

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Vital Signs Researchers Reflect on Progress & Plans

Points of Interest have summarized activities over last 3 years



Photo: At a recent meeting, Golden & Area A's Vital Signs researchers, Shelly Wadden, Jill Dewtie, Chris Hambruch, Joy Orr & Colleen Palumbo reviewed the 2011 and 2014 community reports, and brainstormed "Points of Interest" for each of the 13 issue areas in 2017.

(Golden, BC) – What’s happened to Golden & Area A over the last 3 years? What’s being planned beyond this year? And how can we communicate this information to the community?

Those are the questions [Golden & Area A’s Vital Signs](#) volunteer researchers have been grappling with as they begin the third iteration of Vital Signs.

Vital Signs, led locally by the Golden & District Community Foundation (GDCF), is a national program coordinated by [Community Foundations of Canada](#) that leverages local knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities and support action towards improving our collective quality of life.

With this 2017 iteration, special effort has been made in collecting and sharing the changes that the community has experienced between 2014 and now. These “points of interest” for each of the 13 issue areas have been published on social media – garnering over 1,000 impressions each day – as an effort to bring every resident up to speed on the issues identified and progress made by individuals, families, non profit groups, businesses and government.

“During the planning process, we realized that the hundreds of survey respondents may have very different experiences regarding each issue area,” explained Ryan Watmough, GDCF Executive Director and Vital Signs project manager. “So we developed these Points of Interest as a way to bring everyone up to speed on the recent efforts that have been made to improve the quality of life in Golden & Area A.”

The premise of this new process is that more-informed citizens can better grade our community’s performance. Over the next month, every citizen in Golden & Area A will be asked to provide their input on how our community has progressed with respect to these issue areas and prioritize the issues that the community should focus on into 2020.

“In the end, we hope that knowledge sharing in advance will result in improved community priority setting survey input. This citizen input translates into better resource allocation through a number of local funders – including the Community Foundation.”

Every resident in Golden & Area A is invited to complete the survey through the [Golden & District Community Foundation’s website](#) or [Facebook page](#) when it becomes available later this week.

Local non profit groups, businesses and others that have data sets to share with the Vital Signs team are asked to please contact Ryan Watmough at admin@goldencommunityfoundation.ca.

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About the Golden & District Community Foundation

The Golden & District Community Foundation’s mission is to attract and effectively grow permanent funds; provide leadership and administration that helps in addressing significant community needs; and help donors fulfill their philanthropic interests.

To learn more about your community foundation and *Golden & Area A’s Vital Signs* report, please bookmark www.goldencommunityfoundation.ca.

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Golden & Area A's Vital Signs 2017

Points of Interest

Here are some "points of interest" on what's changed since our 2014 Vital Signs report. Stay tuned for your chance to complete the 2017 Vital Signs survey, to grade the 13 issue areas and prioritize future activities.

1. ECONOMY in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- With oil trading below \$50/barrel, there are fewer jobs in the oil patch, which has impacted both tourists and local residents.
- Since the end of the tripartite agreement to fund Golden Area Initiatives in 2013, there has not been a replacement community economic development organization or program.
- A dispute regarding access to the lower Kicking Horse River has resulted in 15,000 rafters/year not floating into downtown Golden. A study (Phase 1) has been completed outlining possible alternative routes and Phase 2 consultation will likely cost \$160K and take 1 year to complete.
- Tourism Golden's has seen a doubling of additional hotel tax revenue between 2007 and 2016.
- The BC Visitor Centre at Golden will be closed at the end of June 2017 and replaced with a new visitors centre located at the former weigh scales site.
- According to surveyed Area A residents' 2nd highest priority is improving internet service and reliability.
- Whitetooth Brewing opened a new state-of-the-art facility in 2016, which can increase its capacity 10-fold.
- The Town of Golden's Community Funds Local Select Committee uses the citizen priorities from Vital Signs to award \$300,000/year for community projects.
- The Town of Golden's \$5.9M grant request for 100% of the dike improvement in the downtown core won't be determined until the end of 2017. If the dike is raised as planned, mad-made whitewater features for kayaking, rafting & surfing may be possible along the downtown section of the river.
- A recent condition assessment of the Golden Municipal Airport has revealed its runway and tarmac to be in 'poor' condition. Adequate resurfacing will require \$2-\$3M in funds.

2018-20:

- A minority BC Government may slow the funding of projects.
- Canada's economy is expected to grow, with highest rate of growth coming from Alberta.
- Continued geo-political risks make Canada, and Golden, a relatively safe destination for real estate investment and tourism.
- Heli-rafting access notwithstanding, the lower Kicking Horse River will not have recreational and commercial access until at least 2019, if at all.

2. WORK in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- Town of Golden issued 525 business licences for 2016, up from 486 in 2014.
- Nationally, in 2016, individuals aged 55 and over accounted for 36% of the working-age population, the highest proportion on record (since the compilation of comparable statistics in 1976).
- Five cohorts of the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) program have been completed through the College of the Rockies – Golden.
- With guidance from many local stakeholders, the College of the Rockies has developed a new Mountain Hospitality program.
- College of the Rockies and Golden Secondary School offer an Intro to Trades course every other year.
- Growing economy in Canada and United States has Louisiana-Pacific Canada (LP) expanding production operation back to full capacity; adding 43 full-time positions and up to up to 15 casual part-time positions in 2017.

2018-20:

- The \$450M Kicking Horse Canyon Highway Project - Phase 4B will start 2019 and take 5 years to complete, bringing an influx of construction jobs with it.
- Alberta plans to raise minimum wage to \$15/hr, which may make it more difficult to retain workers in BC border communities.
- By 2026, individuals aged 55 and over are projected to account for 40% of the working-age population across Canada.

3. GETTING STARTED & STAYING in Golden & Area A

2015-17 Changes:

- 2017 was the first year that there were more seniors (65+ years old) than young people (<15 years old) and this trend is expected to grow (Golden LHA, 2016).
- Average household income is significantly lower in Golden (\$67,048) compared to the rest of BC (\$78,227) (CensusPlus, Environics Analytics, 2011).
- In 2015, the Golden Women's Resource Centre led a project titled, "Sustainable Volunteer Programs in the Community."
- St. Andrew's United Church & Centre for Peace is leading the Golden Opportunities for Refugees project, which could produce lessons for attracting & retaining many more families.

- Golden Golf Club has created an “Introductory Golf Pass” to get more people golfing and become members.
- Many organizations comprising the Early Childhood Development Coalition (ECDC) and Age Friendly Community Committee (AFCC) work to ensure the needs of residents from 0-6 years old and 50+ years old are met.

2018-20:

- The CRTC will require internet service providers to contribute to a \$750M fund to improve access in remote and rural areas of Canada over 5 years. Eighteen percent (2M) of Canadian households do not have access to high-speed internet and the CRTC plans to reduce that to 10% by 2021. Improved internet service availability and reliability for telecommuting may increase availability of work for local residents.
- The creation of 40,000 federally subsidized day care spots may be implemented.

4. HEALTH in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- An addition has been built at Durand Manor to improve residents’ common space. However, the exterior courtyard of Durand Manor has been deemed unsafe and residents will not be able to use it in summer 2017.
- The “Grab a Granny & Go” program at Durand Manor gets residents out and about the downtown.
- Many organizations comprising the Early Childhood Development Coalition (ECDC) and Age Friendly Community Committee (AFCC) work to ensure the needs of residents from 0-6 years old and 50+ years old are met.
- A sub-committee of the AFCC has lobbied for the preservation and improvement of health services for rural communities.
- Currently, Golden has services, through Interior Health, for moderate to severe mental health problems, but no services for the milder end of the spectrum.
- A Golden-based sonographer position with Interior Health has remained vacant since 2015.
- Keep Medical Services in Golden Facebook Group has over 649 followers.
- A number of new health-related businesses opened, including a naturopath, Element Therapeutics, Nourish Clinic, Eat Pure Foods, and Stages School of Dance.
- Hosted by the Local Food Matters Working Group, 65 people attended a “Local Food Matters Forum” in Golden in May 2017, with the hope of coordinating a “local food movement.”
- Due to escalating gaps between Ministry funding levels and the costs required to provide services, our community’s ability to maintain current levels of service for abuse recovery and men's services are currently under threat. Threats to current levels of service for child and youth support and addiction services are also looming. Simply being able to maintain current levels of service is a main goal/priority looking forward.
- The Child and Youth Mental Health and Substance Use Action Team is working to develop an online resource called 'I'm not fine.' It will provide information about where to go and what services are available for mental health and substance use for local children and youth.

2018-2020:

- Local Physician Dr. Trina Larsen-Soles was elected as the 2017-18 President of Doctors of BC.

5. HOUSING in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- CBT introduced an Affordable Housing Energy Retrofit Program.
- The conversion of existing homes and rental units into AirBnB and VRBO short-term rentals has created significant pressure on the rental housing market.
- Golden Community Resources Society, with support from CBT, will host a meeting on affordable housing in summer 2017.

2018-20:

- A 48-unit apartment complex has been proposed for the former Glacier Rafting property.

6. RECREATION & LEISURE in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- In 2016, the Town of Golden completed a Facilities Assessment Plan to determine long-term capital costs of public facilities.
- Town of Golden Recreation Department has implemented a multi-activity punch card to encourage more people to try different activities.
- Town of Golden has developed a solid understanding of the proportion of Golden & Area A residents who are using recreation programming.
- The Mount 7 Rec Plex Society handed the operation of the Mount 7 Rec Plex back to the Town of Golden.
- The new Schacher Trail & improved Legacy Link provides pedal access from the Golden Municipal Campground up to the top of Mount 7.
- The Golden Two-Four mountain bike race (June) and Golden Ultra Marathon (September) are held annually.

2018-20:

- An Area A Regional Trails Strategy & Master Plan is expected to be rolled out and executed.

7. LEARNING in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- 26% of 2013-2016 kindergarten students were vulnerable in two or more areas of development, which is a 10% decrease since 2011-2013 and lower than BC's average of 32%.
- The Early Years Centre is improving access to affordable programs and services for a diverse spectrum of children and families.

- The \$1M Mountain Child Early Learning & Care Centre was built onto Alexander Park Elementary School and offers programming for 0-6 year old children.
- Franklin Covey's the Leader in Me was introduced in Golden elementary schools and, more broadly, through our community. This initial investment from Rotary and continued work in 2 of our elementary schools has resulted in a shift in ownership and sense of belonging in these schools.
- School District 6 (SD6) focuses on Literacy in all school success planning.
- Partnerships between the high school and outside educational institutions/programs, to provide educational opportunities to students in Golden including university transfer courses and Introduction to Trades through the College of the Rockies, and Ski Patrol.

2018-20:

- A pending \$7B federal program hopes to create 40,000 subsidized childcare spaces across Canada over the next decade.
- The Early Childhood Development Coalition (ECDC) and SD6 partnership will allow all kindergarten students to partake in the Roots of Empathy Program. ROE is an evidence-based classroom program that has shown to reduce levels of aggression and bullying among school-aged students.
- BC redesigned curriculum puts the learner at the centre. It is no longer about content, rather children will have the time and space to explore their competencies.
- ECDC has a strong focus on working with SD6 to help facilitate their work within the early years.
- Kindergarten through grade 12, targeted emphasis on the redesigned curriculum that has a focus on competencies that include personal responsibility, critical and creative thinking, and communication in addition to the big ideas that drive the learning.
- At the high school level, we will see continued partnerships with outside educational programs including certifications like lifeguarding. There will be a continued focus on literacy across all grades with targeted response to data analysis.
- College of the Rockies seeks input from local employers so that they can offer the right training at the right time.

8. ENVIRONMENT in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- Currently, there are no issues with water safety and water quality in the Town of Golden.
- The Golden and District Air Quality Committee is offering air quality rebates to residents of the Town of Golden and CSRD Area A to off-set the purchase of an EPA/CSA approved wood stove, or another less polluting heating appliance, to replace an old, inefficient wood stove.
- According to the Area A Capacity Building Needs Assessment survey respondents, the majority of Area A residents continue to not want zoning.
- 400 new bear-proof garbage cans have been distributed to homeowners in the Town of Golden.

2018-20:

- The creation and implementation of a Regional Trails Strategy and Master Plan will help mitigate wildlife-human conflicts and preserve sensitive wetlands and alpine habitats.
- Another 800 bear proof garbage cans will be added over the next 2 years.

9. GETTING AROUND in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- In 2016, the Province established the Kicking Horse River bridges within the top ten provincially required replacements of their kind. During 2016 select staff participated as technical team members to the project. A public process was held, conceptual designs revealed, and with still more consultative, engineering, and design necessary, a targeted date of 2020 has been set for project completion. The preliminary design includes a pedestrian/cycling lane on the downstream side, with a commitment that the bridge, when built, will include pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2016 Expenditures by the Town of Golden directly related to renewal or new construction of sidewalks and trails.
 - o Sidewalk Renewal Program: \$137,729;
 - o South Pedestrian Bridge Landscaping: \$23,818;
 - o RMI - Trail Enhancements: \$33,750.
- Highlights for 2017 include, opening of the 2km Rotary Loop accessible path extension behind the high school, Alexander Park sidewalk replacement completion, completion of TCH connector from the intersection of Highway 95 and Highway 1 to the East traffic light on Highway 1, numerous cycling trail improvements around community, improved maintenance to dyke trail.
- Kicking Horse Mountain Resort now offers a winter season Staff Shuttle between Golden and the Resort.
- Golden Local Rideshares (198 members) and Golden Rideshares (2,046 members) Facebook groups have enabled people to post requests and offers for rides in Golden and beyond.
- An “Age Friendly Corridor,” located between the downtown and Seniors Centre, running along the Kicking Horse River, was identified in the Age Friendly Community and prioritized for improvements and snow clearing.
- CSRD Area A has created a Regional Trails Strategy – Working Group and has commissioned the creation of a Trails Master Plan.
- In May 2017, collection of organizations hosted a Jane’s Walk, “Getting Around Golden’s Past, Present & Future”.
- The timber framed Kicking Horse Pedestrian Bridge will see \$500K in repair work in 2017.
- The Trans Canada Highway, from Ford Station to weigh scales, will be 4-laned in 2017.
- Mount 7 Taxi has acquired a new mini-bus intended for small group trips.
- The new Schacher mountain bike trail reduces wear and tear on the Mount 7 (Peter Bowle-Evans) road.

2018-20:

- In 2018, completion of the 2km Rotary Loop accessible path extension behind the high school, Alexander Park sidewalk replacement,. Also in 2018 there will be numerous cycling trail improvements around the community along with improved maintenance to the dyke trail.
- The Highway 95/10th Ave Bridge over the Kicking Horse River will not likely be replaced until 2022 and preliminary plans do not include a level pedestrian underpass.
- The \$450M Kicking Horse Canyon Highway Project - Phase 4B will start 2019 and take 5 years to four-lane the last 4km of the Trans Canada Highway.

- An improvement to sidewalks on 8th Ave S, between Durand Manor and the pedestrian bridge, is expected in the coming years.
- The Rotary Club plans to install 10 lights along the Rotary Trail from Pedestrian Bridge to 5th Ave.

10. GAP BETWEEN RICH & POOR in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- In 2015, Golden's Living Wage was calculated to be \$18.68/hour, 35 hrs/week, 2 income family with 2 young children. In 2016, it rose to \$20.68/hr.
- BC's minimum will rise from \$10.85 to \$11.35 in September 2017 (RetailCouncil.org, 2017).
- Visa Infinite Privilege cardholders (minimum \$200,000 gross household income) can access a priority lift line and parking privileges at Kicking Horse Mountain Resort.
- Whitetooth Affordable Ski Program has grown from supporting ~20 local children to over 100 local Grade 4s & 5s.
- The Golden Community Social Services Co-op has been created between 4 non profit organizations to stream-line back-end accounting and improve service integration.
- Golden Food Bank has seen a slightly reduced demand from residents; although children are still 1/3rd of Food Bank clients.

2018-20:

- Federal government may present a poverty reduction strategy.
- Alberta plans to raise minimum wage to \$15/hr, which may make it more challenging to retain local workers.
- Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (CBRDI) is now tracking "poverty indicators" over time, which will improve Golden's understanding and ability to address them.

11. SAFETY in Golden & Area A

2015-17 Changes:

- Road rescue is now covered by the Town of Golden Fire Department Association (\$450,000 from BC Gaming for new road rescue truck).
- Town of Golden Fire Chief Ken McClure was a catalyst in restructuring compensation for call-outs through PEP.
- In 2017, a Community Paramedicine program has been started through BC Ambulance.
- The Golden Women's Resource Centre's began their Recognizing and Addressing Abuse and Neglect project.
- Over the last few years, there has been a slight increase in the number of BC Ambulance call-outs, yet a decrease in fatalities due to the 4-line divided highway.
- There has been an increase in Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) throughout Golden, yet some key facilities still lack them.
- In spring 2017, some Kicking Horse River diking in the downtown has been improved.
- The Trans Canada Highway, from Ford Station to weigh scales, will be 4-laned in 2017.

- The Nicholson Fire Protection area has been increased twice in the last 3 years, while the rest of Area A does not have any fire protection.
- 400 new bear-proof garbage cans have been distributed to homeowners in the Town of Golden.

2018-20 Plans:

- Ice jams still remain a recent threat in the winter, and flooding remains threat in the spring freshet.
- The ongoing volume of hazardous materials on the railways and TCH remain a threat.
- Interface fire is still a risk for communities surrounded by forests.
- \$5.9M has been requested from the Strategic Priorities Fund (UBCM) by the Town of Golden to raise diking to 200-year flood level throughout the entire Kicking Horse River in the Town of Golden. (This would not mitigate the flooding from Columbia River groundwater.)
- Another 800 bear proof garbage cans will be added over the next 2 years.

12. ARTS & CULTURE in Golden & Area A

2014-17:

- A variety of organizations and businesses collaborate on cultural events like Summer Kicks concert series, Golden Museum Fall Faire, Film Kicks, Snow King Masque Parade, Golden Sound Festival, Golden Mountain Festival and the Canada Day Celebration.
- Golden's Sikh Heritage recognized by the BC Government after nomination by the Golden Museum.
- A proposed permanent stage and washrooms building in Spirit Square was put on hold indefinitely.
- A new roof and new windows in the Old CPR Station means the Golden Museum is improving the quality of our exhibits making room for many new exhibits.
- For the last 3-years, Kicking Horse Culture has been supported by Economic Opportunities Funding (EOF).

2018-20:

- The future of Resort Municipality Infrastructure (RMI) funding is unknown after March 2018, which may reduce funding for tourism-connected tourism infrastructure.
- Both ToG & CSRD will begin funding Kicking Horse Culture with locally-derived taxation funding, just like the Golden Museum been supported.
- Golden Museum will create new exhibits on the Burgess Shale and Parson, BC, as well as expand their mini exhibits by creating window signs for Golden businesses.

13. BELONGING & LEADERSHIP in Golden & Area A

2015-17:

- A Capacity Building Needs Assessment was completed for CSRD Area A, which involved extensive public consultation.
- 14 shared services are under review with the Town of Golden & CSRD.
- An Age Friendly Community Plan was created in 2014 and is continuing to be executed and monitored by the Age Friendly Community Committee (AFCC).

- Led by the Golden & District Community Foundation, a prototype project called Better Granting Together brought together funding organizations in Golden & Area A and the Columbia Valley in 2015 and 2016.
- Rotary Interact youth group have beautified downtown buildings with large, colourful murals.
- In 2015, a Community Collaboration project led toward the creation of a Community Team, but it did not take.
- The 1st Local Intelligence Gathering in November 2014 raised the profile of local experts locally and nationally.
- Partnership between CBT and Golden & District Community Foundation (GDCF) was created in order to maximize endowment investments and granting funds.
- In May 2017, a Jane's Walk called "Getting Around Golden's Past, Present & Future" had over 30 participants.
- Creation of Golden Opportunities for Refugees and the effort to provide a home for a refugee family in Golden.
- In 2017, the provincial government riding of Columbia River-Revelstoke saw 58.5% voter turnout (21% adv.); which was slightly above BC's 57%, but below the pre-2001 BC average of +70%.
- The Town of Golden updated their strategic priorities in 2017.
- One third of Canadians report a weak sense of community belonging - that's more than 11.5M people. While we understand the reciprocal relationship between social participation and our sense of belonging — the solution is not as simple as encouraging people to get out and participate because for many people, feelings of discrimination and social isolation persist.

2018-20:

- Maximize and amplify the work and the goals of previous consultative community processes such as the Early Childhood Development Coalition's Strategic Plan, the Age Friendly Community Plan, the CSRD Area A Capacity Building Needs Assessment and Vital Signs.
- The Town of Golden is considering a review of the 2008 Official Community Plan (OCP) with a newly elected Council in 2018.