

NEWS RELEASE

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Economy and Work at Top of Citizens' Priority List

Golden & Area A's Vital Signs Report released for community review

GOLDEN & AREA A'S

VitalSigns®

2011



Intended as a long-term initiative, Vital Signs® is a community check-up that measures our quality of life in the Town of Golden & Columbia Shuswap Regional District Electoral Area 'A.' The local report, with cover shown above, was made available on Tuesday October 4th as part of a national release event with 22 other communities.

(Golden, BC) – Golden & Area A residents have given top priority to the issue areas of the Economy and Work in the 2011 Vital Signs Report.

On October 4th, 22 communities across Canada began to pour through each of the locally-produced quality of life indicator reports championed by their local community foundations. One of the smallest communities to ever participate, Golden & Area A, produced their first ever Vital Signs Report through one of the smallest community foundations to ever lead a project like this, the Golden & District Community Foundation (GD CF).

The Vital Signs Steering Committee, comprised of local volunteers, spent much of the spring and summer researching each issue area in order to provide a snapshot on how the Golden & Area A community was performing. The information compiled is intended to inform, initiate conversations, celebrate successes and determine how the Golden & Area A community can take action to improve citizens' quality of life.

Research data collected by national and regional organizations was analyzed and distilled into four key indicators, producing a local snap-shot for 12 quality of life-impacting issue areas. Local citizens were also asked to complete an online survey on their perceptions of Golden & Area A's strength in these issue areas. With over 300 surveys completed, the Economy, Work and Housing were listed as the citizens' top three priority issue areas.

The Vital Signs Report acknowledged that while the faltering economy has presented challenges here and around the world, to improve our quality of life, and for local organizations and households to prosper, Golden & Area A's economic leaks need to be plugged. With respect to Work in Golden & Area A, the Vital Signs Report found that the quality and nature of employment opportunities can contribute to the overall sense of vitality and well-being of citizens and in a community. And echoing the Official Community Plan, Golden residents identified affordable housing as the primary obstacle to community health and vitality.

The survey also found that across the 12 issue areas, respondents perceive progress or improvements from 2006 to 2011. And using the survey results to look forward to 2014, the future of this small community looks even brighter.

The GDCF's Denise English, also the Vital Signs Steering Committee Chair, hopes that this will translate into action on behalf of local funders and organizations to address these challenges.

"The Community Foundation's Grants Advisory Committee will be looking for grant applications this fall that will address the citizens' priorities from the Vital Signs Report and seek to improve our quality of life," declared Ms. English. The GDCF will be accepting grant applications up to October 21st.

Moving forward, adjustments in grant adjudication are not limited to one funder. The GDCF expects that project proponents will get together as well in order to complete meaningful ventures that produce noticeable results.

Ms. English went on to offer, "We're dedicating time at our 10th Anniversary Celebration on October 5th to discuss how other groups can use the Vital Signs Report. It's the Community Foundation's hope that local business, government and nonprofit leaders will start talking about how we can use this information to make a difference together."

To read *Golden & Area A's Vital Signs Report* for yourself, pick up a copy from one of the many distribution locations in Golden or download it from www.goldencommunityfoundation.ca.

This ambitious community project was made possible through the generous support of the Columbia Basin Trust, Town of Golden, Rural Golden, Vancouver Foundation and the Government of Canada.

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 the Vital Signs project, please bookmark www.goldencommunityfoundation.ca.

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