

GOLDEN & AREA A'S

VitalSigns[®]

2011

Twelve key issues

Hundreds of citizen graders

One snapshot of our community

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Communities

Golden & Area A includes:
 Golden
 Habart
 Nicholson
 Parson
 Field
 Donald
 Blaeberry
 Moberly
 Harrogate
 Castledale
 Kicking Horse

GOLDEN & AREA A'S

VitalSigns®

Intended as a long-term initiative, Vital Signs is a community check-up that measures our quality of life in the Town of Golden (Golden) & Columbia Shuswap Regional District Electoral Area 'A' (Area A).

Community Engagement

Vital Signs builds on partnerships with a broad range of community members who contributed their skills and expertise. In addition, many residents were actively engaged in the development and grading of this report.

Goals

- Highlight areas of need to encourage further dialogue and action from all community stakeholders;
- Encourage cross-sector thinking and collaborative solutions;
- Build community capacity by sharing information.

Community Leadership Group

Many representatives from key Golden & Area A organizations provided high level advice, data and recommendations to ensure that our Vital Signs report is an effective vehicle for showing the trends and priorities that are emerging in our community.

Citizen Graders

Over 300 residents completed our survey, assigning grades from 1 to 6 to the 12 key issue areas, based on their individual perceptions of past, current and expected future performance. Of the respondents:

- 47% lived in Golden & Area A for more than sixteen years
- 59% are female
- 32% are under the age of 35
- 92% are full-time local residents, and
- 246 provided additional comments.

Research Methodology

Index of Grading

The mode (occurred most often) of the citizen grade is illustrated in each issue area over time, including perceptions from 2006, to summer 2011 and forward-looking to 2014. In general, progress is perceived.



Research

Research data used in this report was collected from a variety of sources including SPARC BC, Statistics Canada, BC Stats, Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute and local organizations.

Indicator Selection

Using 4 indicators per issue area, Vital Signs monitors change, informs needed action and celebrates signs of community health. The report is designed to show the trends and priorities and to encourage ongoing discussion for improving our quality of life. For more info, refer to the issue area Deep Data documents on our website.

Community Population Trend



2011 Report Highlights

The issue areas described in this report are placed in order of citizens' priorities.

Economy

Our small community is challenged by seasonal factors, slow real estate activity and few locally-controlled businesses.

Work

There are fewer local jobs and the labour market continues to change as the global economy struggles.

Housing

Golden has identified housing as a top priority and has initiated a plan that includes creating partnerships with developers and employers to diversify housing stocks; however dwelling types in Area A are still primarily single detached units or mobile homes.

Health

We are a fairly active, healthy community. We have good access to doctors and a continuum of health services.

Environment

Air quality, habitat destruction and fragmentation, and terrestrial invasive species are major environmental issues for our community.

Learning

Golden's high school completion rate is slightly higher than the provincial rate, but the number of adults that do not have any post-secondary is below the BC average.

Gap Between Rich & Poor

There are families in Golden who live on incomes below the provincial and federal averages, but the statistical gap between the richest and the poorest is not as large as elsewhere in Canada.

Getting Started & Staying

Golden & Area A's population declined by 4% from 2001 to 2006. We need to focus on creating employment and amenities to keep our population stable.

Belonging & Leadership

Residents report a strong sense of community belonging. Fewer area residents claimed charitable donations than in BC but the value is increasing.

Getting Around

In the past five years our community has worked to be less dependent on personal vehicles. However, there are still challenges to meet the needs of our aging population.

Safety

There are fewer RCMP files and Golden & District Search & Rescue calls, while ambulance activity has increased. Improvements come with concerted efforts by all citizens.

Arts & Culture

Based on community investment and participation, expansion of activities and events, it's apparent that the community strongly supports arts and culture.

A Canadian Initiative with a Community Focus

Vital Signs provides a snapshot of Golden & Area A that tells it like it is - highlighting both areas of concern and celebration.

In 2011, over 300 citizens became graders for Golden & Area A's Vital Signs, which delivered the sobering wakeup call that our authentic adventure community presents challenges that threaten the quality of life for many local residents, businesses and organizations.

Golden & Area A's Vital Signs repeats the message that the last decade of fast paced economic growth has slowed; forcing us to wrestle with our economy, and address work and housing issues today.

This report and the accompanying Deep Data documents (detailed background data available [online](#)) are all about community engagement. Thank you to the hundreds of interested, involved and informed residents, who attended our community discussion forums, completed the survey and answered our call for data.

This project would not be possible without our volunteer Steering Committee members who donate their time, skills and expertise as volunteers for the Golden & District Community Foundation. Volunteers are the backbone of our community.

Golden & Area A's Vital Signs Project Team

Denise English, Chair	Sara Nichols	Joyce deBoer
Nola Milum	Aita Bezzola	Marcella LaFever
Holly Magoon	Troy Durand	Lynne Romano
Monica De	Devin Solberg	Baljit Rana
Ryan Watmough		

Research Network

We thank the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC), especially Lorraine Copas & Kyle Record, for their time and expertise in the development of learning resources. Their help was made possible through the financial support from Vancouver Foundation and the Government of Canada through Canada's Rural Partnership.

We would also like to recognize the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute and the Centre for Living Standards for their research and review.



Economy

To improve our quality of life, and for organizations and households to prosper, economic leaks need to be plugged

Our community is challenged by seasonal factors, a dramatic slowdown in residential real estate sales, and few large locally-controlled businesses. Every dollar spent in our community helps to sustain the local economy. Over 100 local survey respondents consider this our most important issue area.



3%

more visitors stopped by the BC Visitor Centre @ Golden and 35% fewer visitors stopped in the Yoho National Park Visitors Centre in 2010, compared to 2007.

35%

increase in median residential home sale price, while unit sales volume has fallen 60% between 2007 and 2010.

\$335M

will be spent on the Kicking Horse Canyon and Donald Bridge projects by the end of 2012. Another \$683M is budgeted to complete both projects.

76%

of Chamber of Commerce members have 1 – 5 employees. The area's three largest companies employ 650 local residents, 15% of our labour force.

Celebrate Success

Improved amenities and signage make it easier for visitors to spend time and money in the community.

We are diversifying our economy in hydro power, transportation and tourism.

The Vital Signs® project led a Forest Industry Session, which helped start the dialogue on its challenges and opportunities.

Take Action

Read your community's annual report.

Google "economic leaks" and "inflows." Where is your money spent?

Join an industry association; use the community calendar; promote open dialogue and collaboration between businesses.

Work

The quality and nature of employment opportunities can contribute to the overall sense of vitality and well-being in a community.

Access to meaningful employment improves quality of life. The worldwide economic decline has resulted in local employment challenges. More local residents are challenged to find work as there are fewer local jobs posted. Over 180 survey respondents consider work to be 1 of the top 3 issue areas facing us today.



4.3%

of the labour force was on Employment Insurance, compared to 2.1% across BC (Sept 2010). In August 2011, the Thompson-Okanagan reported 6.9% unemployment, while Kootenay and BC were at 9.5% and 7.5%, respectively.

20%

of the population in Golden in 2006 depends on the accommodation and food industries.

330

jobs were posted through Golden Employment Services in 2010; down 55% from 2006.

45%

of clients accessing employment services between 2008 and 2009 were 40+ years of age.

Celebrate Success

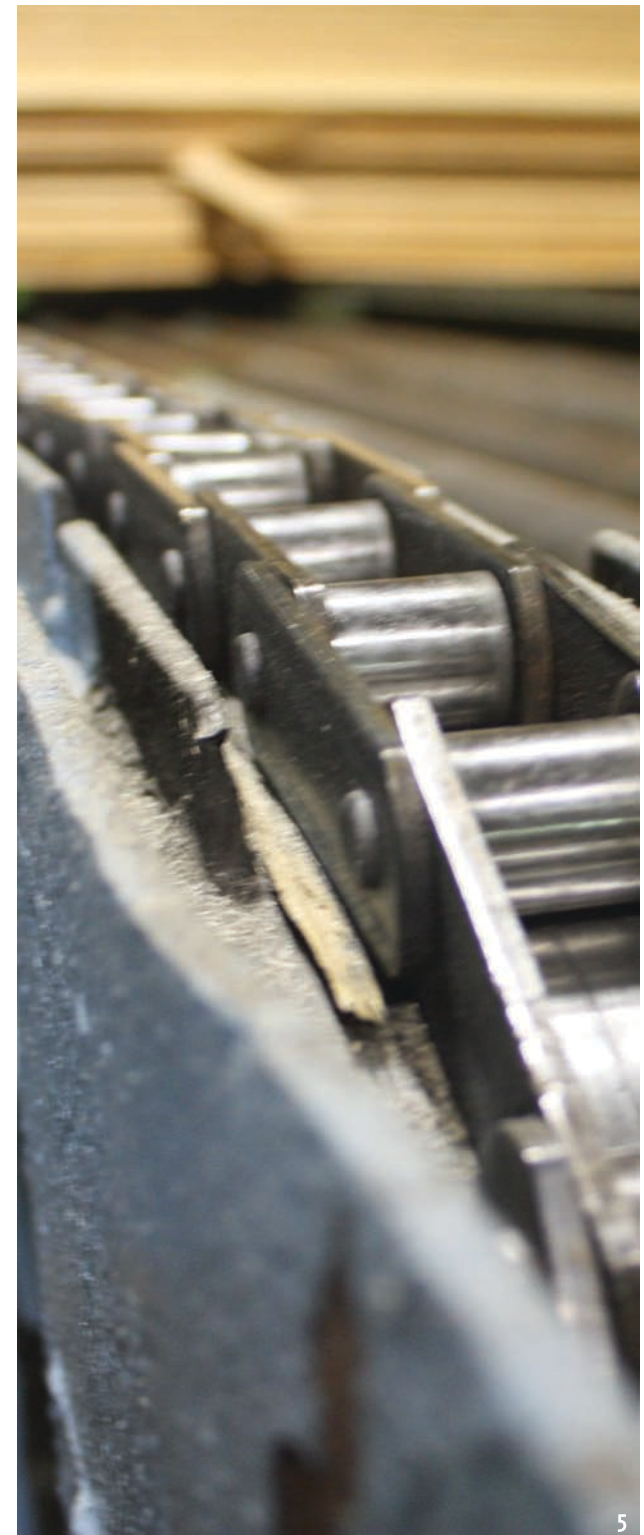
The Columbia Basin Trust's Training Fee Support Program has helped 338 individuals acquire new skills.

Recent highway and transmission line projects have created work for local residents.

Take Action

Talk with Community Futures, Golden Area Initiatives, Kootenay Rockies Innovation Council and Basin Business Advisors to identify new business opportunities.

Improve your skills with courses through the College of the Rockies Golden Campus.

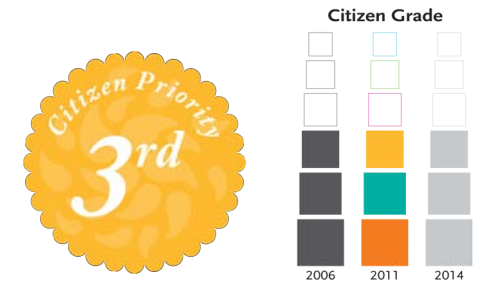




Housing

In the Official Community Plan, Golden residents identified affordable housing as primary obstacle to community health and vitality.

While diversity of housing in the Town of Golden has increased and secondary suites have been legalized; the switch to a tourism economy, the economic downturn, and aging structures are some of the major challenges for enhancing affordable housing for the community.



31%

of Golden families used more than 30% of their income for basic needs, including shelter in 2006, compared to 15% of the same group in Area A.

33%

increase in multiple family households between 2001 & 2006 compared to 18% in British Columbia.

1

residential building permit issued between Jan – Aug 2011. In 2008, 32% of property titles were owned from outside the area and 317 dwelling units were considered unoccupied in 2006.

65%

of existing dwellings were built before 1980 and 12% of dwellings are in need of major repairs, compared to 7.4% for BC.

Celebrate Success

In 2008, the Town of Golden, CBT and the College of the Rockies developed COTR House for student housing.

Since 2009, 185 secondary suites have been legalized.

In 2010, Golden Housing Needs Assessment identified local housing priorities.

To date, 90 senior and low income units exist in Golden.

Take Action

Read a copy of the Golden Housing Needs Assessment.

Talk to your local government representatives about housing priorities.

Consider whether you can contribute to creating an additional, affordable living space for lower income workers or students.

Health

Healthy citizens are a vital component of healthy communities. We enjoy good health and have better than average access to doctors.

Residents and visitors have access to a continuum of health, from acute care to home support services. Golden & Area A is ranked 37th out of 78 BC communities in the Composite Index of Health, with shorter life expectancy at birth, and more potential years of life lost due to natural and accidental causes.



80.4 years

life expectancy, averaged over 2006-10 if you were born in Golden and Area A, slightly below the BC average of 81.7 years.

17.4%

of East Kootenay residents 18 years and over were considered obese (Body Mass Index of 30 or higher) in 2010; higher than the BC average of 13.3%.

70%

of the population of Golden & Area A reported being moderately or vigorously active in 2006, higher than other East Kootenay Local Health Authorities.

15.3%

is the smoking rate in the East Kootenay in 2010. This is less than both the BC rate of 17.4% and the national rate of 20.8%.

Celebrate Success

The Golden & District Community Foundation has two new charitable endowment funds aimed at supporting Health and Wellness in Golden and Area A.

By partnering with specialists from other areas, doctors continue to be able to offer a wide variety of services in our community.

Take Action

Talks to your kids about smoking – 38% of local students have tried it, compared to 26% of BC students.

Play safely! It's good for your brain and your body.

Lobby for more local care as winter travel to city facilities is challenging.

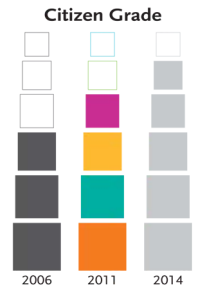




Environment

A healthy environment is the foundation of any area. It sustains a community and supports social and economic well-being.

Residents are fortunate to live in a beautiful environment that includes the protected Columbia Wetlands. Air quality, habitat destruction and fragmentation, and terrestrial invasive species are major environmental issues for the Golden area.



4th

highest average daily concentration of particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) compared to BC communities in 2009.

45

species found in the Golden area are on the endangered species Red List and 121 on the Blue List.

0

aquatic invasive species in Columbia wetlands; however, there are many terrestrial species putting the wetlands at risk.

5.6%

decrease in gross annual water usage in the Town of Golden between 2006 and 2010.

Celebrate Success

Annual Golden Community & Horse Creek weed pulling events battle invasive species.

A Water Smart Ambassador helped residents learn to conserve water.

Restoration activities are underway at the confluence of the Kicking Horse & Columbia Rivers.

Take Action

Educate yourself and your friends on the impact of illegal backcountry, wetland and alpine access and avoid habitat destruction.

Start composting household food waste.

Reduce, reuse, repair and recycle using the curbside recycling program and the land fill reuse centre.

Learning

Education and learning are important for the social and economic well-being of individuals and for a vibrant, prosperous community.

Golden offers many formal and informal learning opportunities for people of all ages. However, child care availability for infants and toddlers is still an issue and approximately 40% of adults in BC have low literacy skills. Higher literacy skills improve employment prospects, promote health, reduce criminal activity, and more.



37%

of 2009-10 kindergarten students were vulnerable in at least one area of development, which is higher than BC's 30% and a 13.7% increase since 2000-4.

82%

of grade 12 high school students graduated last year; which is a 9% decrease since 2005-6, but 2% higher than the BC rate.

76%

of the population 15 years and over had at least a high school education in 2006; 42% had some post-secondary, which is below BC's 52%.

70

is Golden's score on the Composite Learning Index, a measure of progress in lifelong learning; 8 points lower than the BC score in 2010.

Celebrate Success

Educators, library, community organizations, businesses and volunteers collaborate to support literacy.

The Early Childhood Development Coalition and the Community Literacy Planning Committee help to determine learning needs and interests, build partnerships, and coordinate programming and services.

Take Action

Enroll in a class or workshop.

Go to the public library for a free library card, computer usage and programs.

Volunteer at a school or in a literacy program such as the 1 to 1 Children's Reading Program.

Make a donation to one of the many local post-secondary scholarship and bursary funds.

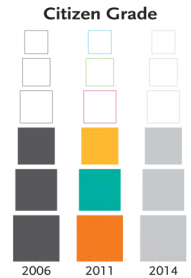




Gap Between Rich & Poor

It is the gap between these two groups that requires monitoring: a wide gap between the incomes of the rich and poor is unhealthy for a community.

Golden & Area A has less people living below low income cut-off (LICO) levels compared to BC & Canada. From year to year, the number of people living in poverty has decreased locally as well. Yet, the number of people accessing the local food bank and funding to offset recreation costs are increasing.



153%

jump in Golden Food Bank usage from 2006 to 2010. In 2007, 21% of users in Golden were employed, compared to 17% in other Canadian communities.

27%

of the workforce is employed in the sales and service industry; over half of the labour force (over 15 years old) works part-time or seasonally.

94%

increase in the number of children and youth enrolled in the Whitetooth Affordable Ski Program since 2008-09.

13.5%

of local housing stock are mobile homes, compared to 2.6% in BC.

Celebrate Success

In 2011, a Community Kitchen opened with a mandate to share food preparation and storage methods among people of all ages and incomes.

Recreational opportunities have opened up for many youth through the Whitetooth Affordable Ski Program.

Take Action

Rich or poor, get involved and make Golden inclusive.

Reexamine your charitable giving strategy and donate to local charities.

“Grow a Row” in your garden and have your fruit trees gleaned for the Golden Food Bank.

Getting Started & Staying

The community needs to address child poverty and youth employment. It is essential to welcome and accommodate seniors and visible minorities.

Indicators of a community's capacity to accommodate changing demographics include migration, immigrant in-flow for quality of life, youth employment and childhood poverty. Expanded options for seniors and steady employment opportunities are needed to stabilize our population.



20.5%

child (0-17 years) poverty rate in Golden in 2009, up 7.1 % from 2001, but 4.1% below the BC average.

5.8%

of the population in Golden & Area A are visible minorities, 19 percentage points less than the BC average of 24.8%.

12.5%

of the employment insurance beneficiaries in Golden & Area A in 2010 were youth 15-24 years old, compared to BC's 9.8%.

11%

of Golden & Area A's population is estimated to be 65 years and older, which is less than the BC average of 15%.

Celebrate Success

Golden has the oldest curling club in BC, established in 1894!

In 2011, BC Housing (in partnership with Golden Community Resource Society and Columbia Basin Trust) built a new eight-unit independent housing facility.

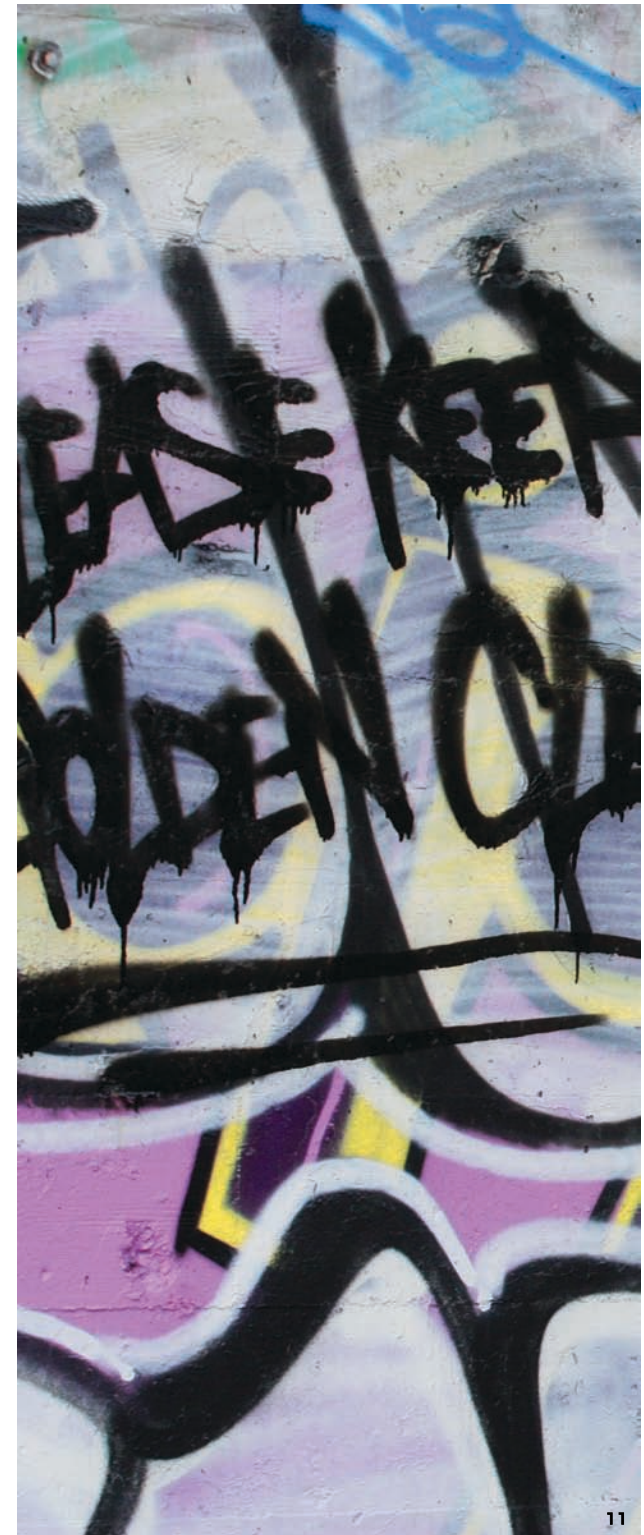
The Golden Sikh Temple (Gurudwara) celebrates 30 years of operations in 2011.

Take Action

Hire a youth; giving them a chance to stay in the community.

Host an international student.

Join the Seniors Centre or a local service club, you can be a member and help out at any age.





Belonging & Leadership

Rural communities rely on volunteers and community spirit to maintain community vitality.

Residents in Golden & Area A can work together to develop a strong and vibrant community. Residents report a strong sense of community belonging and are involved in over 125 non-profit organizations. Fewer residents claimed charitable donations than the BC average, but the value is increasing.



18%

of tax filers donated to charity and claimed it on their income tax in 2009, compared to 22% in BC and 23% in Canada.

38%

was the growth in the dollar value of charitable donations between 2001 and 2009.

40%

of eligible voters in Golden voted in the 2008 local government elections; compared with 26% in Area A.

72%

of people in the East Kootenay Health Region report a strong sense of community belonging.

Celebrate Success

In 2009, the Town of Golden won a leadership & innovation award from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) for community engagement.

In 2011, over 20 people from all different backgrounds challenged their guidance abilities through a leadership program at the College of the Rockies.

Take Action

Talk to your neighbors. It helps build community.

Attend and participate at a community event.

Volunteer with a community organization or sports team.

Run for local government or as a school board trustee.

Getting Around

Our community's rivers, mountains, highways and railways can make travel challenging. But we try to do it safely, while enjoying the journey.

The ability to get around is central to our quality of life and supports tourism. It impacts our work, health and the environment. The community is making progress in many areas; however our challenging climate and geography require substantial investment of resources.



11%

more for gas in Golden is the norm compared to Revelstoke, and 4% more than in Brisco, during the summer of 2011.

61 hours

is the average annual closure time on the Trans-Canada Highway resulting from avalanche control in Rogers Pass.

38%

increase in Kicking Horse Community Transit ridership from 2008 to 2010; while Snow Shuttle use has decreased 56%.

19%

of Golden's residents walked or biked regularly to work: double both the national and BC average.

Celebrate Success

World class cycling, walking and hiking trails are available from your backdoor.

In 2011, a 5.4km 2-meter cycling lane connecting Golden to Nicholson was paved along Highway 95.

The Town of Golden created BC's first 3rd generation Community Bike Share program.

Take Action

Try Kicking Horse Transit, ride a Bike Share bike, and walk the 10km Rotary Trails.

Ride the Health Connection bus to your appointment in Cranbrook.

Keep your sidewalks clear of snow.

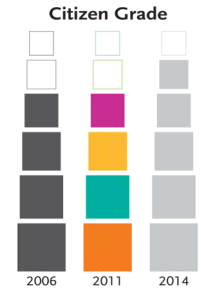




Safety

Our complex geography and climate necessitate the integration of safety services in many situations. Staff & volunteers in police, fire, ambulance, search and rescue and other organizations work together every day.

Safety is an integral part of any community and the emergency services responsible play a very important role. Recently, police and search and rescue cases have decreased, fire calls are steady, and ambulance calls have increased.



78

times per year, on average, the Golden Fire Department is sent out on calls; 7 times for the Nicholson FD. About 2,100 Area A residents lack fire protection.

29%

fewer calls have been handled by Golden & District Search & Rescue (2005-10), which are thought to be a result of traffic improvements.

17%

increase in calls handled by the BC Ambulance Service in Golden in 2010, when they fielded 1,050, which was up from 874 in 2006.

30%

fewer active RCMP files are open in Golden in 2010; when they covered 3,507 calls, down from 4,565 in 2006.

Celebrate Success

The community benefits from Citizens on Patrol (COP), Community Restorative Justice and Victim Services.

In 2011, Golden District Search & Rescue secured a new, permanent location to service back country calls and the RCMP are building a new detachment near the Highway.

The Golden Women's Resource Centre provides emergency shelter for women and children fleeing violence.

Take Action

Increase awareness of activities around you and report emergency service incidents.

Join search and rescue or your local fire department.

Take a course in first aid, backcountry skills or self-defense.

Lobby to increase cell phone service availability in the area.

Arts & Culture

Community health, bringing people together, raising cultural awareness and opportunities for youth are benefits of arts and culture.

Over the past five years our community has supported the development of arts and culture, recognizing its importance in crafting our identity, bringing revenue into the community and providing employment and related income.



1757%

increase in Kicking Horse Culture's membership since 2004, from 35 to 650.

48%

increase in tables at the annual Craft Faire since 2004; often with 2 vendors at a table in 2010.

9

languages, other than English, are spoken most often at home, including Punjabi, German, Italian, Czech, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, French and Spanish.

33%

increase in the number of vendors at the Golden Farmers' Market from 2006 to 2011.

Celebrate Success

The community has pulled together over \$2M to revitalize and refurbish Golden's historic Civic Centre, our cultural hub.

The Golden & District Community Foundation has developed an Arts & Culture Endowment Fund, for our future.

Take Action

Attend a performance or be a performer.

Learn a new language, try a new craft or participate in a new sport or game. You are never too old for lessons!

Become a patron of the arts. Shop at the Farmers' Market, the Christmas Craft Faire and the Art Gallery of Golden.



GOLDEN & AREA A'S

VitalSigns®



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Vital Signs is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends, and supports actions on issues that are critical to our quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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