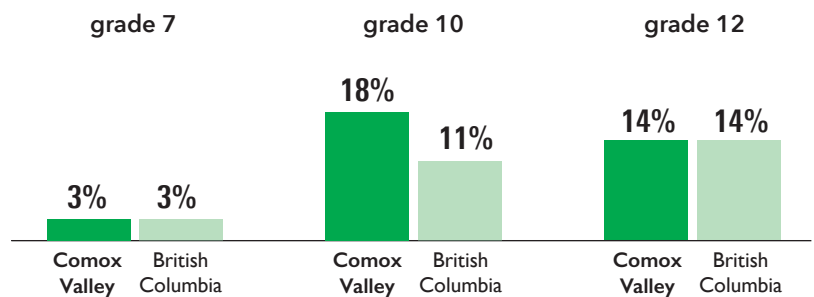
Substance Abuse-Related Death Rates per 100,000 people 2013

	Tobacco	Alcohol	Illicit Drugs
Comox Valley	110.63	38.29	11.27
BC	85.13	24.60	7.22

Youth Drug Use 2013



Youth Smoking Rates 2014/15



**COMMUNITY VOICES** *Your thoughts on Health & Wellness*

**“Support and encourage wellness, and activities which maintain wellness and fitness. Prevention more than curing”**

– [Courtenay resident]

**“More specialty medical services (e.g. MRI scans) needed locally. Better home care/support to die at home/hospice”**

– [Electoral Area A resident]

A healthy lifestyle is encouraged in this community  
 There is good access to mental health services here  
 There is good access to health care here



**top priorities**

1. Increased access to mental health services
2. Increased number of family doctors
3. Increased access to seniors health support services
4. Health and wellness promotion



# HOUSING

## Housing

Communities with housing options that meet the diverse needs of their residents are more inclusive, economically competitive and vibrant.

**“Access to safe, affordable housing is a challenge, particularly for vulnerable youth transitioning to adulthood.”**

–Doug Hillian, City of Courtenay Councillor

**Results from surveys with 157 homeless in the Comox Valley (2016) reveal that homelessness starts at a young age: 31% became homeless under the age of 27 and 26% of respondents had been in the foster care system.**

## Shelters

Emergency Shelters 2015		Lilli House 2015	
Bed Nights	5,471	Bed Nights	4,243
Males	489	Women	245
Females	215	Children	68
Turnaways	890	Crisis Calls	1,456

## Extreme Weather Response Shelter Usage

	2014/15	2015/16	% change
Female	47	37	-21%
Male	120	160	33%
Total beds	167	197	18%
Days in effect	40	76	90%

## Housing Continuum

<b>29</b> Emergency Shelters Beds	<b>0</b> Supportive Housing Units	<b>79</b> Transitional Housing Units	<b>629</b> Subsidized Housing Units	<b>198</b> Low Cost Rental Units
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## Housing Starts

	2014	2015	% Change
Single	168	161	-4.2%
Semi-Detached	28	40	43%
Row	12	40	233%
Apartment	31	133	329%
All	239	374	57%

## % Change in Housing Starts

**57%**  
Comox Valley

**34%**  
Vancouver Island Urban Areas

**12%**  
British Columbia



## Rental Vacancy Rate

Campbell River  
**2.8%**

Comox Valley  
**0.5%**

Nanaimo  
**2.2%**

Victoria  
**0.7%**

## Benchmark Housing Cost

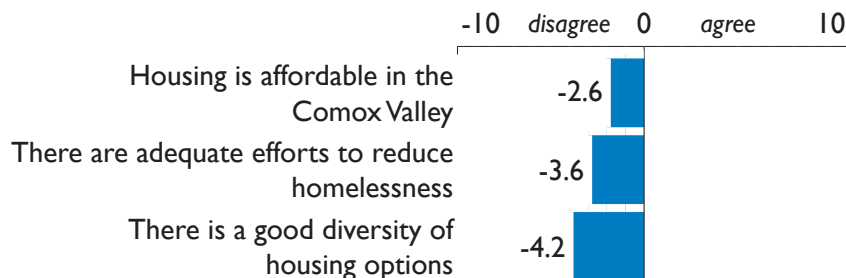
	2015	2016	\$ change	% change
<b>Campbell River</b>				
Single Detached	\$283,300	\$291,900	\$8,600	3.0%
Apartments	\$168,700	\$172,900	\$4,200	2.5%
<b>Comox Valley</b>				
Single Detached	\$334,000	\$364,400	\$30,400	9.1%
Apartments	\$192,000	\$193,500	\$1,500	0.8%
<b>Nanaimo</b>				
Single Detached	\$350,400	\$402,100	\$51,700	15%
Apartments	\$206,300	\$219,100	\$12,800	6.2%
<b>Victoria</b>				
Single Detached	\$508,400	\$593,700	\$85,300	17%
Apartments	\$298,900	\$342,200	\$43,300	15%

## Median Rents 2015

One bedroom	Two bedroom
\$653	\$770
\$665	\$775
\$725	\$835
\$850	\$1,095

## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Housing*

**“Multiple avenues of support will be necessary to solving the housing problem”** – [Electoral Area A resident]



## top priorities

1. More affordable housing units
2. Increased efforts to reduce homelessness in the Comox Valley
3. Increased number of secondary suites



# LEADERSHIP, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & BELONGING

## Leadership, Civic Engagement & Belonging

Vibrant communities are those where residents are engaged and feel that they belong, where civic institutions reflect the diversity of the population, and where strong social connections unite people to one another and to their neighbourhoods. Tracking these indicators helps us to see how well we are doing at building an inclusive community, and where some residents are being left on the margins.



### Taxfiler Charitable Donations 2013

Comox Valley	British Columbia
<b>22%</b> made donations	<b>21%</b> made donations
<b>\$320</b> median donation	<b>\$400</b> median donation

### Local Election Voter Turnout 2014

<b>31%</b> City of Courtenay	<b>41%</b> Town of Comox	<b>41%</b> Village of Cumberland
---------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------------

### Provincial Election 2013

<b>64%</b> Comox Valley	<b>57%</b> British Columbia
----------------------------	--------------------------------

### Federal Election 2015

<b>76%</b> Courtenay - Alberni	<b>70%</b> British Columbia
-----------------------------------	--------------------------------



### Female Elected Leaders (Councillors, Chief and Mayors)

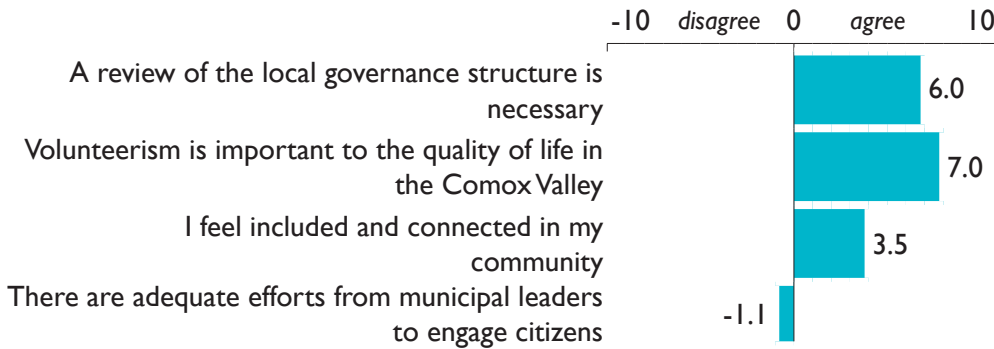
	female leaders	total leaders	% female leaders
K'ómoks First Nation	2	4	50%
Town of Comox	3	7	43%
Village of Cumberland	3	5	60%
City of Courtenay	1	7	14%
Areas A, B, C	0	3	0%
School District 71	3	7	43%
<b>Total Comox Valley</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36%</b>

# COMMUNITY VOICES

Your thoughts on Leadership, Civic Engagement & Belonging

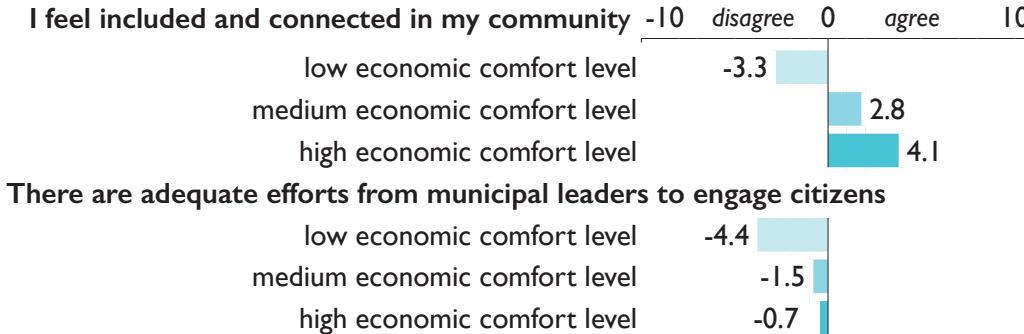
“More engagement by government in listening to community” – [Electoral Area B resident]

“More integrated civic administration” – [Comox resident]



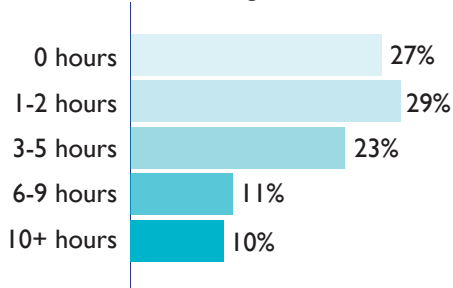
1. Increased awareness of opportunities to volunteer
2. More initiatives to increase voter turnout
3. More free community events

## Responses by economic comfort level



## Volunteerism

During the week of the survey, Comox Valley residents volunteered the following number of hours:

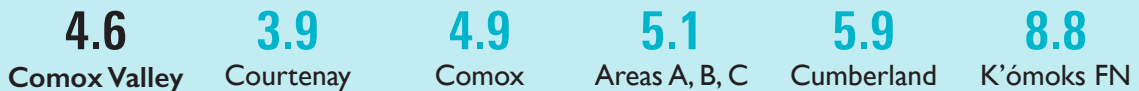


**9,867**

Volunteered for Comox Valley organizations on a recurring basis\*

\* Volunteer Comox Valley Survey

## Sense of Belonging of Survey Respondents



'very weak' (-10 pts), 'somewhat weak' (-5 pts), 'somewhat strong' (+5 pts) and 'strong' (+10 pts)



# EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

## Education & Lifelong Learning

As we prepare the next generation for their future in a knowledge-based economy, it is our shared responsibility to improve opportunities for all students and learners in our community. Successful communities offer residents abundant, affordable and flexible opportunities for learning at school, work, or in the community.



### School Enrollment

**8,188**  
Public  
School

**304**  
Private  
School

change from 2014/15 to 2015/16  
↓-4.7%      ↑11.8%

## Young Children Are More Vulnerable 2011-13

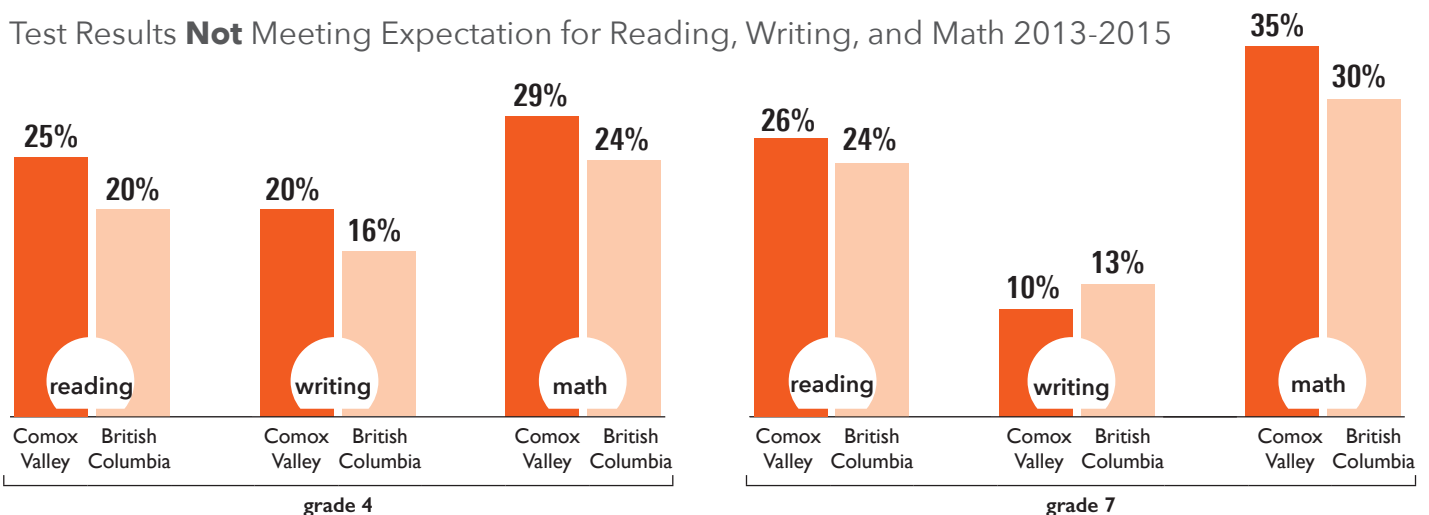
The Early Development Instrument (EDI) measures the vulnerability of children at kindergarten entry in five areas known to be good predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes.

Type of Vulnerability	Comox Valley SD71	BC
Physical	20%	16%
Social	22%	16%
Emotional	19%	15%
Language	10%	9%
Communication	15%	14%
One or More Areas	38%	33%

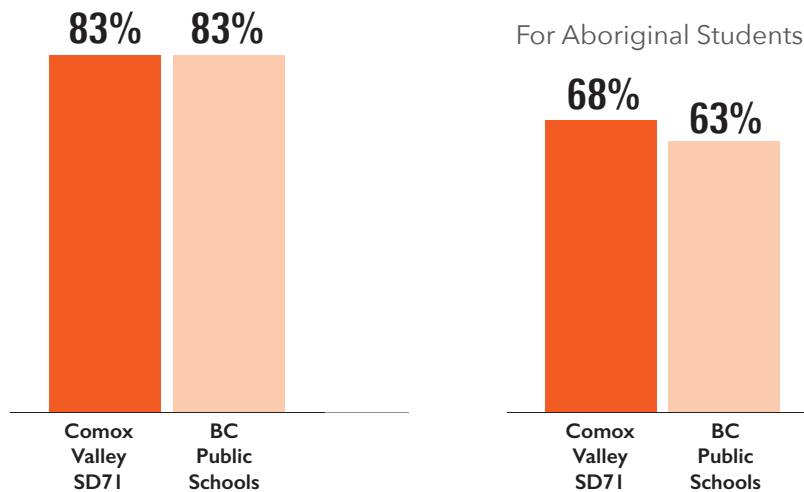
**“The first years of life are the most critical in determining our life chances. At present, nearly 40% of children in the Comox Valley enter kindergarten behind where we would want them to be in their development. This early vulnerability rate has steadily increased over the last decade and means that these children will be more likely to require support in school and into adulthood.”**

– Joanne Schroeder, Comox Valley Child Development Association

## Test Results **Not** Meeting Expectation for Reading, Writing, and Math 2013-2015



## High School Completion Rate 2014/2015



**Fun Fact:**  
 In 2016, the Comox Valley Community Foundation awarded \$10,000 of Professional Development Grants to seven local charitable organizations.

## North Island College

Full-time enrollment -  
 Comox Valley campus  
 2014/2015

Enrollment Category	Enrollment	Student Group	Student satisfaction with education*	Student assessment of the quality of instruction*
Domestic	1,127	Former diploma, associate degree & certificate students	92%	94%
International	211	Apprenticeship graduates	94%	96%
Total	1,339	Bachelor degree graduates	95%	95%

\* assessed 2015/2016

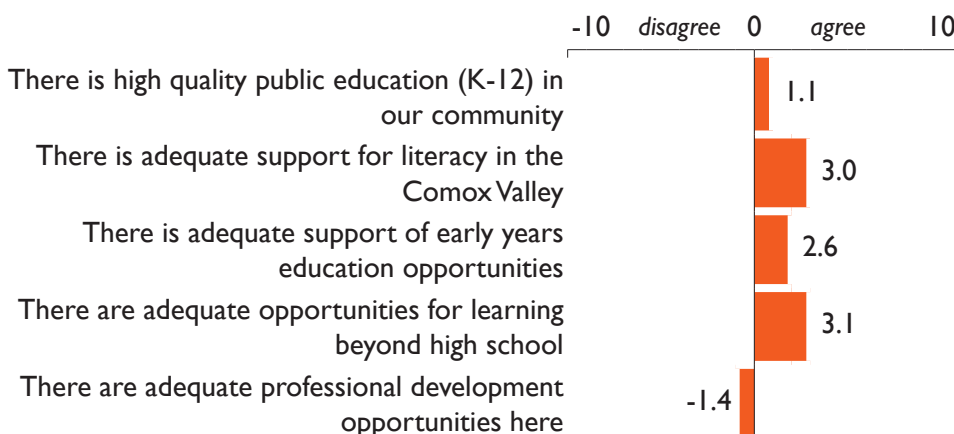
## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Education & Lifelong Learning*

**"We are a new family to the Comox Valley....we are struggling with the quality of the education system offered here and that is a top priority for us." – [Courtenay resident]**



### top priorities

1. Increased funding to the public education system
2. Increased on-the-job training opportunities
3. More education programs for at-risk populations
4. Additional degree options in post-secondary study



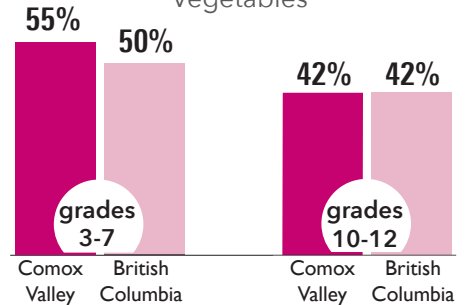


# FOOD

## Food

Food is about a lot more than what we buy or eat. Food sustains us, and our communities, in so many ways. The Comox Valley appears abundant with local food: orchards, vineyards, and farms. However, the issue of food security suggests we look at the sustainability and accessibility of healthy food.

Student Consumption of Fruits & Vegetables



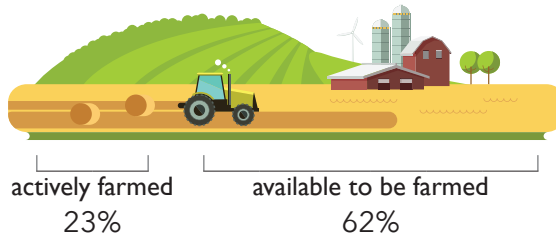
Registered farms 2011

**432 farms**

Farmer's Market Sales **↑15%**  
 \$1,049,812 (2014)    \$1,205,956 (2015)

Agricultural Land Reserve 2013

23,429 total hectares



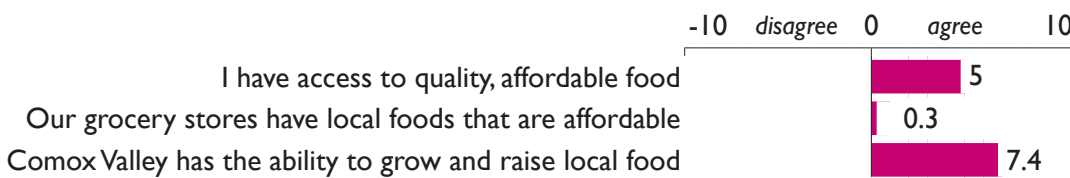
**64,912 Free Meals Provided by Community Groups 2013**

Monthly Food Basket Cost 2015  
for a family of four

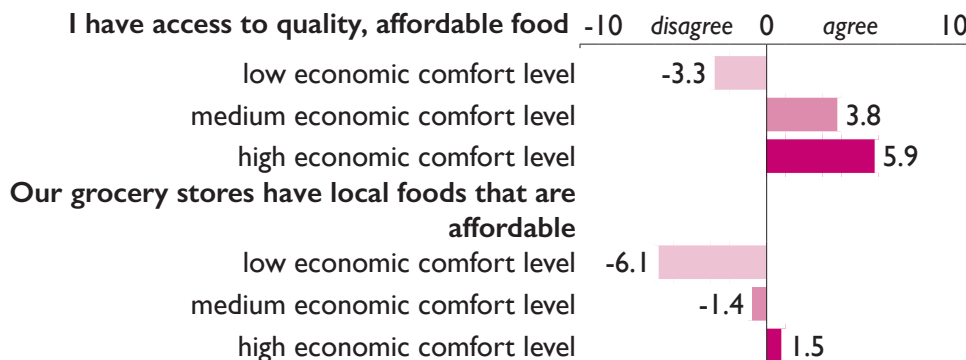
**\$985**  
CV

**\$974**  
BC

## COMMUNITY VOICES *Your thoughts on Food*



### Responses by economic comfort level



## top priorities

1. Protection of agricultural lands
2. More support for programs that promote access to locally grown food
3. More affordable healthy food choices

## Acknowledgments

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. Thank you to all of the survey respondents, community agencies that provided local data, and numerous volunteers who participated in the creation of this report by offering their time, opinions, expertise, and photos. You are deeply appreciated.

## Community Partners



The Comox Valley Community Foundation (CVCF) works with donors to support the causes important to them through gifts now and/or in their wills. Endowment funds are permanently invested for long-term growth. Over the past 20 years, CVCF assets have grown to over \$11 million. The CVCF has granted more than \$1.75 million to charities and in scholarships within the Comox Valley.



United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island is pleased to be a partner of the Comox Valley Vital Signs. Our mission is to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action in our local Vancouver Island communities. United Way builds a strong network of social services and programs for our communities' most vulnerable people. Information gathered throughout the Vital Signs on a wide variety of local issues will help us better identify, create, and fund solutions that make true and lasting change.



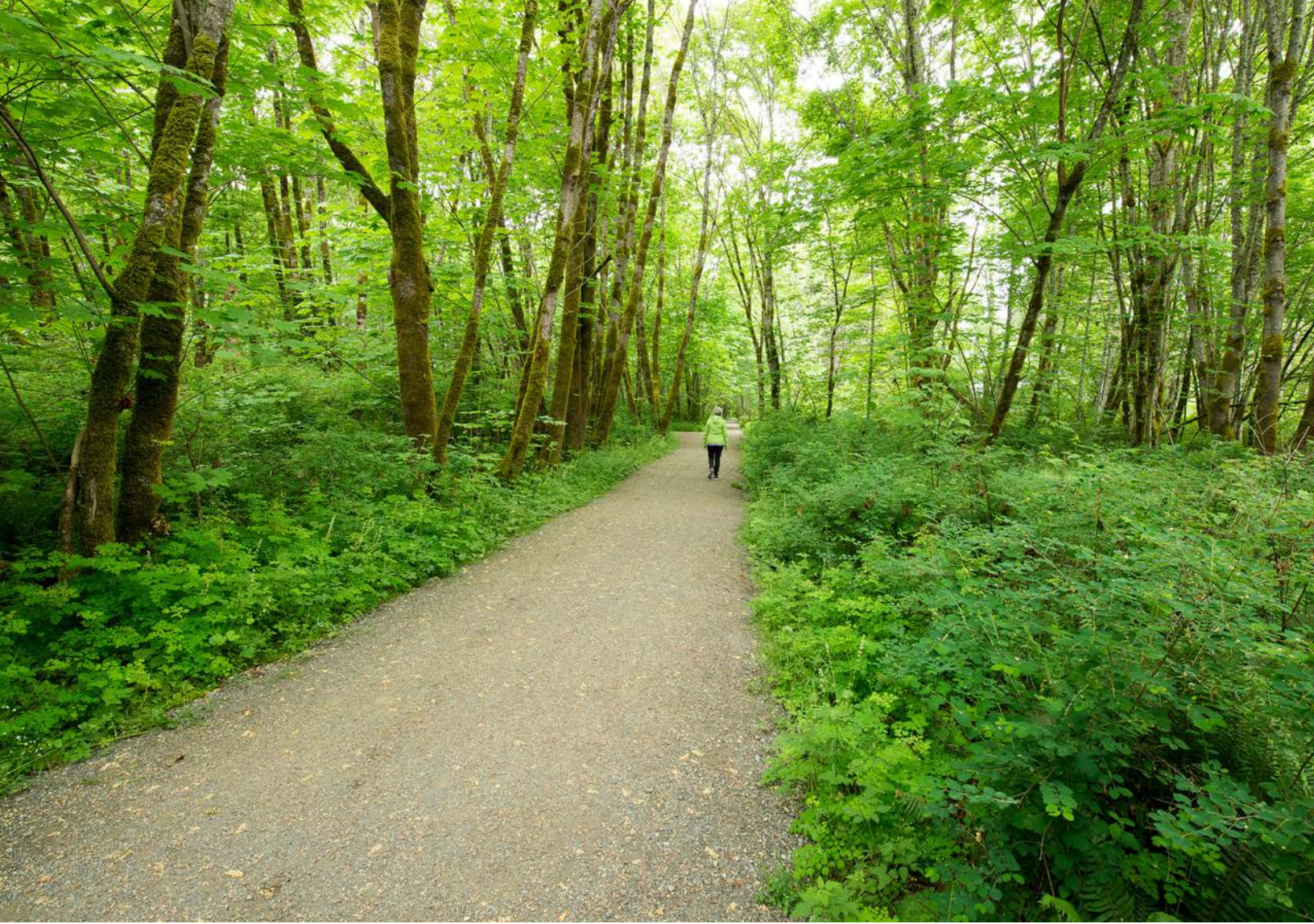
Founded in 1996, the Comox Valley Social Planning Society is a collaborative group formed to address social issues, and to support community initiatives that improve quality of life in the Comox Valley. Over the years, we have published Quality of Life reports in 2002, 2004, 2009 and most recently 2014.

This report has been made possible by in-kind expertise donations and/or financial contributions from:



"The four Rotary Clubs of the Comox Valley are pleased to serve as a major sponsor of this first Vital Signs for the Comox Valley. Our expectation is that the Rotary clubs, as well as other service clubs and funding organizations, will use this report in making decisions about how to use their funds most wisely in enhancing the overall quality of life in the Comox Valley."

–Robert Buckley, Assistant District Governor



The Comox Valley Community Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life in our community today and for generations to come. We enable donors to create philanthropic legacies that will benefit the Comox Valley and its people now and in the future. We inspire giving, care for the assets entrusted to us, and invest in people, ideas and activities that strengthen our community.



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