

Squamish Community Foundation **Vital Signs® 2017**

VitalSigns®
Community foundations taking the pulse of
Canadian communities.



SQUAMISH
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

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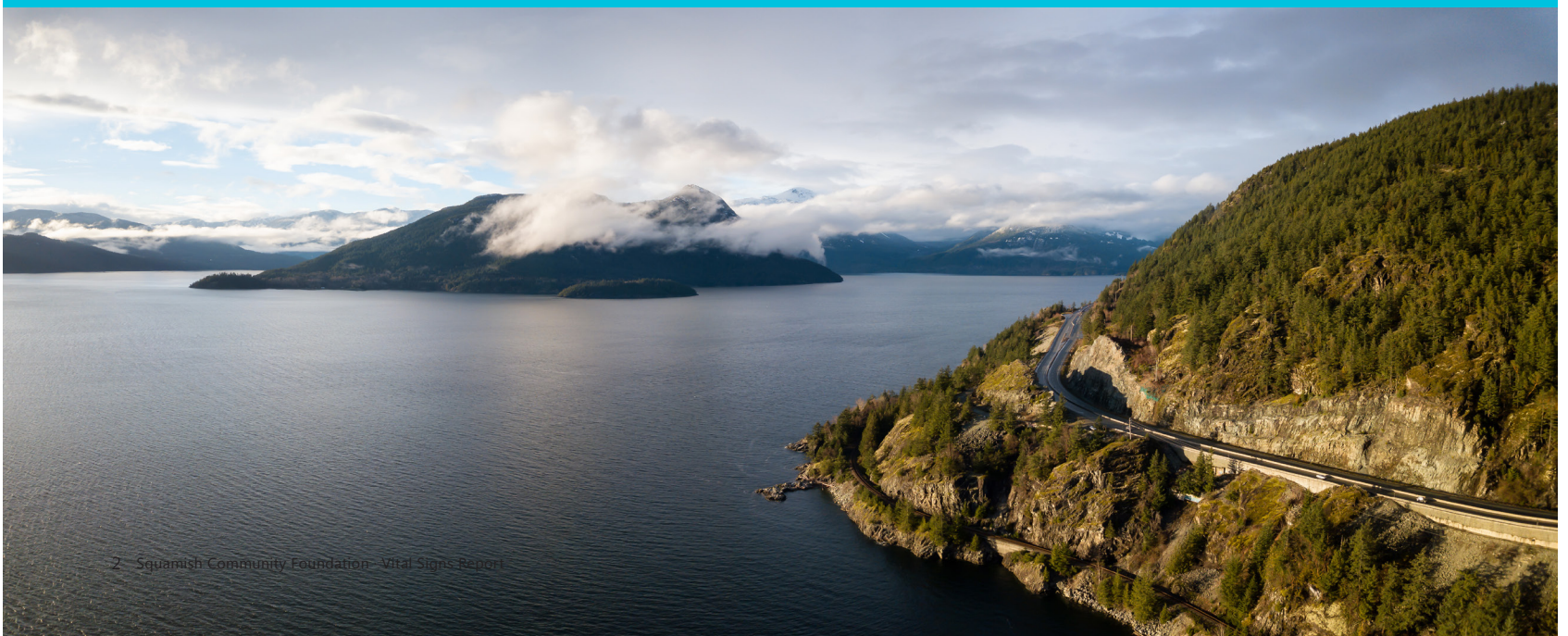
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Welcome

Squamish Community Foundation is proud to share Vital Signs 2017 with you. This report is the third Vital Signs we have presented to the community with our past reports released in 2011 and 2014. Alone or in conjunction with archived community reports, Vital Signs is meant to be used as a road map for creating and maintaining a thriving community.

This report focuses on 11 key quality of life indicators and highlights Squamish's successes as well as areas in need of improvement. We hope you find this report useful!



Photo by Nicole Gurney Photography

Thanks to our Vital Signs Team!

Rob Weys
Ashley Oakes
Sarah Marshall
Doug Hackett

Partners:
Community Foundations of Canada
Squamish Savings
Rotary Club of Squamish

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About Vital Signs

Vital Signs is a national program led by community foundations and coordinated by Community Foundations of Canada that leverages local knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities and supports action towards improving our quality of life.

About Squamish Community Foundation

Squamish Community Foundation is dedicated to strengthening community through innovative leadership, creative philanthropy and effective charitable endowments with the ultimate goal of evoking positive change and enriching quality of life in Squamish.

Methodology

Intended as a long-term initiative, Vital Signs builds on partnerships with a broad range of community members who contribute their skills and expertise, along with citizens who are actively engaged in the development and grading of the report.

Community Engagement Goals

- Highlight areas of need to encourage further dialogue and response from institutions, public leaders, charitable organizations and citizens.
- Encourage cross-sector, holistic thinking on the overall vitality of our town and provide impetus for cross-sector initiatives.
- Build community capacity through shared knowledge for good decision-making.

Research Network

Community Foundations of Canada provided lists of indicators for each issue area. The directorship of the Squamish Community Foundation, with the assistance of local issue area experts and through a survey of the local community, identified and selected indicators for Squamish's Vital Signs that were relevant, accurate and comprehensive. Community Foundations of Canada provided additional expertise through the retention of the Centre for the Study of Living Standards to undertake national research. Specific research was commissioned from the BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit, and data was solicited from the District of Squamish, Immigrant Services Society of BC and from Squamish Search and Rescue.

Indicator Selection

Indicators were selected and prioritized based on the following guidelines:

- Perceived public interest, as identified by the results of our on line community survey in Spring 2017.
- Does the indicator inspire action?
- Does the indicator report on an issue or trend that individuals or communities can do something about?

Data Selection Criteria

- Does it reveal both strengths and weaknesses of Squamish?
- Does it reflect a balance of focus on people, the economy and the environment?
- Has it already been reported in another local publication?
- Understandability and measurability.
- Ease and cost of collection.
- How current the information is, and frequency of collection for future use, in order to identify possible trends.

Data Trends Since 2011

The Squamish Community Foundation produced Squamish's first Vital Signs report in 2011 and 2014. This report revisits the 11 indicators chosen in the past for community presentation. Many of the indicators highlight whether the data represents an improvement or a decline in our community health. If our community graders thought that a positive or negative trend was evident, these trends are broadly represented on p. 5 using "thumbs up or thumbs down" imagery.

2017 Vital Signs Report Highlights

Getting Started

Squamish is growing at a rapid pace and has one of the fastest growing child populations per capita in BC. This comes with growing demands on community infrastructure and resources.

Learning

Graduation rates continue to improve in particular among Indigenous youth. Local residents are well-educated and have diverse skills.

Health & Wellness

The community is performing well on most indicators of healthy living but more can be done to ensure recreational activities are accessible to all who want to participate in them. Additionally, youth health is declining and obesity rates have gone up.

Environment

Since the introduction of curbside compost pick-up, waste diversion to the landfill has improved.

Personal Safety

Squamish is the weekend playground for locals and visitors alike, and access to outdoor recreation opportunities continues to get easier. That leads to some risk, and more injuries are occurring, with significant social cost. The suicide rates in the corridor is a serious issue that needs to be addressed.

Housing

Housing affordability and the availability of suitable rental suites is a persistent concern. A coordinated community response is needed to ensure this issue is addressed.

Gap Between Rich & Poor

Squamish is becoming more expensive and this is resulting in a growing poverty problem. This theme is present throughout this report.

Public Safety

Crime rates in Squamish have been declining but still remain higher than the national average.

Belonging & Leadership

The sense of belonging to the community and satisfaction with life is strong in Squamish. Residents are engaged and connected.

Arts & Culture

Squamish continues to be an attractive location for film production. Additionally residents and tourists are supportive of cultural events and the community attendance at these events continues to grow.

Work

Employment growth remains strong in Squamish with new businesses and industries flocking to the community.

Letter from the President

The Vital Signs community report is not put together without an enormous effort from our Vital Signs committee and our community partners. Thank you and congratulations to Rob Weys for leading our committee and to Sarah Marshall and Ashley Oakes for preparing the report for publication. We had enormous support from community members analyzing data and giving us guidance in many of the subject areas. Special thanks goes to Squamish Savings and the Rotary Club of Squamish for being our financial partners in producing the Vital Signs report.

It is no surprise to anyone living in Squamish that our community is growing at a rapid pace. Additionally, more and more often, Squamish is being featured as a top tourist destination for travellers from all over the world. This growth and popularity brings both positive changes as well as challenges. Vital Signs endeavours to highlight how our community has changed over the past three to five years and how that change has impacted our community.

Squamish Community Foundation Guiding Principles

Squamish Community Foundation provides a vehicle for attracting, managing and distributing donations within our community. The primary purpose of the Squamish Community Foundation is to pool donations in a perpetual endowment fund that earns income. The capital of such funds is managed and monitored by the board of directors. Grants are made from the income earned on the endowment. This mechanism creates a permanent source of funding and the income is distributed to registered charities for community projects.

The Vital Signs report helps us determine which community projects address the issues the report highlights so grants can be made where the community has identified needs. In addition, Vital Signs is a powerful tool for donors looking to make a positive impact on the community.



Charities are a key part of our community and our economy. In Squamish, they deliver health, education and social services; they cater to our cultural, recreational and spiritual needs; and they work to protect animals and our natural environment. They provide opportunities for personal growth and community engagement; they offer established and regulated ways to fulfill our philanthropic goals; and they employ a portion of the population.

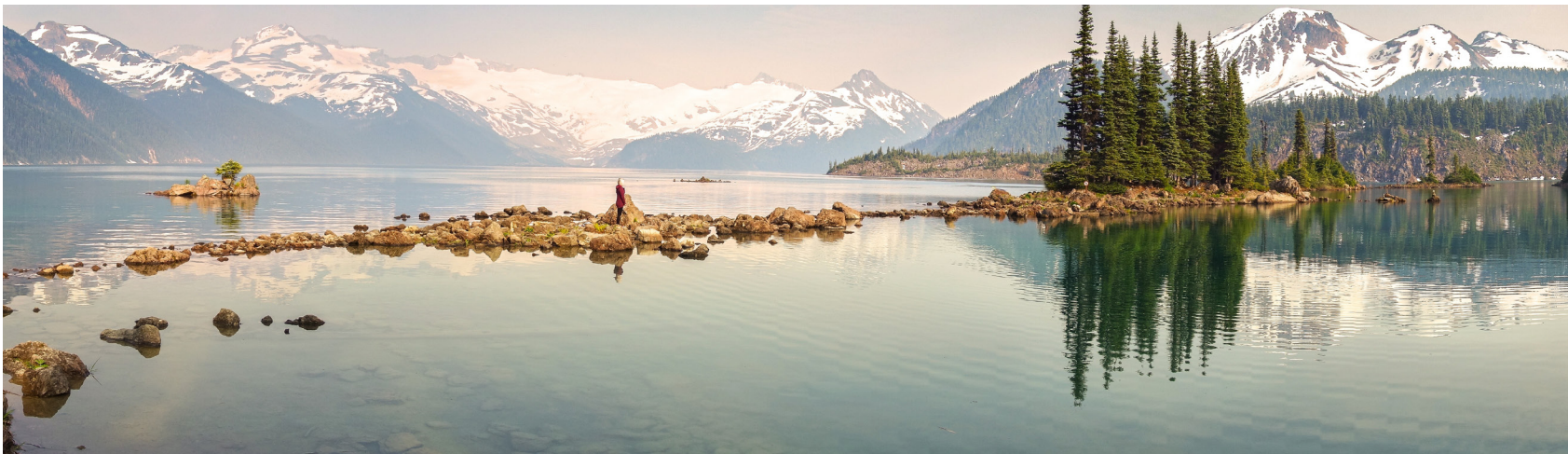
Although the money charities use to fulfill their missions comes from many sources – including government, business, and the sale of goods and services – almost all organizations rely to some extent on donations from individual Canadians. The charities that serve us need and deserve our financial support; whether by direct donation to your charity of choice or through the Squamish Community Foundation's 'Smart and Caring Community Fund'. We should each consider our philanthropic activities and how those activities support improvements to our community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Doug Hackett', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Hackett
President

Community Snapshot

Squamish is Canada’s sixth fastest growing community with a population of between 10,000 to 100,000 people with more than 3% population growth year over year since 2015. The current population of Squamish is over 19,000 and the community has one of the provinces largest per capita population of children. Our community is a hotspot for adventure tourism with people coming from all over the world to climb, mountain bike, kiteboard, hike, trail run and more. With the increase in our population and popularity has come an increase in housing costs and demands on our community’s infrastructure.



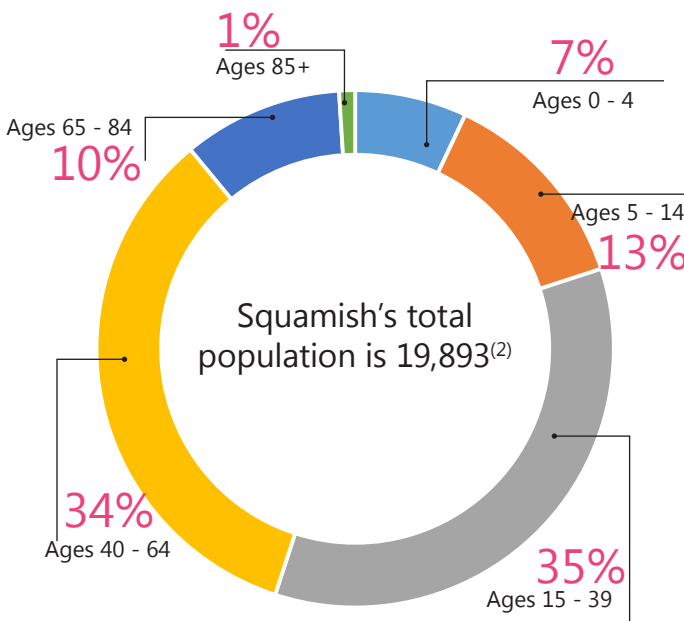
The community’s high school graduation rate is 93.3%⁽¹⁾



75.4% report feeling a strong sense of belonging in the community⁽³⁾



71.1% report spending their leisure time being physically active⁽³⁾



Getting Started

In the “Getting Started” section of Vital Signs we look at the ways migration, family demographics and diversity impact our community’s population. When a community is connected and individuals within the community feel supported, people remain in the community. A growing population faces challenges due to increases in housing need and demand, including pressure on rental housing supply, and increased pressure on community infrastructure and resources. An area of concern that came up in our survey to the community was the amount of people leaving the community due to the high cost of living; however, this is a statistic that is difficult to track. Additionally, our survey found that 46% of respondents indicated that they participate in too few leisure activities which negatively impacts their quality of life.

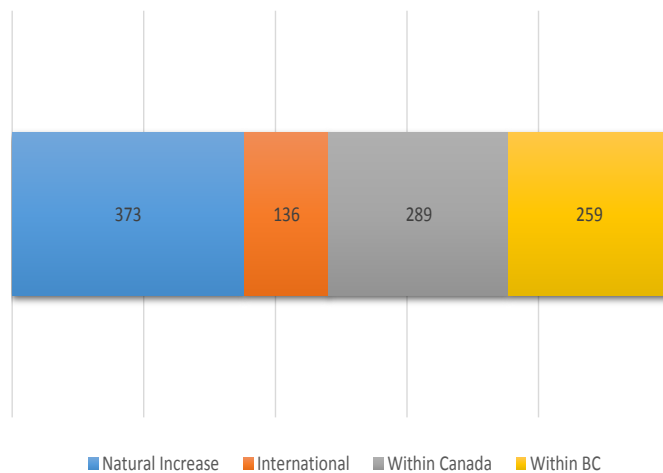
Population

The District of Squamish has a population of 19,893 as of the 2016 Statistics Canada Census. This is an increase of 5.7% from 2014. Of those new to Squamish, 35% are new births, 13% are international migrants, 27% arrived from out of the province, and 25% moved from within B.C. ⁽²⁾

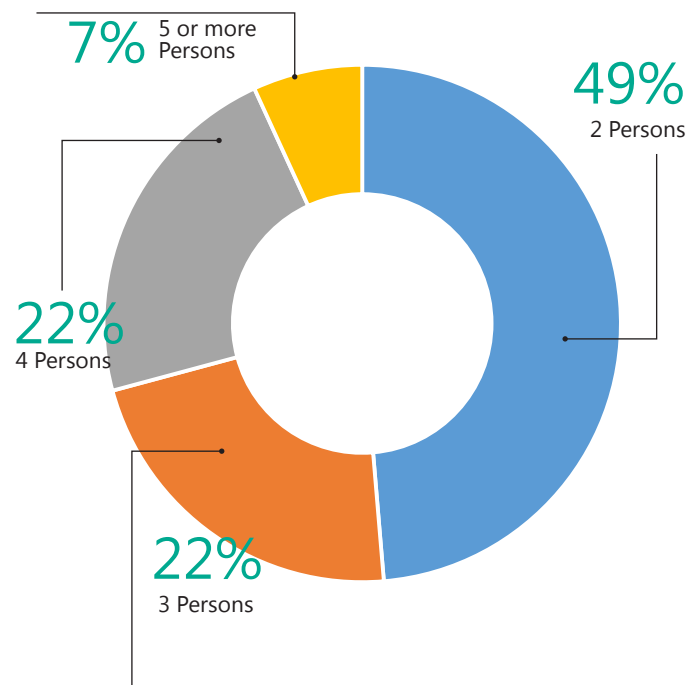
Family Demographics

Squamish is home to one of the provinces fastest growing child populations. The child population (aged 0-14) has grown by nearly 14% since 2011, far above the national average of 4%. The average family in Squamish consists of 2.6 persons. ⁽²⁾

Migration



Number of Persons per Family



Community Growth

It will come as no surprise that Squamish is growing at a rapid pace. In fact, Squamish is part of Canada’s fourth fastest growing census area. Significant continued migration to the area is due in part to the community’s proximity to Vancouver as well as by a desire to live nearer to the natural beauty that surrounds us. With increased migration also comes a wonderful diversity of culture, languages and traditions.



Squamish has an Indigenous population of 1,275 persons ⁽²⁾



Our immigrant population is 3,545 persons. Within our community, there are over 50 languages spoken ⁽²⁾



Parlez vous Francais? You wouldn't be alone! 525 locals list French as their mother tongue ⁽²⁾



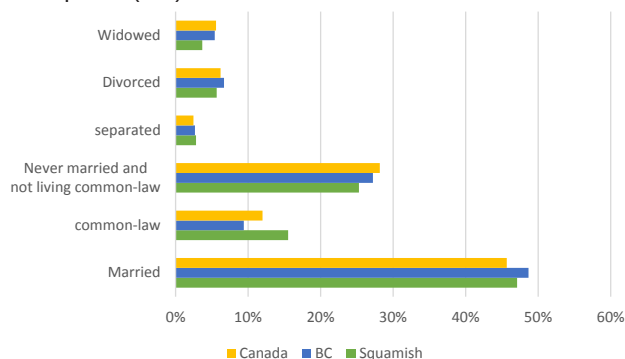
Of the 1500 residents who are not Canadian Citizens, 960 are permanent residents ⁽²⁾



Photo by Nicole Gurney Photography

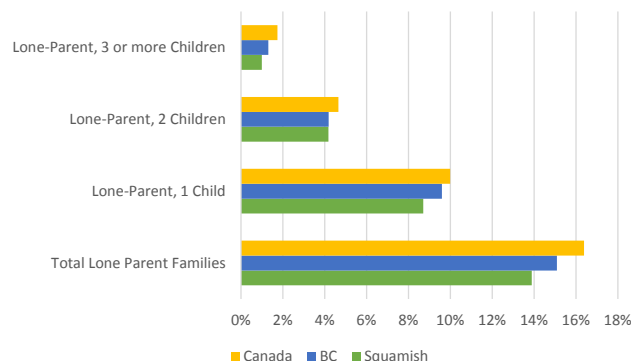
Marital Status

47% of Squamish couples are married; slightly less than the provincial rate of 49%. However, couples in Squamish are co-habiting in far greater numbers in common-law relationships (16%) compared to our provincial counterparts (9%). ⁽²⁾



Single Parent Families

As of the 2016 census, Squamish had 765 lone-parent families; making up 14% of all families in Squamish which is below both the provincial and national rates (15% and 16% respectively). ⁽²⁾



How SQUAMISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS

The Neighbourhood Small Grants program allows the Foundation to give funding directly to residents for projects that connect neighbours and strengthens community. In 2018, thanks to support from the District of Squamish, we have more than tripled the size of this program and will be granting \$10,000 directly to residents.

How YOU CAN HELP

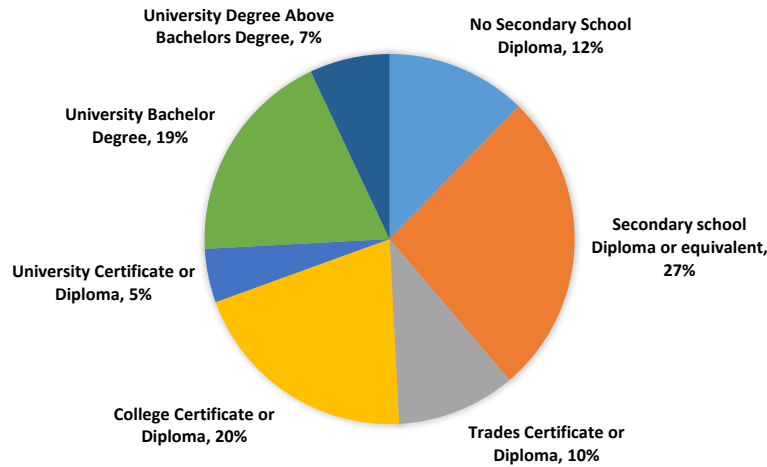
- Volunteer in the community
- Apply for a Neighbourhood Small Grant
- Attend a community event and get to know your neighbours
- Support a newcomer family in the community



Learning

University Completion Rates

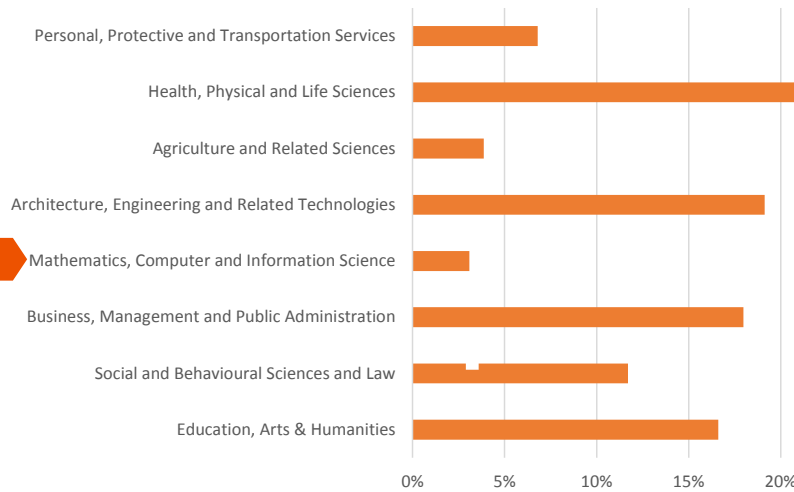
61% of Squamish's eligible population have achieved some post-secondary education. Well above the provincial and national average of 54.3% and 53.8%



Field of Study ⁽²⁾

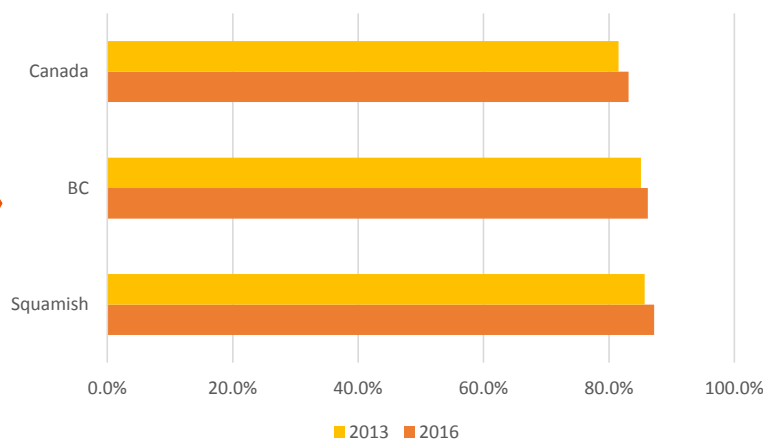
Among those with post-secondary education, there is a wide diversity of skills and knowledge.

There is talent within the community to support our growing needs.



High School Completion ⁽⁴⁾

High School Completion rates have been increasing year over year across Canada



HOW SQUAMISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS

The Ron Anderson Memorial Scholarship Fund, established by Squamish Terminals in 2016, awards \$1,000 a year to a grade 12 student pursuing post-secondary education in the fields of business or transportation.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Read to your children
- Volunteer on your child's school PAC committee
- Attend lectures at Quest or the Library

A thriving community is one built on sharing knowledge, skills and competencies among diverse individuals and groups. A life-long love of learning, fostered early, will support community resiliency and contribute positively to a community's overall health, wellness and safety.

Squamish is home to diverse education options including public and private schools. There are currently 4,919 students enrolled in public school in Sea to Sky School District 48.

SD 48 continues to see graduation rates higher than the provincial and national average, in particular among Indigenous youth. In 2016/17, SD 48 reported an Indigenous graduation rate of 81.6% compared to 60.8% in 2011/12. ⁽¹⁾

Obesity Rates



Obesity refers to a self-reported body mass index of 30 or higher for adults 18 years and over. In Squamish, adult obesity rates increased 4.7 percentage points between 2007/08 and 2015/16 from 10.7% to 15.4%. The 2015/16 rate for the region was 5.9 percentage points below the provincial average (21.3%) and 11.1 percentage points below the national average (26.5%).⁽³⁾

Lack of a Doctor



In Squamish, 9.7% of the population were without a regular medical doctor in 2015/16, down 2 percentage points from 11.7% in 2007/08 and down 3.6 percentage points from the high of 13.3% in 2011/12. In 2015/16, Squamish was 6.9 percentage points below the provincial rate (16.6%), and 6.7 percentage points below the national rate (16.4%).⁽³⁾

Smoking Rates



The rate for current smokers in Squamish has been showing a slight downward trend since 2007/08 and has decreased by 2.1 percentage points since that time (from 15.6% in 2007/08 to 13.5% in 2015/16). In 2010/11 smoking rates reached their lowest point at 11.9%. The current smoking rate is 3.9 percentage points below the national average (17.4%) and is 0.6 percentage points below the provincial average (14.1%).⁽³⁾

Youth Health



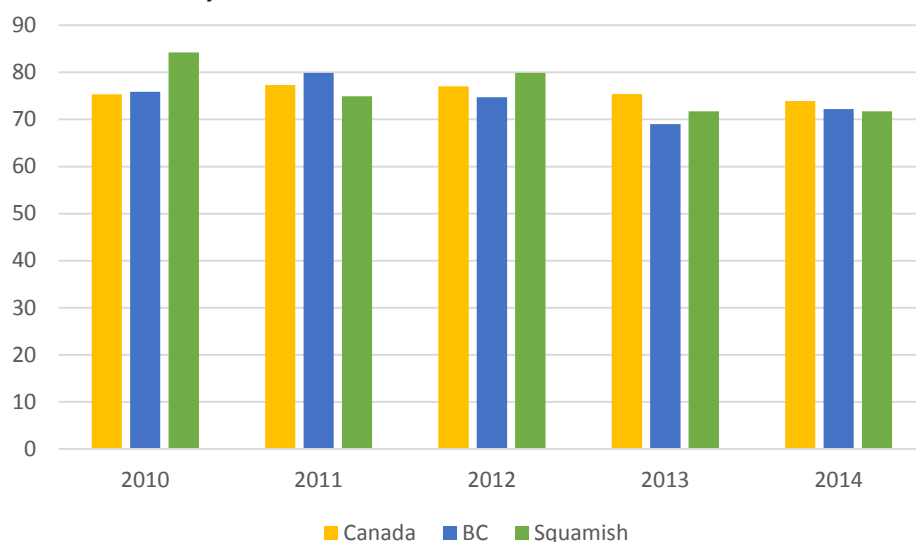
In Squamish in 2015, 71.7% of youth (ages 12 - 19 years) self-reported that they felt their health was very good or excellent. This was a decrease of 9 percentage points from the highest reported rates of 78.8% in 2010. The 2015 rate was 7.4 percentage points below the provincial average (79.1%) and 6.2 percentage points below the national average (77.9%).⁽³⁾

Self-Rated Mental Health Perceived as Very Good or Excellent



In 2014, 71.3% of respondents in North Shore/Coast Garibaldi, which includes Squamish, aged 12-19 rated their mental health status as "excellent" or "very good." This is a decrease of 12.5 percentage points from the 10 year high in 2010 of 84.2%. The 2014 level was 2.2 percentage points below the national rate (73.9%), and 0.5 percentage points below the provincial rate (72.2%). For the adult population, Squamish is doing better than our provincial and national counterparts (Squamish – 74.8%, B.C. – 69.7%, Canada – 71.1%)⁽³⁾

Very Good or Excellent Self-Rated Youth Mental Health



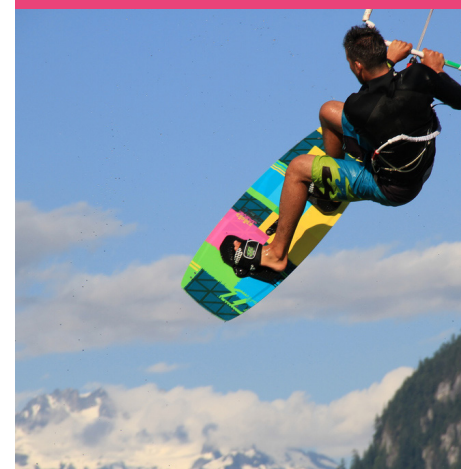
How SQUAMISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS

For the past 3 years, annual grants funding has been provided to Easter Seals House Society so that families in need of a place to stay when a child is in hospital in Vancouver have a supportive place to rest. In 2016, funding for Big Brothers and Big Sisters 'Go Girls' project was awarded to support healthy bodies and healthy minds.

How YOU CAN HELP

- Join a local hiking group
- Be a kind and listening ear to a friend or family member in need
- Support a youth serving sports organization such as KidSport Squamish

Health & Wellness



Squamish continues to outperform the provincial averages on almost all indicators of health and wellness in our community.

Lower obesity rates and fewer smokers, coupled with residents who are committed to playing hard during leisure time ensure a positive overall health picture for our community.

However, there is one exception - Squamish residents report heavy alcohol consumption* rates of 19.9% compared to the provincial rate of 17.4% and the national rate of 17.9%

⁽³⁾

*Heavy drinking refers to males who reported having 5 or more drinks, or women who reported having 4 or more drinks, on one occasion, at least once a month in the past year.

Environment

Squamish is definitely no stranger to rain! Our beautiful, temperate rainforest surroundings depend on it. In 2017, total rainfall for the district was 1462 mm⁽⁶⁾ - 50% less than the yearly average precipitation. Other indications of our changing climate is the increase in our average high temperature and the decrease in our average low temperature over the past 20 years. Overall air quality is increasing in the District, despite the wild fires burning throughout the region in the summer of 2017. Squamish's air quality is consistently 2 or lower (on a scale between 1-10)⁽⁶⁾. Skiers, snowboarders, tobogannners and dogs also celebrated record setting daily snowfall for Squamish in 2016 & 2017.

Household Waste

The District of Squamish reports that in 2017, Squamish landfilled 542kg of waste per capita (down from 630kg in 2012). With the introduction of organic and yard waste curb side collection, households have diverted 59.7% of their waste from going to the landfill (up nearly 14 percentage points from 2013).

Water Diversion

The combined average day per capita consumption was 560.8 L/c/d ⁽⁷⁾. This includes commercial, industrial, institutional and residential users. The estimated residential average day per capita consumption was 325.3 l/c/d.*

The 2016 BC Municipal Water Survey in 2016 estimates the provincial average residential per capita consumption to be 312 l/c/d.

*Squamish does not have universal metering; therefore, the district can only estimate residential consumption based on Canada-wide data on the ratio of residential to total water consumption per capita.

How SQUAMISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS

Through annual granting in 2017, funding was provided to the Squamish Climate Action Network for the Mamquam Edible School Yard. In addition, through the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, funding was allocated to the Mamquam River Campground. In 2016, resources were allocated to the Squamish Trails Society for the Turtle Trail Project.

How YOU CAN HELP

- Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost
- Shop with re-usable grocery bags
- Comply with District of Squamish water restrictions
- Walk, ride, or take public transit more often
- Carry a reusable coffee cup

Personal Safety

Squamish is the weekend playground for locals and visitors alike, and access to outdoor recreation opportunities continues to get easier. That leads to some risk, and more accidents are happening, with significant social cost. Injuries are not accidents, they are predictable and preventable. Injuries are the leading cause of death among those aged 44 years and younger. In 2010, injuries cost British Columbians \$3.7 Billion. 87% of all acute injury hospitalizations in Squamish General Hospital over the six years from 2008 were among residents of the region, accounting for 92% of the total injury hospitalization costs. ⁽⁸⁾

Sport and Recreation-Related Injuries

31% of all acute injury hospitalizations in the region over the six years from 2008 were sport and recreation-related, with 43% resulting from ski and/or snowboard injuries, and 29% from cycling injuries occurring on and off the road. ⁽⁸⁾



31% of hospitalizations are rec-related



51% of all injuries are from falls

Other Injuries

Falls and unintentional poisoning account for 54% of hospitalizations in Squamish. Fall-related hospitalizations were highest among those aged 65 years and over. 69% of the unintentional poisoning deaths in the region in the last six years from 2009 resulted from poisoning by narcotics, impacting young adults from age 20 years to adults up to age 59 years. ⁽⁸⁾

Suicide

Suicide deaths are increasing and are the leading cause of injury deaths in the region. The suicide death rate in the region from 2009 - 2015 was 11% higher than the B.C. rate of 11.3 per 100,000 population. Death rates from suicide were highest among males aged 60-64 years. Hospitalization rates from attempted suicide was highest among female youth aged 15-19 years. ⁽⁸⁾



Suicide Rate
11% higher than
BC Average



Traffic-related injuries are
14% lower than BC Average

Road Safety

In 2014, the death rate of traffic-related injuries in Squamish was 14% lower than the provincial rate of 6.2 per 100,000 population and very close to the national rate of 5.2 per 100,000 population. Speed, distraction and impaired driving are all contributing factors to traffic-related deaths in the region. ⁽⁸⁾

Squamish Search & Rescue

The Squamish Search and Rescue (SAR) team is comprised of a diverse group of volunteers who invest countless hours away from family, friends and work. Currently, there are 70 members, all trained in ground search and rescue techniques and emergency first aid. In addition, many also participate in public education and specialized disciplines, such as technical rope, swift water and mountain rescue.



In 2017, Squamish Search and Rescue (SSAR) responded to 95 tasks, up from 81 in 2013, making them one of the busiest SAR groups in BC ⁽⁹⁾



Squamish SAR reported an 8 Year Average of 5.6 HETS (Helicopter External Transport System) missions per year prior to 2013. SSAR completed thirteen missions in 2017. ⁽⁹⁾



How Squamish Community Foundation Helps

Through our annual grants program in 2016 & 2017, we funded North Shore Schizophrenia Society to deliver mental health workshops to families and service providers in Squamish. In 2015, funding was given to Squamish SAR for the purchase of an automated external defibrillator.

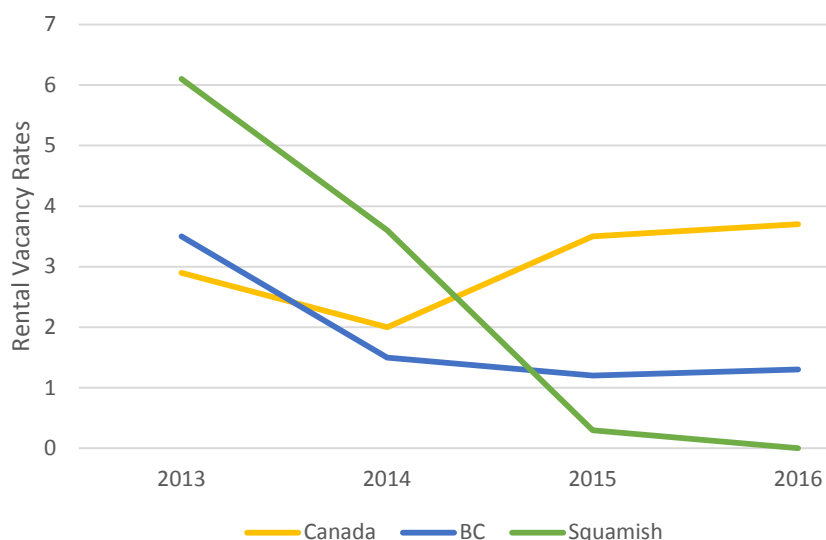
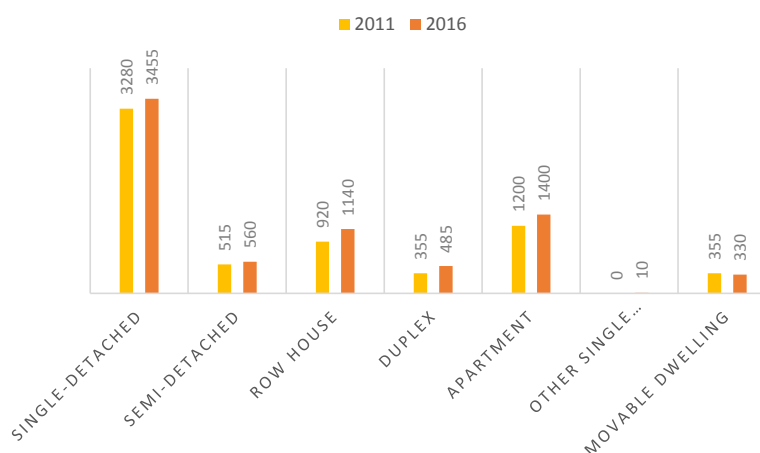
How You Can Help

- Always leave a plan with someone before embarking on an adventure in the wilderness
- Check-in on elderly neighbours
- Leave your phone alone when driving
- Volunteer to mentor a youth through Big Brothers and Big Sisters

Housing

With 2017 home assessment prices up over 10% over 2016 and rental rates having increased by more than 30% since 2014; Squamish is facing a housing affordability crisis. People are flocking to the community from across Canada and around the world to live, work and play. There are currently 306 listings on Air BNB between Britannia Beach and Paradise Valley, while the long-term rental vacancy rate for the community stays at 0.0%. Even with the rising housing cost, and the difficulty some may have in finding rental homes, the Gross Shelter Income Ratio (the average monthly total household income which is spent on the owner or occupants major payments) has reduced since 2010 for both owners and renters from 29.8% to 21.8% for owners and from 54.3% to 36.4% for renters. However, rising interest rates may put new homeowners at risk of an increase in their Gross Shelter Income Ratio. ⁽¹⁰⁾

Since 2011, Squamish has seen an 11% increase in total housing stock in the community. The largest growth in housing type has been seen in row houses (24% increase) and duplexes (36% increase). The only type of housing to reduce in stock was movable dwellings which are down by 6% from 2011. ^{(2) (11)}



For individuals and families looking to rent in Squamish, the availability of rental housing is alarmingly low. Current renters whose landlords choose to sell and those looking to move to the community will find it difficult to find a new home.

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability was identified as the #1 area of concern in Squamish Community Foundation's community survey results, as well as the Vancouver Foundations Provincial Vital Signs report in 2016. 80% of respondents identified that the chances of finding affordable housing in the community were either poor or slim. In, Squamish residents identified that a top priority is improving the affordability of home ownership and rental housing.



The average cost to rent a home (all types) in Squamish is \$1,304/month ⁽¹⁰⁾



Squamish has 3,455 single-detached homes in the community ⁽²⁾



There are 7,260 homes in Squamish. In 2017, 246 new homes (all types) were completed and 64 were started. ⁽¹⁰⁾



The average price of a single-detached home in Squamish is \$1,015,900 ⁽¹²⁾



Affordable Housing Units

The average total income for low-income lone-parents in 2015 is listed as \$18,330 ⁽³⁾ making the cost of market housing unaffordable. Squamish currently has 157 below-market housing units (1-3 bedrooms), all of which have waiting lists.



Emergency Shelters and Housing

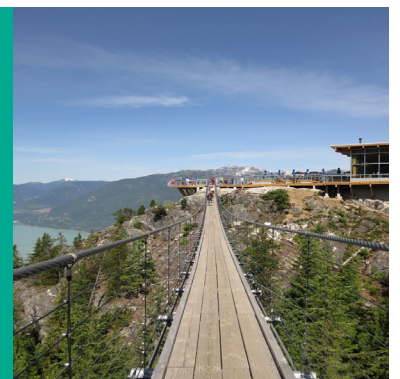
There is one emergency shelter in Squamish with 15 shelter beds, ⁽¹³⁾ operated by Squamish Helping Hands Society; the same as when we last reported in 2014. Additionally, there is one transition house for women and their children who are fleeing violence, are homeless or are at risk of homelessness. In 2016, Pearl's Place Transition House served the needs of 56 women and 22 children. ⁽¹⁴⁾

How Squamish Community Foundation Helps

Through the Squamish Communities That Care Fund, Squamish Community Foundation annually supports the work of Sea to Sky Community Services.

How You Can Help

- Attend council meetings and advocate for affordable housing development
- Support the work of the Squamish Integrated Housing Solutions Group
- Consider renting your suite locally, long-term, rather than through Air BNB where appropriate



Gap Between Rich & Poor



Poverty continues to be an issue in our community where the cost of living is increasing at a rate faster than the national and provincial average. Since the release of Squamish Vital Signs 2014, Squamish has made improvements to the child poverty and overall poverty rates but we have seen a slight increase (up 1.5 percentage points) in poverty rates among the elderly. In our survey to the community, 39% of respondents indicated that they are unable to afford to participate in the activities that they enjoy and that this financial strain affects their quality of life.



In 2014, 14.8% of people living in Squamish were living at or below the poverty level compared to 16.2% in 2011. ⁽³⁾



The median income for lone-parent families in 2014 was \$39,650; slightly above the provincial median lone-parent income of \$38,220. ⁽³⁾

The national rate of poverty among the elderly in 2014 was 6.8%. In Squamish the rate was 6.3%. ⁽³⁾



Child poverty rates in Squamish in 2014 were 14.9% which is 4.9 percentage points below the provincial average of 19.8%. ⁽³⁾



Food Bank Use

The Squamish Food Bank helped 440 single adults, 154 families (including 255 children), and 73 seniors. An average day sees the food bank make 20 deliveries to users who are unable to access the food bank due to medical or transportation issues. ⁽¹⁵⁾



Locally, nearly 450 hampers are distributed each year in Squamish ^(14,15,18)



On average, support is given locally to 400-450 people once or more per month. ⁽¹⁵⁾

How SQUAMISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS
Squamish Community Foundation supported the Squamish Food Bank through funding from the annual grants program in 2015 and 2017.

How YOU CAN HELP

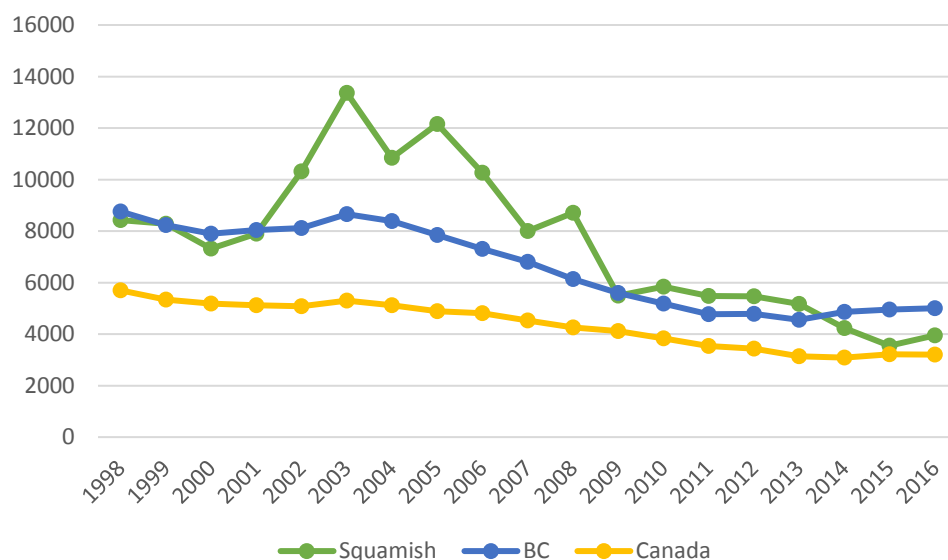
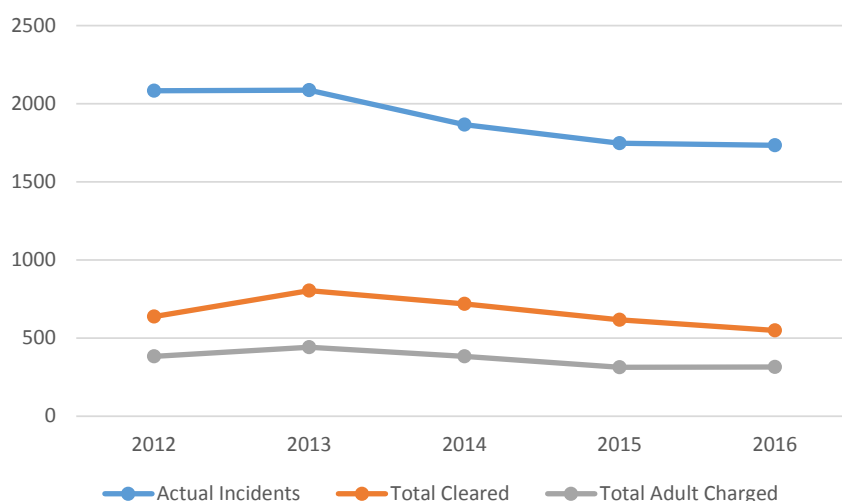
- Donate money to the Squamish Food Bank
- Sponsor a Family Christmas Hamper with Howe Sound Women's Centre Society or Squamish Community Christmas Care

Public Safety

Although crime remains a concern in Squamish, criminal activity per capita has steadily declined over the past 5 years. In Squamish Community Foundation's 2014 Vital Signs report, Squamish's Crime Severity Index was alarmingly high at 41% above the national average. We are pleased to report that in 2016, Squamish reported an overall Crime Severity Index of 80.6 which is 10.5 points above the national average and 13 points below the provincial rate. ⁽³⁾

Crime Rates

In general, Squamish is seeing a downward trend in criminality. ⁽³⁾



Property Crime

The property crime per 100,000 in 2017 was 3,947; 21% lower than the provincial rate but 19% higher than the national rate. ⁽³⁾

HOW SQUAMISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS

By drawing attention to a range of issues, such as Public Safety, through the publication of Vital Signs, the Squamish Community Foundation hopes to inspire community conversations about what it takes to build and maintain an excellent place to live in Canada.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Organize a neighbourhood block watch - apply for a Neighbourhood Small Grant to fund it
- Be a role model for youth - volunteer for Big Brothers and Big Sisters Sea to Sky Region

Belonging & Leadership

Squamish residents are largely satisfied and love their community. In our community survey, respondents identified their top three reasons for living in Squamish as: natural beauty and scenery; lifestyle & recreational opportunities; and friends and family living close by.

While on the whole our charitable giving is improving, it is still behind our provincial counterparts.



Photo by Nicole Gurney Photography

Life Satisfaction



In 2015/16, in Squamish, 93% of people aged 12 years and over reported they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their life. This was the same over the long term (2007/08 to 2015/16) but was a decrease of 1.6 percentage points since 2009/10, the highest rate recorded. This rate was 0.6 percentage points above the provincial average (92.4%) and 0.1 percentage point above the national average (92.9%) in 2015/16. ⁽³⁾

Community Belonging



In Squamish in 2015/16, 78.8% of people ages 12 years and over reported that they felt either a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging. This was an increase of 3.4 percentage points over 2007/08 rates (75.4%). In 2015/16 people from Squamish reported the community's highest recorded rates of sense of belonging. The 2015/16 rate was 1.5 percentage points below the provincial average (71.6%) and 10.4 percentage points above the national average (68.4%). ⁽³⁾

Voter Turnout



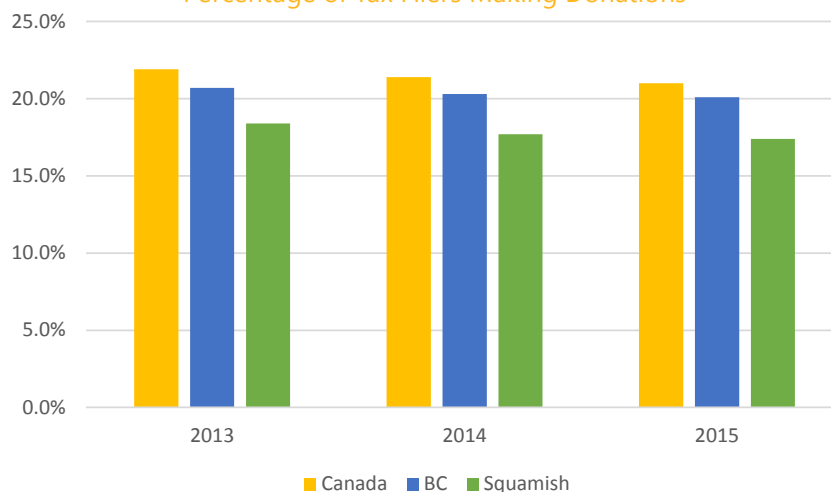
In 2015, the voter turnout in Squamish was 72.3%. This figure is 2.3 percentage points higher than the national level (70%) and 4 percentage points higher than the provincial level of turnout (68.3%). The voter turnout increased by 9 percentage points from 63.3% in 2011. ⁽¹⁶⁾

Charitable Giving



In 2015, the median amount of charitable donations in Squamish was \$300 per year. This amount is on par with the national median amount and lower than the provincial level (\$430). ⁽³⁾

Percentage of Tax Filers Making Donations



Donors

The percentage of tax filers making donations in Squamish is 3.6 percentage points below the national average and 2.7 percentage points below the provincial average. ⁽³⁾

How Squamish Community Foundation Helps

Throughout the year, Squamish Community Foundation hosts community conversations to involve residents in dialogue on how we can work together to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in Squamish. We also seek to empower donors through the establishment of donor directed funds. These funds ensure the donor's vision for our community lives on in perpetuity.

How You Can Help

- Donate locally
- Apply for a Neighbourhood Small Grant and do something for your community or neighbourhood
- Get out and vote
- Volunteer with a local charity

Arts & Culture

In 2017 Squamish Loggers Sports celebrated 60 years of tradition honouring Squamish's logging past. In addition to the celebratory 5 days in August, Squamish plays hosts to a cultural activity or event nearly every weekend of the summer!



Film Industry

In 2017, 48 productions used Squamish as a filming location ⁽⁷⁾



Library Use

In the six year span from 2011 to 2017, the Squamish Public Library reported an increase in visitors of 21%, for a total of 11,577 visits in 2017. In 2017, Squamish Public Library issued memberships to 1,667 new members. ⁽¹⁷⁾



Culture Events

In 2017, there were 52 permitted events held in Squamish including parades, concerts, festivals, and street parties. ⁽⁷⁾



Working Artists

In Squamish, in 2016, 610 people (5% of the labour force) indicated that they are employed in the arts, culture, recreation and sport industries - higher than both the provincial and national rates (3% & 4% respectively). ⁽²⁾

How Squamish Community Foundation Helps

In 2016 & 2017, funding was awarded to the Squamish Seniors Centre Society for the purchase of art supplies to offer free or low cost art programming to seniors in the community. In 2017, through the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, in partnership with the District of Squamish, funding was allocated to the Squamish Art Council for the annual Art Walk held in September.

How You Can Help

- Attend local cultural events
- Support local artists
- Become a library member
- Donate to one of Squamish Community Foundations Arts & Culture Funds

Work

Recent data shows that employment growth remains strong in the region. New industries also face challenges as residents demand high standards before accepting their arrival in the community. Squamish also has a relatively high proportion of service sector jobs.



Photo by Nicole Gurney Photography

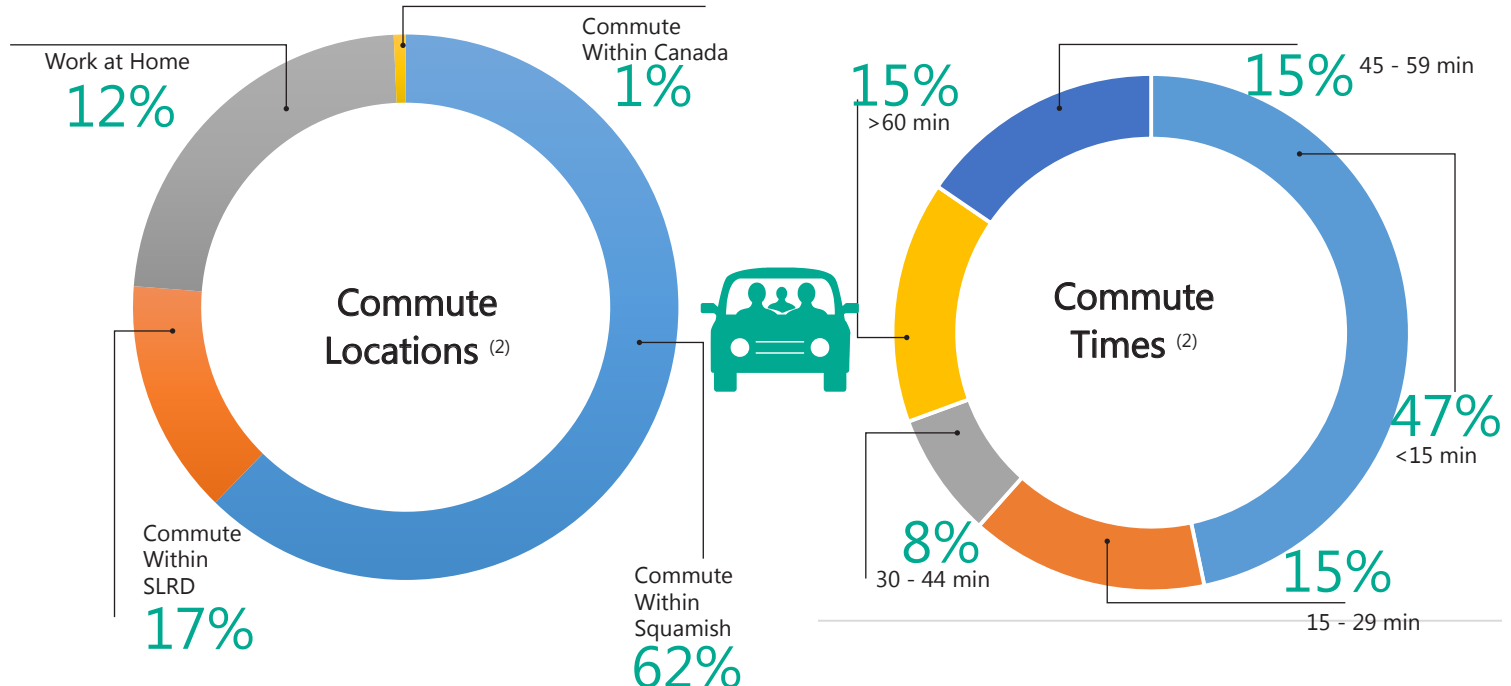
In 2016, 25% of all earners in Squamish were not earning a living wage (had an annual income of under \$20,000). This was 5 percentage points below the national level (30%) and 7 percentage points below the provincial level (32%).⁽²⁾



In 2015, median annual earnings in Squamish were \$55,664, 4% higher than the national median (\$53,431), and 3% higher than the provincial median (\$53,940).⁽²⁾



The amount of earners with an income of less than \$30,000 was 37% of all income earners, 6 percentage points below the national level (43%) and 8 percentage points below the provincial level (45%).⁽²⁾



How Squamish Community Foundation Helps

By providing individual and corporate donors with the opportunity for flexible gift giving that is respectful of specific donor direction. Through a wise and effective granting program the Foundation enhances quality of life in Squamish and helps make Squamish a great place to locate a business.

How You Can Help

- Shop locally
- Become a member of the Chamber of Commerce
- Hire local talent
- Carpool
- Pay workers a living wage

Summary

As one of a growing number of communities nationally publishing a Vital Signs report, The Squamish Community Foundation's Vital Signs increases the effectiveness of the Foundation's grant making by identifying key issues and priorities that provide guidance to better inform our donors about compelling funding opportunities requiring philanthropic support. Volunteers are the backbone of our community. We'd like to thank our Board and Committee members who donate their time, skills and expertise as volunteers for the Squamish Community Foundation.



Our sincere thanks to the following partners and volunteers who made this possible



FUNDING PARTNERS



COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS WHO GAVE THEIR TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR CONSULTATIONS AND/OR ASSIST WITH THE PROVISION OF DATA:

Louise Walker, Squamish Chamber of Commerce
Lois Wynne, Sea to Sky Community Services
Lesley Weeks, Squamish Tourism
Tim Sjogren, Squamish Youth Soccer
Kate Mulligan, District of Squamish
Jeff Cooke, SORCA
Ian Kent, School District #48
Megan Reynolds, Howe Sound Women's Centre Society
Cydney Lyons, Squamish Arts Council
Ann Marie Mckenzie, Big Brothers and Big Sisters - Sea to Sky Region
Hilary Bloom, Squamish Public Library

Urszula Lipsztajn, Squamish Savings
Kevin Haberl, Rotary Club of Squamish
Kim Stegeman-Lowe, Squamish Terminals
Alison Sydney, Community Foundations of Canada
Rick McKinney, Squamish Food Bank
Fahra Rajabali, BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit
William Chute, Squamish Search and Rescue
Squamish RCMP
Devon Guest, District of Squamish
Marie-Lou LeBlanc, District of Squamish
Mayor Patricia Heintzman, District of Squamish
Tara Ramsey, Immigrants Services Society of BC

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- 4 Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey
- 5 Universities Canada Facts and Stats
- 6 Environment and Climate Change Canada
- 7 District of Squamish
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- 9 Squamish Search and Rescue

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- 11 Statistics Canada Census Profile - Census 2011
- 12 Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver
- 13 Government of Canada Shelter Capacity Statistics and Report
- 14 Howe Sound Women's Centre Society
- 15 Squamish Food Bank
- 16 Elections Canada
- 17 Squamish Public Library
- 18 Squamish United Church

Financial support of this project does not necessarily imply Squamish Savings endorsement of the findings or content of this report.

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