

West Vancouver's

# VitalSigns<sup>®</sup>

2019 Report



**WEST VANCOUVER**  
FOUNDATION

## With Gratitude

The West Vancouver Vital Signs initiative is fully funded through partners from the community. We are incredibly thankful for this leadership, as these resources allow us to deliver meaningful research and insights while ensuring donor funds are focused on making an impact in areas of need across the North Shore.



BRITISH PACIFIC  
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West Vancouver  
Sunrise



# 2019 Vital Signs Advisory Council

We are immensely grateful to the individuals and organizations who contributed time, knowledge, experience and perspectives around belonging, connecting and community as members of the 2019 Vital Signs Advisory Council. The work of the Vital Signs Advisory Council is further supported through input from subject matter experts, consultants, government staff and non-profit organizations.

**Jenny Benedict**  
West Vancouver Memorial Library

**Dr. Mark Lysyshyn**  
Vancouver Coastal Health

**Jan Riddell**  
District West Vancouver,  
Youth Services

**Chief Len Goerke**  
West Vancouver Police Department

**Charlotte McLaughlin**  
West Vancouver Citizen  
Working Group Volunteer

**Barb McMillan**  
Lead Researcher, Vital Signs

**Rev. Simon LeSieur**  
West Vancouver United Church

**Wendy McCulloch**  
North Shore Multicultural Society

**Elaine McHarg**  
West Vancouver Foundation

## BRITISH PACIFIC PROPERTIES Vital Signs Platinum Partner

Vital Signs is an essential and worthy initiative. The continued bold work and leadership of the West Vancouver Foundation on the study and analysis of our community's health is imperative. As a community builder for over 88 years in West Vancouver, British Pacific Properties remains a proud partner and supporter of the West Vancouver Foundation's Vital Signs Program and its dedication to building a more inclusive, resilient community.

In addition to the more recognized and documented issues of housing affordability and accessibility, this year's report dives into the important, although often subtle, issues of changing demographics, rising invisible poverty, health challenges stemming from isolation, and the mental health of our youth. Through this research and these collaborative community conversations, we hope to understand and address our vulnerabilities and work together towards a brighter and healthier tomorrow.

British Pacific Properties thanks the West Vancouver Foundation on another year of meaningful and critical work and congratulates them in their 40th year of serving the community.

**Geoff Croll**  
President, British Pacific Properties

*For their support of our work since 1989, the West Vancouver Foundation is proud to recognize British Pacific Properties as Founding Corporate Partner. In 2019, BPP announced a multi-year commitment to Vital Signs and related community engagement.*

Cover image: Ambleside Pier, taken by John Tak,  
West Vancouver resident, Sept/19

## LETTER FROM THE CEO

# What is a vibrant community?

It's where we feel connected- to each other and to this place where we live, work and play. It's also where we feel excited to contribute with time, talent and treasure.

You're reading this report because you are interested. You also care deeply about our community's future - for your own self-interest but mostly for the benefit of all -those who live next door and those who you may never meet. It's people like you who ensure the heart-beat of our community is strong.

This report is comprehensive and evidence-based. We've added some new categories and updated data in our existing categories. We've also included "wicked questions", which attempt to get at tensions that exist when there are competing values at play.

Earlier this year, we recognized that we had not been as purposeful in providing voice to the young adults of our community who care deeply about decisions around housing, transit, environmental protection, climate change and quality of life. To this end, we have added more research regarding youth and young adults in the community.

Another new element is an effort to connect the local to the global. In 2015, United Nations 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 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) intend to protect the planet and ensure that no one is left behind. By aligning our Vital Signs data with the SDGs, we have the opportunity to connect what's happening in our community to a global sustainability effort -so we did just that.

My hope is that there will be something or some things in this report that call on your head and heart. And my deeper hope is that you will feel compelled to do something about it.

Read this report from cover to cover. Talk about it. Share it with your family, friends and neighbours, and

maybe host a "vital conversation" over dinner. Ask our elected officials and candidates what they think about the issues. Most importantly, ask yourself, "Have I done enough? What more can I do?"

Use this report as your giving guide and consider a "give where you live" gift. Establish a personal target for charitable giving each year. Decide what issues matter most to you and set aside a percentage of your overall annual giving for local projects that bring about change. If you'd like help with making those gifts, we are here.

At the West Vancouver Foundation, we believe that Vital Signs research + philanthropy = a more vibrant and connected community. Together, we have a lot of be proud of, and a lot to give.

With Gratitude,



**Adine Mees,**  
*CEO, West Vancouver Foundation*



Since 1979, the West Vancouver Foundation has worked to leverage the generosity, talent and commitment of our residents to build a stronger, more caring and inclusive community.

Our vision is a healthy and vibrant West Vancouver, where everyone is valued, contributes and feels they belong.

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Todd Duncan Photography [www.tdphotography.ca](http://www.tdphotography.ca)

## Commitment to Reconciliation

As a leader for positive change, the West Vancouver Foundation is committed to Reconciliation by building connections and working with the Squamish Nation to ensure a greater understanding of and appreciation for Indigenous history and voices. We believe Reconciliation begins with listening and learning. As signatory to The Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action and a member of The Circle of Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, we acknowledge the importance of collaborative conversations and relationships required for Reconciliation to take place.

Our newly updated community grants criteria recognizes the importance of initiatives supporting Reconciliation. Recent funding has included the cedar wall welcome panel (carved by members of the community under the direction of Squamish Nation artist Xwalacktun Rick Harry and hung in the lobby of the new West Vancouver Police station), the Honouring Reconciliation programs at the West Vancouver Memorial Library, a creative collaboration between the Squamish Eagle Dancers and West Vancouver Youth Band, a regalia making session for Squamish Nation youth (through a neighbour grant), plus various dialogues and experiences for members of the community to learn and better understand.

**We would like to acknowledge that the West Vancouver Foundation is located on the traditional, unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, as represented by the Skwxwú7mesh [pronounced Skohomish] (Squamish), Tsleil- Waututh [pronounced slay-wa-tooth], and Musqueam Nations.**

### LARCO | PARK ROYAL Vital Signs Platinum Partner

West Vancouver Vital Signs has and continues to be an informative and valuable report on the state of our community. Vital Signs is key to helping us understand our community and plan for what can be done to enhance connections and lead West Vancouver to a more inclusive, vibrant and resilient future. Park Royal has served West Vancouver for 70 years and we have witnessed firsthand the speed and degree of change in our community.

The Vital Signs work done by the West Vancouver Foundation is intelligent, thoughtful and essential on examining changes we are all aware of and taking necessary, sometimes bold, steps to ensure we have the foundation for a healthy community, now and in the future. Vital Signs may not have all the answers, but it encourages more open and honest conversation and consideration as we adapt and embrace the new realities for West Vancouver. Park Royal is proud to support Vital Signs and all those who have contributed to the findings that continue to help shape and appreciate our community.

#### **Rick Amantea**

**Vice President Community Partnerships & Development -Park Royal**

*West Vancouver Foundation is grateful to the management and owners of Larco | Park Royal for their continued support of Vital Signs. Park Royal was the first sponsor to come forward with funding and resources as we began this journey of shared discovery in 2015.*



## DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER

### Message from the Mayor

As my council colleagues and I strive to understand the needs of the community, and deliver services that meet those needs, the West Vancouver Community Foundation's Vital Signs Report provides current, concrete and critical data to help us achieve our strategic priorities on housing, mobility, the local economy, the environment, municipal services and social well-being.

Our vision of a complete community and one that is livable, vibrant and inclusive depends on hearing from all voices - our seniors, our families, our newcomers and our youth.

This year's report is a useful tool not only for its findings but for the questions it leads us to ask about the community we want now and into the future.

We are proud to acknowledge the Foundation as a trusted and valued partner.

Warm Regards,

**Mary-Ann Booth**  
Mayor, West Vancouver

## LEADERSHIP

# 40 years of local generosity

In 1978, Mayor Derrick Humphreys appointed a special committee to explore the possibility of creating a charitable foundation that would inspire and steward local philanthropy for local benefit. The following September, the first meeting of the Board of Directors was convened with Mayor Humphreys, Frank Griffiths, Jr., Charlie Hopkins, Bill Hyndman, David Mathieson, Kay Meek, Mary Pattison, Gordon Rowntree, and Shirley Sager. Their legacy is profound. In partnership with our generous donors, more than \$4 million has been granted to community projects and organizations.

Our goal is to make meaningful and lasting impacts benefiting members of our community and build a stronger sense of belonging for all. We are governed by a team of community volunteers who share their time, passion, leadership, and expertise to ensure our success, continued growth and impact.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Nancy Farran, Chair
- Carolyn Coleclough, Vice Chair
- John Parker, Treasurer
- Geoff Jopson, Past Chair
- Dave Mason, Secretary
- Mark Ballard, Director
- Naomi Denning, Director
- Gordon Holley, Director
- Sara Mohamadkhani, Director
- Paul Robillard, Director

### HONORARY GOVERNORS' COUNCIL

- Tom Baillie
- Merla Beckerman
- Mary-Ann Booth, Mayor
- Moh Faris
- Pamela Goldsmith-Jones, MP
- Gerry Humphries
- Mark Sager
- Audrey Sojonky
- Jo-Ann Wood
- Ron Wood



*The West Vancouver Foundation is one of 191 Canadian community foundations and part of a worldwide movement of local philanthropy.*

# Building Community Insights

## Methodology

This report builds on the 2016 and 2017 West Vancouver Vital Signs Reports, which provided a baseline or comparative data for many of the indicators. The report was also informed by members of the Vital Signs Advisory Council, who provided valuable insights on themes and indicator selection, and helped to identify data sources and ensure relevance and accuracy of information. Community Foundations of Canada, which retained the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) to analyze national research, provided additional support.

This report draws on a number of research studies and reports that have been issued over the past 48 months. For this reason, not all data aligns to the same date, and reviewers are asked to consult the full data source file if additional verification is required.

Indicators were selected and prioritized based on the following guidelines:

- Opportunity to update data from 2016 and 2017 indicators
- Perceived public interest
- Potential to inspire and engage individuals, organizations, or communities to take action
- Availability of reasonably current data and frequency of collection for future use
- Understandability and measurability

Data sources for all indicators are available on our website, [westvancouverfoundation.ca/VitalSigns](http://westvancouverfoundation.ca/VitalSigns)

Community engagement is an ongoing aspect of the Vital Signs work.

# Global Goals—Local Action

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal framework and plan to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. These aspirational global goals, with 169 targets across 17 key themes, were published and agreed upon by the UN's 193 Member States in 2015 and establish shared global targets for 2030.

While the SDGs are national and international in scope, to be achieved the implementation must take place at all levels. The West Vancouver Foundation, along with Community Foundations of Canada and partner community foundations across the country, are committed to building awareness and education around this important initiative. For this report, we have mapped the West Vancouver 2019 Vital Signs themes to the appropriate SDG as noted below.



## Mapping West Vancouver Vital Signs to the SDG

**Belonging** (SDGs 3,5,10), **Culture & Arts** (SDGs 3,4,11),  
**Economic Vitality** (SDGs 1,2,3,8), **Environment** (SDGs 7,11,12,13,14,15),  
**Getting Around** (SDGs 11,13), **Health & Wellness** (SDGs 3,10),  
**Housing & Community** (SDGs 11,13, 15), **Learning** (SDG 4),  
**Safety & Security** (SDGs 3,6,11,16),  
**Volunteerism & Civic Engagement** (SDGs 4,16)

**Global collaboration and local action aim to achieve each goal by 2030 with a pledge to ensure no one is left behind.**

**Visit [globalgoals.org](http://globalgoals.org) for more information.**

**VitalSigns**<sup>®</sup>



## About Vital Signs

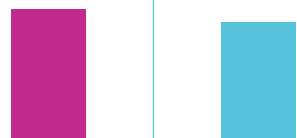
Vital Signs is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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



# If West Vancouver Was a Village of 100 Community Snapshot

## GENDER



**54**  
Females

**46**  
Males

Inclusive Gender identification and Sexual Orientation have not been captured on Census reports up to now. In the 2016 Census Transgender, Transsexual and Intersex persons were given the option to indicate which gender they most associated with or the leave the question blank.

## ETHNICITY

	2019	2016
Caucasian Background	64	72
Chinese Background	18	11
West Asian	9	8
South Asian	2	3
Other	7	6

## LANGUAGE

	2019	2016
English	62	67
Chinese	15	8
Farsi	9	8
German	2	2
Korean	2	2
French	1	1
Other	9	12

In 1979 English was the language spoken in 90% of homes in West Vancouver.

## INCOME

	2019	2016
Less than \$20,000	10	15
\$20,000 - \$40,000	14	19
\$40,000 - \$60,000	12	19
\$60,000 - \$80,000	10	15
\$80,000 - \$99,999	8	11
\$100,000+	46	21

Canadian reported Household income

## AGE

	2019	2016
0-4	3	3
5-9	5	3
10-14	6	6
15-19	7	7
20-39	15	15
40-64	36	39
65-85	23	20
86+	5	5

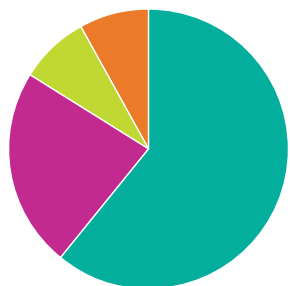
In 1979 there were 28 youth (19 and under) versus 21 today and 11 seniors over 65 versus 28 today.

## EMPLOYMENT

	2019	2016
In Labour Force	52	61
Unemployed	5	5
Not in Labour Force	43	34

Over 5 years there has been a significant shift in the workforce due to both retirement and immigration.

## MARITAL STATUS AGE 15 AND OLDER



● Married **61**

● Single/Never Married **23**

● Widowed **8**

● Divorced/Separated **8**

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Live Alone	27
Live with 1 Other	34
Live with 2 Other	15
Live with 3+ Other	24

# A WELCOMING, LIVEABLE COMMUNITY WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS

Using lenses of Belonging, Livability, and Welcoming, this Vital Signs Report examines key factors that are critical to ensuring a healthy and vibrant West Vancouver where everyone is valued, contributes, and feels they belong. While the report is organized by 10 subject areas, all of these themes and the indicators within them are inter-connected. Considered as a whole, it presents a snapshot of West Vancouver and the key issues and opportunities currently faced.

The quality of life in West Vancouver has always been relatively high by most measures. It is an affluent and safe community of well-educated and civically engaged residents, and home to a vibrant arts and cultural scene. Its spectacular setting and access to nature and recreational activities, all in close proximity to urban amenities and employment opportunities, makes its location highly desirable as a place to live. Over the years, most West Vancouver residents have enjoyed an enviable standard of living and considered the community an ideal place to raise a family and to remain in for their retirement years. They have developed a strong sense of belonging through solid connections to people and place in West Vancouver.

However, for an increasing number of residents, quality of life has not been improving. More families and workers can no longer afford to live here, more seniors are experiencing isolation and poverty, more teens are challenged by mental health problems, and more young people don't see a place for themselves in the community. There is decreasing age diversity, increasing inequality, more strains on the environment and infrastructure, and getting around has become a significant challenge for many residents and workers.

*What are the effects of a displaced workforce, missing middle class, fewer families, more vulnerable youth, and a growing culture of exclusivity on community vitality and cohesion?*

*What changes need to happen to preserve the things that residents value about their community?*

*How do we ensure that West Vancouver is a welcoming and liveable community for all its residents and workers, now and in the future?*

There is extensive evidence that the overall health and liveability of a community has a significant influence on the health and well-being of the people who live and work there. At the same time, factors such as residents' education, economic situation, civic participation, social connectedness, sense of belonging and connection to place play an important role in community vitality and sustainability. For a community to be healthy, it requires healthy people, a healthy society and healthy environments.

## A LIVABLE COMMUNITY HAS

- A clean, healthy environment, and access to green spaces and parks
- A built environment that is designed for residents of all ages and stages
- Ease of mobility – walkability; access to public transit, bike lanes; well-managed and maintained traffic and roads
- Vibrant and sustainable local economy
- Availability of shops and key services in close proximity
- Availability of work and access to employment opportunities
- Access to health care
- Safety and security – low crime, well-equipped to deal with emergencies
- Access to educational and recreational opportunities
- A vibrant public realm, with welcoming places where people can connect
- Vibrant and diverse arts and cultural activities
- Residents are engaged in the social, economic, and civic life of the community
- Planning, policies, and practices in place for long term resilience and sustainability

## A WELCOMING COMMUNITY:

- ✓ Is inclusive -accepting of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, cultures, faiths, genders, socioeconomic status
- ✓ Includes a range of ages, interests, activities and opportunities for inter-generational and inter-cultural connections
- ✓ Fosters a culture of volunteerism, philanthropy, civic literacy and stewardship and provides opportunities for contribution and civic engagement



# BELONGING, INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

A community includes more than the people who live there - it is also made up of the people who teach us, protect us, transport us, deliver our mail, and serve our coffee, as well as family members and others who care for us, and visitors who are here to study, work, or explore. A welcoming and inclusive community fosters belonging for everyone by embracing diversity in all its forms, and by creating the conditions for connections among people, and with place. While West Vancouver's cultural diversity has increased, age and socioeconomic diversity have decreased, and there are fewer young people and families, plus a shrinking middle class. Belonging and diversity are further challenged by an aging population, limited suitable housing options, and young people who don't see a place for themselves in this community.

**In West Vancouver, 88% of residents feel a strong or very strong sense of community belonging, and life satisfaction is rated at 8.33 out of 10.**

## Newcomer

**West Vancouver's total immigrant population is now 45% (18,615), and of these, 7% (2,940) are recent immigrants who arrived in Canada between 2011- 2016.**

West Vancouver now has the largest newcomer population (by percentage) on the North Shore compared to North Vancouver City (38.2%) or NV District (31.2%).

36% of West Vancouver residents are visible minorities, an increase from 28% in 2011. Among recent immigrants, 82% report as a visible minority.

Immigrants Speaking neither English nor French at Home	Other than English Language Most Often Spoken at Home	
	2016	2011
All West Van Immigrants	44%	37%
Recent WV Immigrants	73%	68%
Recent Metro Immigrants	62%	-

Mandarin 19% (3,600)  
Farsi 14% (2,540)  
Cantonese 2% (450)  
Korean 2% (390)

**Learning English:** 1,469 newcomers participated in classes at the North Shore English Language Centre, co-delivered by the North Shore Multicultural Society and MOSAIC during 2017/18. More classes located in West Vancouver could make this learning more accessible for new residents.

## Faith, Spirituality & Belonging

Many West Vancouver residents belong to a faith community, and the municipality is home to numerous churches and a synagogue that accommodate at least 14 formal congregations of various religions. However, Canada is among the least religious countries in the world, with only 27% of Canadians reporting that religion is important in their lives, far below the global average of 55%.

*Belonging is about being and feeling part of a collective "we". How do we build stronger interconnectivity?*

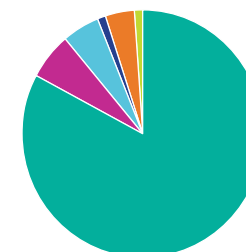
How Teens Feel about their Faith	2018	
	WV	BC
Very/Somewhat Important	36%	38%
Little Important	19%	16%
Not Important	37%	39%
Don't Know	9%	12%

## Young People

Younger members of the community are as equally diverse as the general population. Youth in West Vancouver have a stronger sense of belonging than their provincial counterparts. There is, though, a marked rise in teens feeling discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and family income.

Belonging & Teens	2018		2013	
	WV	BC	WV	BC
Feel a sense of being part of their community				
Very Much /Quite a Bit	47%	42%	49%	39%
Somewhat	38%	36%	39%	41%
Little or Not	15%	22%	11%	19%

**WV Teens Sexual Orientation (Self-identified)**



- Straight 83%
- Mostly Straight 6%
- Bisexual 5%
- Not Sure Yet 4%
- Gay/Lesbian 1%
- Not Listed 1%

The Need for Kindness & Respect	2018	2013
Teens report they feel discrimination based on:		
Physical Appearance	19%	16%
Race, Ethnicity, Skin Colour	14%	12%
Gender/Sex	11%	4%
Sexual Orientation	5%	3%
Income/Family Income	8%	3%
Disability	2%	-

*What needs to change for our young adults to feel that they are part of a welcoming and inclusive community?*

# CULTURE & ARTS

Culture, arts and heritage thrive in West Vancouver, and festivals, cultural celebrations and arts events are important community builders. Besides creating space for connection among diverse ages, cultures and interests, they foster belonging, celebrate community, connect people to place and support local economic development. While there has been significant growth in the number and types of events and the size of audiences, arts facilities are becoming strained. Many are not suitable for the purpose or the current and forecasted capacity needs as the community grows.

**Arts organizations report steady participation growth, reflecting the interest in new, local experiences and entertainment. Areas we could continue to improve include affordability, increased arts funding, and expanded intercultural and cross-generational programming.**



Emily Carr, Hazelton Totem, 1912, gifted by Sandra Therrien Schemmer in memory of Dr. and Mrs. E. E. Therrien to the permanent collection of the West Vancouver Art Museum.

## A Home for Art

The District of West Vancouver holds over 100 pieces in its public art inventory, including paintings, prints, murals, monuments and sculptures. As an expression of the community's visual identity, many of these works are on display in prominent locations not only for the enjoyment of residents and visitors but to also provoke thought and interaction, particularly about the connection to place.

## A Home for Artists

West Vancouver has long been a home to artists and architects who are drawn here by the beauty, diversity and the creative community.

- 1,150 residents (6 % of the labour force) were employed in the arts, culture, recreation and sports sectors in 2016. This is significantly higher than the BC proportion (4%) and double the national rate of 3%.
- At 3%, the number of residents (15 years and older) who studied visual and performing arts and communications technologies in 2016 was higher than both the provincial and national averages. How West Vancouver can continue to attract and support local artists will be influenced by housing mix, affordability and business/studio opportunities.

To service the current and growing arts market there is a pressing need for investment in purpose-built, sustainable and accessible arts facilities such as galleries, studios, plus performance, rehearsal and teaching spaces. How does this happen? Who is responsible? Who leads?

### Arts are a growing and important aspect of West Vancouver

Organization	Programming	Audience
Kay Meek Arts Centre (Operated in partnership with West Vancouver Schools)	370 performances	60,600
WV Community Arts Council (Silk Purse)	127 (Silk Purse) plus 210 affiliate shows	21,150
WV Arts Museum	8 exhibits	36,000
Ferry Building	17 exhibits featuring 114 artists	35,500
WV Memorial Library	Programming throughout the year	35,000

All numbers include youth specific programming as reported

## Belonging Through Interculturalism

Belonging is built and strengthened through shared experiences and celebrating each other's culture through festivals and gatherings of all sizes.

### Bridge Festival

In June 2019, over 10,000 people attended West Vancouver's first Bridge Festival, a day of celebration to share and highlight the diverse cultures in our community through art, music, performances, exhibits and food.

### Harmony Arts Festival

With more than 150 free events and 140,000+ attendees, the Harmony Arts Festival continues to grow year over year. The 10-day festival, now in its 30th year, offers art exhibits, musical performances, film screenings and food experiences.

## The Intersection between Art, Design & Legacy

In 2018, 235 people participated in the West Vancouver Art Museum's Annual West Coast Modern Home Tour. Since 2005, the tour has welcomed almost 3,000 guests and featured over 50 architecturally innovative West Vancouver residences, showcasing the community as a hub for mid-century and modern design.

## Norooz (Persian New Year)

Each year Ambleside Park is host to the Persian celebration of the arrival of spring. Thousands of Iranian families and friends, along with community members, join together for fire jumping, musical performances and cuisine.

## Lunar (Chinese) New Year

Introduced in 2016, members of the West Vancouver Chinese community have led the way in establishing an inclusive Lunar New Year celebration with a weekend of lion dancing, performances and crafts. Over 3,000 guests attended in 2019.

# ECONOMIC VITALITY

West Vancouver residents have among the highest median incomes in the country, and a highly professional workforce. However, growing economic inequality in the community is reflected in a shrinking middle class, fewer younger families and youth, increasing poverty among older residents, and a largely non-resident workforce. Many employers struggle to attract and retain staff, largely due to housing costs and availability. The disconnect between property values and incomes continues to increase, and those with caregiving expenses and responsibilities, whether childcare or seniors' home care, experience further financial strains.

The median household income (before tax) in West Vancouver in 2015 was \$90,000, while the average was \$196,000. This compares to the BC median of \$70,000 and average of \$90,000. 20% of West Vancouver households had an after-tax income of less than \$30,000, comparable to the provincial rate of 21%. However, 40% of households had an after-tax income of more than \$100,000, significantly higher than the 24% provincial rate.

## Seniors Under Pressure

- In 2016, 11 % of West Vancouver residents 65 and older were considered low income, (12% women and 10% men) an increase from the 2011 rate of 10%, and higher than the Metro Vancouver rate of 10%.
- For a once-daily home support visit (public health), a senior with an income of \$28,000 is required to pay \$9,000 per year (\$733 per month), a significant expense for most seniors.
- With fewer family members residing locally, seniors face more loneliness and increasing complexity in maneuvering appropriate, fair-valued services. Elder fraud/abuse is a growing risk driving the need for seniors' advocate support for health and financial well-being.

## Lone Parent Family Households

In 2016, 14% of West Vancouver families were lone-parent families, an increase from 12% in 2011. Of the total 1,685 lone-parent families, 83% were female-led, an increase from 2011, when the proportion was 75%. Thirty-six percent of lone-parent families are considered low income.

## Cost of Child Care

The average cost of childcare is \$1,200 per month: \$1,400 for infants; \$1,300 for toddlers; and \$1,000 for pre-school age children.

## Visible Signs of Wealth

In West Vancouver, one in every 142 people owns a luxury vehicle costing \$150,000 or more, compared to one in 577 in Richmond, and one in 615 in Vancouver.

## Where does FUNDING come from?

Municipal revenue is primarily generated through property taxes applied according to the classification of land use and annual assessed value, to cover municipal services provided. West Vancouver is predominantly a residential community. The lack of an industrial tax base and limited commercial properties within the District of West Vancouver leaves a disproportionately high dependence on residential property tax revenue. Residential properties contribute 93% of West Vancouver's property taxes, and business properties contribute just 6% to revenue. (at a commercial rate of between two and ten times residential rates). The municipality does not significantly benefit from the broader tax base nor the residual corporate support. The result is more need for private funding to support initiatives.

## Predominantly a Community of Professionals and Retirees

Approximately half of the residents work (52%), and of West Vancouver's labour force of 18,540, only 5.5% is unemployed, compared to the provincial rate of 6.7%.

Of those employed, more than 40% work in the fields of management, business, finance and administration, while 11% work in health and social assistance, 9% in retail, and 6% in the arts, culture, recreation, and sport sectors.

# 21%

of residents over 65 work full- or part-time.

50% are self-employed, compared to 34% self-employed in the general labour force.

**Young Adults (20-34)** comprise only 11% of West Vancouver's population (vs. 19.5% for BC), posing significant challenges to supporting the local workforce, whether in the service sector, or in positions such as teaching, policing, fire fighting or local government.

**Youth (15-19)** from West Vancouver are less likely to have paid working positions than their counterparts in North Vancouver.

## Local Employment

- In 2018, the largest employment sectors in West Vancouver were retail and personal services, education, government and real estate related. Opportunity areas include personal health care, senior services and tourism.
- West Vancouver's jobs base declined by an average of 175 jobs per year between 2001 and 2011, a period when growth in employment in the region increased by more than 200,000. The current jobs base in West Vancouver is approximately 15,000.
- In 2017, there were 538 new business incorporations in West Vancouver, an increase from 459 in 2016.
- Although the number of business licenses issued annually in the District fluctuates, there has been a significant overall increase over the past seven years from 4,519 in 2012 to 5,838 in 2018. The increase reflects, in part, the high number of suppliers from outside of the community doing licensed business such as construction and health care.



# ENVIRONMENT

West Vancouver's natural beauty and easy access to mountains, forests, and the ocean contribute to a strong connection to place and an appreciation for nature among residents. As environmental issues take on increasing urgency globally, the community has been taking action locally to mitigate the effects of climate-related events, such as floods, fires, water issues, heat waves, and sea-level rise. Other important steps undertaken to raise awareness and encourage action include placing an economic value on the community's natural assets, and embedding the District's Community Energy and Emissions Plan into the Official Community Plan. Residents can help make a difference by increasing their efforts in carbon and waste reduction, water conservation and protecting green space.

**In June 2019, the District of West Vancouver declared a Climate Emergency, joining a growing movement of communities around the world making similar declarations.**

## How We Manage What We Use

- In 2018, 76% of residential solid waste was recycled or composted in West Vancouver, up from 74% the previous year and higher than the Metro Vancouver rate of 63%.
- Residents generated 210 kg of waste per single-family household, a reduction from 220 kg in 2017, and 8% less than the 228 kg per household produced in 2016.
- Approximately 5,100 tonnes of organic household waste was diverted from the landfill in 2018, including yard waste picked up curbside for composting.

Since 2017, all District of West Vancouver major events aim to be zero-waste, including Canada Day, Community Day/Bridge Festival, and Nowruz. In 2018, a total of 92% of waste at these events was diverted to composting or recycling. For example, the Harmony Arts Festival diverted 92% of its waste from landfills, including 735 bags of garbage, 5700 kg of items recycled, saving 15.4 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

*As a community that lies between the ocean and mountains and is crossed by streams that connect the two, how can we best safeguard assets while managing sea-level rise and flood risk? How does the community learn about environmental changes and challenges?*



## Conservation & Stewardship

West Vancouver has 135 kilometres of trails, 30 kilometres of shoreline, and its 220 plus hectares of parkland (over 4.4 hectares per 1000 residents) is significantly higher than the provincial average of 2.5 hectares per 1000 population.

## Unwelcomed Guests

There are 19 invasive plant species in West Vancouver that are targeted for removal and control. The two of most concern are knotweed and hogweed, which can affect human health, damage infrastructure and degrade natural ecosystems.

In 2018, volunteers contributed approximately 15,000 hours participating in 25 organized stewardship-related events and activities, including invasive species removal and native species planting. Approximately 100 m<sup>3</sup> of priority invasive plant material was removed from West Vancouver parks and natural areas.

## Natural Resources Valuation

Besides recreation, West Vancouver's natural assets such as forests, foreshore, waterways and grasslands provide water filtration, carbon sequestration, storm water management and erosion control. Other benefits may include lower health care expenditures due to reduced air pollution enabled by forests. The value of these benefits is still being assessed but is currently estimated at between \$1.14 and \$3.2 billion.

## Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Housing

About 95% of West Vancouver's Green House Gas emissions (GHGs) are generated by the community, with 54% coming from heating homes.

The average 1960's home produces 6 tonnes of GHGs per person per year. With 48% of West Vancouver's single detached homes constructed pre-1971 (4,000 homes), home energy retrofits would be one of the most effective ways of reducing GHGs in the community.

## Going Electric



3.5% of the 31,000 vehicles insured in West Vancouver in 2017 were electric (410) or hybrids (680), an increase from 0.9% in

2015. There are currently 21 public plug-ins in the District of West Vancouver.



# GETTING AROUND

Geography and low density have contributed to West Vancouver being largely car dependent, but other factors have also caused a significant increase in traffic congestion. These include the growing non-resident workforce, limited transit options, kids being driven to school (from both inside and outside West Vancouver), drive-through traffic from Squamish and Whistler commuters, plus ferry traffic. Increasing use of public transit, walking and cycling, increasing density, and creating more affordable housing options are some of the individual and collective choices that can result in significant improvements in community livability and health.

In 2016, West Vancouver's population density was 487 people per square km, an increase of 13 people per square km from 2001, but significantly lower than Metro Vancouver's density of 855 people per square km.

## Getting Around

In 2016, the median commuting time for West Vancouver residents was 20.5 minutes and the average was 26 minutes, similar to provincial and national average commuting times.

Place of work and distance travelled both play a factor in average commuting time.

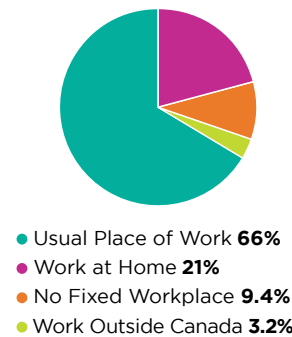
- 1 in 5 residents work from home, and 75% travel somewhere - most often to Vancouver.
- In 2016, 27% of residents commuted less than 5 km to work (compared to 42% in BC and 37% in Canada), there are also fewer residents making longer trips with only 4% travelling further than 35 km (versus BC at 6% and Canada 8%).

## Coming from Away

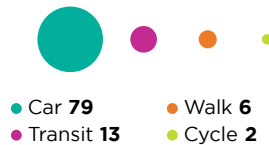
- Between 2011 and 2016, there were 2,900 more people working on the North Shore, but the working-age population (age 20 to 64) grew by only 900.
- In 2016, 41.4% of the North Shore's workforce came from elsewhere in the region, an increase from 40% in 2011. Typically, commute time for these workers is longer and less reliable due to both multiple points of congestion and public transit limitations.
- 70% of West Vancouver's workforce, including 90% of municipal employees, and more than 25% of students enrolled in West Vancouver schools, commute into the municipality.
- In 2016, daily crossings of the Lions Gate Bridge ranged from 60,000 - 70,000, while the Ironworkers' Memorial Bridge saw almost 118,000 vehicle crossings each day. Approximately one-quarter of North Shore highway traffic during the afternoon rush period is for local trips.
- Expanded and improved transit options are one solution being examined through the Integrated North Shore Transportation Planning Project (INSTPP/XNSTTPP). Enhanced bus service could help congestion as each full bus is the equivalent of taking 40 cars off the road.

What do community members need to understand regarding new transit options in order to assess near- and long-term impacts and benefits?

Where WV Residents Work



Commuting Mode



## Personal Vehicles

There is a high degree of car ownership in West Vancouver, with 31,000 vehicles insured for a driving-age population of approximately 36,000.

## Getting to School

69% of West Vancouver students age 12-18 travelled to school in a car, and 15% travelled by bus. Only 16% used active modes such as walking, cycling or skateboarding, compared to 29% across BC and 37% in the rest of Vancouver Coastal Health Region.

## Seniors' Shuttle

In 2018, the privately funded West Vancouver Seniors Shuttle operated for 1,736 hours over 248 days of service, providing accessible, low-cost local transportation to 8,062 riders.

## Space for Cycling

Investment in cycling lanes has been a priority for Vancouver and North Vancouver communities. West Vancouver has 5 km of dedicated lanes in addition to mountain biking trails on Cypress Mountain.

## Young Adults & Transportation

With an increasing awareness of how actions impact climate change, combined with the high cost of car ownership, an increasing number of young adults are choosing transit over personal vehicle travel.

*During the Vital Conversations with Young Adults and Youth both groups asked for expanded transit services, including a night bus.*

How does improving ways of getting around help to build stronger, sustainable neighbourhood communities? What is the right mix between walkability, transit, and cars?

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

West Vancouver residents enjoy good health overall and a long life expectancy, largely due to health determinants such as high income and education levels, healthy behaviours, good access to health services and social supports, and a clean environment. However, the convergence of factors such as an aging population, less affordable and suitable housing, increased demands on health and social supports, and a largely non-resident workforce suggests a decline in health and wellness in the future.

**Life expectancy at birth is an indicator of overall health, and at 86 years, West Vancouver residents continue to have a higher life expectancy than the BC average of 83. Between 2011 and 2016, life expectancy increased by a half-year for men and a full year for women. However, with an older population, there is a corresponding increase in chronic health conditions.**

## Taking Care

Not all seniors require caregiving as they grow older, and many are caregivers themselves, caring for spouses, friends, neighbours, grandchildren, other family members. While paid care is available from a variety of businesses and community organizations, it is often not accessible or affordable to many who need it, **and over 80% of care is provided by family and friend caregivers.**

**28% of BC residents are caregivers**, 60% of whom are employed, and most are women. It is estimated that 690,000 people in Metro Vancouver identify as caregivers, and if these figures hold true for West Vancouver, then close to 12,000 local residents are caregivers.

However, caregiving can take a significant physical, emotional, and/or financial toll on caregivers. 31% of family caregivers in BC are in distress - the second-highest rate of caregiver distress in Canada, and an increase of 3.4% in the last five years.

As West Vancouver's population ages, caregiving for many will become an even greater challenge than it already is. The number of seniors requiring caregiving will increase, while both paid and unpaid caregivers will be less likely to live in or easily access the community due to housing costs and transportation challenges.

## CRITICAL NEED: More Support for Family Caregivers

There are currently 12 adult day program spaces in West Vancouver provided through Vancouver Coastal Health and located at the Kiwanis Manor, a reduction from 30 spaces in 2017. The space at Kiwanis Manor is a temporary arrangement.

*A sustainable solution for caregiver respite that can accommodate the growing need is a top priority for seniors in the community.*

## Where People Live Matters

In Canada, approximately 92% of seniors reside in private households, and fewer than 5% live in nursing homes or long-term care facilities. In West Vancouver, there are 146 assisted living and memory care units and 569 long-term care beds for seniors. Our seniors population (over 65) is approximately 11,800.

## Social Isolation—Reach out and Connect with Seniors

28% of West Vancouver residents live alone, slightly lower than the provincial proportion of 29%. It is estimated that up to 16% of seniors 65 and older experience social isolation. In West Vancouver, this would mean that approximately 1,900 older residents are socially isolated.

*Living alone increases the potential for individuals to become less socially connected, particularly as they age, which can have significant negative effects on physical and mental health.*

## A CARING COMMUNITY: Taking Action on Memory

In 2018 the three North Shore municipalities took concrete steps to work together to support people living with dementia by collaboratively developing the **Dementia-friendly North Shore Action Plan**. The goal is to introduce more dementia-friendly policies, resources, programs and services.

## Home Support

In 2018/19, there were 2,697 (23%) seniors 65 and older living in West Vancouver and Bowen Island with active referrals to the Vancouver Coastal Health Home and Community Care program. Currently, less than 100 West Vancouver residents receive non-medical home support through the Better at Home program. There are also a variety of other not-for-profit and for-profit agencies that provide medical and/or non-medical services to support older adults to age in place.

*Is West Vancouver the canary in the coal mine? With a disproportionately aging population and a shrinking working-age segment to support service delivery, who will provide the growing list of health care and community services?*

# HEALTH & YOUTH

“The kids are alright” – or are they? The health and wellness of youth and young adults affect the entire family and the community. The BC Adolescent Health Survey (BCAHS), conducted every five years since 1992, gathers information on the physical and emotional health of youth. The survey focuses on “protective factors” – the conditions and attributes that support young people’s positive physical, mental, emotional and social development.

**In 2018, 84% of West Vancouver students age 12 to 18 self-reported their general health as being good or excellent, compared to the BC average of 81%. Despite this, there is a growing need for youth-driven and youth-serving organizations and facilities in West Vancouver.**

In 2018, an increase in stress, anxiety and mood disorders among West Vancouver youth coincided with shifts in a number of behaviours that are known to contribute to declines in health and wellness, particularly mental health. These include sleep, physical activity, exposure to nature, a sense of safety, belonging and inclusion, and relationships with supportive adults.

## Creating habits that protect well-being and strengthen resiliency.

Students who slept longer and went offline before going to bed (turning off or silencing their phone, or putting it in another room) were more likely to report good or excellent overall health and excellent mental health.

**Protective factors** also include family, school, and community connectedness. For example, youth who had an adult in their community who they felt really cared about them were more likely to feel:

- Connected to their community (53% vs. 22% who did not have such an adult relationship)
- Safe in their neighbourhood during the day (94% vs. 87%) and night (69% vs. 56%)
- Hopeful for the future (71% vs. 56%)

**Go Outside and Play.** Research indicates that time spent outside reduces stress and symptoms of attention deficit disorders, as well as making children healthier, happier and smarter.

## Youth Mental Health

74% of West Vancouver students rate their mental health as good or excellent, while 26% report as fair or poor. Of the 26% who report a mood or anxiety disorder, 11% experience depression and 15% experience anxiety or panic attacks.

## Getting (or not getting) Help When Needed

18% of West Vancouver students reported needing emotional or mental health services in the past year but didn’t get them due to not knowing where to go (35%), they didn’t want their parents to know (58%), or they thought or hoped the problem would go away (58%).

Felt Stressed in the Past Month	
Little/No Stress	31%
Some, enough to bother me	25%
Quite a bit	30%
Don't Know	14%

## Snooze Time

In 2018, only 45% of West Vancouver teens slept at least eight hours per night—a decline from 58% in 2013. This compares to the provincial average of 48%, which declined from 53% in 2013. Older students were less likely than younger ones to have slept eight or more hours. The National Sleep Foundation recommends 8.5 to 9.25 hours of sleep each night for adolescents.

## Vaping

Vaping in West Vancouver is on the rise. During a one month period, 26% of West Vancouver students reported vaping with nicotine (BC average 21%) and 15% vaped without nicotine.

## Cannabis

27% of teens have tried cannabis compared to the BC average of 25%. In 2018, students generally waited longer to try cannabis than those in previous studies.

Waited until 15+ years for first use of Cannabis		
	2018	2013
WV	59%	44%
BC	47%	41%

## Physical Activity

At least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity is recommended for young people up to the age of 18. In 2018, only 15% of West Vancouver students met this guideline, compared to 17% of students across BC. In West Vancouver, 9% of students did not participate in any moderate to vigorous physical activity in the previous week, compared to 10% of students across BC.

## Youth-oriented health care access

The Foundry in North Vancouver is an integrated health and social service centre for young people aged 12 - 24, providing a one-stop-shop to access mental health care, substance use services, primary care, social services and youth and family peer supports. 13 - 20% of the youth accessing primary and mental health services at the Foundry live in West Vancouver.

*Services such as these that were closer to home was one of the top suggestions regarding youth wellness during the Vital Conversations with youth and young adults.*

# HOUSING & COMMUNITY BUILDING

Adequate and affordable housing is essential to an individual's well-being and to a community's liveability, for all demographics. When suitable housing is unattainable for many, ripple effects are felt; in the local economy and workforce, traffic and transportation, the community's health and well-being including levels of social connectedness and inclusion, as well as, diversity, vitality and resilience.

Housing continues to be a defining issue for the community. Decisions made now will impact who lives here, what services are available, and how we see ourselves in the future. In 2018, West Vancouver updated the Official Community Plan and included recommendations regarding housing mix and accessibility, incorporating apartments and rentals as priority elements to community building.

## Housing Stock: The Backbone to Building Neighbourhoods

There were 16,935 total private dwellings in West Vancouver in 2016, slightly down from 17,075 in 2011, attributable to a decrease in occupied detached homes.

Housing Type	2016	2011
Single Detached	9,355	9,845
Semi-detached/ Row/Suited	2,410	2,285
Apartments	5,170	4,940

## Homeownership

After years of steady increases, the **median home** price in West Vancouver fell from \$2.9 million in 2017 to \$2.7 million in June of 2019.

The number of **owner households** in West Vancouver decreased from 79% in 2011 to 75% in 2016, and 44% of owner households have a mortgage on their property.

West Vancouver continues to be one of the least affordable communities in the Lower Mainland, making it difficult to attract young families and early years professionals.

## The Other Face of Homeownership

- With 9.2% of homes unoccupied in 2016, West Vancouver continues to have the highest rate of empty homes in Metro Vancouver, where the average is 8.2%.
- While some of these homes may not be empty but only temporarily occupied, it poses the unique question as to how becoming a destination community with seasonal residents could change the services needed in the community.
- 23% of West Vancouver homes are not owner-occupied compared to the Metro Vancouver average of 26%. The median value of non-owner occupied homes is \$3.2 million.
- At 6.2%, the proportion of homes in West Vancouver owned by an individual whose principal residence is outside of Canada is also higher than the Metro average of 4.8%.

## West Vancouver Renters

For the 25% of households that are renters, the average monthly rent in 2018 was:

- \$1,275 for a bachelor suite
- \$1,629 for a 1-bedroom
- \$2,408 for a 2-bedroom
- \$3,621 for a 3-bedroom

The overall average monthly rent of \$1,896 represents an 8% increase over 2016.

**Vacancy rate** in West Vancouver improved from .2% in 2016 to .6% in 2018 but still trails the Metro Vancouver's vacancy rate of 1%, which increased from .7% in 2016.

In 2019, there are 1,900 purpose-built rentals in West Vancouver, with only 278 units added in the past 10 years. However, recent approvals of new developments will see over 300 units added in the next few years, and several other projects are currently going through the re-zoning space application process.

**"Vertical blocks"** is one of the new ways to think about apartments - with similar needs and desire for neighbourly connections and feeling part of a community. An example would be new developments that take steps to consider both living and working in the community.

*What are the ways to create community connections, recognizing that the structure of our neighbourhoods is changing (with more homes empty or occupied only temporarily), and when suitable housing is increasingly unattainable for the middle-income earners?*



# HOUSING & COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community building is about more than houses—it's about spaces. Dynamic neighbourhood design takes into account a broad spectrum of needs, both physical and emotional. The elements we value in West Vancouver center around our natural beauty and scenery, small-town atmosphere, sense of community, services and lifestyle. Whether through local area revitalization initiatives (such as Horseshoe Bay) or purpose-built neighbourhoods, as in the new Cypress Village, these enhancements will be instrumental to both the form and function of the community.

People feel they belong when they are connected to people - family, friends, neighbours, workers (teachers, caregivers, shopkeepers, etc.), and also when they feel a connection to place—neighbourhood, community, landscape, history, heritage.

## The Invisible Risk of Poverty

In 2016, 14% of West Vancouver households were in **dire housing circumstances**, spending at least half of their household income on shelter costs.

This is a slight increase from the 2011 rate of 13% and comparable to the provincial rate of 15%. Of those in dire housing circumstances in 2016, 48% were seniors.

## Looking at Affordability

West Vancouver is not exempt from the mounting pressure of housing costs. These increases are an indication that income is not keeping pace with housing costs.

- **31% of West Vancouver homeowners are spending more than 30% of income on shelter**, compared to the Metro Vancouver rate of 25%, and considerably higher than the BC average of 21%. This is a significant increase from the 2011 rate of 26%
- **58% of West Vancouver renters are spending more than 30% of income on shelter**, compared to the Metro Vancouver and BC averages of 43%. This is a slight increase from the rate of 55% in 2011, which was even then 10 points higher than Metro Vancouver and BC.

## Social Housing

- 14% of West Vancouver tenant households live in **subsidized housing**, comparable to the Metro Vancouver rate of 13%.
- There are 579 **social housing units** in West Vancouver, a 17% increase from the 495 units in 2015. However, the BC Housing waitlist for social housing has increased to 132 in 2018, including 64 seniors and 20 persons with disabilities. In 2016, the waitlist was 96 and included 50 seniors and 20 persons with disabilities.
- Kiwanis North Shore Housing Society provides 303 units of **seniors' social housing** in West Vancouver. In 2019, there were 50 people on the waiting list for accommodation.
- There are 42 **equity co-operative** units in West Vancouver. As a non-profit facility, these units remain below market value, offering seniors more affordable housing for independent living.

## Who Will Live Here In The Future?

In 2016, 71% of young adults aged 20 to 34 in West Vancouver were living with a parent.

**As our youth become young adults, one of the greatest barriers to belonging is that life in West Vancouver is unachievable due the lack of affordable housing and transportation options. Even for young professionals, it is daunting without new purposeful housing strategies and developments.**

**Planning for Growth:** It is estimated that to meet the anticipated growth outlined in the West Vancouver Official Community Plan (OCP), approximately 230 new units should be added each year to the housing pool. The OCP identified that a mix of townhouses, laneway houses, updated single-family homes, and affordable apartments would be optimal to meet the needs of current and anticipated residents.

*If we do not create housing for the next generation, will we by default, give away our community to those who have a different understanding of what a community is or can be?*

# LEARNING

West Vancouver residents are among the best educated in the country. With our changing demographics, we are seeing more English language learners of all ages. However, an increasing number of children are arriving at kindergarten unprepared for learning. If this preparedness is not addressed in a timely and effective way, resiliency is negatively affected. Academic success in later years depends heavily on kindergarten readiness.

**83% of West Vancouver residents aged 25-64 have a university degree, or post secondary certificate or diploma, compared to the provincial rate of 64%, and the national rate of 54%. In 2016, 64% of recent immigrants (between 2011-2016) aged 25-64 held a bachelor's degree or higher, 11% greater than Vancouver Metro's recent immigrants (53.2%).**

## Early Years Readiness and Resiliency

In 2016, 28% of kindergarteners in West Vancouver were vulnerable on one or more scales of the **Early Development Index**, which assesses school readiness in five areas: physical health and well-being; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; communication skills and general knowledge.

While still lower than the provincial average of 32%, this represents a meaningful increase in childhood vulnerability from the score of 22% in 2013 and the score of 17% of children vulnerable in 2006. Overall, the areas of greatest vulnerability are communication skill, as well as, language and cognitive development.

On a neighbourhood basis, the current scores indicate increased vulnerability in Caulfeild/West Bay and Ambleside/Dundarave. Scores have stayed the same in Horseshoe Bay/Bowen Island/Lions Bay and improved in the British Properties.

The British Properties Family Hub may have contributed to the reduction in the vulnerability rate of kindergartners in that neighbourhood, down from 33% in 2013 to 26% in 2016. The Hub offers multi-generational, flexible community health and education programs for families, seniors, singles and children in the area.

In 2018-19, 823 immigrant families in West Vancouver accessed the Settlement Worker in Schools (SWIS) program to learn about the Canadian school system and how to participate in the school community.

## The West Vancouver Memorial Library - more than books!

In 2018, there were over 500,000 in person and 650,000 online visits to the **West Vancouver Memorial Library**, and 30,600 active borrowers circulated a total of 949,000 items. While the number of materials circulated is down from the 1,058,980 circulated in 2015, the 35,000 people participating in programs and events in 2018 is a significant increase from the 29,960 who attended events that year.

The WVML introduced a multi-year program, Honouring Reconciliation, with the goal of expanding awareness of the strength and resilience Indigenous peoples have shown in the face of intolerance, a lack of understanding and racism.

## Exceptional Performance

A **graduation rate** of 97.5% has been maintained by West Vancouver students, significantly exceeding the provincial rate of 86.4%. Over 87% of West Vancouver students proceed directly to post-secondary education (2018), a rate also unchanged from 2016. While this achievement is praiseworthy, youth and young adults report it is equally important that the 13% who do not proceed into post-secondary education have appropriate support to achieve other goals.

**Student achievement** in West Vancouver ranks in the 100th percentile among BC public school districts, based on the number of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) and results from annual Grade 10, 11 and 12 government program examinations.

### School Enrollment: Almost 10,000 students

<b>West Vancouver Schools (public)</b> 7,346 students	7,346 includes 536 international fee-paying. 76% reside in catchment (West Vancouver, Bowen Island, Lions Bay), 19% North Vancouver, 3% Vancouver. 17 campuses K-12		
<b>Independent schools (private)</b> 2,393 students	<b>Collingwood</b> 1,256 (JK-12)	<b>Mulgrave</b> 925 (JK-12)	<b>St. Anthony's</b> 212 (K-7)

- In the public West Vancouver schools, 16% of students (or 1,175) are English Language Learners (ELL). 31% of teens report speaking a language other than English most of the time when at home.
- Among school-aged children and youth in West Vancouver public schools in 2018-19, 8% have special needs designation, an increase from the 2015-16 school year when 6.75% of students were designated. In the same period, the BC average of special needs students increased from 9.5% to 11.4%.
- 5% of West Vancouver youth age 12 -18 report having a diagnosed learning disability, which may be supported with personal learning plans and enrichment programs. The national average is 10%.

# SAFETY & SECURITY

Community safety is about more than prevention of injury and crime—it is also concerned with people’s perception of safety, and their state of well-being within social and physical environments, including their psychological and emotional safety. Because of this, safety means different things to different people, and perceptions of safety, whether real or not, affect the way people feel and interact in their community. At the same time, it is known that vibrant, cohesive and participatory communities tend to be safer.

**Busy is good for safety—when people are on the street, out of cars, walking and connecting; when there is housing diversity; when the community is welcoming and inclusive; and when they feel they belong, the community is both more liveable and safer.**

West Vancouver Police Crime Reports			
Type of Crime	2018	2017	2016
Crimes Against Person (Violent Crime)	282	262	252
Crimes Against Property (Property Crime)	1,747	1,652	1,698
Drug Offences	133	133	146
Motor Vehicle Incident—Fatal	1	1	1
Motor Vehicle Incident—Injury	60	107	118
Motor Vehicle Incident—Damage	405	369	433
Youth Crime	6	3	1
Domestic Violence (Intimate Partner Violence)	28	32	32
Frauds (all categories)	217	178	153
Identity Fraud	14	18	24

## Emergency Preparedness

According to a 2018 provincial survey on emergency preparedness, Metro Vancouver residents were most concerned about earthquakes (79%), extended power outages (58%), severe weather (58%), disease outbreaks (46%) and wildfires (39%).

## West Vancouver is Vulnerable

Ringed by mountains, forests, and ocean, West Vancouver is more vulnerable when an emergency happens, particularly given our dependency on bridges. In preparing for natural or climate-related disasters, residents are advised to have at least three days of emergency supplies on hand and be as self-reliant as possible. Less than half of our first responders live locally— only one out of a force of 96 West Vancouver Fire & Rescue members lives in West Vancouver (38 live on the North Shore); just five of the 86 West Vancouver Police force members live in West Vancouver (39 on the North Shore).

## Neighbour to Neighbour

- Older community members are disproportionately at risk in natural disasters due to factors that include mobility and medical treatments. Additionally, homebound seniors may be “invisible” to neighbours who may not be aware there is someone needing assistance.
- Newcomers and non-English speakers are also at increased risk in emergency situations, as they may be unfamiliar with potential hazards and preparedness planning.
- Knowing your neighbours is an important part of preparing for, surviving and recovering from natural disasters.

## Youth and Safety

While youth generally report feeling safe, there are concerns around being bullied and online safety.

- 56% of West Vancouver students reported being bullied in person in the past year, including being teased, purposely excluded or physically assaulted. This is an increase from 51% in 2013, and is slightly higher to the BC average of 53% of BC students who reported being bullied in-person in 2018, compared with 50% in 2013.
- 12% of West Vancouver students age 12-18 reported being cyber-bullied in the past year, the same rate as in 2013. This compares to the provincial average of 14% (17% females and 11% males), including 23% of non-binary youth (those identifying with no gender).

### Students (age 12-18) Often or Always feel safe:

- In their neighbourhood during the day and in their home (both 95%)
- In their neighbourhood at night (78%)
- Using public transit (75%)

## Importance of Supportive Adults

Among West Vancouver students, 74% report having an adult inside their family who they could talk to about a serious problem; however, non-binary and LGBTQ2 students were the least likely to feel they had a supportive adult within their family.

- 64% of students in this age group report having an adult in the neighbourhood or community who really cares about them; however, only 27% feel that there is an adult outside their family who they could talk to about a serious problem. These rates have decreased by half over the past 10 years, which is a cause for concern as there is significant evidence that having positive adult role models, coaches or mentors is an important protective factor influencing individual resilience, and the prevention of crime or victimization.
- Many groups who work with youth (sports teams, clubs, schools or service groups) are all reporting difficulty in recruiting volunteers due in part to the changing demographics of fewer age-appropriate adults and the larger proportion of ageing seniors.

# VOLUNTEERISM & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

West Vancouver residents have a strong tradition of community engagement and giving back, and their contributions are critical to the success and sustainability of many local events, programs and activities. There is also a high degree of civic literacy - the knowledge and skills needed to participate in community change efforts. However, civic literacy and engagement does not always lead to community cohesion, and there is evidence that the growing economic divide negatively affects change efforts aimed at benefiting the broader community.

**West Vancouver has a strong culture of volunteerism, yet changing demographics are challenging the recruitment of new volunteers in arts, service, recreation and other areas. Causing one long-time active volunteer to ask, “Who will volunteer for me?”**

## Non-Profits in the Community

Of the more than 200 non-profit societies in West Vancouver, 120 are also registered with Canada Revenue Agency as charities, allowing them to issue tax receipts. There are 317 registered charities in North Vancouver, and hundreds of other non-profit societies and community groups. Many of these organizations serve all of the North Shore.

Most local non-profits operate with the support of large volunteer teams giving thousands of hours to the community each year.

### Sampling of Volunteer Commitment

Organization	Hours	Volunteers
WV Community Centre	15,816	492
Kay Meek Arts Centre	6,300	135
WV Community Arts Centre	1,700	45
WV Art Museum	2,400	N/A
Ferry Building	2,670	50
WV Seniors Centre	46,780	941

## Youth Volunteers

West Vancouver’s 2018 Municipal Youth Awards recognized over 200 local young people, including 16 individuals who received Youth Recognition Awards, and 18 who received Youth Community Enhancement Awards. Another 185 youth were part of the 28 groups that were recognized for making a significant contribution to their local or global community.



## Giving Circles—democratizing philanthropy

Giving circles are a new “old way” of supporting local charities by harnessing the energy of groups. 100 Women Who Care of the North Shore is a giving circle that meets quarterly to learn about and support local charities. Since its inception in 2016, they have awarded over \$55,000 to 10 local charities.

## Neighbourhood Grants

Help to build connections among residents and increase community belonging. The program was introduced in West Vancouver by the Vancouver Foundation for 2014, with four grants going to West Vancouver projects and 11 in 2017.

West Vancouver Foundation launched its own Neighbourhood Grants program in 2018, funding 33 initiatives. Another 38 have been granted in 2019 to individuals and groups who want to bring people together.

### Participating in Democracy: Voter Turnout

Local	Federal	Provincial	
WV Municipal & School Trustees	West Van- Sunshine Coast- Sea to Sky (WVSCSSC)	WV- Capilano	WV- Garibaldi/ Sea to Sky
2018: 38% 2014: 32%	2015: 74% 2011: 63%	2017: 63% 2013: 67%	2017: 61% 2013: 57%

*In the 2015 Federal election WVSCSSC had higher participation than both BC (68%) and Canada (69%).*

## Civic Engagement

In 2018, 90 members of the public participated in District of West Vancouver civic committees and working groups.

Over 100 newcomers to the community have attended District Hall tours and information sessions with District Council members.

During 2018, the District of West Vancouver received a total of 789 responses to surveys on five projects that had a public engagement component.

In 2019, during the one-month consultation period for the Proposed B-Line for West Vancouver, there were 3,148 public and stakeholder interactions; 948 people attended community or stakeholder meetings, 1,560 completed print or on-line feedback forms, 226 people participated in a telephone poll, and 414 written submissions were received by Mayor and Council.

*Civil discourse is conversation intended to enhance understanding. How can we raise the bar on discourse - especially on the hard questions with long-term implications?*



# 2019 BC VITAL SIGNS SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

## Community Participation and Contribution

The 2019 BC Vital Signs Survey is led and coordinated by the Vancouver Foundation. 7,980 BC residents completed the online survey during June 2019. A link to the survey was distributed by BC's Community Foundations, including the West Vancouver Foundation, and was also sent to Mustel Group's panelists, and to one of their panel partners (Asking Canadians) panelists. Approximately 70% of interviews were collected by Mustel Group and 30% by Community Foundations. Respondents were provided with their choice of English or Chinese to complete the survey. The final sample was weighted to match Statistics Canada census data on the basis of gender, age and region of residence. The results presented address key findings of West Vancouver along with comparisons to the Sea to Sky region community foundations on a consolidated basis.

### IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

30% of WV respondents feel they can make a Big Difference in making their community a better place to live, which is higher than the score of 24% for the Sea to Sky region.

62% agree they have a voice in what happens in the community, while 32% disagree that they have a voice.

The old adage of time, treasure, and talent continues to hold true as respondents feel that volunteering, donating money and raising awareness are the most impactful ways to make a difference for a charity.

### SUPPORTING RECONCILIATION

41% of respondents had watched or listened to information to gain a better understanding.

24% attended an event to learn about the lives and experiences of Indigenous peoples.

1 in 4 re-examined their own perspective and made a personal commitment to support Reconciliation.

20% have spoken out against negative stereotyping.

42% have not taken any action regarding Reconciliation.

### VOLUNTEERING

Volunteerism is highest with those 45+ and continues to rise with active seniors.

Of those who volunteer, the main reasons they participate are that they believe in giving back (41%) and that they have a personal connection to the cause or the organization (21%).

Younger volunteers (45- 65) prefer one-time or short-term volunteer gigs, while seniors who volunteer prefer ongoing commitments with consistent activities.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

When becoming publicly engaged to supporting a cause, respondents indicate that feeling they can make a difference and their voice will be heard (42%), along with being passionate about an issue and have a personal connection (26%), are the top reasons.

How people engage matters as well. Throughout the Sea to Sky region, the most common methods of engagement are completing surveys on municipal issues or providing feedback on specific initiatives (60%), attending a public consultation (46%) and/or attending a meeting at City Hall (28%).

### GIFT PLANNING

The top three reasons for making a donation in the past year (in ranked order):

- Believe in giving back (49%)
- Connection to a cause (26%)
- Connection to an organization (14%)

When deciding to make a financial donation this past year, 70% of active donors were more likely to donate to any organization they already knew and trusted.

28% identified a cause first and then donated to an organization that supports it.

22% of WV respondents have stipulated a charitable gift in their will, while another 18% indicated they haven't yet but plan to. Approximately one-third have not thought about it yet (Sea to Sky region 36%, West Vancouver 27%).

Responders who made a political donation were more likely to support a federal party/candidate (80%) over a provincial (60%) or municipal (27%).

# REFLECTIONS ON 1979

In recognition of our 40th Anniversary, we have collected a few interesting facts about hot issues discussed in West Vancouver during 1979. It takes persistence, care, and a forward-looking approach to build a community that can grow and adapt to changing times, new residents, challenges and opportunities. A few topics have changed, but many are the same. Things to ponder...

## LEARNING

In 1979, the draft West Vancouver Community Plan recommended that “Schools are a continuing community asset, and should be treated as such for recreation and adult education purposes.”

## HOUSING & COMMUNITY

In 1979, re-zoning a limited area in the vicinity of the Recreation Centre was recommended to allow duplexes or townhouses, aimed at leading to a population increase.

## SAFETY

In 1979, the Family Diversion Committee of the West Vancouver Provincial Court put out a call for foster homes in West Vancouver to support youth who were having difficulties remaining in their own homes.

## INCLUSIVITY

In 1979, an Advisory Committee involving six North Shore agencies was formed to unify resources in support of people with special needs, recognizing that they are a part of the total community and should not be living in isolation.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In the 1979 federal election, voter turnout in West Vancouver Howe Sound was 68.6% - significantly higher than the national average of 50%.

## YOUTH

In 1979, West Vancouver’s skateboard park (the first in Canada) was two years old and had been attracting on some days as many as 700 visitors from the Lower Mainland and beyond.

## SENIORS’ HEALTH

In 1979, funding was secured for a new seniors’ centre, estimated to cost \$1.2 million.

## TRANSPORTATION

In 1979, the final draft of the West Vancouver Community Plan included recommendations on maintaining and strengthening priority of public transit over private vehicles in rush hour traffic.

## ENVIRONMENT

In 1979, in an effort to cut garbage bulk and costs, West Vancouver Council approved a recycling program involving public awareness and a trial curbside pick-up service for recyclable materials.

## ECONOMICS

In 1979, West Vancouver’s average individual income was scored High (120%–140% higher) or Very High (140%–201% higher) compared to the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area average annual income of approximately \$14,000.

## CULTURE & ARTS

In 1979, West Vancouver’s draft Community Plan recommended the creation of a Municipal Beautification Fund to accept bequests and donations. These funds were to be used for the acquisition of properties and the beautification of public spaces for which Municipal Parks and Recreation Department do not normally provide, such as sculptures, fountains and street furniture.

# Thank you for reading our 2019 Vital Signs Report and for being interested in how local philanthropy can support and address important local issues.

## WHY GIVE WHERE YOU LIVE?

This 2019 Vital Signs Report shines a light on those aspects of community that we can be proud of. And it also sheds light on areas that need our support.

Vital Signs is about starting conversations, building deeper understanding around issues and trends, and a call to action. Some members of the community will respond through volunteering and advocacy; for others, it will be about providing financial support and investment to address problems that are happening today and perhaps also leaving a legacy for tomorrow.

This report covered ten key themes that touch the lives of people in our community. It discusses the needs of youth, young adults, families and seniors. It also begins to look at issues like invisible poverty, seniors in isolation, access to housing and work, mental health, healthy civic engagement, and how we can all be part of a community that thrives. It is a snapshot as we explore and uncover emerging needs and issues that add to our understanding.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP.

### The need in our community is great and will continue to grow.

In 2019, the West Vancouver Foundation received grant requests valued at three times the funds that were available for community projects. With our ageing population, we can see this number increasing over time.

To summarize, in order for the West Vancouver Foundation to provide a level of funding that matches community current need, our assets have to be three times the size they are now. That means a need to increase assets from \$17 million to \$50 million.

That's a big task! With your help, we're up for the challenge!

## WHAT CAN I DO?

It is a common question, and there are a number of things to consider. Simply put, take a percentage of your annual philanthropy budget and direct it locally. There are so many excellent organizations on the North Shore. Need some suggestions? Check out the grants page on our website at [westvanfoundation.ca](http://westvanfoundation.ca)— pick a few groups and support them. Consider setting up a fund with the West Vancouver Foundation today, or plan for tomorrow with a bequest in your Will.

We're here to help.



The Vital Signs process of research and consultations is right for West Vancouver. It builds on our small-town roots and focuses on what it means to be a community that is welcoming and ensures newcomers feel they belong.

**WHAT ISSUES ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?**

**WHAT CAUGHT YOUR ATTENTION?**

**IF YOU COULD SOLVE ANY PROBLEM, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

**WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AS A RESULT OF YOUR GIVING?**

The West Vancouver Foundation was established by caring community members who wanted a way for residents to give and support local initiatives and causes for both the current day and for tomorrow.

For more information, contact us via:

- [westvanfoundation.ca](http://westvanfoundation.ca)
- [mylegacy@westvanfoundation.ca](mailto:mylegacy@westvanfoundation.ca)
- Or give us a call to discuss your plan and ideas 604 925 8153



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