

PRINCE GEORGE'S

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all for our community.



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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.

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INTRODUCTION



As the Prince George Community Foundation is approaching its 25th anniversary, we would like to take this opportunity to present our second Vital Signs publication. Prince George's first Vital Signs brief in 2017 provided a lot of valuable insights about our community — who we are, how we live, and what Prince George looks and feels like — in relation to four selected indicator areas. This year, we follow up and build on that first report. This 2019 Prince George Vital Signs report is more comprehensive and includes all ten indicator areas suggested by the Vital Signs program.

Vital Signs has evolved its program to be more internationally relevant by aligning indicator areas with many of the Sustainable Development Goals identified by the United Nations. By relating the snapshot of our community to internationally recognized development goals, the findings cannot only be put into a larger context, but their relevance is also more widely agreed upon. The Sustainable Development Goals that were relevant for this report will be introduced and linked to the indicator areas.

As a service centre in the North, Prince George is in a somewhat unique position. While we share many characteristics with our northern small town neighbours, we also may have more in common

with more populated areas in the southern half of the province than is commonly acknowledged. Northern infrastructure — geographically, logistically, and in terms of service provision — congregates in our community. We have many opportunities for growth and sustainable development, while we still have to deal with seasonal challenges and long distances, for example. Over the last few years, an increasing appreciation of our quality of life and affordability has been notable. In order to identify areas of opportunity and areas in need of attention, it is important to have an accurate, updated, and well-informed snapshot of the community.

The purpose of this report is to inform us, the Prince George Community Foundation, in our decision-making and actions we take in the community. It is also a tool for every citizen, practitioner, or local government to get a sense of our community. In some cases, the numbers may confirm our own experiences in the community; in other cases, statistics might open up awareness about successes and struggles in the community about which one had no prior knowledge or personal experience. Besides providing a manageable selection of information, this report can also guide those looking for more details by introducing available statistics and relevant sources.



Photo by: Chuck Chin

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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 community knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities and support action towards improving our quality of life.

ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Prince George Community Foundation was founded in 1995 and is an independent, volunteer-driven, charitable organization that brings together people who care about their community. As a member of the Community Foundations of Canada, we facilitate philanthropy by partnering with donors



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to build permanent endowment funds that support community projects concerned with health, sports, recreation, arts, culture, social services and the environment. Currently we have granted over \$2.4 million back to registered charities within our community.

THE METHODOLOGY applied in this report includes data searches in existing databases such as Statistics Canada's Census program, as well as reports by local and regional organizations, and personal conversations with some representatives of community organizations to fill in information where statistical data did not paint the complete picture. A full list of sources is included at the end of the report and can be used as a starting point for further research. Whenever available, the data refers to the Prince George Census Agglomeration. The boundaries go beyond city limits to include the population which regularly accesses services in Prince George.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO HELPED MAKE THIS REPORT POSSIBLE.

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT:

On behalf of the Prince George Community Foundation, I am honored to present our second Vital Signs report. Vital Signs is a national program led by local community foundations across the Country and coordinated by Community Foundations of Canada which leverages community knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities and support action towards improving our quality of life.

This complete Vital Signs report, which examines 10 indicator areas is far more than another statistical research report. It provides a community check-up and measures the vitality of our region, identifies concerns, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life. Additionally, for 2019 the Prince George Community Foundation accepted the call to action by the Community Foundation of Canada to connect this report to the UN Sustainable Development Goals to help further the connection between change at the local and global level.

Just as our 2017 report, this will help us not only as a philanthropic organization to understand our areas of greatest community need but also to further inform us, the Prince George Community Foundation, and our partner organizations, in our decision-making and actions we take in the community. It is also a tool for every citizen, practitioner, or local government to get a sense of our community. In some cases, the numbers may confirm our own experiences in the community; in other cases, statistics might open up awareness about successes and struggles in the community about which one had no prior knowledge or personal experience.

The Prince George Community Foundation, established in 1995, will celebrate our 25th Anniversary in 2020. The Foundation manages charitable gifts from donors through the creation of permanent endowment funds. These initial dollars are invested together with our other funds and the

interest earned is then distributed as grants to charitable organizations in Prince George. We grant back funds in the following six areas: Health, Education, Arts & Culture, Sports & Recreation, Local Environment and Social Services. We are so pleased that to date we have granted over \$2.4 million back into the Prince George community. Together with this community as our partners, we are making a difference in the quality of life for all our citizens, ever committed to making Prince George a place where we all belong.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff, I want to thank Board Member and Project Lead, Catherine Pennington, for her continual dedication to make this a top priority for the Foundation. Thank you also to our dedicated staff who gave many hours to this important work, the UNBC Community Development Institute, our donors, community partners, researchers, and designer who helped make this possible.

We hope you find the report both interesting and helpful but even more, we hope it sparks many deep conversations about ways to make Prince George an even better place to live for all. We look forward to working with you to elevate the findings in this report and take action to create an even larger impact within our Community.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alain LeFebvre', written in a cursive style.

Respectfully,
Alain LeFebvre
President

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) member countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In concrete terms, this included the drafting of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in order to have comparable and, to some degree, measurable objectives.¹

Vital Signs has been aligning its indicators with those SDG to help Canadian community foundations get a snapshot of their communities that can be compared against an international context. The following SDG are included in this Vital Signs report:



GOAL 1: NO POVERTY

Economic growth must be inclusive to provide sustainable jobs and promote equality.

While poverty rates have been reduced significantly worldwide over the last decades, it is still a widespread problem in developing regions as well as in some areas, and for some population groups, in developed countries.

Poverty is more than the lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable livelihood. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, as well as the lack of participation in decision-making.

"Donate what you don't use."



GOAL 2: ZERO HUNGER

The food and agriculture sector offers key solutions for development, and is central for hunger and poverty eradication.

Right now, our soils, freshwater, oceans, forests and biodiversity are being rapidly degraded, one of the reasons being climate change. If done right, agriculture, forestry and fisheries can provide nutritious food for all and generate decent incomes, while supporting people-centered rural development and protecting the environment.

"Avoid throwing away food."



GOAL 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all and all ages is essential to sustainable development.

Significant strides have been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the common causes of death associated with child and maternal mortality. However, many more efforts are needed to fully eradicate a wide range of diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues. ***"Vaccinate your family to protect them and improve public health."***



GOAL 4: QUALITY EDUCATION

Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to creating sustainable development.

In addition to improving quality of life, access to inclusive education can help equip locals with the tools required to develop innovative solutions to the world's greatest problems. Some of the reasons for lack of quality education are due to lack of adequately trained teachers, poor conditions of schools and equity issues related to opportunities provided to rural children.

"Help children in your community to read."



GOAL 5: GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

While the world has achieved progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment, women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large.

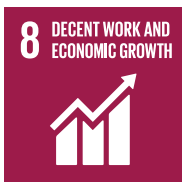
"Call out sexist language and behavior."



GOAL 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in.

To improve sanitation and access to drinking water, there needs to be increased investment in management of freshwater ecosystems and sanitation facilities on a local level. This is true especially in developing regions but also important to keep in mind for development in our community and region. ***"Avoid wasting water."***



GOAL 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

A continued lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investments, and under-consumption lead to an erosion

of the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: that all must share in progress.

Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. ***"Buy from green companies that are equal opportunity employers."***



GOAL 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

There needs to be a future in which cities provide opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation, and more.

With the number of people living within cities rising, it is important that efficient urban planning and management practices are in place to deal with the challenges brought by urbanization.

"Bike, walk, or use public transportation to keep our city's air clean."



GOAL 13: CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change is a global challenge that affects everyone, everywhere.

Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities and countries dearly. Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economies. ***"Educate young people on climate change to put them on a sustainable path early on."***



GOAL 16: PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all; and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Progress in ending crime and strengthening the rule of law varies globally. It is important to ensure equal access to justice and security, and effective institutions built on strong communities.

"Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development."

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

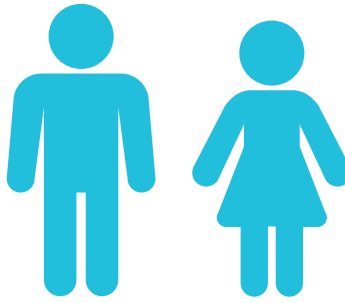
Imagine Prince George was a village of 100 people who represent all of our community's characteristics and realities! This snapshot highlights some of the main findings about the people who make up our population. See our age structure, education, income, cultural background, and health in one glance before diving into more detailed information on the following pages.

*If Prince George
was a village of* **100**



50

MALE



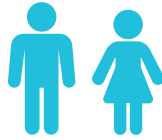
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FEMALE



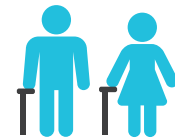
24

YOUTH 19 AND UNDER



62

AGED 20-64



14

SENIORS 65+

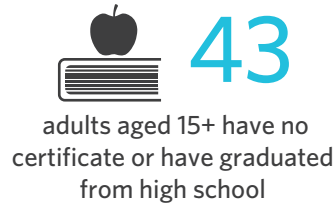
MARITAL STATUS



ETHNICITIES



EDUCATION

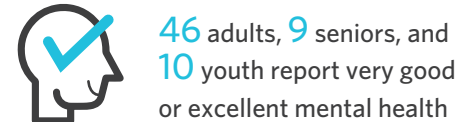
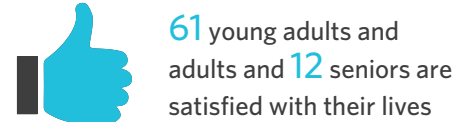
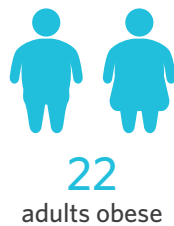


LABOUR FORCE

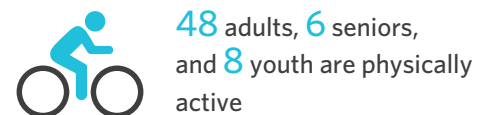
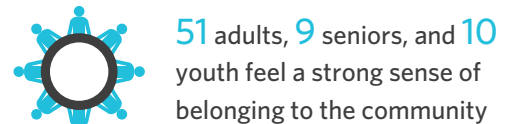
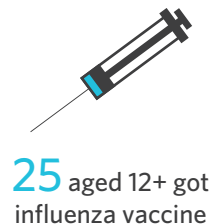
The labour force aged 15+ consists of 56 people



HEALTH



LOW INCOME

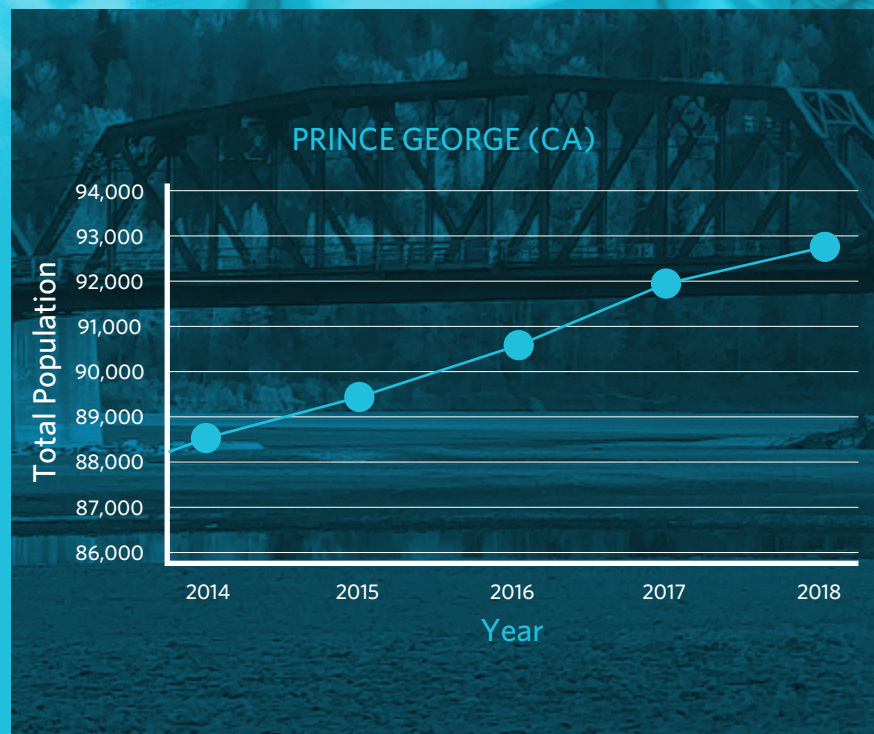


* The use of the term 'Aboriginal' has been chosen for this report when referring to the Indigenous population of Prince George and Canada because it is consistent with the terminology used in the national and provincial data sources included in the report.

OUR COMMUNITY



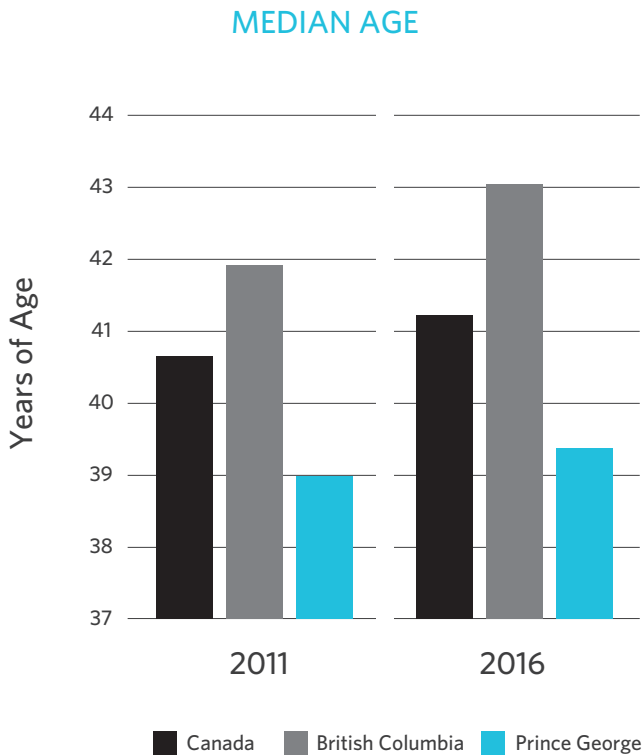
This section aims to provide an overview of our community's demographic. Who are the people who make up Prince George, how old are we, where are we from, and what do the households and families look like that we live in? Demographic statistics provide that kind of information and an insight into how the community is evolving.²



The total population of the Prince George Census Agglomeration in 2018 is 92,792. The graph shows that we have seen steady growth in the last five years. However, compared to Canada and British Columbia, Prince George has grown at a slower rate both over the last five years and the last year.

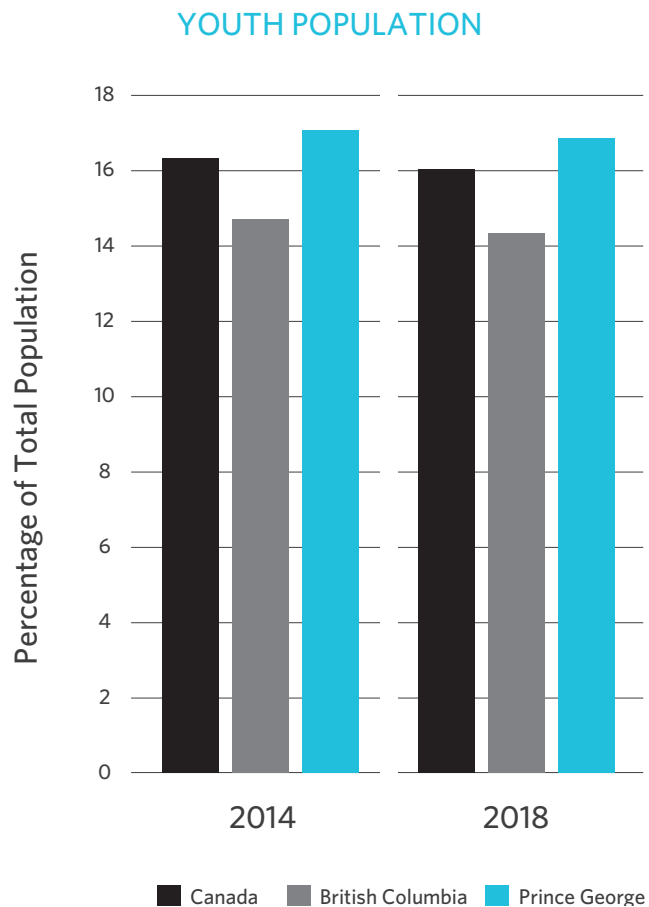
POPULATION AGE

With population aging being a world-wide phenomenon, not only every country but also every community has to think about what this means in terms of service and infrastructure needs, as well as economic opportunities and implications.

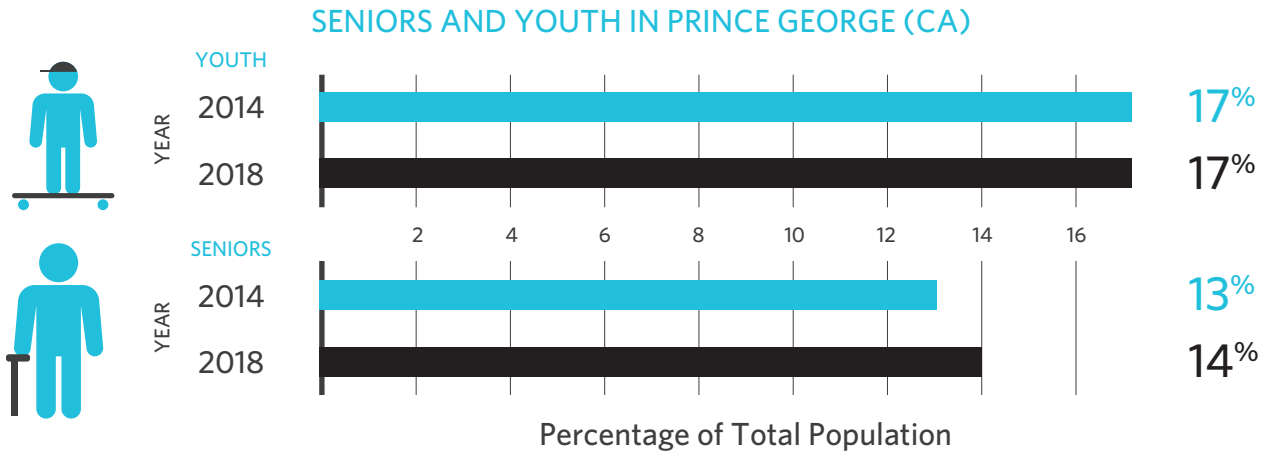


The median age of 39.4 years in the Prince George area in 2016 is below both the Canadian median age and especially the province's median age, which was at 43 years. As the graph shows, median age has been increasing nationally, provincially, and locally; however, population aging has been slower in Prince George.

Prince George has a higher percentage of youth aged 14 years and under than Canada and especially British Columbia. Our strong youth population is an asset. As the next generation is growing up to be our future work force, it is important to think about what needs to be done to provide adequate education opportunities and keep our youth in the community as they grow up.



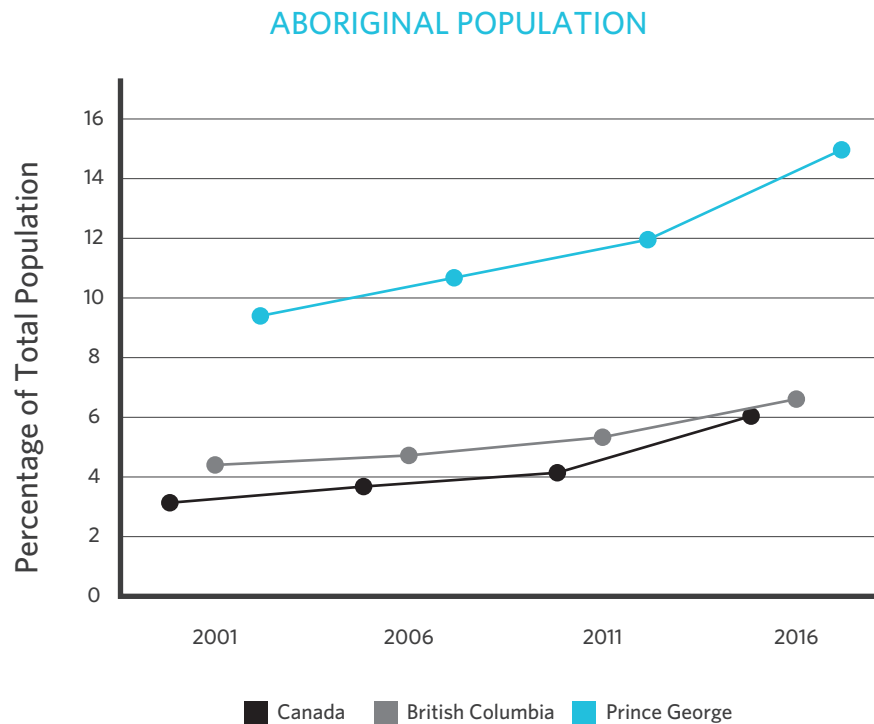
A look at Prince George's senior population (14.2%), which is considerably lower than in Canada (17.2%) and British Columbia (18.3%), confirms that Prince George has a comparatively young population.



Comparing Prince George's youth and elderly population groups, we can see that youth are the larger group, but the percentage of elderly in the community is steadily increasing. This serves as a reminder that, although we are a relatively young community, population aging is an important consideration for Prince George and area. A growing senior population not only depends on medical and care services, and seniors housing; with an increase in the 'young' and healthy senior group with money and time to spend in the community, other amenities attractive to seniors also gain in importance. Further considerations related to a growing senior population include an awareness that many of them are on fixed incomes but also the opportunities for the voluntary sector to recruit seniors who are happy to spend time supporting their community.

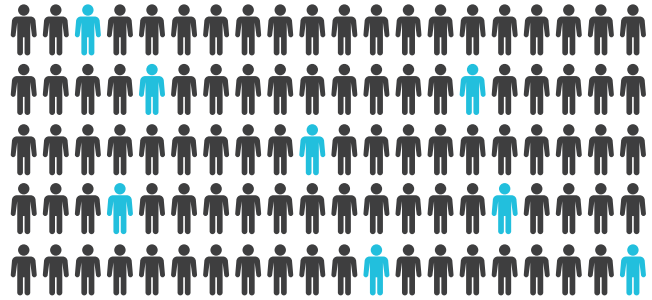
ABORIGINAL POPULATION

The Prince George area has more than twice the Aboriginal population compared to Canada and British Columbia. With close to 15% of our 2016 population being of Aboriginal origins, compared to just over 6% in Canada and British Columbia, Prince George's Aboriginal population is a large group to consider in the planning and development of education opportunities, workforce training, and culturally sensitive services to name but a few.



VISIBLE MINORITIES

With just under 8% of the total population in the Prince George area making up our visible minority population in 2016, Prince George's visible minority is only a fraction of the presence of visible minorities in Canada and British Columbia. While Prince George has seen increases in its visible minority over time, the rate at which this group has been growing is far behind increases in other parts of the country.



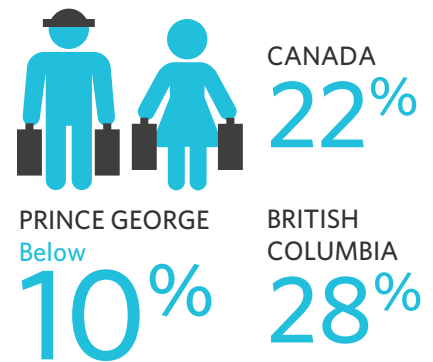
8% of the total population in the Prince George area are made up of visible minorities

IMMIGRANTS

At below 10%, Prince George's foreign-born population is considerably smaller than immigrant populations in Canada (22%) and British Columbia (28%). Furthermore, Prince George has not seen any notable increases in its immigrant population over the last two decades.

When looking at opportunities for community growth, the under-represented population groups should be kept in mind along with ideas for attraction, retention, and inclusion of visible minorities and immigrants.

FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

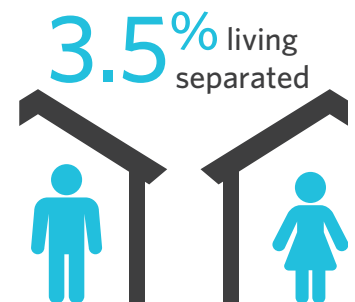
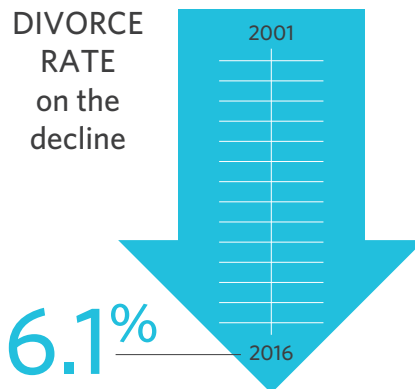
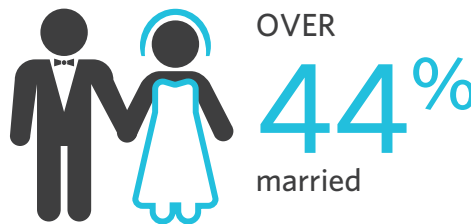


FAMILIES

Over 44% of the Prince George adult population are married and another 13% living in a common law relationship.

Our divorcee rate has been decreasing since 2001 and, at 6.1% in 2016, the rate of people living separated from their partners is slightly higher in Prince George (3.5%) than in Canada and British Columbia.

PRINCE GEORGE FAMILIES



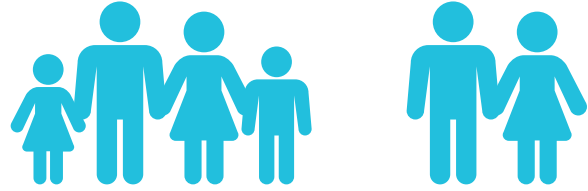
FAMILY STRUCTURE

Prince George Family Makeup

Trend up to 2006



Trend since 2011



Prince George



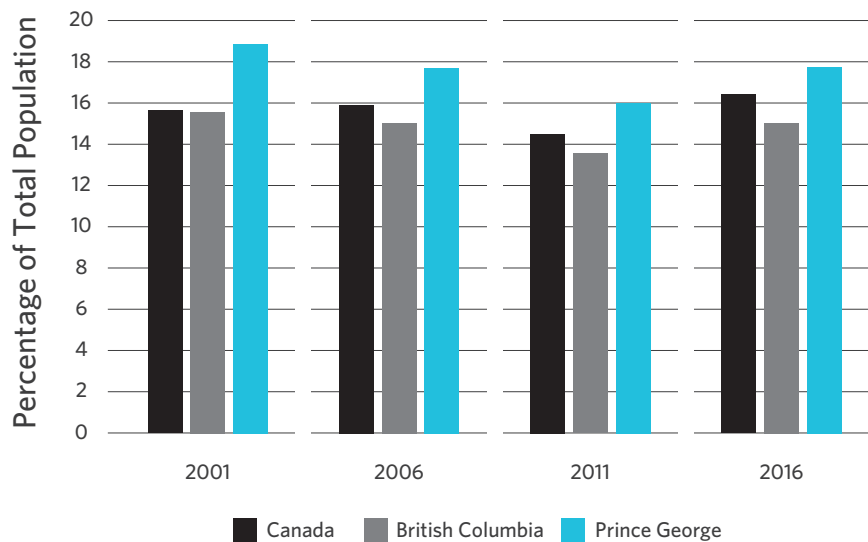
Canada



Until 2006, data shows that couples in Prince George were more likely to have children than in Canada and British Columbia. However, since 2011, the trend has been reversed, and there has been a slow but steady increase in couples without children (52.2%), while Canada-wide over 51% of couples still have children. This warrants looking into factors such as schools, family services, economic opportunities for families, and overall community family-friendliness to ensure that Prince George is welcoming to, and supportive of, families with children.

Prince George has a higher proportion of single-parent families than Canada and British Columbia, and while the rate decreased between 2001 and 2011, it has begun to increase again since then. This can affect childhood poverty. Moreover, it means that child care services are especially important for Prince George families.

SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES





MOBILITY

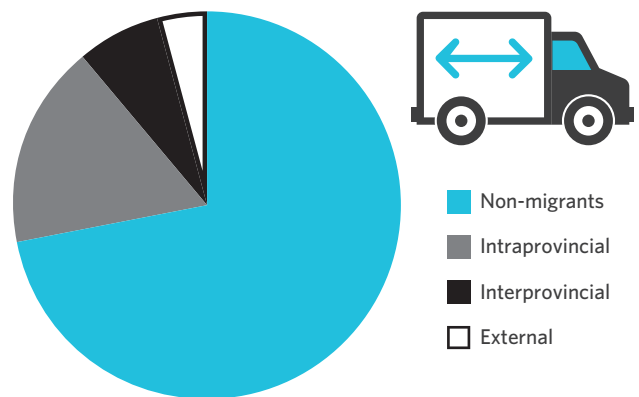
Mobility data captures how much residents in Prince George move and where they moved from. This information can be useful in many contexts, including attraction and retention efforts, urban planning, newcomer services, and to get a general idea how rooted Prince George residents are in the community.

Prince George has a slightly higher proportion of movers than Canada but reflects provincial trends almost exactly. Of the total population, 15% moved in the last year, and 41% moved in the last five years.

Of those who moved, around 70% are considered non-migrants as they moved within Prince George (72% in the last year, 67% in the last five years). Roughly one in five moved to Prince George from somewhere within British Columbia, making them intraprovincial movers (17% in the last year, 21% in the last five years). Around 7% were interprovincial

movers and came to Prince George from other regions within Canada. Around four to five percent of movers, came to Prince George from other countries, defining them as external movers.

MOVERS IN PRINCE GEORGE IN THE PAST 5 YEARS



NO POVERTY

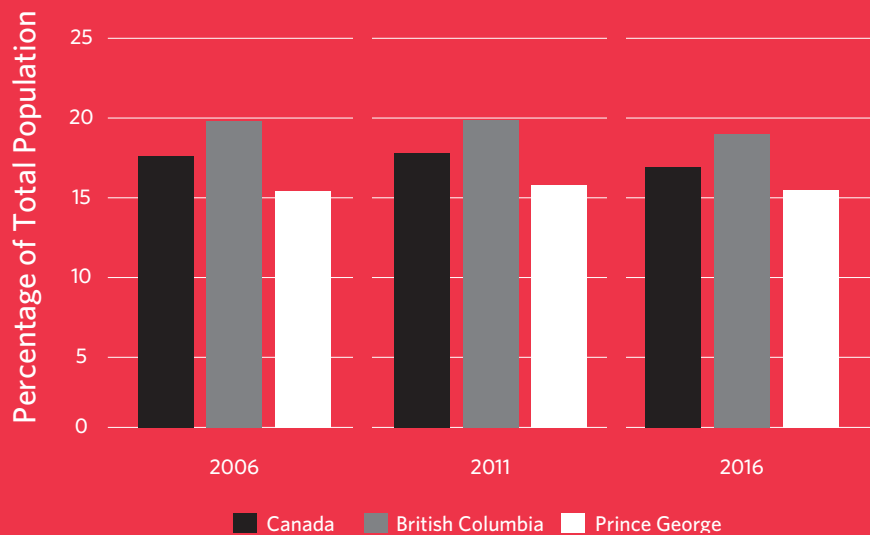


Despite worldwide improvements, poverty is still a problem, including in developed countries and affluent communities. Economic growth should benefit everyone in the community. One of the commonly used measures to express poverty rates is the Low Income Measure (LIM) a threshold set at 50% of median household income, adjusted for household size.³

LOW INCOME

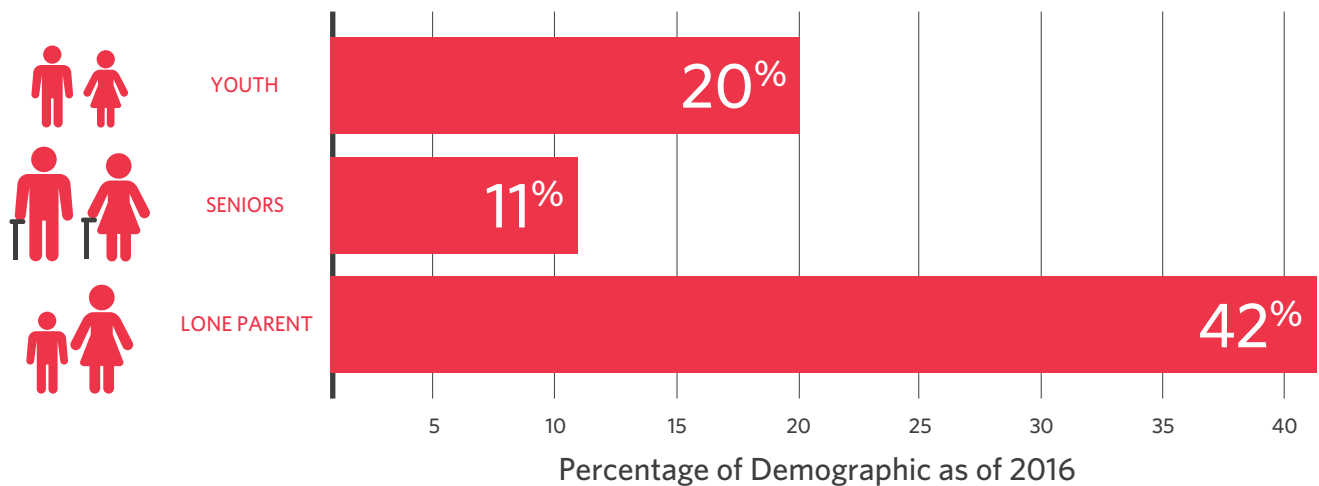
While annual numbers show that LIM after tax rates have fluctuated over time along with larger economic circumstances, Prince George's LIM after tax rate is consistently below provincial and national rates.

LOW INCOME AFTER TAX





PRINCE GEORGE POVERTY (Low Income Measure After Tax)



Child poverty has overall decreased over the past decade. While Prince George’s child poverty rate is below the provincial rate, improvements in our community have been happening at a slower pace. In 2016, 20% of children, or one in five, in our community live in low income.

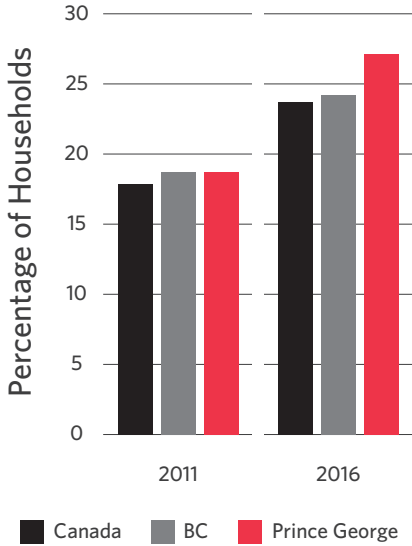
The rate of seniors living in low income situations in Prince George is notably below rates in British

Columbia and Canada and is at 11%. There has been an increase over the past few years. With many seniors being on fixed incomes, it is no surprise that increasing median income overall means that more seniors fall into the low income range.

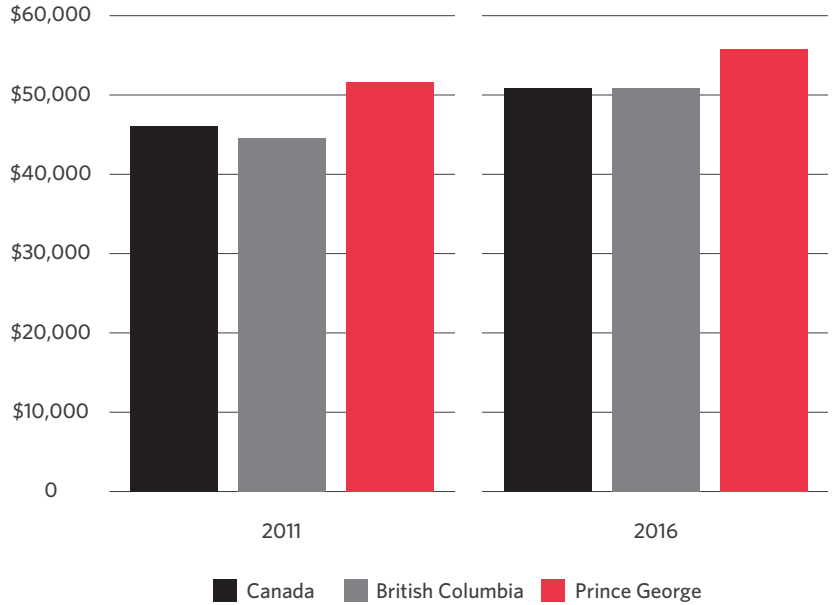
Lone parent households in low income, on the other hand, are more prevalent than in Canada and British Columbia. In 2016, 42% are living in low income.

INCOME

HOUSEHOLD AFTER TAX INCOME (\$100,000 and Over)



MEDIAN AFTER TAX INCOME



The proportion of households earning \$100,000 or more annually after tax has grown faster than at the provincial and national levels, and is at over 27% in 2016.

A look at median after tax family income confirms that Prince George has overall higher incomes. Increases over time have been following similar patterns for all locations, and median family income in Prince George has grown by 34% between 2004 and 2016 while nationally it has increased by 37% and provincially by 40%.

At the same time, Prince George has a higher proportion of the population receiving employment insurance (8.2% compared to 5.5% and 7.8% respectively in British Columbia and Canada).



PRINCE GEORGE FAMILY AFTER TAX INCOME ON THE RISE



PRINCE GEORGE INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING EI ON THE RISE

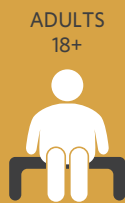
ZERO HUNGER



Hunger is about more than income; it is about food security. The goal of eliminating hunger considers factors such as healthy eating, food waste, and the local agriculture sector and its direct connections to the community.⁴

HEALTHY EATING HABITS

While obesity is on the rise nation-wide, the graphs indicate that obesity is more wide-spread in the Northern Interior Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA) and is rising at a faster pace. At the same time, residents in our HSDA are also less likely to at least eat five servings of fruits and vegetables per day (27% compared to 31% Canada-wide).



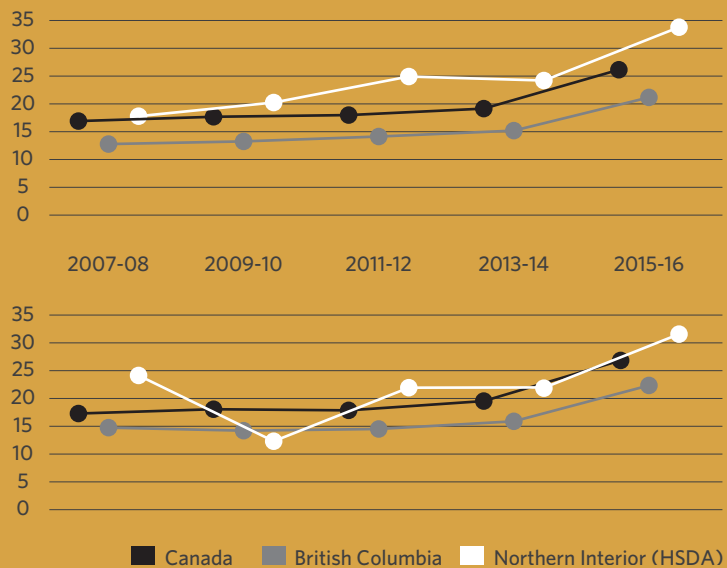
ADULTS
18+

Percentage of
Population



SENIORS
65+

OBESITY (Adults & Seniors)





AGRICULTURE

While the Cariboo Census Agricultural Region (CAR) has a sizeable number of farms (1,411 in 2016), it has seen one of the greatest declines in the province over the past five years.

Similarly, the decline in farm operators in the Cariboo CAR has been substantial. However, the decline in farm operators in the context of a decline in farms may indicate if the declines in numbers are due to closures or consolidation. While Canada-wide and province-wide the larger proportional decline in operators shows a trend towards farm consolidation, the farming decline in the Cariboo CAR appears to be more likely due to farm closures, a trend that may be linked to the older average age of farmers in our region.

FOOD BANK

According to Food Banks Canada, around one-third of food bank users are children, while seniors make up 6% of food bank users nationally and 10% in British Columbia. Food bank use in Canada and British Columbia has increased by 22% and 27% respectively between 2016 and 2018. Prince George food bank statistics indicate a 20% decrease in food bank visits between 2016 and 2018.

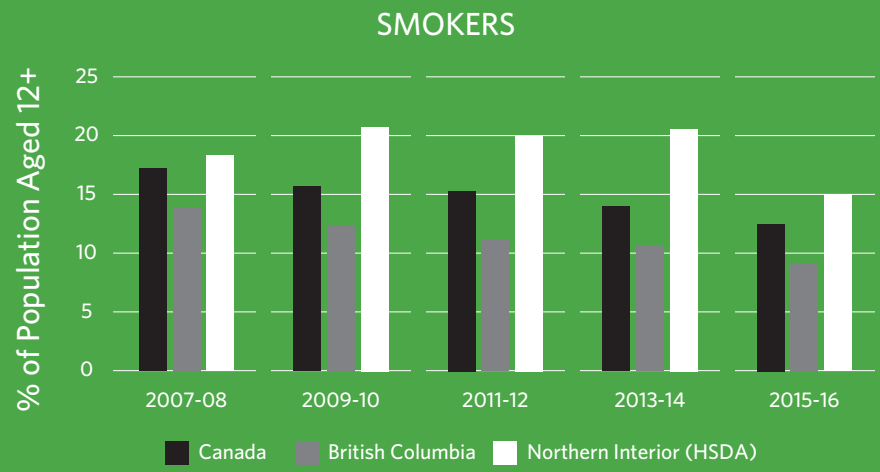
GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Good population health is about healthy habits as well as services to ensure good health. Sustainable community development is about ensuring good health and well-being for all community members.⁵

Physical activity in our region is overall higher than the national rates of physically active individuals. Broken down by gender, women in the Northern Interior tend to be more active than their counterparts province- and nation-wide, while men are slightly less active than men in BC overall. Youth show similar patterns when it comes to gender and physical activity; overall youth are slightly more physically active than adults. Seniors in our region, on the other hand, are substantially less physically active than other age groups and than seniors at the provincial level. While the senior age group may be more prone to physical limitations, these findings are a call to investigate further whether opportunities for physical activity for seniors are adequate.

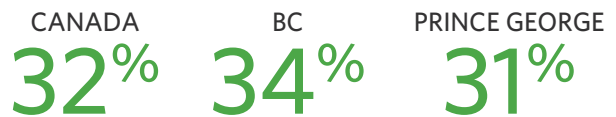




HEALTH SERVICES

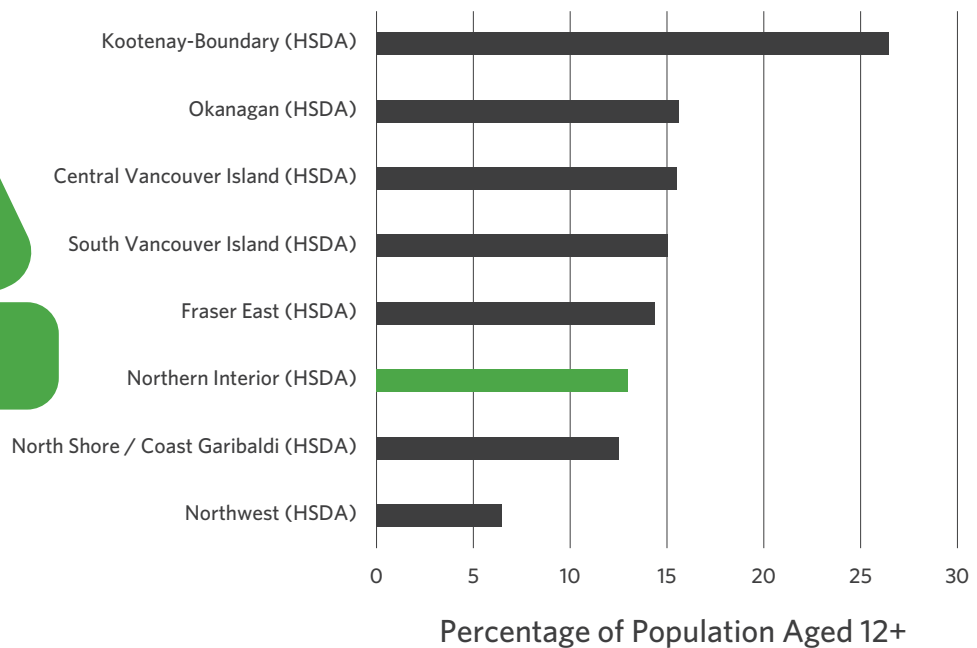
While the percentage of the population without a regular physician has seen fluctuations in all regions, the Northern Interior has a more favourable physician to population ratio than a number of other BC regions and tends to accommodate patients better than data suggests for the nation and the province as a whole. The percentage of the Prince George labour force employed in health care and social assistance is substantially higher than national and provincial averages and reflects Prince George's role as a service centre and hub for medical services.

INFLUENZA VACCINATION



Both access to health services, as well as health habits and trust in the system can influence vaccination rates. In 2016, 31% of the population aged 12 and over reported having received the influenza vaccination in the Northern Interior in the past 12 months. This was lower compared to Canada (32%) and British Columbia (34%).

POPULATION WITHOUT A FAMILY PHYSICIAN (2015-16)

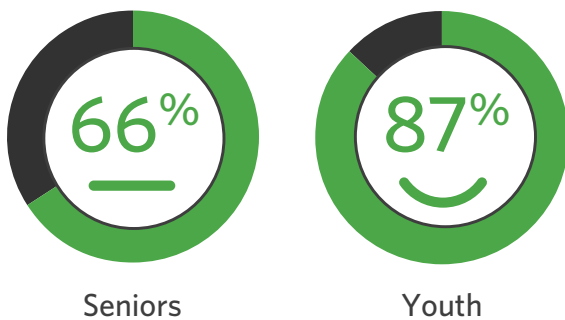


MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

While self-rated mental health in Canada has seen a steady decline over the past decade, the rates of those reporting very good to excellent mental health in the Northern Interior have seen more fluctuations but have generally stayed below national and provincial, as well as the majority of other BC regions', rates. At over 83%, however, youth mental health is rated better in the Northern Interior than in most other regions. Seniors' mental health tends to fluctuate more and generally stays well below national and provincial rates. At 62.6% of the population aged 65 and over reporting very good to excellent mental health, seniors' mental health lags behind the overall population's 67.3% in 2016.

A sense of belonging in the community has been significantly higher in the Northern Interior than in BC or Canada since the 2009/2010 survey. It should be noted that there has been a slight reversal in trend with a recent decrease in sense of belonging.

SENSE OF BELONGING

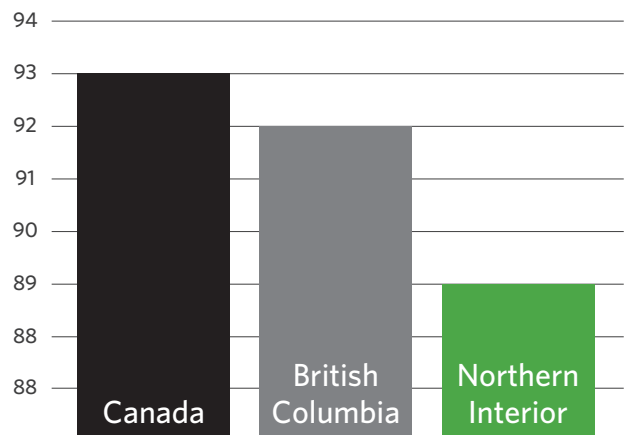


Broken down by generations, seniors feel less of a sense of belonging in our region (66.4% in 2016) than in Canada and BC. Youth tend to be most connected to their home region with 87% feeling a strong or very strong sense of belonging in the Northern Interior.

In terms of life satisfaction, the Northern Interior only reports 89% satisfied or very satisfied in 2016, while Canada's rate is at 93% and British Columbia's at 92%.



LIFE SATISFACTION



QUALITY EDUCATION

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Education is vital to improving quality of life and ensuring sustainable economic growth with a strong workforce. A highly educated workforce attracts economic development as industries are most likely to settle where they find a qualified workforce.

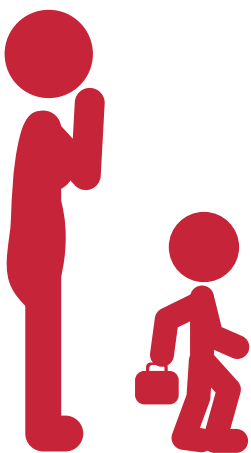
Beyond economic opportunity for the community, higher educational attainment translates to more opportunities in the job market, and for career advancement and personal development. While there are many other aspects to education, success and progress is commonly measured in early childhood development and the levels of educational attainment.⁶



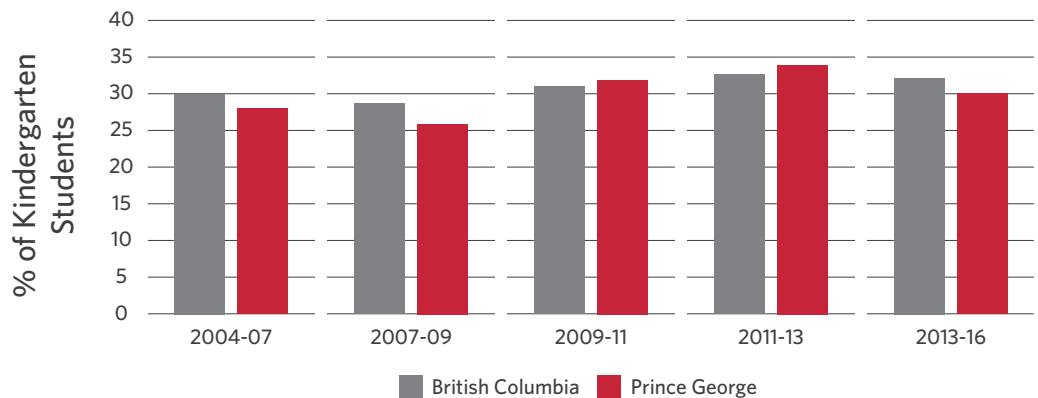


EARLY EDUCATION

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) measures school readiness among Kindergarten students in five areas, including physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge. These factors can determine a child’s educational future.



VULNERABLE IN AT LEAST ONE AREA OF EARLY DEVELOPMENT



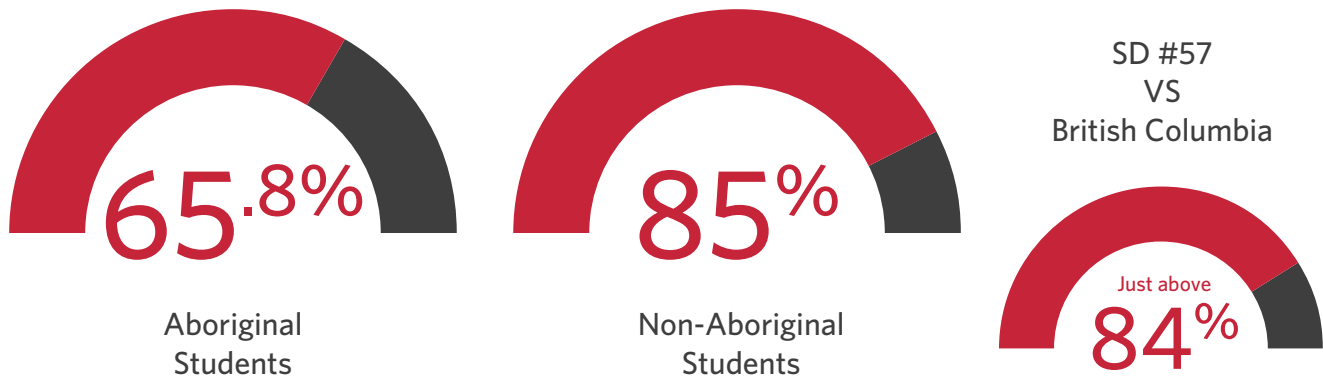
This graph shows that young children’s readiness for school in Prince George has fluctuated. It appears to correlate with economic vulnerability in our community, meaning that our children are better prepared for school than the provincial average when families in our community are economically secure but fall behind provincial school readiness in times of economic uncertainty.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

A first measure of high school graduation is the six-year completion rate, which is the proportion of students who graduate within six years from the first time they enroll in grade eight. The rate is adjusted for migration.

SIX-YEAR COMPLETION RATE

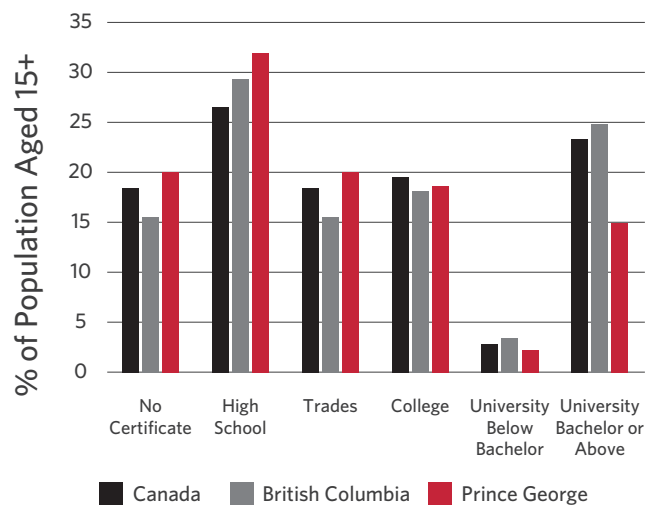
2017/18 Completion Rates for School District #57



The total six-year completion rate for all students in the Prince George School District in 2017/2018 was just below 80%, compared to 84.8% province-wide. The rate for Aboriginal students was at 65.8% in our community. While this is well below the non-Aboriginal rate of almost 85%, Aboriginal six-year completion rates have improved at a faster pace. In British Columbia, Aboriginal students constituted around 10% of the 2017/2018 student cohort; in Prince George, Aboriginal students made up over 27% of the cohort in 2017/2018. It should be noted that Prince George rates show stronger fluctuations than provincial rates; especially the strong fluctuations of the Aboriginal completion rate express the higher vulnerability of Aboriginal students in our schools.

According to the 2016 Census, Prince George has a higher proportion of people with less than a high school certificate or no post-secondary education. Trades certificates are more common in Prince George than in British Columbia and Canada overall; the attainment of college certificates and university below the bachelor level are comparable to national and provincial proportions; however, university degrees at or above bachelor level are considerably less common in the Prince George area than provincially and Canada-wide. This could have implications for the accessibility and attractiveness of education for people in our community, but might also be of interest in the context of retaining educated individuals in our community.

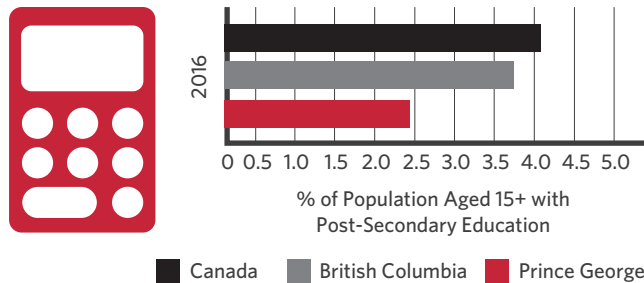
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2016)



FIELDS OF STUDY

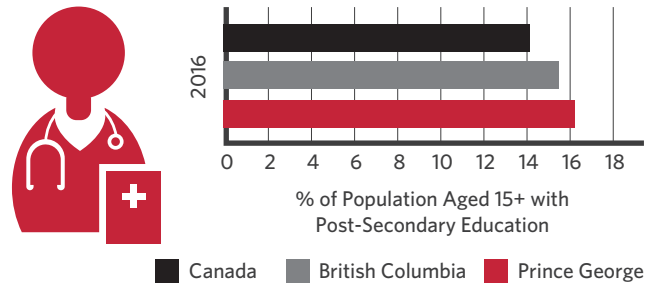
Enrollment in certain fields of study is of particular interest, for example because they are in high demand on the labour market, tend to be underrepresented among students, or have implications for amenities and quality of life in the community.

FIELD OF STUDY: Mathematics, Computer and Information Sciences



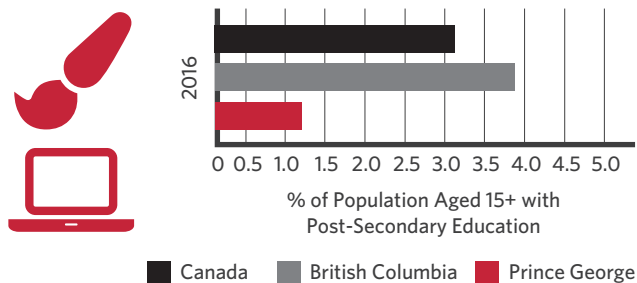
While the proportion of individuals with post-secondary education in mathematics, and computer and information technologies in Prince George has increased faster over the past decade than in other regions, it is still below 60% of the proportion of students Canada-wide.

FIELD OF STUDY: Health and Related Fields



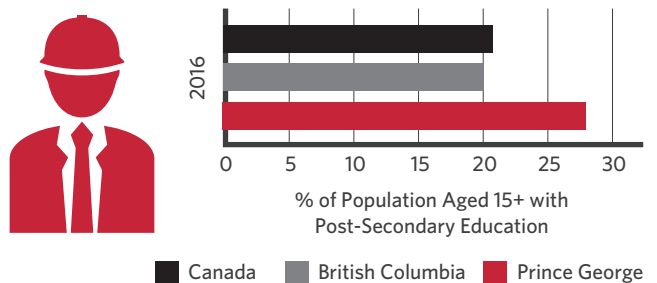
In comparison to other fields of study of relevance to economic opportunity and community quality of life, the proportion of the Prince George population with post-secondary qualifications in health and related fields is consistently above provincial and national numbers.

FIELD OF STUDY: Visual and Performing Arts, and Communications Technologies



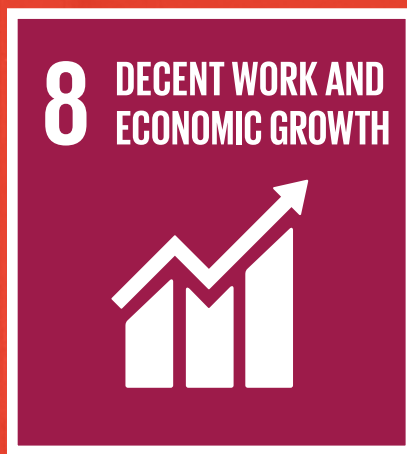
A total of 1.2% of individuals with post-secondary education in Prince George indicate visual and performing arts as their field of study. It has seen an overall decrease in the past decade, and is less than one-third of the provincial equivalent. This finding has implications for Prince George's arts and entertainment scene. A look into supports and barriers for arts studies and performers in the community, as well as attention to what is needed to attract programs as well as students, could provide more context to those numbers.

FIELD OF STUDY: Architecture, Engineering, and Related Technologies



Engineering and construction related post-secondary qualifications are another field of importance to the future labour market. Here, Prince George has a higher proportion of post-secondary educated individuals in the fields of architecture, engineering, and related technologies than Canada and British Columbia overall.

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND GENDER EQUALITY



Data on employment and labour force participation, income distribution, and employment opportunities in businesses provides an overview of whether people are finding employment in the community, whether wages are adequate, and how far we have come in terms of gender equality.⁷

EMPLOYMENT

With a labour force participation rate of over 69% in 2016, the population of the Prince George area is more actively involved in the labour market than Canada and British Columbia. Again, this is likely

in part linked to the younger population, and the trend, as in all other regions, shows a decrease in the participation rate over time.

In Prince George in 2018, 63% of the population aged 15 and over was employed. The employment

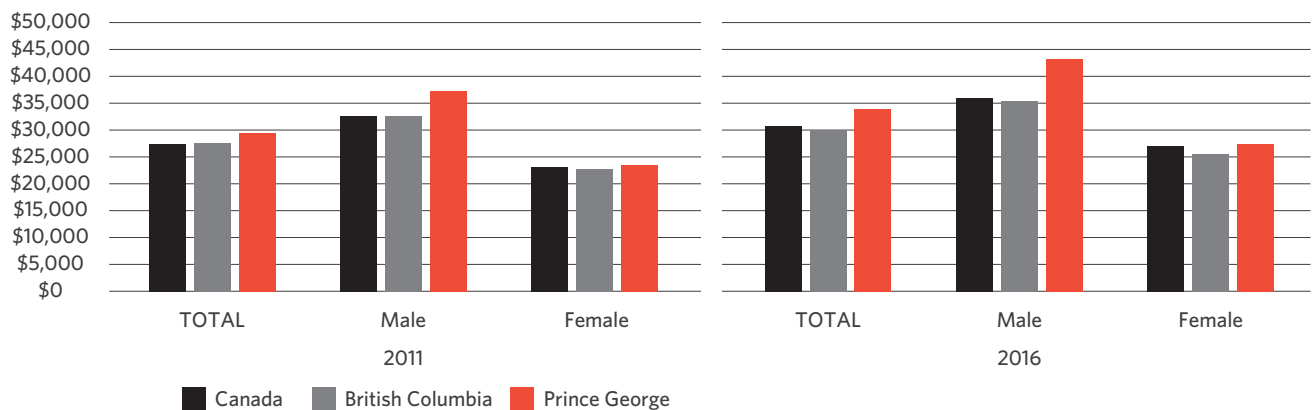
rate has been steady over the last eight years, and consistently above employment rates for Canada and British Columbia.

Unemployment in Prince George in 2018 is at 5.6%. Fluctuations in the unemployment rate in Prince George tend to follow national and provincial patterns but are more extreme. For the community, this means we have to be more flexible in our response to economic cycles. While the ability to expand and contract employment related services in a timely and efficient manner when economic change is happening is important for appropriate reactive action, it is particularly important to focus on economic diversification to minimize our community's vulnerability to external economic developments and dependence on a small number of large industries. Having an educated workforce in place is one important factor in attracting economic diversity.



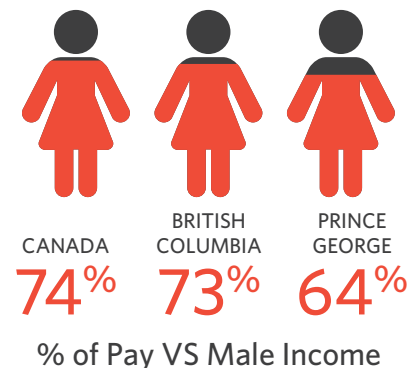
INCOME

MEDIAN AFTER TAX INCOME



Median income in Prince George tends to be higher than at the national and provincial levels. This is especially true for men. The gender gap, however, is considerably bigger in Prince George than in Canada and British Columbia. While the gender gap has been decreasing over time, the 2016 median after tax income of women in Prince George was around 64% of the male income. Meanwhile, in Canada, women made 74% of the male income; in British Columbia female median after tax income was 73% of the male income. This begs the question, what can Prince George do to make higher paying positions more accessible or interesting to women, and how can we ensure that women are paid fairly for the work they do.

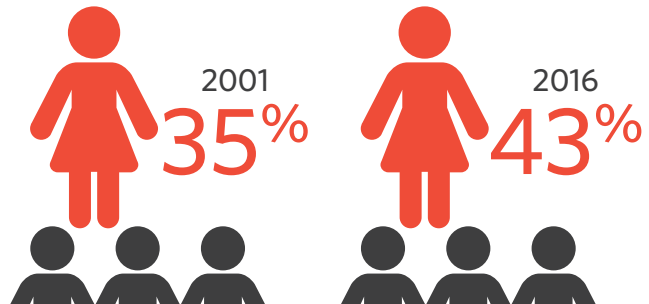
THE GENDER GAP





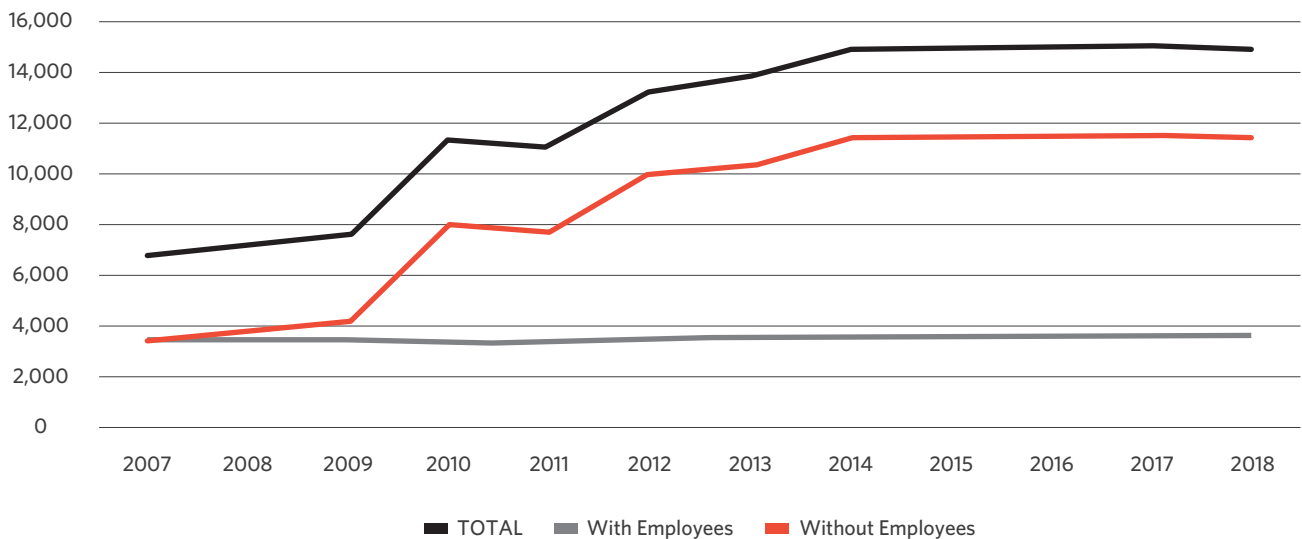
WOMEN IN LEADING POSITIONS

Prince George has seen the biggest increase of women in managerial positions compared to Canada and British Columbia. In 2001, 35% of all managerial positions in Prince George were occupied by women; by 2016, that number has gone up to 43%.



BUSINESS

BUSINESS COUNTS, PRINCE GEORGE



In 2018, Prince George counts a total of 14,676 businesses. Of those, over 76% are businesses with no employees. In 2007 and 2008, of the total number of businesses of over 6,500 about half had no employees. After the economic crisis that began in 2008, the number of businesses with no

employees almost tripled between 2008 and 2014. Faced with high unemployment rates at the time, Prince George residents showed their business sense and creativity and created employment and income or income supplements for themselves.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Despite a relatively low population density of fewer than 5 people per square kilometre in 2016 in the Prince George Census Agglomeration (compared to 855 in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area and 18 in Kamloops Census Agglomeration),

urban planning is important to ensure sustainable growth and development in our community. Housing and transportation are among the most relevant topics for Prince George in urban planning considerations. Sustainable cities have to provide opportunities for all their residents. This includes affordable and appropriate housing options and viable transportation alternatives to personal vehicle use.⁸



HOME OWNERSHIP

The Prince George area tends to have a higher percentage of home-owners than Canada and the province. While recent trends on national and provincial levels see home ownership decreasing, Prince George has seen an increase from 70% to over 72% between 2011 and 2016.

HOME OWNERSHIP LEVELS

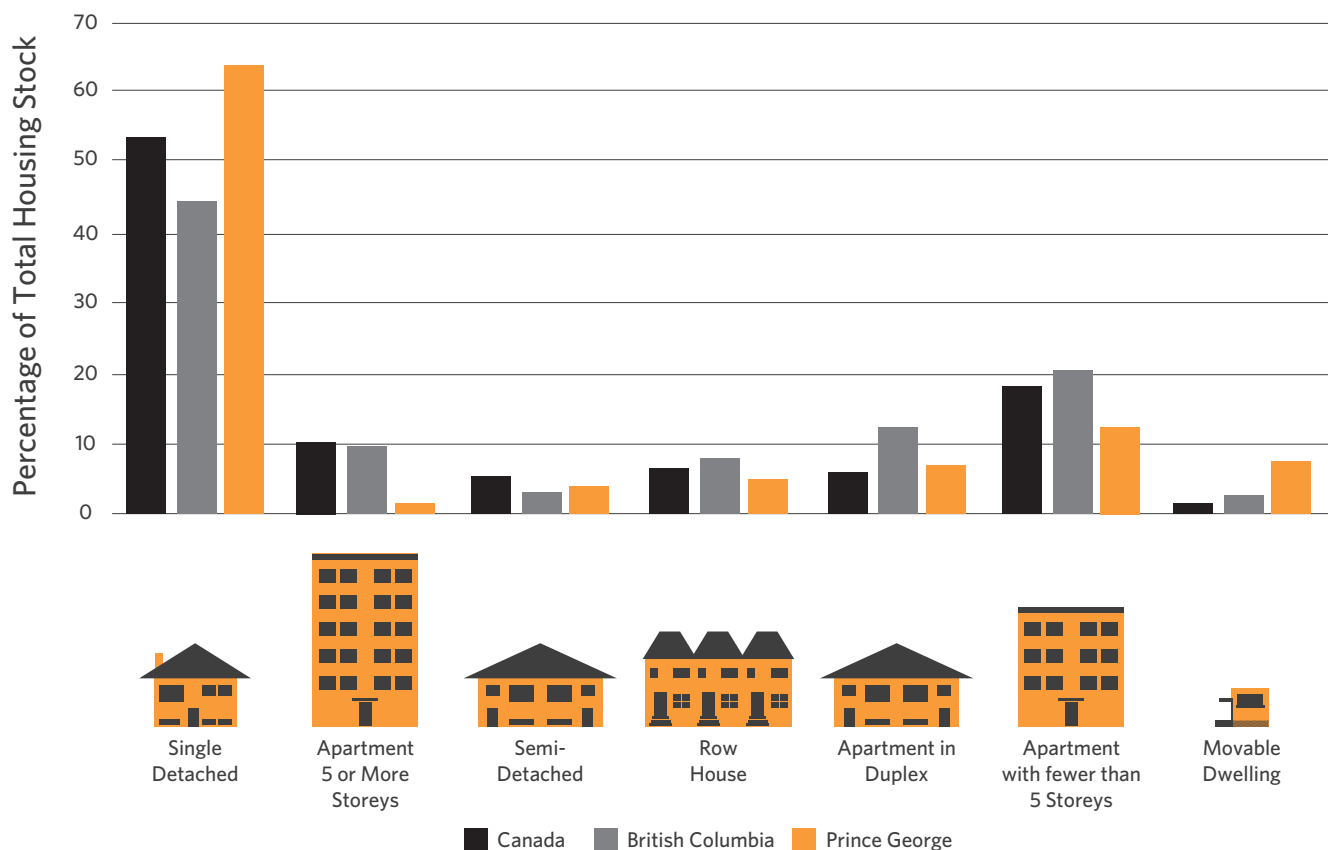
National and Provincial

Prince George

HOUSING STOCK

Data about the type, age, condition, and size of the housing stock is crucial to assessing and anticipating housing needs, and can inform future development planning.

TYPE OF DWELLING



PERIOD OF CONSTRUCTION



OVER
50%
Built in the 1960s
and 70s

Over 50% of Prince George homes were built in the 1960s and 70s. Only a minor percentage was added in the last 15 years. Compared to Canada and British Columbia, that means Prince George's housing stock is older.

SUITABILITY OF HOUSING

OVER
97%
PRINCE
GEORGE

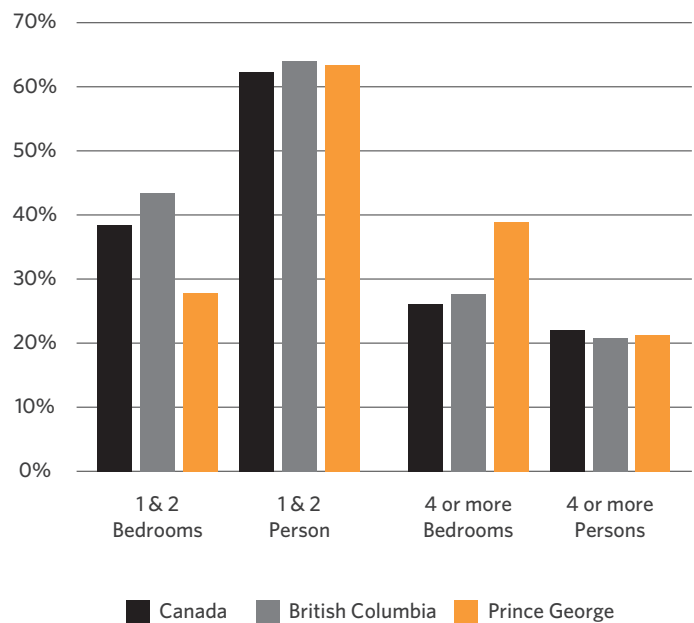
AROUND
95%
NATIONAL AND
PROVINCIAL AVERAGE

In terms of suitability of housing, that is whether a dwelling has enough bedrooms for its occupants, Prince George ranks a little higher than the nation and the province with over 97% of housing suitable compared to around 95% in Canada and British Columbia.

Prince George housing stock tends to be bigger than in other regions. Almost 40% of Prince George homes have four or more bedrooms compared to 26% and 28% in Canada and British Columbia respectively. When comparing household size and housing size, the graph shows that there is a mismatch. The shortage of one and two-bedroom options and the oversupply of four and more bedroom houses is more pronounced in Prince George than in Canada and the province.



HOUSEHOLDS VS HOUSING STOCK





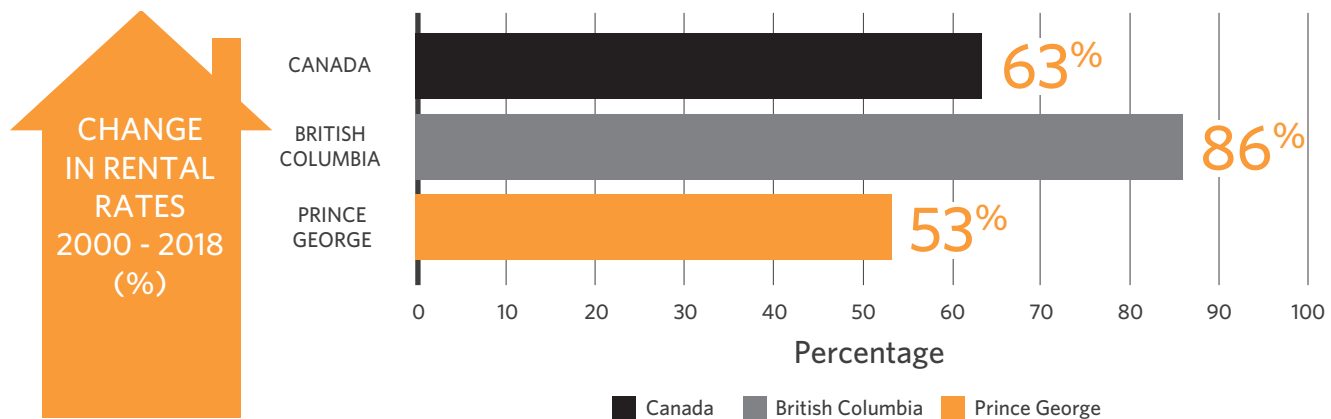
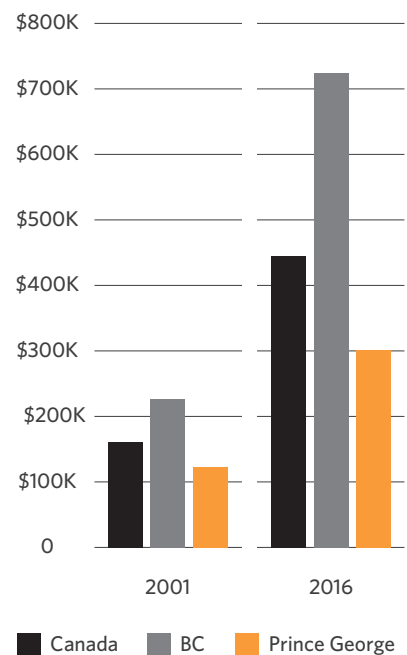
AFFORDABILITY

The cost of housing, house values, and developments over time provide some indication of how affordable housing in Prince George is compared to other regions. When put into context with income levels, we learn how well shelter costs in our community are matched with incomes.

Average monthly costs for tenants, including rent and utilities for example, are generally lower than average costs for home owners. While shelter costs have been increasing nation-wide over the last decades, the Prince George area is consistently more affordable than national and provincial averages with the gap for both owners and tenants increasing over time.

The average value of dwellings Canada as well as our province and our community has increased steadily since 2001. The chart shows, however, that increases in Prince George have been much slower than in Canada and especially in British Columbia.

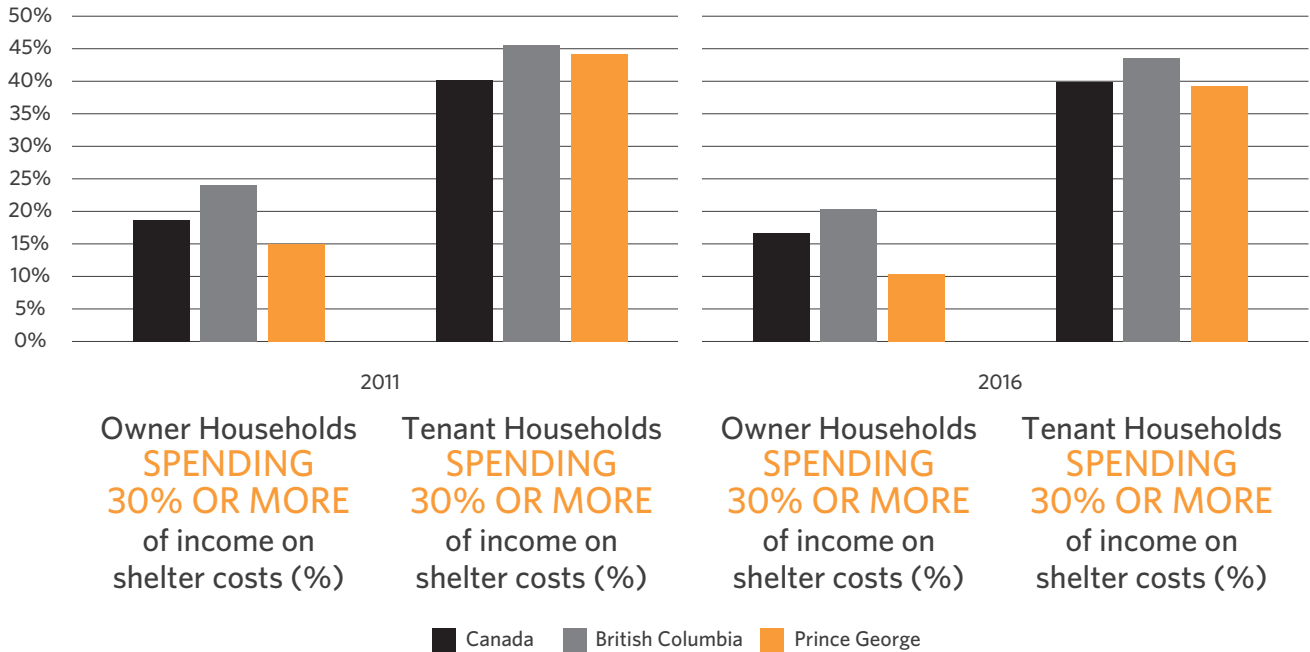
AVERAGE VALUE OF DWELLINGS (CAD)



While an increase of over 86% in average rent since 2000 places British Columbia well above national average rental rates and increases, average rent in Prince George has seen the lowest increase of under 53%.

The shelter to income ratio confirms Prince George's affordability. The percentage of households spending 30% of their income on shelter has decreased between 2011 and 2016 and is at 18% in Prince George, compared to 24% Canada-wide and 28% in British Columbia.

SHELTER TO INCOME RATIO: Owners VS Tenants

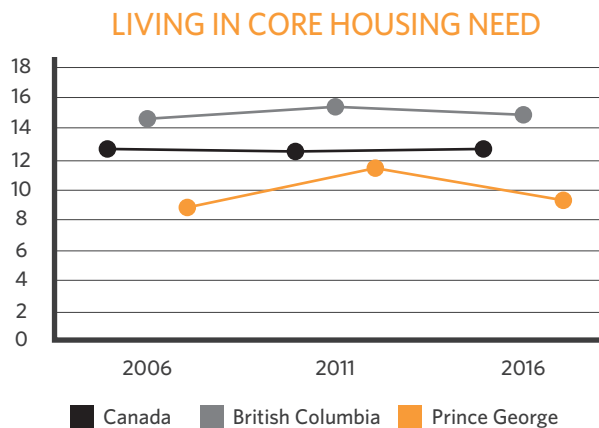


While shelter costs for tenants are below the costs home owners face, a look at shelter to income ratio divided by home ownership status shows that, while home owners do very well in Prince George compared to other regions, the gap between owners and tenants is bigger in our community than at national and provincial levels.

The vacancy rate in Prince George in 2018 was at 3.6% and has therefore dipped below the ideal vacancy rate of 4%.⁹



Households living in core housing need are those whose dwelling is considered unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable and who cannot afford suitable alternatives in the community.¹⁰ In Prince George, 9.4% of households, almost one in ten, live in core housing need. This is below national and provincial rates.



9.4% or almost
1 in 10
live in CORE housing need

COMMUTE

The mode of transportation and the duration of a commute can say a lot about transportation characteristics and traffic in a community.

The comparison shows, that while driving a car, truck, or van is the most common mode of commuting, Prince George residents' habit, preference, or necessity to drive themselves to work is well above Canadians' and British Columbian's reliance on driving to work. In particular public transit is much more prevalent in other regions overall, indicating a shortage of public transportation options in Prince George.

A look at commuting time shows that Prince George and area residents have considerably shorter commutes with over 86% of commuters traveling under half an hour to work. Canada-wide and in British Columbia close to 40% of commuters travel for more than half an hour.

JOURNEY TO WORK (2016)



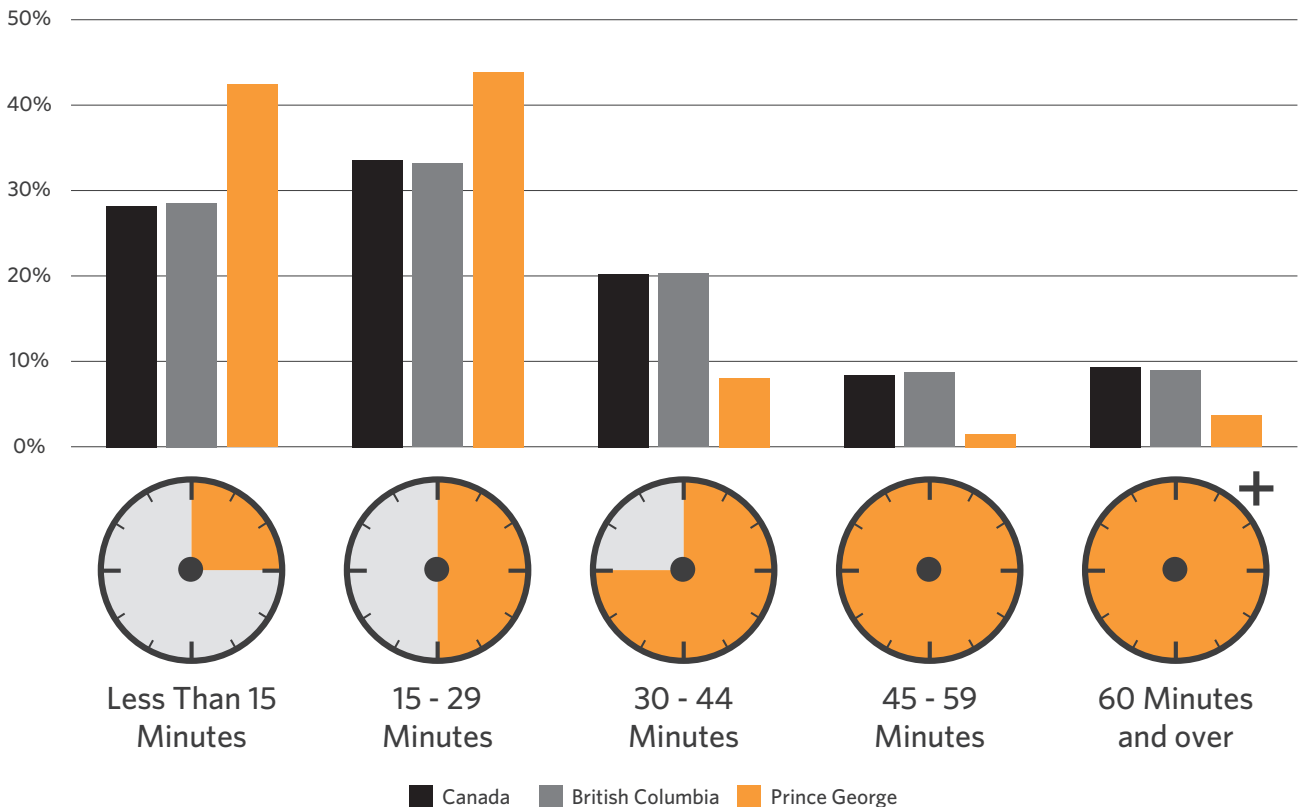
ALMOST
85% drive
to work in a car, truck,
or van

6% catch a ride
with someone in a car,
truck, or van to work



9% take public
transportation, or walk
or bike to work

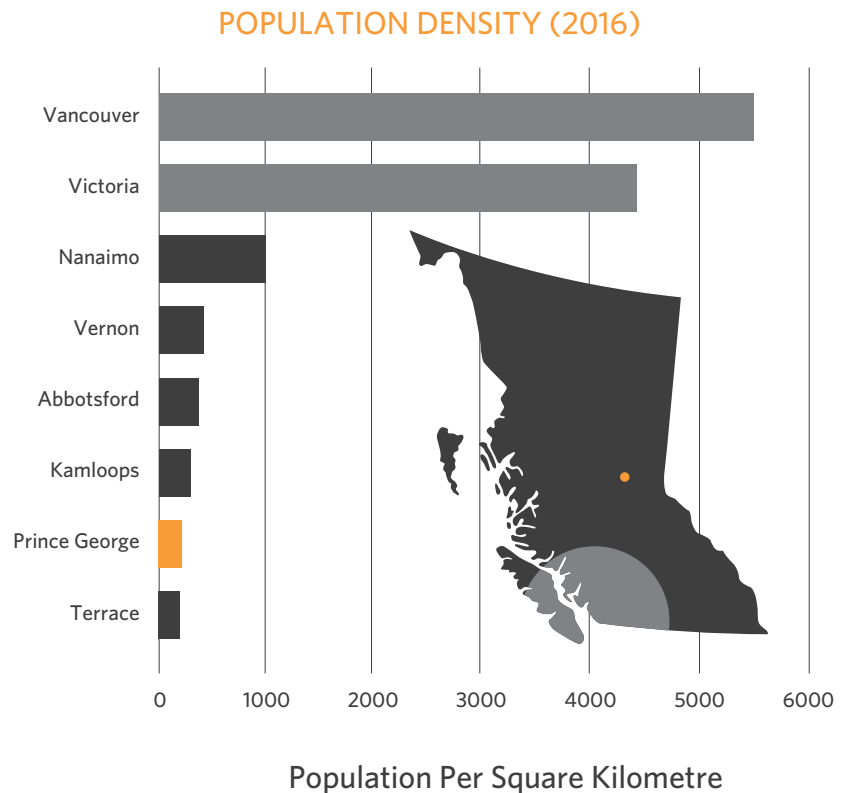
COMMUTING TIME (2016)





SUSTAINABLE PLANNING

Population density has implications for a community's tax base as well as the ability to implement services efficiently. Examples from larger cities demonstrate that more front doors per square kilometre increase the municipality's tax income while decreasing the tax burden on the individual households. In addition, more households can be served in a smaller area making service delivery, such as curbside recycling, snow removal, and many others, more cost effective. Prince George's population density of 232.5 people per square kilometre within city limits in 2016 is low and shows how spread out our community is.



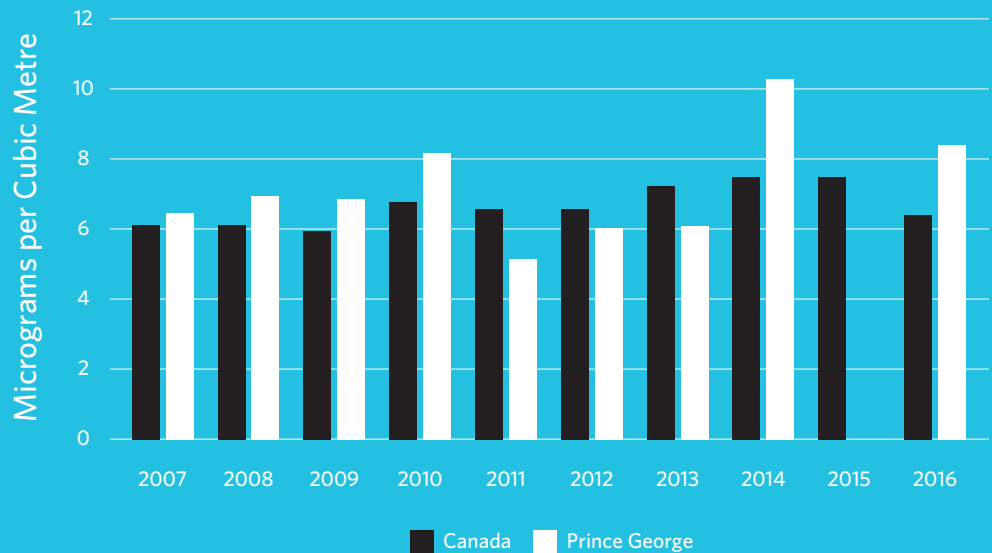
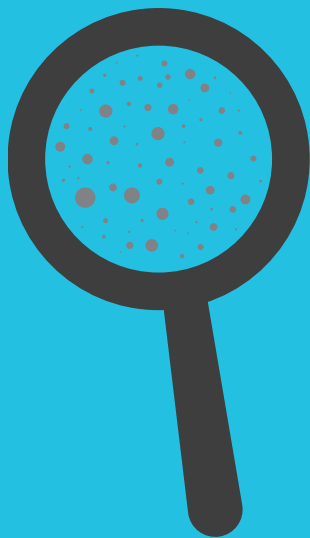
CLIMATE ACTION, AND CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Photo by: Chuck Chin



This section is concerned with air quality, environmentally conscious habits, and clean water. Composting and water conservation habits are not available for Prince George.¹¹

AVERAGE FINE PARTICULATE MATTER (um/m³)





Above: Cottonwood Island Park

The air quality in Prince George undergoes stronger fluctuations than the Canadian averages. Big events like forest fires contribute to years with particularly high amounts of fine particles in the air at a local level. Prince George saw a significant improvement in 2011, but recorded a year with very high amounts in 2014 and still has higher than national average amounts in 2016. Generally, new technology implemented by local industry and programs to reduce wood burning activity have contributed to air quality improvements; in some years, improvements and progress have been offset by severe forest fire seasons.¹²

Since Prince George has no curbside composting program, there is no data on the rate of residents composting their kitchen and yard waste. Similarly, data on water conservation practices was not available for our region.



PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

16 PEACE AND
JUSTICE



Accountable, effective, and inclusive institutions, along with access to justice, are the foundation of peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable communities. Universally, communities aim to end violence and crime, and strengthen their institutions and citizen participation and ownership in their communities.¹³

CRIME

Crime rates are decreasing in Canada. While Prince George's crime rates, both for overall crime and violent crime, are still above national and provincial rates, the trend since the late 1990s has been a decrease. The overall crime rate has decreased by 17% between 1998 and 2017; violent crime has been reduced by over 43% in the same time period.



OVERALL CRIME RATE
HAS DECREASED by

17%

between
1998 and 2017



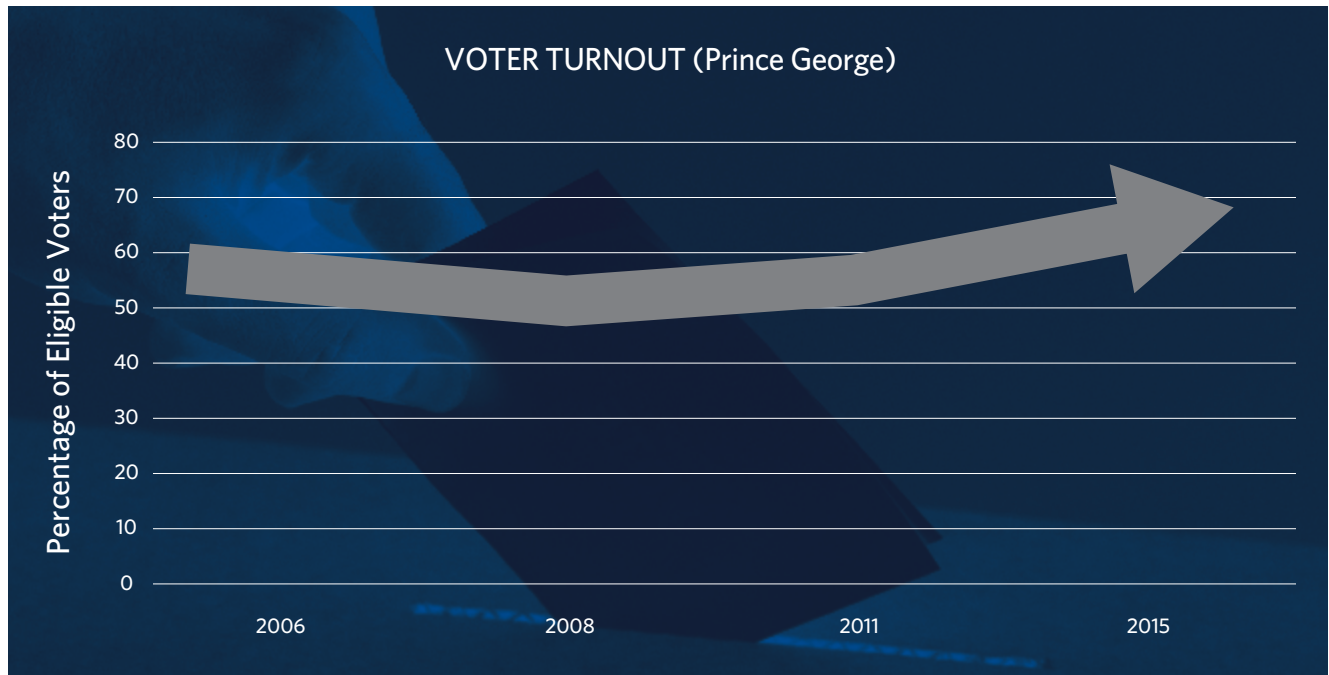
VIOLENT CRIME HAS
BEEN REDUCED

by
over 43%

between
1998 and 2017

STRONG INSTITUTIONS

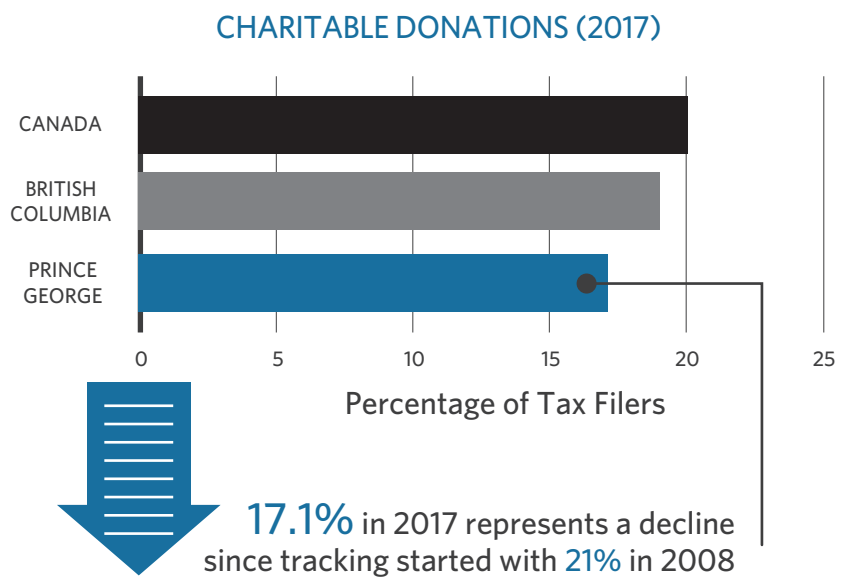
The strength of institutions depends not only on effective operations but is an expression of community participation and by-in.



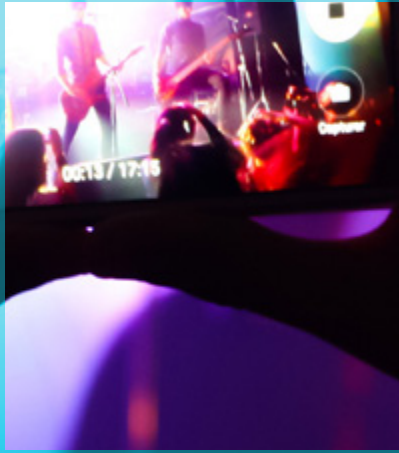
Voter turnout is an expression of interest and commitment to the community, as well as a form of active participation in shaping community life. Showing how many people in a community vote, and thereby not only participate actively but also stand behind governments, gives an indication of the strength of local and regional institutions.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Charitable donations reflect commitment to, and active interest in, the community. The rate of tax filers making donations in Prince George was at 17.1% and below Canadian, British Columbian, and most other BC regional rates. It has also been on the decline since tracking started with 21% in 2008. This graph does not hold any information about dollar amounts donated.



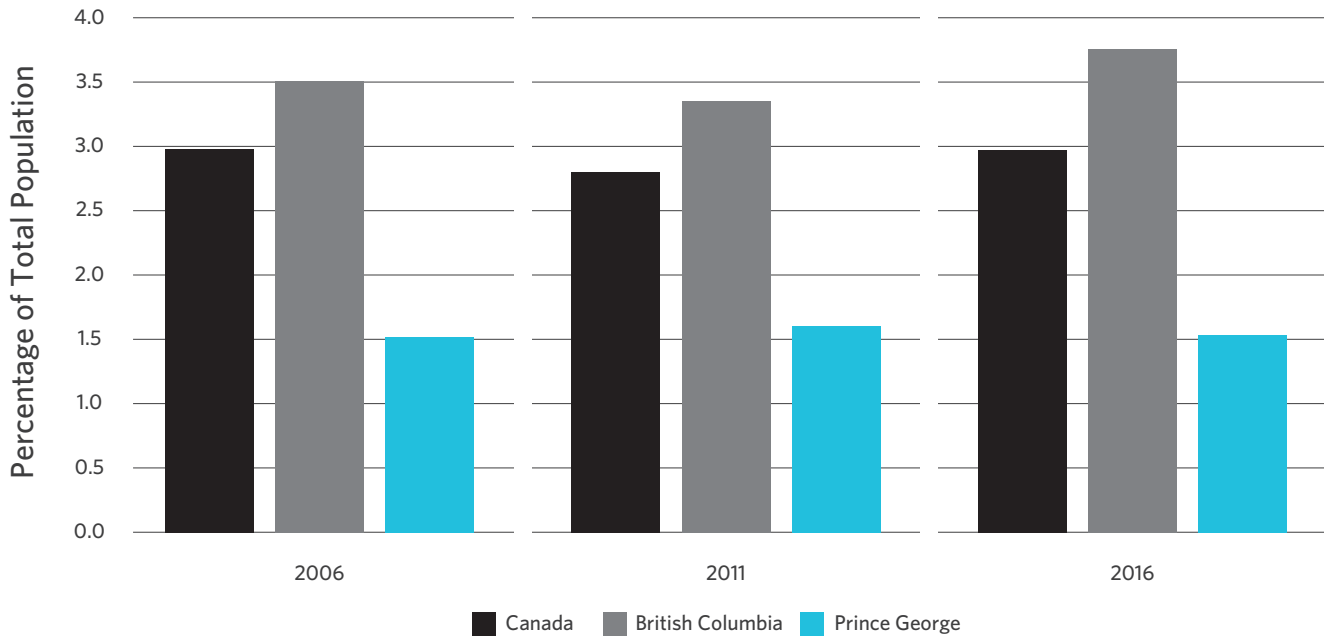
CULTURE AND ARTS



Culture and arts play a central role in the quality of life in a community. Prince George is proud of its growing art sector. Topics like a performing arts centre or a community stage have been debated for quite some time. A look at employment in culture and arts, as well as grant distribution, helps identify areas that could benefit from additional attention, support, and funding.¹⁴

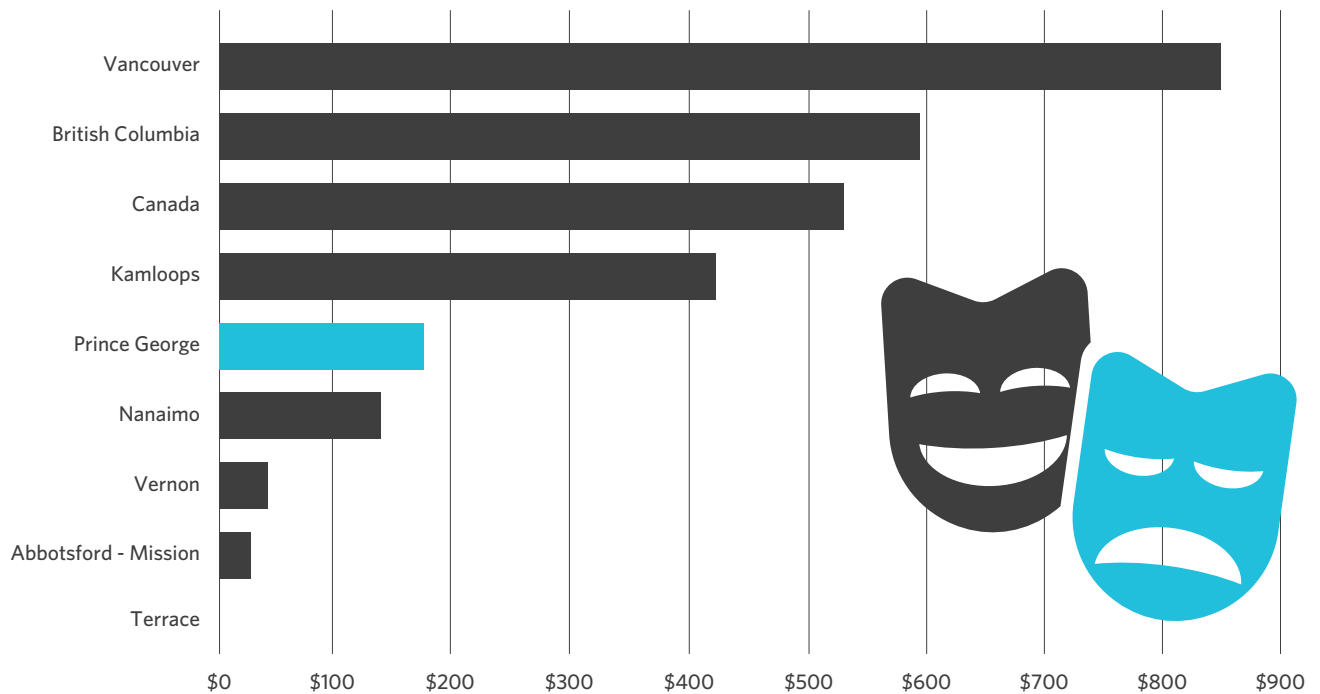


EMPLOYMENT IN CULTURE AND ARTS



A look at this graph shows that the proportion employed in culture and arts in Prince George lags well behind Canadian and provincial numbers and has not seen a notable increase over the past ten years.

2016 - 17 GRANT DOLLARS PER PERSON



In terms of grant funding received from the Canada Council for the Arts, Prince George finds itself behind comparable cities like Kamloops and the Canadian and provincial averages.

CONCLUSION

What are the implications of the findings in this report, and where do we go from here? A lot of stories about our community emerge throughout the indicator areas. We will summarize a few of them to conclude the report with some food for thought.

Prince George is a relatively young community with a large Aboriginal population and room for more diversity when it comes to immigrants and visible minorities. This has implications and holds opportunities for our future labour force. Think education, and attraction and retention, for example.

At the same time, we cannot ignore a growing senior population. Our community may be younger than many others, but it is aging too. With this, we will see more households on fixed incomes, changing housing needs, different service requirements, and changing quality of life expectations, for example in terms of leisure opportunities and retail choices. Think accessibility, affordability, convenient transportation, and diverse programs, to name but a few.

Our housing stock is older than the average Canadian housing stock and shows an increasing mismatch with the predominant household sizes. People in Prince George have fewer children and are aging, meaning the proportion of one- and two-person households can be expected to increase further. Prince George is already in the midst of a number of new housing developments. For strategic planning of further development, we have to ask ourselves how can we improve the existing housing stock, who we are building for, whose needs have to be met, and how can it be sustainable and cost effective in terms of city services and transportation.

Our housing affordability sets us apart from other centres. But we must not lose sight of the fact that our housing costs are following the same curve as other, much less affordable, communities, and they are rising too. Think affordability as an attraction and retention opportunity but also keep an eye on housing cost developments and how other communities deal with, or avoid, affordability crises.

In terms of education, Prince George has room for improvement when it comes to both high school completion and university level qualifications. An educated workforce means not only more opportunities and overall better quality of life at a personal level; an educated workforce is also a

prerequisite for attracting industry and business development and diversification. Think education barriers and incentives, as well as future workforce needs and program availability.

Prince George has higher incomes than the average Canadian community, fewer people living in low income, and a slight decrease in food bank visits. This is good news; however, one in five children in low income, and a trend towards rising elderly poverty, have to be kept in mind. Think preventive measures — such as education, job accessibility, and affordable child care — as well as services to alleviate immediate struggles.

Healthy habits have been improving in Prince George, our physician shortage is less pronounced than in most other regions, and as a health service centre with a university hospital and a cancer treatment centre, we have a large health care workforce. However, the overall population, and especially seniors, in Prince George have fewer reports of good mental health than many other regions. And while the Prince George population overall reports a strong sense of belonging, seniors feel much less connected in the community. Beyond attraction and retention of physicians and specialists, think seniors' community connections and needs beyond medical services.

As most aspects of community life are interconnected, the emerging stories tell tales of both challenges and opportunities which are linked very closely. For example, efforts made in one of the areas of education, health, income equality, life satisfaction, economic diversification, and the diversification and expansion of the arts and culture scene, to name a few, will show effects in all other areas. Our community groups are our assets that we should take care of to realize their full potential. Our sizeable youth population is our future and calls for attention to realize its full range of opportunity. Our growing senior population deserves attention to its changing needs and holds great opportunity for our community both economically and socially. Our diversity, which calls for special attention to inclusiveness, cultural sensitivity, and equal opportunity, holds great opportunity for all aspects of community life as well as Prince George's economy. The Prince George Community Foundation is continuously engaged in the community and actively works with community groups to make Prince George a community where we can all belong and flourish!



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Above: Huble Homestead Historic Site



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