

2015

ALBERNI VALLEY'S

**VitalSigns®**

Community foundations taking the pulse of  
Canadian communities.



The Alberni Valley  
Community Foundation

## Message from the Board Chair



I am proud to serve on the Board of the Alberni Valley Community Foundation and I am proud of the many charities throughout the region that we have helped and brought together over the years. This, our first VitalSigns® publication, is a wonderful tool for bringing the community together and inviting dialogue on a wide range of issues that affect us all. It will provide a base to record the progress that we as a community make and it will help the Alberni Valley Community Foundation make informed decisions in our grant making. The Alberni Valley is already a “Community with a Heart” and this report will ensure we become a “Smart and Caring Community,” alongside each of the 27 other community foundations in Canada releasing a report this year. I would like to thank the many individuals and agencies who shared their data and knowledge with us. I do hope you enjoy this report and look forward to your continued input for future publications.

**Hugh Grist**

Board Chair

Alberni Valley Community Foundation

## Message from the Research Facilitator

Compiling data, pictures, and stories for the inaugural Alberni Valley VitalSigns® report has been a privilege. Learning about all of the positive actions being taken by Alberni Valley residents, service organizations, non-profits, and local governments to better our community has been encouraging. I am excited about all of the different ways that this report will be used, and look forward to seeing readers roll up their sleeves and take informed action to build on the assets in this Valley. After all, in the words of Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

**Maggie Hodge Kwan**

*Research Facilitator*

# About VitalSigns® Reports

VitalSigns® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life. For more information, please visit [www.vitalsignscanada.ca](http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca).

## Why a VitalSigns® report?

By compiling local information and tracking it over time, we will deepen our community knowledge and provide a valuable tool for our foundation, residents, local government, and other community groups, giving us a basis from which to develop innovative ideas that build a stronger Alberni Valley.

## How is the report organized?

The VitalSigns® report format captures trends on issue that are important to the quality of life and health of a community, in its broadest definition. This report is arranged by 12 issue areas that contribute to our community's vitality. Under each of the issue areas, several indicators are evaluated using relevant data. The data show whether there is improvement or decline from previous years or how the Alberni Valley compares to other communities and/or provincial and national trends.

## What is the Alberni Valley?

For the purposes of this report, the Alberni Valley is defined as the City of Port Alberni, Regional Districts B, D, E, and F, and the Tsahaheh 1, Ahahswinis 1, Alberni 1, and Klehkoot 2 reservations. All efforts have been made to focus on data from this area, but occasionally different geographic areas are measured. This will be noted.

## Community Foundation of Canada

The Community Foundation of Canada (CFC) oversees the development of all 191 community foundations across Canada. The CFC also coordinates the VitalSigns® report, and provides support regarding community engagement, data collection, and reporting. In 2015, 28 Canadian community foundations produced a VitalSigns® report.

# Data & Indicators

## Data

Much of the data within this report was collated by the CFCs data partner, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). Where possible, it has been verified by local experts in each issue area. Additional information was provided by local reports and organizations. All data sources are listed on page 21.

## Indicator Selection

Indicators were selected and prioritized based on the following guidelines:

### Indicator Characteristics:

- Perceived public interest (informed by community survey and consultations)
- Does the indicator inspire action?
- Does the indicator report on an issue or trend that individuals or communities can do something about?
- Does it reveal both strengths and weaknesses of the Alberni Valley?

## Data Selection

- Understandability and measurability
- Ease of collection
- How current the information is and frequency of collection for future use

# How to Use This Report

## READ

Please take the time to thoroughly read this report. Ponder what the data within means to our community.

## SHARE

Share this report with your family, friends, neighbours, colleagues, and elected officials. The report is accessible in print or online at [www.albernifoundation.ca](http://www.albernifoundation.ca).

## DISCUSS

When you read this report, what surprised you? What stood out? What will the Alberni Valley look like 2, 5, or 10 years from now?

## EXPLORE

If you want to know more about an indicator statistic, visit the cited source (page 21).

## ACT

If you or your organization is motivated by what you read, use this report as a starting point for positive action.

## SUPPORT

There are many worthy organizations in the Alberni Valley that could benefit from your participation and/or financial support.

## GET POLITICAL

Use the information in this report to engage and inform politicians and other decision makers.

## CONTACT US

The AVCF knows the issues and organizations in our community. If you are looking for ways to make a difference, we can help.

# Table of Contents

2015 Report Highlights	5
Our Valley	6
Arts, Culture, & Recreation	7
Belonging & Leadership	8
Environment	9
Children & Youth	10-11
Income Gap	12
Getting Started in Our Community	13
Health	14-15
Housing	16
Learning	17
Safety	18
Seniors	19
Work	20
Sources	21
About the Alberni Valley Community Foundation	22



# 2015 Report Highlights

## Arts, Culture, & Recreation

Employment in the arts and culture sector has more than doubled in the last decade. More good news? Traditional language revitalization is being led by a passionate local group.

## Belonging & Leadership

While the number of charitable givers has decreased in recent years, the average amount of money given has increased. Additionally, the Alberni Valley enjoys a high rate of volunteerism.

## Environment

Citizens take action to ensure the health of the environment. Recycling and alternative forms of commuting are positive choices. Our air quality, especially in winter, could be better.

## Children & Youth

Our children and youth are as healthy or healthier than the provincial average, but too many children and youth live in poverty.

## Income Gap

While different organizations are working to provide services and opportunities for people who do not make enough money to live comfortably, the need is greater than the current resources.

## Getting Started in Our Community

The Alberni Valley has a much smaller visible minority population than the provincial average. Migration is negative.

## Health

Life expectancy is slowly rising, but other health issues, including heavy drinking, smoking, and stress, hinder our progress.

## Housing

Housing prices and related costs are relatively low for homeowners. However, for nearly half of renters, shelter is an expensive endeavor.

## Learning

While high school completion rates, Aboriginal high school completion rates, and the number of citizens with a post-secondary education continue to rise in the Alberni Valley, they are still below the provincial average.

## Safety

While many crime rates are still higher than the provincial average, the overall crime rate, property crime rate, and sexual assault rate have all been decreasing steadily for many years.

## Seniors

There are far fewer poor seniors in the Alberni Valley than there are in the province and country. The senior population is expected to nearly double by 2034.

## Work

High rates of unemployment and low wages result in 40%+ of the working population unable to make a living wage. (Note that Statistics Canada and Living Wage Canada calculate two separate amounts for a living wage.)



# OUR VALLEY

-0.8%

## Population change

Between 2006 and 2011, the population of the Alberni Valley declined slightly from **25,297** to **25,085**. At the same time, neighboring communities grew: The Clayoquot Sound experienced a **9%** increase in residents, and Nanaimo's population grew by **3.6%**. The population of British Columbia grew by **7%**.<sup>1</sup>

47.3

## Median age

The median age in the Alberni Valley has been rising: in 2001, it was **41.4** years. In 2006, it rose to **45** years, and in 2011, to **47.3** years. In 2011, the median age in British Columbia was **41.9** years, and was **40.6** years nationally.<sup>1</sup>

13.3%

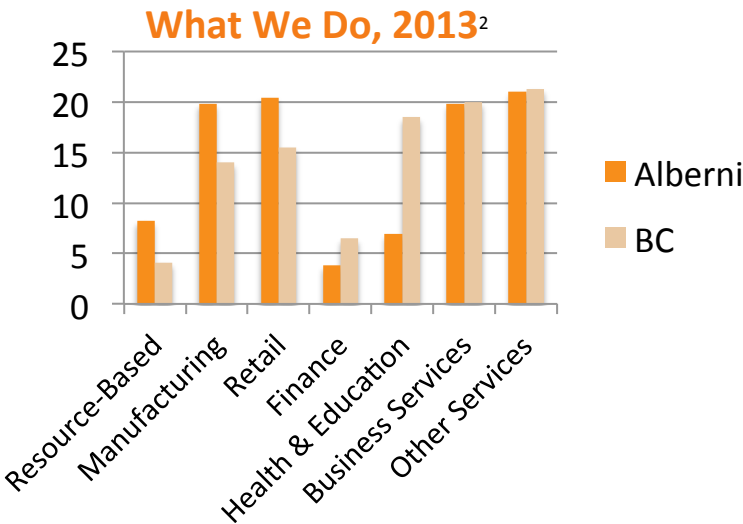
## Aboriginal population

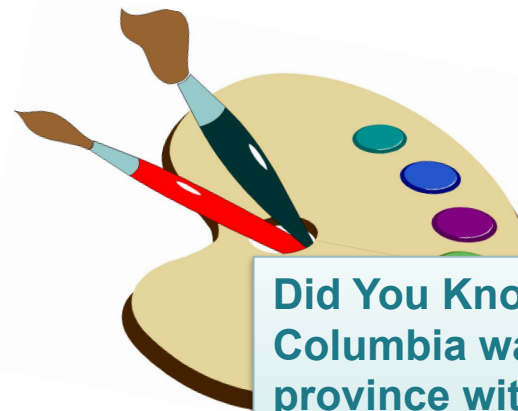
In 2011, **13.3%** of Alberni Valley residents identified as Aboriginal compared to **6.6%** for Vancouver Island and **5.4%** for British Columbia. Of the **3,335** Aboriginal residents in the Alberni Valley in 2011, **2,460** identified as First Nations. **755** identified as Metis, and **75** identified as Inuit.<sup>1</sup>

15.7%

## Population of children and youth

In 2011, **15.7%** of Alberni Valley residents were children and youth ages 14 years and under. This is comparable to the British Columbia average of **15.4%**, and one percentage point below the Canadian average of **16.7%**. Our population that is 65 years and over is **20.4%**, compared to **15.7%** in British Columbia and **14.8%** in Canada.<sup>1</sup>





**Did You Know?** In 2012, British Columbia was the Canadian province with the highest number of working artists.<sup>6</sup>

## ARTS, CULTURE, & RECREATION

# 7,488

### Registered library borrowers

In the Alberni Valley, **29.5%** of residents are registered library borrowers. In comparison, across the Vancouver Island Regional Library service area, **38.5%** of residents have library cards.

Total visits to the Port Alberni library branch in 2014 were **114, 293**.<sup>3</sup>

# 2.7%

### Employment in cultural occupations

Employment in cultural industries (which includes arts, culture, heritage, recreation, and sport) increased from **1.1%** in 2001 to **2.7%** in 2011. Of the **10,860** respondents who reported that they were employed, **295** worked in cultural occupations.<sup>1</sup>

# 94,592

### Admission to recreation facilities

In 2014, nearly **95,000** visits to recreation facilities were recorded by the City of Port Alberni. That's **3.7** visits per person in the Alberni Valley. **19%** of the City of Port Alberni's budget was allotted to Parks, Recreation, and Heritage in 2014.<sup>4</sup>

# 215

### Traditional language speakers

There are **215** traditional Aboriginal language speakers in the Alberni Valley. Great efforts are being made by the Quuquutsa Language Society, whose vision is "have a fluent Nuuchah-nulth community and society."<sup>1,5</sup>

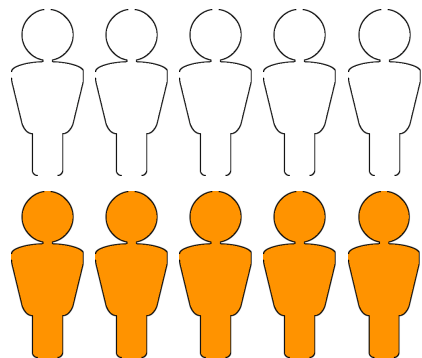
## FACT

# 125

Number of working artists in the Alberni Valley.<sup>1</sup>

## IMPACT

The **Alberni Valley Community Foundation** has provided grants to arts and culture organizations every year since 1999. The Foundation has been privileged to contribute to efforts in musical theatre, fine arts, spoken word, and dramatic performance. Recently, the Foundation granted funds to support moving the historic millstones to the bottom of Roger St, where they will be the focal point of a new park.



**48%**, or nearly 5 of 10, Alberni Valley residents engaged in unpaid volunteer activities in 2010.<sup>7</sup>



## BELONGING & LEADERSHIP

**78.8%**

### Sense of community belonging

In the 2014 Canadian Community Health Survey, **78.8%** of Alberni Valley respondents reported feeling a “strong” or “somewhat strong” sense of community belonging. The provincial average for 2014 was **69.3%** and has remained fairly stable over the last decade.<sup>8</sup>



### Charitable donations

In 2008, **20%** of tax filers made charitable donations. Charitable donors have decreased every year since, with **17.8%** of residents making a financial donation in 2013. In the same time period, the average donation amount increased by **8.3%** from **\$240** to **\$260**.<sup>9</sup>

**93%**

### Life satisfaction

**93%** of Alberni Valley residents reported that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their lives in a 2014 survey. In the last decade, life satisfaction in the Alberni Valley has always been reported as **90%** or higher.<sup>8</sup>

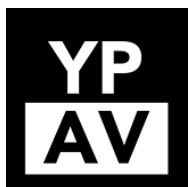
**46.4%**

### City of Port Alberni voter turnout

**46.4%** of eligible voters participated in the 2014 municipal election. This is significantly higher than the **35.5%** turnout in 2011, and the **29.3%** turnout in 2008.<sup>10</sup>

**Note:** The Alberni Clayoquot Regional District does not collect this information, as voters are registered on the day of the election.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROFILE



The **Young Professionals Alberni Valley**, pictured above, were founded in 2012 to provide networking, professional development, and community service opportunities to professionals under 40 years of age. In 2015, the YPAV celebrated the opening of a community garden on 4<sup>th</sup> and Napier and are busy working on a public art project depicting various events in Alberni Valley history. Future projects include upcycled bike racks. For more information, visit <http://ypalbernivalley.ca>.





## ENVIRONMENT

**449.7L**

### Daily water consumption per capita

In 2014, Alberni Valley residents got their metered water from the City of Port Alberni, the Stamp River, and the Cherry Creek Waterworks District. Other sources that are not measured include wells, springs, and lakes.<sup>4,11,12</sup>

**Winter**

### Air quality, poorest

In the Valley, air quality is measured by concentration of particulate matter (PM). From 2010-2014 concentrations of PM were relatively low compared to BC guidelines. However, winters consistently show PM2.5 levels higher than BC objectives. Excessive burning contributes to high levels of PM.<sup>13</sup>

**81kg**

### Household recycling

Average amount of recycling produced per year by each of the 8155 households in the City of Port Alberni, Beaver Creek, Hupacasath, and Tseshaht communities that have access to recycling pick-up services by the ACRD.<sup>11</sup>

**1,781<sub>mm</sub> 2.9°C**

### Average annual precipitation

2014 saw an increase in precipitation over 2013, when **1,041.0mm** of precipitation fell. The dampest year in recent record was 2010, when **2,626.8mm** of precipitation were recorded.<sup>14</sup>

### Mean minimum temperature, 2015

February is usually the coldest month in the Alberni Valley. Between 2001 and 2014, our average mean minimum temperature was **-1.5°** in February. Our mean maximum temperature of **27.9°** in July is close to the 2001 – 2014 average of **26.7°**.<sup>14</sup>

## FACT

**2**

Number of certified green buildings in the Alberni Valley, by BOMA or LEED standards: **ADSS and the BC Hydro Operations Facility**.<sup>15</sup>

## IMPACT

In 2015, the Foundation was pleased to support **Cycle Alberni** with a grant for Bike to Work Week, in May. While biking to work was the main focus, participants were also encouraged to bike to school, and to bike for exercise and running errands. In total, **150** riders participated. They rode a total of **3,240** kilometres, and saved **703** kilograms of greenhouse gases along the way!<sup>16</sup>



## CHILDREN & YOUTH

**30.8%**

### Child poverty rate

The most recent child poverty statistics, from 2013, indicate that the after-tax poverty rate for children 0-17 in the Alberni Valley is **30.8%**. This indicator has remained fairly consistent, dropping to **29.8%** in 2008 and rising to **32.0%** in 2009. Across British Columbia, the 2013 child poverty rate was **20.4%**, a difference of **10.4** percentage points.<sup>1</sup>

**4.8%**

### Low birth weight

In 2013-2014, **4.8%** of babies born in Central Vancouver Island, which includes the Alberni Valley, were classified as low birth weight, or weighing **2.5** kilograms or less. This is a decrease in low birth weight babies: in 2012-2013, **5.5%** of babies born were classified as low birth weight. The provincial average for 2013-2014 was **6.0%**.<sup>17</sup>

**3 in 10**

### Vulnerability rate

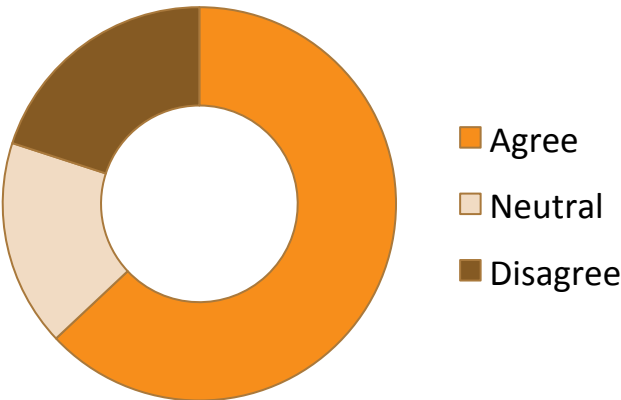
The Early Development Instrument measures the development of children in five domains (including physical, social and emotional competence and communication skills). It demonstrates that **30%** of Alberni Valley children are “vulnerable,” meaning that without additional support, they may experience future challenges in school and society.<sup>18</sup>

**1470**

### Registered library borrowers

In 2014, **19.7%** of registered library users were children and youth. In the Alberni Valley, there are **1,045** children and **425** teens with library cards.<sup>3</sup>

Responses from Grade 7 students when asked “I believe I can make a difference in the world.”<sup>19</sup>



## FACT

## IMPACT

**3020**

Hours of time donated by Parks, Recreation, and Heritage summer youth volunteers, 2015<sup>10</sup>

Since the Foundation began granting in 1999, services for children and youth have been a funding priority. Over \$30,000 has been granted to local agencies who work with families. In 2010, the Foundation became a sponsor of the Parks, Recreation, and Heritage **Our Town** events, held four times each summer to offer families an opportunity to enjoy fun activities in the outdoors. Sponsorship has continued every year since.



**52%** of SD70 grade 4 students responded “Very much true” when asked if there were adults in the community who really care about them.

By grade 7, students who responded “Very much true” to the same question had fallen ten percentage points to **42%**.<sup>19</sup>

**PA Action** is a youth-led group focused on the beautification of public property in the Alberni Valley. Their first task? Applying glow-in-the-dark paint to the Pathway to Success walkway that connects ADSS to North Island College (right). The stencils that have been used were designed and created by the members of PA Action. There are stylized mountains, trees, stars and moons. If you would like to get involved, please contact Parks, Recreation, and Heritage.



# 80%

## Self-rated mental health

When asked to rate their mental health for the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey, **80%** of youth chose “excellent” or “good.”<sup>20</sup> In 2003, the first year that Alberni Valley youth were surveyed for the Canadian Community Health Survey, **77.8%** chose “excellent” or “very good.” Youth are not asked for a rationale.<sup>8</sup>

# 15.9%

## Obesity rate

When surveyed, **15.9%** of Central Island youth, which includes the Alberni Valley, indicated that they were obese. Comparatively, **18.9%** of youth in the South Island identified as obese, as did **19.1%** of British Columbian youth, and **19.4%** of Canadian youth.<sup>8</sup>

# 12.2%

## Youth unemployment rate

The 2013 Labour Force Survey showed a **12.2%** youth unemployment rate for the Vancouver Island and Coast Economic Region, which includes the Alberni Valley. For comparison, the provincial rate in 2013 was **12.9%** and, the youth unemployment rate was **13.7%** nationally.<sup>2</sup>

# 78%

## Teens on their phone or online after their expected bedtime

The 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey noted that **78%** of teens in Central Vancouver Island were on their phone or online after they were expected to be asleep. This matched the provincial average. As teens reported more sleep, they were more likely to report their mental health as “excellent” or “good.”<sup>20</sup>

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROFILE



Through the doors carved by **Gordon Dick**, left, **Alberni District Secondary School** students access the **Neighbourhood of Learning**. Neighbourhood of Learning creates community within the school and provides many services for students, including access to staff from the Alberni Valley Community School, Island Health’s Youth Clinic, Alberni Community and Women’s Services, Alberni Drug and Alcohol Prevention Services, and mental health assistance. In addition to access to professional services, students may access emergency clothing, hygiene supplies, and food.





## INCOME GAP

18.5%

### Overall poverty rate, after tax

In 2013, the overall poverty rate in the Alberni Valley was **18.5%**, up slightly from **17.8%** in 2012. The 2013 figure was **13%** higher than the provincial average, and **26.6%** higher than the national average.<sup>21</sup>

17.3%

### Families making less than \$30,000 per year

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, **17.3%** of Alberni Valley families earn less than **\$30,000** per year. Comparatively, the provincial rate is **13.6%** while the Canadian rate is **12%**. On the opposite end of the spectrum, **20.2%** of Alberni Valley families earn \$100,000 or more. In BC, **33.5%** of families make **\$100,000+**.<sup>1</sup>

46%

### Renters spending more than 30% of income on rent and utilities

Of the **3,610** renter households in Alberni-Clayoquot, **46%** spend more than **30%** of their before-tax income on rent and utilities. The rental market in the Alberni-Clayoquot region is rated "Severe" by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association.<sup>22</sup>

\$30,400

### Median income of single parent families, after tax

While this amount has increased every year since 2008, it still falls below the **\$33,579** that Canadian Living Wage Framework calculated for Port Alberni. Additionally, it falls below the provincial median of **\$37,180** and the national median of **\$38,710**.<sup>21,23</sup>

## FACT

26,493

The number of meals (breakfast and lunch) served at the Bread of Life in 2014.<sup>24</sup>

## IMPACT

Accessing food on the weekend can be difficult for those who are food insecure. In 2014, the Foundation provided a grant to the **KUU-US Crisis Line Society** for their weekend outreach program. Between June 1, 2014, and May 30, 2015, 1,494 hampers were distributed to individuals and families. Hampers contain food and seasonally appropriate clothing. The Foundation has also provided grants to the Backpack Program at 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue School and to the Port Alberni Shelter Society.



Alicia LaRue moved to the Alberni Valley in 2014 in pursuit of a more balanced life. After learning about the low home prices and the close proximity to a variety of recreation activities, Alicia decided that the Valley would be her next home. Born in California and raised in Alberta, Alicia has lived in many different communities but says that the Alberni Valley stands out because of it's friendliness, and the numerous opportunities for locals to improve their community.

Though she is busy with both a young daughter and her own graphic design business, Alicia still finds time to develop her large painted mural, right, at Canal Beach. An avid kitesurfer, Alicia is excited about the potential of further waterfront activities in the Alberni Valley, and sees the area as a developing hub for wind enthusiasts.



## GETTING STARTED

# -249

### Migration

From July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, the population of the Alberni Valley shrunk by **249** people. In the Alberni-Clayoquot census division there was a net loss of **6** people from international migration, **51** people to interprovincial migration, and **212** people from intraprovincial migration, and a natural increase of **20** people.<sup>25</sup>

# 27

### Languages spoken

Aside from Canada's two official languages, **25** other languages are spoken in the Alberni Valley. After English, Punjabi is spoken with the greatest frequency, followed by French, Italian, and German.<sup>1</sup>



### Largest immigrant group

The Alberni Valley's largest group of immigrants moved to Canada from the United Kingdom. Other relatively large groups of immigrants are from the Netherlands, Germany, India, and the United States.<sup>1</sup>

# 3.5%

### Visible minority

Aside from the Alberni Valley's Aboriginal population, only **3.5%** of the population belongs to a visible minority. The largest visible minority groups in our Valley are South Asian and Chinese. In British Columbia, visible minorities make up **27.3%** of the population.<sup>1</sup>

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROFILE



**Literacy Alberni Society** is a designated Welcoming Centre for new immigrants under the Welcoming Communities Program of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training. One of the Society's core programs is the English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program, which allows learners to better their English language skills, learn more about Canada, and explore their new community.



Walk With Your Doc is a public health initiative that the Alberni Valley, along with many other communities across the province, participates in annually. The first Alberni Valley event began in 2011, and it has grown every year since. In 2015, 95% of local doctors participated, and nearly 800 citizens came to Bob Dailey Stadium to take a lap with their doctor. This gives the Alberni Valley bragging rights to the best turnout in the province! A local organizing committee brings together medical health professionals, entertainers, community organizations, and vendors to ensure an evening of health and well-being.

## HEALTH

**78.67**

### Life expectancy from birth

2014 data from Vital Statistics shows that life expectancy is slowly rising in Local Health Authority 70, Alberni. But at **78.67** years, it is still below the life expectancy for the island Health service area (**82.05** years) and British Columbia (**82.92** years).<sup>17</sup>

**5.8%**

### Proportion of the population without a regular doctor

In 2014, **5.8%** residents of Central Vancouver Island, which includes the Alberni Valley, reported that they did not have a regular doctor.<sup>8</sup> There are 22 general practitioners in the Alberni Valley. If every resident in the Valley had a regular doctor, each GP would average **1,140** patients.<sup>36</sup>

**22.6%**

### Perceived life stress

In 2014, **22.6%** of Central Vancouver Island residents age 15 years and older reported perceiving that most days in their life were quite a bit or extremely stressful. Central Vancouver Island is slightly less stressed than the rest of the province. In 2014, the British Columbia average was **23.5%**.<sup>8</sup>

**1 in 3**

### Rate of influenza immunization

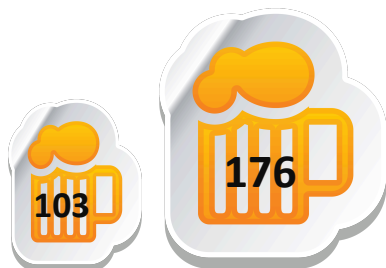
Fewer residents in the Alberni Valley receive influenza immunization than the provincial average. In 2014, **30.5%** of Valley inhabitants got flu shots, compared to **34.1%** of the British Columbia population and **32.5%** of all Canadians.<sup>8</sup>

## FACT

**140**

Number of mapped trails in the Alberni Valley, ranging from 1km to 20+ kms<sup>39</sup>





BC

Alberni

Annual average alcohol sales, in litres, per person  
age 19+ in 2015.<sup>38</sup>



66.9%

#### Self-rated mental health

**66.9%** of people age 15 years and older and living in Central Vancouver Island rated their mental health as “very good” or “excellent,” compared to **69.7%** of British Columbia residents and **71.1%** of Canadians.<sup>8</sup>

91.5%

#### Food security

When food security in Central Vancouver Island was last studied, in 2011-2012, **91.5%** of residents were found to be very food secure. This means that most residents could afford to purchase some food. Factors not taken into consideration include quality and quantity of food, cost of food, and access grocery stores and locally grown foods.<sup>8</sup>

18.8%

#### Smoking rate

In 2014, **18.8%** of the Central Vancouver Island population ages 12 years and older smoked daily. This is a **3%** increase from 2013, when **15.3%** of Central Vancouver Islanders smoked daily. Comparatively, **14.3%** of all British Columbia residents smoke daily. **18.1%** of Canadians smoke daily.<sup>8</sup>

18.5%

#### Heavy drinking

**18.5%** of Central Vancouver Island residents reported consuming 5 or more drinks on one occasion at least once a month. This number is **2.7** percentage points higher than the British Columbia average of **15.8%**, but only slightly higher than the Canadian average of **17.9%**.<sup>8</sup>

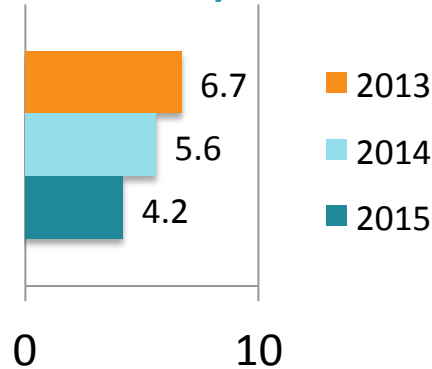
## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROFILE

The Port Alberni **Integrated Health Network (IHN)** offers collaborative care to the community. The Network is comprised of a nurse, a social workers, and two dieticians who help patients working towards a healthier lifestyle. In partnership with many different community organizations, they offer many health promotion programs, including smoking cessation, exercise and fitness classes, mental and emotional wellness classes, and information series on many of today's most prevalent diseases.



## HOUSING

### Rental Vacancy Rate<sup>26</sup>



# 11.9%

### Dwelling units requiring major repair

This indicator has stayed fairly stable over time: in 2006, **11.2%** of private dwellings required repair. In 2011, it increased slightly to **11.9%**.

**6.5%** of dwellings in neighbouring Nanaimo require major repair, which is closer to the provincial average of **7.2%**.<sup>1</sup>

# 16.8%

### Homeowners spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs

While many renters spend the majority of their income on housing, most homeowners do not. Only **16.8%** spend one-third or more of their before-tax income on housing costs such as mortgage, property taxes, and utilities. This is significantly lower than the provincial average of **23.8%**.<sup>1</sup>

# 12

### Number of beds in emergency homeless shelter

The Port Alberni Shelter Society operates the emergency shelter. In extreme weather, from November 1-March 31 of each year, the Shelter may offer **15** additional beds. In 2013, the last year that BC Housing required turn-away counts, the Shelter had to turn away **744** individuals due to lack of space.<sup>27</sup>

# \$194,300

### Benchmark home price

A home in the Alberni Valley costs less than average homes on Vancouver Island. Across Vancouver Island, the average sale price for a home in summer 2015 was **\$338,700**.

Data from 2015 indicates that the average price for a detached bungalow in BC is **\$689,000**, due in part to desired markets in Vancouver and Victoria.<sup>28,29</sup>

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROFILE

The **Alberni Valley Community Stakeholders Initiative to End Homelessness (AV CSI)** formed in 2007 to create a plan to eradicate homelessness in the community. Members of this open, ad-hoc group work on a variety of housing initiatives. Pooling their expertise and their resources has helped sustain this group, who meet to plan, prioritize, and act. Investing a portion of their funding in the Foundation has helped this group maintain their sustainability and impact as well: in 2014, a grant from the Foundation empowered the AV CSI to update their plan to end homelessness. Many local organizations participated in the development of the updated plan.





## LEARNING

**74.3%**

### High school completion rate

2013-2014 data from School District 70 demonstrates that the six-year high school completion rate has been steady or climbing since the 2008-2009 school year, when it was **63.1%**. The provincial average in 2013-2014 was **83.7%**.<sup>30</sup>

**41.7%**

### Aboriginal high school completion rate

Data from 2013-2014 notes a **41.7%** six-year completion rate for local Aboriginal students. Comparatively, the six-year completion rate for Aboriginal students in British Columbia was **61.8%** - a difference of **20.1** percentage points.<sup>30</sup>

**\$4095**

### Average annual cost of university undergraduate tuition

Vancouver Island University is the closest public university. Tuition has risen slightly from **\$4015** in 2013-2014 to **\$4095** in 2014-2015.<sup>31</sup>

**43.9%**

### Population 15+with post-secondary

Census data demonstrates that more of us are obtaining post-secondary training. In 2001, **35.5%** had completed post-secondary. In 2011, **43.9%** had. The Valley is **11.8** percentage points lower than the provincial average of **55.7%**.<sup>1</sup>

**41%**

### Illiteracy rate

**41%** of Alberni Valley residents are lacking adequate literacy skills. Those with low literacy levels may struggle with daily tasks including grocery shopping, reading a prescription, applying for jobs, and helping children with homework.<sup>30</sup>

## FACT

**97**

Percentage of 2014-2015 Grade 7 students who said they planned to graduate high school.<sup>19</sup>

## IMPACT

Each year, the Foundation provides bursaries to students who have demonstrated scholastic achievement. Additionally, Foundation grants have supported educational programs and providers, including the **Alberni Valley Community School**, the public library, **North Island College**, and **ElderCollege**.

## SAFETY



# 109.9

### Crime severity rate

At **109.9** per 100,000 persons in 2014, the Crime Severity Index was above the national level (**66.7** per 100,000 persons) and provincial figures (**91.6** per 100,000). The level decreased by **16.3%** compared to 2013 and **51.5%** compared to 1998.

# 4,844

### Property crime rate, per 100,000 population

Property crime rates in the Alberni Valley have been steadily decreasing since they reached their peak in 2005. Local property crime rates have decreased by **17.3%** since 2013, and are just below the provincial average of **4,886** per 100,000.



### Vehicular crime rate

While incidence of vehicular theft have decreased from **152** per 100,000 thefts in 2013 to **90** in 2014, rates of Criminal Code traffic offenses per 100,000 have risen **44.8%** from **250.3** in 2013 to **362.5** in 2014. Criminal Code traffic offenses include speeding and impaired driving.

# 50.0

### Sexual assault rates, per 100,000 population

The sexual assault rate has fallen **20%** in the Alberni Valley since 2013, and **64.7%** since 1998. Provincial reports are similar. However, police caution that many sexual assaults go unreported, and that it is difficult to get an accurate statistic.

# 12

### Beds in women's and children's transition house

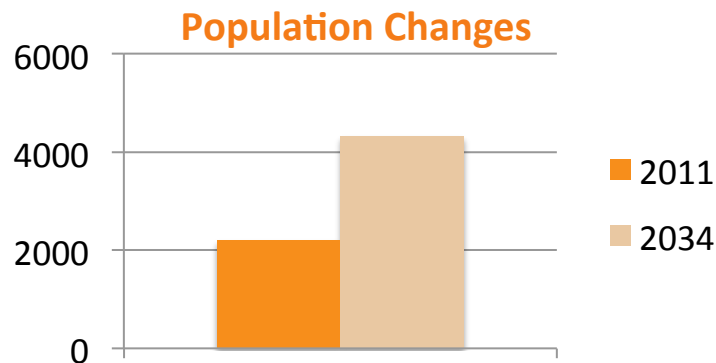
In the Alberni Community and Women's Services Society's 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Transition House provided **1947** nights of bed stays for women and children at risk of or fleeing domestic violence.

## COMMUNITY STORY

Crime is not the only measure of a community's safety. Because much of the Alberni Valley is in a tsunami inundation zone, it is crucial that residents are alerted to potentially hazardous weather situations. To this end, the **ADSS Civics class** chose to act on a suggestion from the City of Port Alberni Fire Chief: implement a new test sound for the Alberni Valley Tsunami Warning System. After months of deliberation and a few trips to city council meetings, the class decided on a didgeridoo track. The sound will ring out on the first Wednesday of each month as a reminder of the possibility of a tsunami in the Valley.



## SENIORS



According to a report from Island Health, the population ages 75 and older is expected to increase 96% by 2034.<sup>34</sup>

# 3.7%

### Poverty rate, after tax, for seniors aged 65+

2013 financial data for the Alberni Valley shows that **3.7%** of seniors are living in poverty. This is an increase from 2012, when only **2.5%** of seniors were living in poverty, but still below the provincial and national averages of **8.2%** and **6.4%**, respectively.<sup>21</sup>

# 27.4%

### Percentage of senior population living alone

More than one-quarter of seniors in the Alberni Valley live alone, and **60%** of them are women. Programs including Better at Home and the Sunshine Club's Friendly Phone Service ensure that seniors are checked up on.<sup>35</sup>

# 2

### Number of seniors-specific physicians

There are **2** physicians in the Alberni Valley specializing in seniors care: a gerontologist, and a geropsychiatrist.<sup>36</sup>

# 192

### Residential care beds

There are **192** residential care beds spread across 6 sites in the Alberni Valley. Additionally, there are **36** assisted-living suites for those who need some help to continue to live independently.<sup>34</sup>

# 59.7%

### Percentage who do not eat recommended fruits and vegetables

A 2014 Canadian Community Health Survey asked seniors aged 65+ if they ate 5 or more fruits or vegetables daily. Nearly **60%** of Central Vancouver Island residents, which includes the Alberni Valley, do not.<sup>8</sup>

## FACT

# \$60

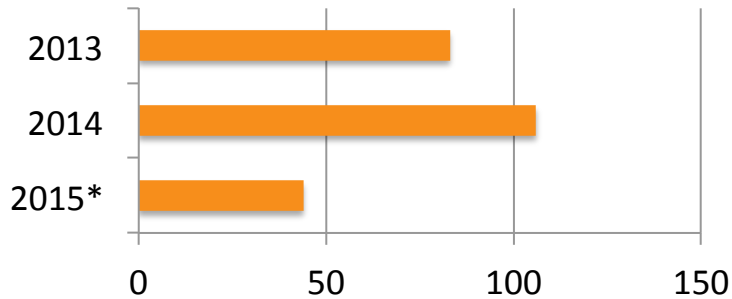
the annual cost of Echo Sunshine Club membership, for people age 50 and better<sup>37</sup>

## IMPACT

The **Echo Sunshine Club** received a grant from the **Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program** to build pickleball courts. Pickleball is a relatively new sport, but is one of the fastest growing sports in Canada because it is fun and accessible. The courts are located at Gyro/ Recreation Park and will be available to Valley pickleball enthusiasts.



## New Business License Applications<sup>10</sup>



\*2015 data only includes January – July 2015 due to publication deadlines.



## 46.0%

### Employment rate

2011 National Household Survey data shows a **46%** employment rate for City residents, and **50%** for residents in the ACRD. Since 2001, employment for City residents has decreased **12.3** percentage points, from **58.3%**. ACRD rates have also fallen by **2.8** percentage points from **52.8%**.<sup>1</sup>

## 10.4%

### Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate has also seen significant changes. In 2001, the unemployment rate for the Alberni Valley was **14.7%**. It then dropped to **7.7%** in 2006, and rose to **10.4%** in 2011. Provincially and nationally, the unemployment rate was **7.8%**.<sup>1</sup>

## \$46,317

### Median annual earnings

Alberni Valley residents with full-time employment reported an annual income of **\$46,317** in 2011. Assuming a 40 hour work week, this amounts to **\$22.27** per hour. Median annual earnings in the Alberni Valley are slightly lower than British Columbia, at **\$49,143**.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.5%

### Involuntary part-time workers

One-quarter of workers in the Alberni Valley are part-time workers, and of those, **10%** - or **2.5%** of total workers - would like to work more than part-time hours. The largest group of part-time workers are youth, followed by women ages 25 – 54.<sup>2</sup>

## 40.8%

### Percentage of income earners not earning a living wage

The Census definition of working poor is anyone not earning a living wage, which Statistics Canada defines as \$25,000/year. In 2011, **40.8%** of income earners were earning less than \$20,000/year.<sup>1</sup>



# SOURCES

- 1 Statistics Canada, 2001 and 2006 census; 2011 National Household Survey
- 2 Statistics Canada, 2000-2014 Labour Force Survey
- 3 Vancouver Island Regional Library
- 4 City of Port Alberni 2014 Annual Report
- 5 Quuquutsa Language Society <http://www.quuquutsa.ca>
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- 11 Alberni Clayoquot Regional District [www.acrd.bc.ca](http://www.acrd.bc.ca)
- 12 Cherry Creek Waterworks District
- 13 Air Quality Council of Port Alberni
- 14 Canadian Meteorological Centre, Climate Information Branch
- 15 BOMA BEST; Canada Green Building Council
- 16 Bike to Work BC <https://www.biketowork.ca/port-alberni>
- 17 BC Vital Statistics, [bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsbySubject/Demography/VitalStatistics.aspx](http://bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsbySubject/Demography/VitalStatistics.aspx)
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- 36 West Coast General Hospital
- 37 Echo Sunshine Club
- 38 Island Health
- 39 Alberni Valley Trails Planning Study, Friends of the Log Train Trail Society, 2006

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Page 20: Charmead Schella

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\*Indicates photo contest winner. Way to go!

All other photos provided by the AVCF.

# About the Alberni Valley Community Foundation

## Who

The Alberni Valley Community Foundation (AVCF) is one of the 191 community foundations across Canada. There are six directors currently, and they are appointed by a committee comprised of representatives from local government, education, business, and labour.

## What

The AVCF:

- Invests in the future of our community by creating and managing funds: all gifts from donors go into permanent endowments!
- Provides grants to local charities to improve quality of life.
- Addresses community needs and opportunities; encourages caring citizens to provide leadership.
- Ensures the integrity of funds and that the wishes of donors are respected.

## When

The Foundation was formed in 1995 with contributions from MacMillan Bloedel, the Vancouver Foundation, and local donors. In 1997, the first community requests were funded. In 2015, the Foundation holds roughly \$800,000. The interest that this money makes is distributed to community organizations annually. Please visit [www.albernifoundation.ca](http://www.albernifoundation.ca) for granting information.

## Where

The AVCF serves the whole Alberni Valley, including lands administered by the City of Port Alberni, the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District, and First Nations.

## Why

The Foundation exists to satisfy both donors and community.

### **Donors:**

People want to be sure their charitable dollars are used wisely, where they can do the most good. Donors may choose to support a favorite cause or they may ask the Foundation to distribute the income from the invested funds.

### **Community:**

Organizations apply for grants to help fund local projects. The Foundation has established broad and flexible criteria, enabling it to support innovative activities.

## NOTES



## THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read this report.

Thank you to all of the survey respondents, community conversation participants, photo contest entrants, and other individuals who participated in the creation of this report by offering their opinions, stories, and pictures. You are deeply appreciated.

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*The Alberni Valley  
Community Foundation*

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