

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
ATTENTION: NEWS EDITOR

### Red Deer's Vital Signs 2009 Release

(Red Deer, Alberta, October 6, 2009) Red Deer's Vital Signs was launched today, along with 16 other communities across Canada. Red Deer & District Community Foundation's third publication of Vital Signs comes at a time when drastic changes in the economy of our global community are occurring. With the past year being one of swift, dramatic changes in the economy, the report attempts to quantify the extent of the profound change, through statistical presentation and at the same time qualify it through our Community Graders' responses on our survey.

The economy was indeed front and center of the report. Red Deer Economic Region's seasonally adjusted employment rate for June of this year, at 70.4 per cent, shows very minimal increase from last year's 70.2 per cent. It seems that Red Deer is faring better than the provincial rate at 69.5 per cent and Canada at 61.6 per cent as of June 2009. There has also been a substantial decline in both the provincial and national employment rates compared to June 2008 figures. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate as of July 2009 at 7.4 per cent, in the Red Deer Economic Region, shows a significant increase compared to July 2008 at 4.1 per cent. The current spike in the average number of regular Employment Insurance claims clearly shows that the effects of the economic downturn has hit home, with an increase of 252 per cent in the first four months of 2009 compared to the first four months of the previous year.

Our community's perception of safety seems to be different from the statistical information despite improvements in our safety record. In the last five years, there has been substantial decline in Red Deer's property and violent crime. Property crime rate delined 62.1 per cent over the past five years and violent crime,31.1 per cent over same time frame. However, 14 per cent of our community graders indicate that they do not feel safe living, working and playing in Red Deer. 42 per cent feel "somewhat" safe.

When community graders asked what Red Deer's most important issue is, 48 per cent of responses indicated "Crime/Law& Order".

As indicated by the household recycling rates, composting rates and temperature changes in homes, Red Deer has strong environmental consciousness and are participating in activities around environmental protection and preservation. Community Graders marked our green spaces as our community's greatest strength.

Vital Signs is an annual community check up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities, identifies significant trends and shares opportunities for action in at least 10 issue areas critical to quality of life and is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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