

The Calgary Foundation presents

Calgary's **VitalSigns**

2010 Citizens Report Card

say what you

DO

what you say



THE CALGARY
FOUNDATION
FOR CALGARY FOREVER

CALGARY'S
VitalSigns[®]
TAKING THE PULSE OF CALGARY

The Calgary Foundation conducts an annual check-up that measures the vitality of our community, sparks discussion, encourages connections and inspires action in 12 interconnected areas critical to our quality of life.

Welcome to Calgary's Vital Signs 2010

Being human is itself difficult, and therefore all kinds of settlements have problems. Big cities have difficulties in abundance, because they have people in abundance. But vital cities are not helpless to combat even the most difficult problems. Vital cities have marvelous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving, and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties. — Jane Jacobs, urban writer and activist

vi-tal (adj.) Concerned with or necessary to the maintenance of life.

The Calgary Foundation believes that vital cities are resilient cities. But how do we know if we are making progress? Tracking the current and long-term vitality of our city is the purpose of Calgary's Vital Signs, The Calgary Foundation's annual checkup that reports on both the facts and citizen perceptions on how we are doing.

A vital city has many moving parts, consequently the annual report monitors key issue areas influencing Calgary's quality of life. This year, a section on Food is included, reflecting a growing trend of food themed discussion and activity.

Galileo said something akin to measure what is measurable, make measurable what is not.

This is the fourth edition of this still evolving work to track vitality and each year we try to improve — particularly with regard to making measurable what is yet not, including many of the most important dimensions of quality of life and vitality.

Accordingly, in this year's survey we asked graders to tell us about some of these dimensions of their lives.

We learned that 94% are happy and 78% are connected to their communities, key ingredients for a vital life. These and other survey results are covered throughout the report.



Eva Friesen
President & CEO



Alison T. Love
Board Chair

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Overall Trend...

Despite navigating rough economic waters over the last two years, citizen perception is relatively upbeat. Graders gave their own quality of life a "B" and, over three years of reporting, have steadily increased the average grade given to Calgary quality of life issues. While a "B" has been the highest mark to date, the grades have either remained stable or increased — except for the environment grade has moved up and down since 2008.

The Good, the Bad and the Persistent...

Among the surprises in this year's findings are both good and bad news stories and there are also those issues that remain a persistent concern.

Good	Bad	Persistent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High rate of small business & self-employment • C-Train extensions • Safer & cleaner city centre • Homeless shelter use declines • Calgary top eco-city • Arts events & attendance thriving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of food climbs • High youth unemployment • Loss of rental units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High poverty rates • Many earn less than living wage • Immigrants underemployed • High greenhouse gas emissions

WHAT TO DO WITH THE REPORT

Take action

If you feel strongly about an issue use the report as a starting point for getting involved.

Pass it on

A community only succeeds through collective action...encourage your colleagues, neighbours, and family to read the report.

Learn more

Go to thecalgaryfoundation.org for more information on the 2010 report and the Vital Signs initiative.

Contact us

We know the issues and the community... if you want to participate we can connect you. thecalgaryfoundation.org.



Here's a summary of how we did in 2010.

Calgarians commented on each key area of focus as to what's working and what's not.

Belonging & Leadership **B-**

What's Working?

Many volunteers, strong charitable donations and a good sense of community.

What's Not?

Voter turnout rates, citizen engagement and lack of citizen knowledge of local political issues.

Health & Wellness **B-**

What's Working?

Excellent pathway systems, many recreational programs and access to excellent fitness facilities.

What's Not?

Lack of family physicians, long emergency wait times and limited bike lanes.

Sustainable City **C+**

What's Working?

Increased number of green and LEED buildings, West C-train expansion and improved recycling program.

What's Not?

Urban sprawl, inefficient transit system and lack of green buildings and housing.

Immigrant Newcomers **B-**

What's Working?

Specialized agencies/programs to assist newcomers including ESL educational programs.

What's Not?

Recognition of foreign credentials of immigrants, lack of acceptance of cultural diversity.

Work **B**

What's Working?

Good availability of jobs, a strong economy and stable oil and gas industry.

What's Not?

To diversify local economy, eliminate our dependence on oil and gas industry and increase minimum wage/working wage.

Learning **B**

What's Working?

Many accessible post-secondary options, plenty of lectures/classes at public libraries and adult education opportunities.

What's Not?

Class sizes that are too big, high tuition at post-secondary institutions and not enough support for special needs children.

Financial Well-being **C+**

What's Working?

High average income, an effective 10 year plan to end homelessness and plentiful charitable organizations.

What's Not?

Lack of affordable housing, increased gap between rich and poor and high cost of living.

Arts & Culture **B**

What's Working?

Variety of festivals/events, excellent theatre/ballet and a wide range of multicultural offerings.

What's Not?

Increase funding for arts to make events more affordable and increase performance venues.

Housing **C**

What's Working?

Increased efforts in providing more affordable housing, good support for the homeless and increased rental vacancies.

What's Not?

Creation of more affordable housing options, need cheaper rental properties and less urban sprawl.

Safety **B**

What's Working?

Acceptable emergency/police response times, a noticeable increased police presence and a safe feeling in our communities.

What's Not?

Not enough lighting downtown and too many homeless that leads to safety issues, unsafe roadways due to aggression/congestion and not enough security on public transit.

Environment **B-**

What's Working?

Blue bins/curb side recycling program, good pathways, parks, and green spaces and a great water treatment plant providing clean water.

What's Not?

Provide more recycling options at condos/apartments/commercial buildings, reduce water consumption and decrease vehicle pollution by increasing commuter rate.

Food **B-**

What's Working?

Availability of healthy options for fresh or organic food ie. Farmers Markets/specialty stores/supermarkets/community gardens.

What's Not?

Healthy food options aren't affordable. Need more community gardens and healthy food choices for kids, especially at schools.

Key Issue Area	2008	2009	2010	Trend
Environment	C-	B	B-	↓
Sustainable City	C	C	C+	↑
Food	—	—	B-	—
Health & Wellness	C	C+	B-	↑
Work	B	B	B	—
Financial Well-being	C	C	C+	↑
Belonging & Leadership	C	B-	B-	↑
Immigrant Newcomers (Formerly Getting Started)	C+	B-	B-	↑
Arts & Culture	C	B	B	↑
Learning	B	B	B	—
Safety	C-	B-	B	↑
Housing	D	C	C	↑
Average	C	C+	B-	↑

Here's how we did it. We call it Community Engagement.

Calgary's Vital Signs 2010 extends thanks to the 1400+ citizens and community partners who added their voice and expertise to this year's snapshot of our city's quality of life.

CITIZEN OPINION SURVEY

This year, 1171 citizens completed the online survey assigning grades and providing their views on "What's Working" and "What's Not" for each of the 12 issue areas. This year graders were also asked questions on overall quality of life, happiness and community connections.

The enthusiasm and insights of the graders generated over 22,000 citizen comments. (see thecalgaryfoundation.org)

GRADER PROFILE

- 77% lived in Calgary for more than ten years
- 17% are foreign born
- 65% are female
- 27% are between 19 and 34
- 44% are between 35 and 54
- 27% are 55 and over
- 86% volunteered in the last year
(top volunteer areas: specific event or fundraiser; local community; school; arts; sports or recreation)
- 76% are university educated
- 73% live in NW or SW Calgary

...and the workplace diversity was extensive

- 37% work in business and included corporations such as Brookfield Properties and RBC Dominion Securities
- 32% work for government, predominantly the City of Calgary and the Province of Alberta
- 16% work in the broad voluntary sector

- Kerby Centre retirees were engaged
- Students from schools and institutions U of C, Bow Valley College, and Crescent Heights High School participated
- Clients and staff from the Mustard Seed and Fresh Start Recovery Centre took part

SURVEY ANALYSIS

The online survey, conducted by The Praxis Group, is based on a 'self-selected' respondent population. Data is accurate + or - 3% 19 times out of 20. Most market research involves much smaller samples of around 400 and a margin of error + or - 5% 19 times out of 20. In 2009, Vital Signs did a comparison between a random sample telephone survey of Calgarians and the online survey which revealed negligible differences between the responses of the two groups.

INDICATOR RESEARCH

Over 35 local subject matter experts representing a wide range of Calgary organizations were consulted to assist in identifying current trends and research to ensure that the indicators used for Calgary's Vital Signs are relevant, accurate and comprehensive. Community Foundations of Canada, who retain The Centre for the Study of Living Standards to undertake national research, provided additional indicator data. The sources for all indicators can be found at thecalgaryfoundation.org

GRADING INDEX

Excellent: stay the course

A

Good: but some improvements could be made

B

Average performance: suggest additional effort be made to address these issues

C

Below average performance: additional work is required

D

Failure: immediate action is crucial

F

(Graders could also choose to give their grade a plus or minus.)

Calgary has seen the best of times (2000-2007) and the worst of times (2008, 2009). Over the past decades we have seen nation leading growth and economic performance, and have now seen nation leading contraction. Almost two completely different cities. Truly the best and worst of times, for the same city.

Calgary Economic Development State of the Economy. June 2010.

environment

B-

Calgary is World's Top Eco-City

The Mercer 2010 Quality of Living Survey ranked Calgary 28th of 221 cities for quality of living. The report also identified cities with the best eco-ranking based on water availability and drinkability, waste removal, quality of sewage systems, air pollution and traffic congestion. Calgary scored the top mark in this category, followed by Honolulu, with Ottawa and Helsinki, jointly, ranking third.

Highest Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Canada

At 17.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide per capita, Calgary ranked among the worst emitters, placing 5th in a 2010 United Nations' study of 50 global cities. This is partly attributable to the fact that most Alberta electricity is generated from fossil fuels. Only Washington D.C., Minneapolis, Denver and Rotterdam produced more greenhouse gases. Vancouver produced 4.9 tonnes per capita.

New Parkland Acquired, New Parks Constructed

Since 2003, Calgary has gained 251 hectares of new parkland. In 2010, five major regional parks are under construction: Memorial Drive Landscape of Memory, Central Memorial Park, Ralph Klein Regional Park, Nose Hill Park pathways and Devonian Gardens. In 2003, the Enmax Legacy Parks Program was created. It has been the most significant funding source for capital parks work in the City of Calgary Park's history.



Calgary's Urban Forest Continues to Expand

In 2009, Calgary had around 272,000 street trees, up from about 25,000 in 1959. Calgary Parks' activity to keep Calgary's urban forest healthy and safe in 2009 included: 16,700 trees pruned; 4,450 trees planted; 1,600 trees removed; 629 trees planted in 13 communities through the NeighbourWoods volunteer program and new fruit trees as a part of a community orchard pilot project.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
[Discover environmentally friendly businesses, resources and events.](#)
reapcalgary.com

The water in Calgary is great, why are people still drinking from plastic bottles?

— Citizen Comment

DOING OUR PART

Alberta Council for Environmental Education received support to educate citizens in being responsible stewards of the environment.

C+

sustainable city

WHAT YOU CAN DO
[Get a Healthy Homes consultation.](#)
greencalgary.org

C-Train Extended

In 2009, the total length of Calgary's LRT system grew to 46 kilometres (km) with the addition of the 3.6 km Northwest LRT extension to Crowfoot Station. Construction began on the 8 km West LRT line from downtown, as well as on the 2.9 km NE LRT extension to the Saddletowne Station. When complete, the LRT system will have doubled in size since 2001.

Downtown Parking Rates Among Highest

Despite downtown office rents declining sharply in the past two years, parking rates have remained among the most expensive in North America. Average monthly rates for downtown stalls operated by the private sector and associated with office buildings, remained unchanged at \$465.15 in the first quarter of 2010 from a year ago, up from \$283.34 in 2003.

More Hybrids to Hail

In 2010, around 50 hybrid vehicles have been adopted as taxis by Calgary cab companies. Drivers report that they spend an average of 58% less on fuel compared to conventional taxis. This is a very small proportion of local taxis compared to Vancouver, where hybrid taxis account for 50% of all cabs.

Green Buildings Going Up

According to the Canada Green Building Council, by mid 2010 Calgary had 124 projects registered with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard, up from 88 a year ago. Seventeen of these projects are now certified, up from 12 last year. There are now over 6,714 Built Green™ homes enrolled in the Calgary area, more than triple the number in 2008.

Great to see new LEED buildings, a wind powered LRT, and recycling - FINALLY, but we still need to "small up" our eco footprint.

— Citizen Comment



DOING OUR PART

Federation of Calgary Communities received support to educate and engage community volunteers in the urban planning process.

B-

food



DOING OUR PART

Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association received support to revitalize their weekly inner-city farmer's market.

Cost of Nutritious Food Climbs

According to Alberta Agriculture's Nutritious Food Basket Price Report, in December 2009 the minimum cost of healthy eating for a family of four in Calgary was \$228 per week or \$983 per month, up from \$784 in June of 2008, and \$710 in November 2007. These reports are based on a selected basket of food items that reflect current Canadian nutrition recommendations and food purchasing patterns of Albertans.

Community Gardens Flourish; Community Orchards Take Root

The Community Garden Resource Network reports that in summer 2010 there were 32 public community gardens, up from 21 in 2009. There were 45 private community gardens identified, up from 25 last year. There are six ornamental community gardens, up from three last year. In 2009, City of Calgary Parks began planting fruit trees and shrubs at three community orchards.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Sign up to receive a low cost, monthly box of fruits and vegetables. communitykitchenprogram.com

Growing Crop of Farmers' Markets

In the summer of 2010, Calgarians had a new crop of farmers' markets to choose from as the number of markets surged to 14, almost doubling from 2009. Both Airdrie and Okotoks added markets of their own, increasing the number of markets within an hour drive to 10.

Budding Interest in Local Food

In a survey on local food conducted for The City of Calgary in May 2010, 33% of respondents said they grow vegetables, 24% grow fruit and 33% grow herbs. Of those who do not grow any food, 50% have no space, 25% have no time and 13% are not interested. 77% said it is very or somewhat important to purchase locally grown foods, while 40% said one quarter of their food purchases are locally grown.

We need more rooftop gardens but YAY to all the community gardens and farmers markets!

— Citizen Comment

health & wellness

B-

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Sign up for a City of Calgary recreation program. calgary.ca/recreation/recguide

Physicians per Capita Improving

In 2008, there were 235 active physicians (family practitioners and specialists) per 100,000 population in the Calgary Health Region, above the provincial rate of 203 and national rate of 196. The rate is up 25% from 188 in the year 2000.

Calgarians Physically Active

In 2009, 62.4% of people aged 12 and over in the Calgary Health Region reported being moderately active or physically active compared to 52.5% nationally, up from 56% in 2008. Calgary continues to be one of the most physically active cities in Canada.

Mental Health Stable

In 2009, 75.4% of those aged 12 and over in the Calgary Health Region rated their mental health status as excellent or very good — no change from 2008 but a slight decline from 2007 (80.4%). The 2009 national average was 73.9%.

Family Friendly City

Calgary earned an "A" in a 2010 national report card by the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada. Canada's 33 largest cities were graded according to five criteria — community feel, education choice, economic strength, cost of living, and family independence. Vancouver, Edmonton, Kitchener and Guelph also scored "A" grades.

DOING OUR PART

Wellspring received support for programs that heal the body, mind and spirit of those struggling with cancer.

Lots of pathways for biking or walking, cheap public programs available, and lots of accessible parks really add to keeping me healthy.

— Citizen Comment

Number of Self-Employed Hits Record Levels

In 2009, there were 115,000 self-employed Calgarians, up from 109,400 in 2008, and 83,900 in 2000. At 93.9 per 1,000 population, Calgary had the second highest number of self-employed people in Canada, after Vancouver. Calgary can also claim the title of the young entrepreneurial capital of Canada with 21.8% of its 15-34 age group self-employed... larger than any other major Canadian city.

Highest Rate of Small Businesses

In 2009, small businesses (businesses with less than 50 employees) accounted for 94.9% of all Calgary businesses. At a rate of 40.2 per 1,000 population, Calgary had the highest number of small businesses per capita among major Canadian cities, and was second in Canada in small business growth from 2005-2009.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

[Hire youth or access career advice from the Calgary Youth Employment Centre.](#)
[yec.nextsteps.ca](#)



work

B

Unemployment Rate Remains High; EI Claims Rise

Calgary's average seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the first half of 2010 was 7.4% (53,800 were unemployed in June of 2010), up from 7.0% in the second half of 2009. The 2010 rate is below the national rate of 8.2% but above the provincial rate of 7.0%. Employment Insurance claims rose 63% from February 2009 to February 2010.

Youth Unemployment Rate High

The 2009 youth (15-24 years) unemployment rate in Calgary was 14%, up from 6.9% in June 2008, below the national rate (15.3%) but above the provincial rate (12.3%). Males face a higher rate than females. According to the International Labour Organization, world youth unemployment is set to hit a postwar high in 2010, with just over 13% of the global workforce aged 15 to 24 jobless by the end of the year.

DOING OUR PART

Making Changes received support for programs that help unemployed women in need re-enter the workforce and become self sufficient.

Kudos to all the companies and organizations supporting telework and flexible work hours.

— Citizen Comment

Calgary Property Tax and Utility Charges Relatively Low

Calgary's combined cost of total property tax (municipal and school taxes) and utility charges for an average single detached house was \$3,571 in 2009. Calgary's cost was 5th lowest among 21 Canadian cities surveyed. Surrey, B.C. had the lowest cost at \$3,204, while Edmonton's at \$4,217 was among the highest.

Household Income Rising

In 2008, the median after-tax income for economic families in the Calgary area was \$81,700, 28% higher than the national level of \$63,900, and up from \$81,100 in 2007. (An economic family refers to a group of two or more people who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption.)

Poverty Rate Declines

In 2008, the poverty rate in the Calgary area, based on Low Income Cut-offs (LICO) before tax, was 8.9%, down from 9.5% in 2007 and lower than the national average of 13.6%. Calgary's child poverty rate was 9.7%, also lower than the national average of 14.2%. The elderly (age 65 and over) poverty rate was 11.5%, down from 12.6% a year prior, and lower than the national average of 13.1%.

A Twelfth of Employed Calgarians Not Making Living Wage

According to Vibrant Communities Calgary, a Calgarian working full time needs to make a minimum of \$12.25/hr plus benefits (or \$13.50 in lieu of benefits) to earn a Living Wage. Being paid less than a Living Wage means earning less than \$22,229 annually. As of April 1, 2009, minimum wage in Alberta is \$8.80/hr or \$16,016 annually. In 2008, 15% of employed Calgarians (over age 15), earned less than the Living Wage.

financial well-being

C+

DOING OUR PART

The United Way received support for Moving out of Poverty initiatives that help people obtain job skills, financial literacy and affordable housing.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

[Become a living wage leader.](#)
[vibrantcalgary.com](#)

How about more flexibility with rental suites? It's been red taped to death.

— Citizen Comment

Sense of Community

Belonging Trends Upward

In 2009, 63.1% of the population, 12 years and over in the Calgary Health Region, reported a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging, up 18% from 2008. The 2009 rate is lower than the national (65.4%) and provincial (65.2%) levels.

Charitable Donations Rise

With a median charitable donation of \$360 in 2008, donations in Calgary were up \$40 from \$320 in 2006. The Calgary level was significantly higher than the 2008 national median charitable donation of \$250. In Canada, religious organizations were the biggest beneficiaries, followed by health and social services organizations.

Happy Calgarians

In the 2010 Calgary's Vital Signs survey, when asked "How would you describe how happy you are?" 94% reported being "very" or "somewhat" happy. Similar results were found in 2009 when 94% of the population 12 years and over in the Calgary Health Region responded they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their overall life, up from 91.5% in 2008.

Strong Community and Neighbourhood Connections

In the 2010 Calgary's Vital Signs survey, 78% of respondents reported being "very" or "somewhat" connected to their community. When asked "How many people in your neighbourhood do you know well enough to ask a favour?" 63% of respondents reported "very many" or "some".



belonging & leadership

B-

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Get candidate info and vote in the civic election. civiccamp.org

Having a lot of people up for election is a good thing.

— Citizen Comment

DOING OUR PART
Festivals including Slammenberry Jam Urban Dance, South Calgary Multicultural and Afrikadey received support to promote a vibrant sense of community.

B-

immigrant newcomers

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Discover the needs/contributions of culturally diverse Calgarians. ccis-calgary.ab.ca

Calgary Public Library has great programs for new Canadians... Bow Valley College and others have fantastic programs for ESL students.

— Citizen Comment

Calgary Top Draw for Newcomers

In a 2010 Conference Board of Canada report benchmarking the attractiveness of 50 Canadian cities, Calgary was ranked number one in having what migrants are looking for. Rankings are based on performance in seven categories (society, health, economy, environment, education, innovation and housing). Calgary earned top marks in economy and innovation, but earned a "D" in the society category due to the low earning power of university-educated, foreign born people.

Calgary Not Doing Enough to Welcome New Canadians

According to the 2010 Vital Signs survey, when asked "Do you feel Calgarians do enough to be welcoming to new Canadians?" — 53% of respondents said that Calgarians are not doing enough.

Educated Immigrants Underemployed

A Statistics Canada report on Canada's 2008 immigrant labour market found that two-thirds of university-educated recent immigrants to Canada are underemployed—a situation also reflected in Calgary. The report also found that immigrant wages were lower and involuntary part-time work and temporary employment were more common than among Canadian-born workers.

Immigration to Calgary Hits a Record High

In 2008, 12,689 new immigrants landed in Calgary, accounting for 5.1% of Canada's immigrants, up from 4.2% in 2003. Most immigrants to Calgary are fluent in English, compared to five years ago when over half had no official language ability. In 2008, the Philippines became Calgary's largest immigrant source country, surpassing India and China, historically, the dominant source countries.

DOING OUR PART
The event - Lunch, Learn and Celebrate with the Ismaili Community received support to help multicultural seniors share their culture with the wider community.

arts & culture

B

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Support local artists/
musicians.
marketcollective.ca

Festivals are increasing and improving, arts groups are collaborating and new initiatives are focused on younger patrons. Bravo!

— Citizen Comment



DOING OUR PART

Blue Collar Dance, Ghost River Theatre and WordFest received support to ensure their long term sustainability in times of transition.

Arts Public Attendance Thriving

In 2009, Calgary's 166 nonprofit arts organizations offered 7,336 arts events/public activities that attracted a total attendance of 2.7 million people. One of the largest attractions was Theatre Calgary with a total annual audience of over 114,000. Festivals drew 20% of the overall attendance, community arts groups accounted for 27%, professional groups with budgets under \$1 million captured 28%, and organizations with budgets over \$1 million attracted 25%.

Arts Organizations Depend on Volunteers

In 2009, 20,178 volunteers contributed 602,058 hours to support Calgary's arts organizations. With 1,612 volunteers, the Calgary Folk Music Festival benefited from the most volunteers. On the other hand, there are only 727 staff employed full time (FTE) across all organizations and almost half have less than one FTE or no staff at all.

Albertans Highest Spenders on Live Performing Arts and Museums

Alberta had the highest level of average household spending for live performing arts and museums. With over 481,900 households in Calgary, total spending on live performing arts and admissions to museums and similar activities in 2008 was estimated at \$83.6 million.

Festivals Flourishing

According to Wikipedia (June 2010), there are at least 53 annual festivals and cultural events in Calgary, with new ones added to the roster each year. Ranging from GlobalFest to WordFest to FunnyFest, events are held across the city and year round.

learning

B

Library Borrowing Rises Another Million

The Calgary Public Library (CPL) saw continued dramatic increases in use during 2009. Customers borrowed 16 million books, CDs, and DVDs, up by almost one million from 2008 and over two million since 2007. CPL usage is the second largest in Canada behind Toronto. Over 1,500 items were added to the collection daily, resulting in 575,000 new books, magazines, DVDs and more in 2009.

Post Secondary Completions High

In 2009, 57% of Calgarians (15 years and over) completed post-secondary education (university degree, post-secondary certificate or diploma), more than the national average of 51%. Only Ottawa-Gatineau, among Vital Signs communities, had a higher level (63%).

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Volunteer to teach
children to read.
calgaryreads.com

Positive Trend in High School Completions

In 2009, 14.5% of Calgarians (aged 15 and over) had not completed high school, a slight improvement from 14.7% in 2007. This figure has been improving steadily since 1990 (23.8%), with only Victoria (13%) and Ottawa (9.5%), among Vital Signs communities, posting lower rates in 2009.

CBE Students Excel on Provincial Exams

Each year, Grade 3, 6 and 9 students write Provincial Achievement Tests and Grade 12 students write Diploma Exams. The Calgary Board of Education reports that 2008/09 results were well above provincial standards and have improved over previous CBE results. As well, special education students and English Language Learners also exceeded the provincial average.

DOING OUR PART

Calgary Reads received support for an early literacy initiative that assists parents in being their child's first, best teacher.



Lifelong learning opportunities are everywhere whether it's Lunch and Learn at the Glenbow, speakers at ACAD or programs at the Bird Sanctuary.

— Citizen Comment

Property Crime Rate Falls

At 4,304 per 100,000 population in 2009, the property crime rate in Calgary declined almost 10% from 2008 and is down 22% from 2005. Part of this decline is attributable to Calgary Police Service's efforts which led to a 29% reduction in auto thefts in 2009.

Firefighter Response Time Lags Target

The Calgary Fire Department reports that in 2009 the first engine on scene arrived within seven minutes 59% of the time, behind its target of 66%. New community growth, traffic, construction and weather were cited as factors compromising their ability to meet the target.

More Agree that Calgary is a Safe City

According to the Calgary Police Commission Citizen Survey, there was a significant increase in 2009 in the number of citizens who agree that Calgary is a safe city in which to live, rising to 86% from 79% in 2008.

Centre City Safer and Crime Declines

According to a 2009 City of Calgary survey, a majority of Calgarians say the city's core is safer and cleaner than a year prior. Also in 2009, Centre City person crimes, property crimes and disorder incidents all reached a five-year low. Some of this success is likely due to "Clean to the Core", a collaborative effort which includes more police officers patrolling on foot, and more bylaw and transit officers.

Gang-Related Activity Decreases

Of the 24 homicides committed in Calgary in 2009, 7 were gang-related, down from 15 in 2008. There were also 10 non-fatal gang-related shooting incidents, down sharply from 21 in 2008.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
[Discover tips to make your home/community safe](#)
safercalgary.com

The visible increase in police presence makes me feel safe, even when I'm alone downtown.

— Citizen Comment

safety

B



DOING OUR PART

YouthLink Calgary Police Interpretive Centre received support for a Safe City 2.0 exhibit that teaches youth about online safety.

housing

C



WHAT YOU CAN DO
[Volunteer with the Calgary Homeless Foundation](#)
calgaryhomeless.com

Create more cooperative housing complexes... they're affordable AND sustainable.

— Citizen Comment

DOING OUR PART
 The Calgary Homeless Foundation received support for their 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness that helps people move to self-sufficiency and independence.

Downward Trend in Homeless Shelter Use

In 2009 the number of people staying in Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs funded emergency shelters in Calgary began to decline — 190 fewer people used a shelter in March 2010 compared to March of 2009. There are 2,429 spots in Calgary shelters and the Calgary Homeless Foundation estimates that 15,000 to 17,000 people used a Calgary shelter for at least one night in 2009.

Improved Rents & Vacancies

By April 2010, the Calgary apartment vacancy rate increased by one percentage point to 5.3% from April 2009, despite the fact that Calgary lost 886 rental units due to condo conversions since 2009. The enhanced vacancy rate saw rents drop slightly — the average rent for a two-bedroom unit was \$1,082, a decline of \$24 from April 2009.

Targets for New Affordable Housing Units Surpassed

In its second year of implementation (2009/10), Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness had a goal to develop 1,025 affordable housing units, supportive housing units and/or treatment beds. The goal was surpassed with 2,165 affordable housing units funded through dozens of community partners — resulting in more affordable housing created in the plan's first two years than in the previous decade.

Calgary House Prices More Affordable

According to RBC Economics, with a Housing Affordability Index of 38% Calgary offered more affordable housing (for a standard two-storey house in Q1 of 2010) than Vancouver (81%), Toronto (58%), Ottawa (41%) and the national average (47%). The RBC Housing Affordability Index measures a house price in relation to the total payments required for a mortgage, utilities and property tax.

Here's who helped us do it.

What becomes clear with each Vital Signs Report is how interconnections are vital to The Calgary Foundation.

No one person, organization or level of government alone can address the challenges facing Calgary. We thank the remarkable organizations and individuals that are the threads that connect all aspects of life in our city.

— Alison T. Love, Chair, The Calgary Foundation

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RESEARCH SUPPORT

Alberta Agriculture
Alberta Health Services
Built Green Society of Canada
Calgary Arts Development
Calgary Board of Education
Calgary Economic
Development
Canada Green Building Council
Calgary Herald
Calgary Homeless Foundation
Calgary Public Library
Canada Mortgage and
Housing Corporation
Community Garden
Resource Network, Calgary
Horticultural Society
Conference Board of Canada
Ethno-Cultural Council
of Calgary

Mercer 2010 Quality of
Living Survey
Statistics Canada
Vibrant Communities Calgary
Wikipedia

City of Calgary

Calgary Fire Department
Calgary Police Services
Calgary Transit
Centre City Implementation
Community &
Neighbourhood Services
Environmental & Safety
Management
Land Use Planning & Policy
Office of Sustainability
Parks
Recreation
Transportation Planning



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA
all for community.

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 assigns grades in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

15 city and regional community foundations produced Vital Signs reports in 2010

Calgary
Greater Montreal
Greater Saint John
Hamilton
Kingston and Area
London
Medicine Hat and
Southeastern Alberta
Nova Scotia: Lunenburg County
Ottawa
Red Deer and District
Sudbury
Toronto
Vancouver
Victoria
Waterloo Region (Kitchener
Waterloo, Cambridge &
North Dumfries)

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Survey

The Praxis Group

Creative Partner

Foundry Creative

Calgary's 2010 Vital Signs

Report is generously supported by the Daryl K. (Doc) Seaman Flow Through Fund at The Calgary Foundation



Thanks for joining the discussion. Every opinion counts... but it's another thing to take that next step.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Start new conversations that spark discussion, encourage connections and inspire action.

Attend Vital Conversations, a series of dynamic community forums, hosted by The Calgary Foundation and Calgary Public Library, that invite Calgarians to voice their opinions on issues presented in Calgary's Vital Signs Report. Go to thecalgaryfoundation.org for details.

WHAT WE DO

The Calgary Foundation is listening to Calgarians. By creating meeting places and developing partnerships, we bring people together... to take the pulse of Calgary.

The Calgary Foundation, established in 1955, facilitates collaborative philanthropy by making powerful connections between donors and community organizations for the long term benefit of Calgary and surrounding area.

IN 2009 - 2010 THE CALGARY FOUNDATION

- Received \$30 million in new gifts
- Increased the asset base to \$335 million
- Granted \$29 million to 605 charitable organizations
- Established 59 new funds



THE CALGARY
FOUNDATION
FOR CALGARY FOREVER

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