

THE SUNSHINE COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PRESENTS 2019 VITAL BRIEF

The Sunshine Coast Community Foundation is a charitable organization that brings together people who care about the Sunshine Coast community. Our mission is “to contribute to the quality of life on the Sunshine Coast by building endowments, making meaningful grants and inspiring community leadership.”

This 2019 Vital Brief celebrates 10 years of Vital Signs reporting. The Vital Signs program advances the Foundation’s mission by inspiring community leadership, informing local governments, service providers, and donors about issues that matter in the community and helping the Foundation to make appropriate and strategic granting decisions.

Over the last 10 years, the Foundation has published a variety of Vital publications. The full Vital Signs reports published in 2009, 2011 and 2014 present a wide-ranging snapshot of the Sunshine Coast, largely through statistical information. Other

publications have focused on particular community issues in more depth.

This Vital Brief follows much the same methodology and format as the full Vital Signs Reports. The Foundation met with community experts to obtain an overview of the community’s challenges and successes in various areas. The backbone of the report is statistical information the Foundation obtained from publicly available sources and from community

organizations. Thank you to all those who contributed their time and expertise to assist the Foundation in preparing this Vital Brief.

We have strived in this report both to update key indicators we have reported over the last 10 years and to incorporate relevant new indicators. This year’s report highlights that many of the past trends continue. The Coast’s aging population continues to be a central concern. BC Stats predicts that, by 2029, there will be fewer people of traditional working age living on the Coast than children

and seniors. This has serious potential implications for many aspects of our life, including economic vitality, housing, health care, transportation, and accessibility.

The Foundation recognizes that statistical data alone has practical limitations. Some of the issues described by community experts cannot be well represented through statistics, either because statistics are not publicly available or because the complexities of the issues lead to a risk that the available statistics will be misleading. For these reasons, this Vital Brief does not address serious community issues such as homelessness, mental health, the opioid crisis and the availability of doctors. Statistical information about the lack of affordable housing is included; however, these statistics do not describe the negative effect this challenge is having on our community.

Notwithstanding the constraints of this Brief, the Foundation believes that it provides important information for the community, the Foundation and our donors. We hope you find it useful.

Photo by Sunshine Coast Photography



ISSUE AREAS / INDICATORS

OUR COMMUNITY



There has been steady population growth over the last 10 years, particularly for those aged 55 and older. There has also been solid growth among 25 – 34 year olds. It is projected that the ratio of working age to non-working age Coasters will continue to decline.

Population

In 2016, there were 29,970 people living on the Coast, up 4.7% from 2011 and 7.8% from 2006. The overall rate of growth was slower than in BC. However, the Coast’s population over 55 grew faster than in BC, while the population below 50 grew more slowly.

The median age has continued to rise

dramatically, from 48.5 in 2006 to 51.6 in 2011 and 55 in 2016 (43 in BC). The most significant increase since 2008 has been among 65–74 year olds while the most significant decrease has been among 45–54 year olds.

Projected Population changes

According to BC Stats projections, the Coast’s population will increase by 11.5% from 2019 to 2029. However, the 80 and older population will almost double. By 2029 there will be more children and seniors than working age adults (15–64).

Diversity

The Sunshine Coast population is not diversifying nearly as quickly as in BC as a whole. The percentage of immigrants increased slightly from 17% in 2006 to 19% in 2016 (28% for BC in 2016). Compared to BC as a whole, more Sunshine Coast

Projected Dependency Ratio

Number of children (0–14) and seniors (65 plus) for every 100 working age adults (15–64)



immigrants arrived prior to 1981, before they were age 24 and from the Americas or Europe. The percentage of visible minorities in 2016 (7%) was higher than in 2006 (4.6%) but still substantially lower than in BC as a whole (30%). The percentage of residents who do not speak English or French remains tiny (.3% in SCRD; 3.3% in BC).

Age Bands

Year	2008		2013		2018	
0 – 14	3897	13.71%	3450	11.54%	3372	10.54%
15 – 24	2930	10.30%	3007	10.06%	2537	7.93%
25 – 34	2027	7.13%	2480	8.29%	2931	9.16%
35 – 44	3240	11.39%	3019	10.10%	3388	10.59%
45 – 54	5047	17.75%	4548	15.21%	4018	12.56%
55 – 64	5244	18.44%	5857	19.59%	6187	19.34%
65 – 74	3256	11.45%	4409	14.75%	6012	18.79%
75 – 90+	2793	9.82%	3131	10.47%	3551	11.10%
Total	28434		29901		31996	

Photo by Sunshine Coast Photography

ENVIRONMENT

 **Potable water continues to be a significant environmental challenge.**

Waste Diversion Rate

The ratio of material diverted from the landfill to total waste has fluctuated between 53% and 56% since 2012. In 2018, Coast residents disposed of an average of 403 kg of waste each, less than in the three prior years, but significantly above the target of 279 kg.

Water Use

Per capita water use fluctuates but has generally been less since 2011 than it was from 2003 to 2011. The 2018 water use of 503 liters per person per day was roughly equal to the lowest annual per capita water use since 2003.

Methods of Commuting

75% of commuters drove to work in 2016, down from 79% in 2006. The percentage of commuters who took public transit doubled from 2006 (3%) to 2016 (6.5%) but was half of the BC rate.



Every drop counts!

Photo by Shutterstock



The Sunshine Coast remains a safe place to live.

SAFETY

 **The Sunshine Coast continues to be a safe place to live. Crime rates remain low. Mental health related files are a significant portion of RCMP files.**

Crime Rate

The crime rate on the Sunshine Coast continued to decline and to be significantly lower than in BC as a whole.

Even with the growing population, there was a decline in the number of incidents of most types of crime

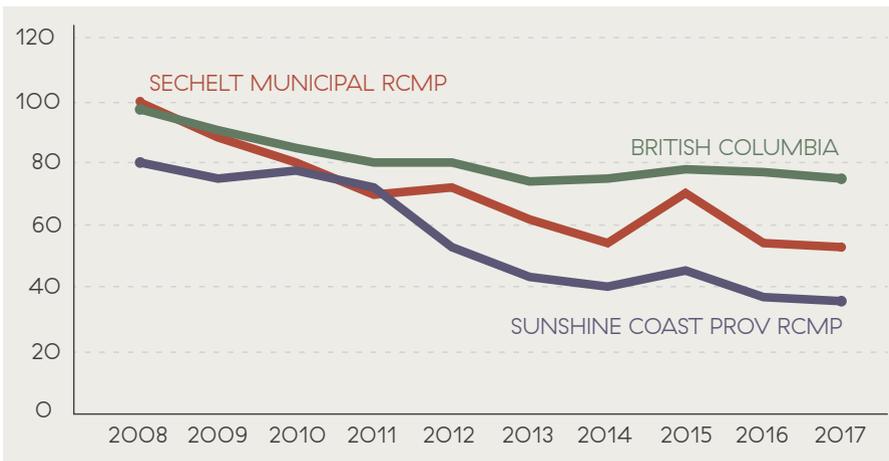
from 2009–2011 to 2015–2018. The numbers of spousal assaults, fatal collisions and frauds increased during that time, while the numbers of robberies and homicides were about the same.

The RCMP reported, on average, 557 mental health files per year from 2015 to 2018.

Yew Transition House

Yew Transition House for women and children continues to operate at full capacity. Its call volume has increased steadily since 2011.

Crime Rate per 1000 People



Calls to Yew Transition House

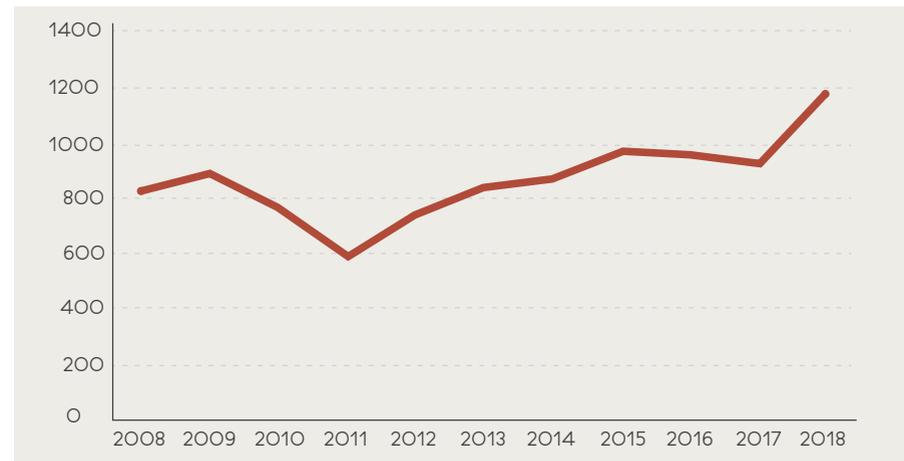


Photo by Shutterstock



Among Sunshine Coast high school students alcohol is most prevalent.

YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE

 **In a survey of SD 46 high school students in 2018, more youth reported having tried alcohol (56%) than marijuana (37%) or smoking (22%). Among those youth, the most common age of first use was 13 to 15.**

There has been a dramatic switch away from traditional forms of smoking towards vaping. 35% of smokers reported using vape pens/sticks with nicotine in the last month and 22% reported using vape pens/

sticks without nicotine. Only 8% reported smoking cigarettes (36% in 2013), 2% reported using cigars (21% in 2013) and 2% reported using chewing tobacco (22% in 2013).

Far more of those who had consumed alcohol on the previous Saturday night in 2018 had had liquor (64%) and coolers (48%) than beer (28%) or wine (8%). 6% of students reported having an alcohol or drug addiction (3% in 2013).

ECONOMIC HEALTH



The lack of affordable housing and childcare present challenges for workers and employers. Arts and culture remains a strong sector of the economy, although a decline in volunteer leadership is affecting legacy programs and events.

Household Income

The median total household income in 2015 was \$60,279, a 6% increase from 2005 but substantially less than the 12% increase in BC during that time. Median income dropped from the 12th worst to the 9th worst among BC's 29 regional districts.

Photo by Sunshine Coast Photography



Art Crawl revenues have increased 14-fold over the past nine years.

Work Activity

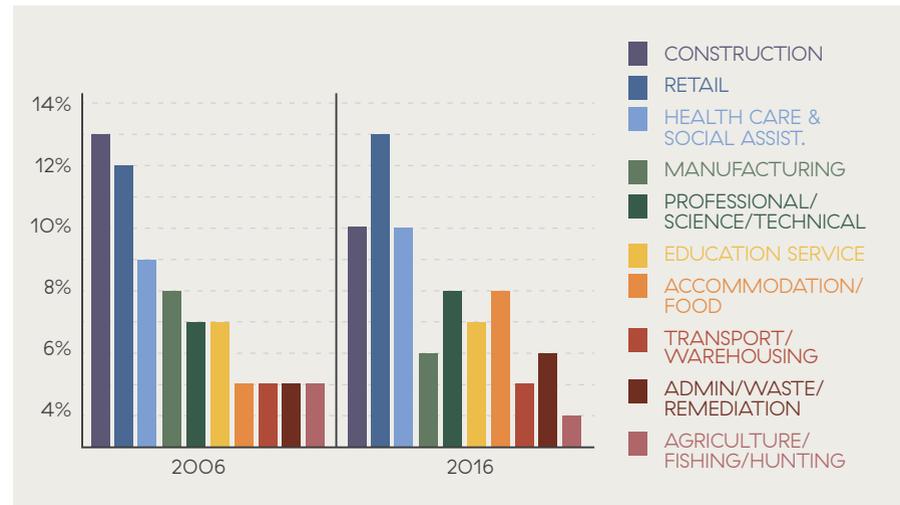
In 2016, fewer Coasters worked (61%) than British Columbians as a whole (67%) and fewer worked full year, full time (23% on Sunshine Coast; 31% in BC).

In 2016, 25% of Sunshine Coast workers were self-employed, compared to 14% in BC, similar to the 2006 rates.

Off Coast Travel to or from Work

In 2016, 7,545 Coast residents reported that their usual place of work was on the Coast. Other Coast residents worked in the GVRD (890 people), Capital RD (35 people), Nanaimo RD (30 people) and Squamish-Lillooet RD (25 people)

Top Employing Industries



and in other provinces or territories (45 people). Conversely, 265 people whose usual place of work was on the Coast lived in the GVRD, 40 lived in Nanaimo RD and 40 lived in the Powell River RD.

Childcare

The availability of affordable childcare is a challenge for working parents. In a survey of 9 local childcare providers in 2019, the only availability was a few spots in an out of school program at one school-aged daycare. Seven of the providers maintain waitlists of between 15 and 70 kids.

Economic Impact of Arts and Culture

A much higher percentage of workers

(4.8%) in the Sunshine Coast than in BC (2.9%) or Canada (2.2%) work in arts and culture. The percentage of Coast workers who worked in arts, culture, recreation and sport increased slightly from 2006 (5.1%) to 2016 (5.8%).

Revenue from the Arts Crawl has increased dramatically in its first nine years, from \$30,000 in 2010 to \$440,000 in 2018.

Top Employing Industries

Retail trade has replaced construction as the industry with the most employees. Retail trade employed 13% of employees (12% in 2006), while construction employed 10% (13% in 2006).

HOUSING



The lack of affordable housing remains a very significant issue.

Benchmark Price

The MLS Benchmark Price for Sunshine Coast houses broke \$400,000 in early 2017, reached \$628,000 in June 2018 and declined to \$599,100 by June 2019. Since 2007, it has been lower than, and has increased more slowly than, any other area of the Lower Mainland. In June 2019, it was about half of the Lower Mainland average of \$1,223,000.

Average Value of Owned Dwelling

The average value of an owned dwelling increased from \$443,057 in 2006 to \$578,406 in 2016, a 30% increase (72% in BC).

Affordability

In 2016, 27% of Sunshine Coast

households spent at least 30% of their income on housing, an indication of unaffordability. Unaffordability is higher for renters, 52% of whom spent more than 30% of their income on housing in 2016 (46% in 2006). The overall rate in 2016 was about the same as for BC (28%), but the BC rate for renters was less (43%).

The median monthly shelter cost for rented dwellings increased from \$735 in 2006 to \$1001 in 2016. This is very close to BC's median (\$752 in 2006 and \$1036 in 2016).

The rate of homeowners who have a mortgage in 2016 was less on the Coast (48%) than in BC (59%). This

is likely a reason that the median monthly shelter cost for owned dwellings on the Coast (\$711) in 2016 was substantially less than in BC (\$1149).

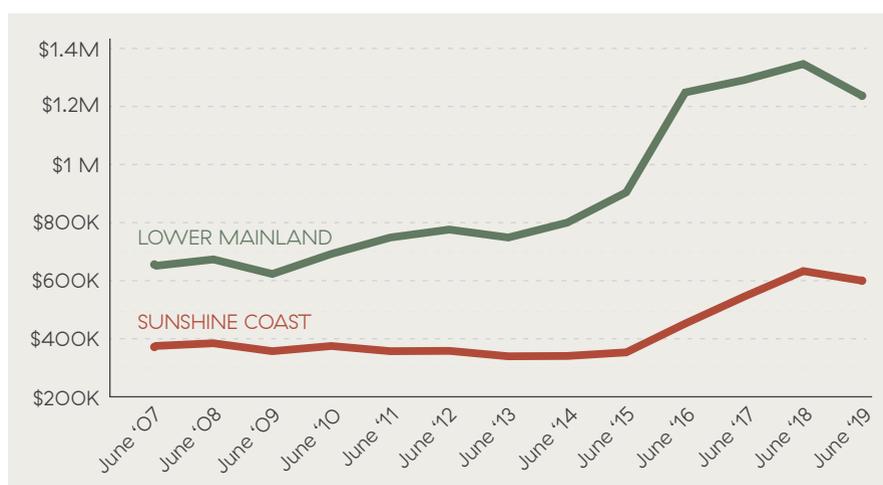
Housing Stock

There was been little change between 2006 and 2016 in the Coast's percentage of single detached homes or dwellings occupied by the usual residents. In 2016, 80% of dwellings were single detached homes (81% in 2006), substantially more than the provincial rate (44% in 2016). The rate of dwellings occupied by the usual residents on the Coast was 81%, compared to 80% in 2006 and 91% in BC in 2016.

Own v. Rent

A higher percentage of Sunshine Coasters owned rather than rented their homes (78%) than in BC (68%) in 2016.

MLS Benchmark Prices



LEARNING



The school district continues to perform solidly. Library use is strong.

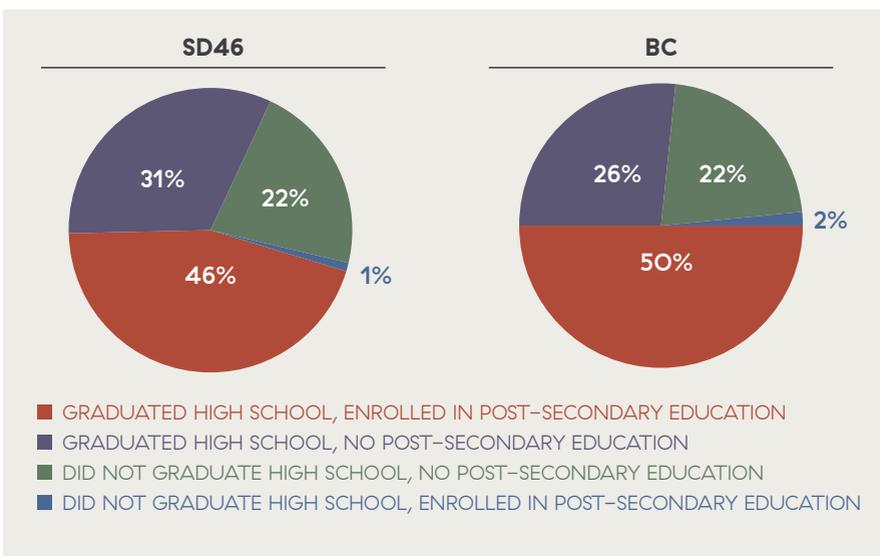
High School Graduation

SD46's six year completion high school graduation rate fluctuates but has increased from 76% in 2008/2009 to 83% in 2017/2018. In 7 of those years, SD46's rate was at least 2% below BC's rate. During the same period, however, the rate for SD46's aboriginal students increased from 47% to 83%, matching the rate for all students in SD46 and 13% better than the rate for aboriginal students in BC.

Library Use

Library use remains strong. In 2017, the Gibsons and Sechelt libraries ranked 17th and 26th respectively among 71 public libraries in BC for total visits per

Transition to Post Secondary – Coast/BC Comparison



capita (14 in Gibsons and 11 in Sechelt) and 22nd and 18th respectively for in person visits per hour open (45 in Gibsons and 52 in Sechelt).

Early Development Indicators

In 2013–2016, 36% of preschool kids in SD46 were considered vulnerable to

school readiness (32% in BC). This was better than 2011 – 2013 (38%) but worse than 2009–2011 (30%).

Photo by Sunshine Coast Photography



“Job readiness truly starts at home as basic work ethics instilled by the parents, through life skills taught at school, are then reinforced by us at our business.”

Bob Hoy – IGA Gibsons

Photo by Sunshine Coast Photography



“We are experiencing a severe shortage of safe, affordable and dignified housing that is paramount to the health and wellbeing of communities.”

Catherine Leach Executive Director – SC Community Services

LOW INCOME



Poverty is an enduring problem which affects the wellbeing of the Coast and its residents.

Prevalence of Low Income

A lower percentage of Coast residents (7.4%) were living with low income than in BC (11%) in 2015, when assessed according to the low income cut off—after tax metric (LICO–AT). This was true for children (8.6% on Coast; 12.1% in BC), working age

adults (9.8% on Coast; 12% in BC) and seniors (2.1% on Coast; 6% in BC).

The overall percentage of Coast residents with low income on the LICO–AT scale decreased from 2005 (7.8%) to 2015 (7.4%). However, the percentage of children in low income increased from 7.2% to 8.6% and the percentage of seniors in low income increased from 1.3% to 2.1%. The percentage of working age adults with low income decreased from 10% to 9.8%.

Food Bank Use

The number of households registered

at the Sunshine Coast Food Bank increased from 450 in 2009 to 770 in 2018. During the same time, the number of individuals attending each month increased from 900 to 1200. As of July 2019, approximately 70 of the Food Bank's clients were women over 55.

Cost of Food

The cost per bag of food (donated and purchased) at the Sunshine Coast Food Bank has increased from \$22 in 2009 to \$35.50 in 2018.

THE VITAL SIGNS TEAM

Don Basham | Catharine Esson
Janet Crowe | Vicki Dobbyn

For all 10 years of Vital Signs reports go to...
www.sccfoundation.com

Sunshine Coast Community Foundation appreciates the generous support of the **Coast Reporter**.

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“Coasters demonstrate a strong sense of community, belonging and pride in where we live” – Vital Signs 2016

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