To build a healthy, vibrant community where everyone belongs – that is the purpose of Calgary Foundation. It is a purpose that many organizations serving community share, and each of us make a uniquely different contribution to achieve that purpose.

At Calgary Foundation, our contribution is to inspire and facilitate philanthropy, support the charitable sector, and build a permanent endowment to address current and future needs of people in our community.

Knowledge of community is fundamental to our work, and that knowledge has greatest value when it is shared broadly. Calgary’s Vital Signs is one way we deepen our knowledge of community. This annual quality of life report presents both citizen perceptions and current local research. Vital Signs informs our work in community building. We appreciate the 2,262 citizens who participated and spoke out. To our surprise and delight, 77% were first time participants.

We are pleased to share this report with you. It may give you a new understanding of your community. If you work in the charitable/public sector it may inform your work as it does ours. It may inspire you to get involved in community building in a new way. It may inspire you to ask: how can I contribute to creating a community where everyone belongs.

Calgary’s Vital Signs

2,262 citizens took the survey – 77% were first time participants.

This report presents both citizen perceptions and current local research.

Methodology
See page 19 to learn how our survey was conducted.

In the spirit of reconciliation, Calgary Foundation acknowledges that we live, work and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani) the Tsuut’ina, the Stoney Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3) and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

In an effort to build a stronger connection between Tsuut’ina Nation and Calgary, Hal Eagletail spoke to a crowd gathered at the Tsuut’ina Nation Junior/Senior High School during a dinner series called For Our Children (Nihisgaka Ogha).
Living Standards: There is enough for all.

Pathway out of poverty

Raul Tapia always thought of himself as somebody who never finished anything. After dropping out of high school, Raul led a life of addiction, failed relationships and fatherhood at 20. Wanting to be a better role model for his sons, he enrolled in the Never Too Late program to complete his GED courses. After failing his first test, Raul was full of self-doubt, but he stuck with the program, and passed the courses he required to receive his high school diploma. Reflecting on his past, Raul says that he shouldn’t even be alive. But now, with a renewed lease on life, he has the self-confidence to believe he can achieve his dreams of a better life, for himself and his children.
Looking inward to look forward

After being tasked with painting a mask to represent her inner-self, Vinnie Chan was unsure of what to do – she had never painted before – but she was quickly drawn to a memory of her late mother. With her last words, Chan’s mother said that she would be back to look after her daughter. Ever since, Chan has seen a white butterfly appear at her window on her birthday. Inside her mask, Chan included images of butterflies to remember this. Created at a workshop offered by WP Puppet Theatre Society, Chan still keeps her mask on her writing table at home. She says that if the weather is rough outside, she just needs to look at her mask and remember the warmth of her mother being with her.

As a member of the Carya-Active Chinese Seniors Cultural Group, Vinnie Chan works on the mask she created at VIEW from the Inside: Courage Journey, a workshop offered by WP Puppet Theatre Society to support mental wellness through self-reflection.

Wellness: All Calgarians achieve optimal health and well-being.

Perceptions: Statistics based on Vital Signs survey respondents

Remaining percentage value reflects a respondent rating of average.

Alberta Fentanyl-Related Deaths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alberta Adult Prison Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calgary Sexual Offences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alberta Medically Assisted Deaths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alberta Suicide Deaths

Average age of a person obtaining a medically assisted death in Calgary:

70

Overweight/Obesity Rates Across Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Overweight (%)</th>
<th>Obese (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight (BMI 25-29.9)</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese (BMI 30 or higher)</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overweight or Obese Children and Youth in Alberta:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Building bridges for our children

Despite being neighbours, there has been a divide between Tsuut’ina Nation and the city of Calgary for decades. In an effort to bridge that metaphorical gap, Tsuut’ina Chief Lee Crowchild decided to invite his neighbours over to share a meal and enjoy some conversation. The dinner series, called Nihisgaka Ogha: For our Children, brought together elders, artists, politicians and community leaders with the goal of creating a better future “for our children.” The entrance was complete with ceremonial smudging, and the neighbours were greeted with art, poetry and discussion about how to create a better future for the next generation. The location is already booked for next year’s celebration.

Following a dinner at Tsuut’ina Nation, the party gathers outside for a traditional ceremony full of singing, drumming and sprinkling of tobacco to honour the land.
Art offers freedom

Every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon for the past ten years, Mark Brickman has joined his colleagues at the Indefinite Arts Centre to unleash his passion for painting, pottery and fibre artwork. While listening to his favourite music, like the soundtrack from the James Bond movie, Live and Let Die, Mark enjoys the freedom of artistic expression that not only advances his development as an artist, but also provides opportunities to showcase his creative abilities. In addition to painting gifts for his family, Mark’s work has been featured in a solo show, in a calendar produced by the Centre, and three of his paintings are on display in the offices of Ups and Downs: Calgary’s Down Syndrome Association.

Mark Brickman, artist at the Indefinite Arts Centre.

Perceptions:
Statistics based on Vital Signs survey respondents

Excellent/good or agree
Below average/poor or disagree

Remaining percentage value reflects a respondent rating of average.

Art offers freedom

Everyone lives a creative life.
Environment: The air we breathe, the water we drink, the land we enjoy sustains us all, now and in the future.

Putting down roots

Back in her home country of Bhutan, Nar Mahat was a farmer by trade. However, when conflict broke out in the area in the 90s, she and her family fled the danger as refugees to Nepal. After arriving to begin a new life in Canada seven years ago, she enrolled in classes at the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society to learn English. Since last summer, she’s gone back to her roots in the garden as a member of the GROW project (Gardens by Refugees and Other Newcomers Welcomed) – planting and pruning in a garden lush with rhubarb, peppers, peas and tomatoes. Smiling, she said it makes her happy to work alongside other students and has since started her own garden at home.

Nar Mahat tends to the community garden behind the offices of Calgary Immigrant Educational Society as a part of their GROW educational program that builds a sense of belonging for newcomers.

Perceptions:

**Environment:**

- The air we breathe, the water we drink, the land we enjoy sustains us all, now and in the future.

- **Statistics based on Vital Signs survey respondents**
  - Excellent/good: 74%
  - Slight problem: 6%
  - Moderate problem: 10%
  - Severe problem: 5%

- Remaining percentage value reflects a respondent rating of average.

**Reality:**

- Research based on the most current data available

**Calgary Water Withdrawals**

- **Calgary Recycling Contamination Rates**
  - 2-5% of materials thrown into GREEN carts aren’t suitable for composting.
  - 12-15% of materials thrown into BLUE carts aren’t suitable for recycling.

**Calgary Landfill Waste**

- **Calgary Recycling Contamination Rates**
  - 2-5% of materials thrown into GREEN carts aren’t suitable for composting.
  - 12-15% of materials thrown into BLUE carts aren’t suitable for recycling.

**2016 Concentrations of Ozone**

- Calgary showed a decrease in ground level ozone and fine particulate matter where we are lower than Toronto and Montreal but not as low as Vancouver.

**Meteosat**

- Particulate matter episodes in Calgary are mainly influenced by forest fire smoke in the summertime. It is also influenced by vehicle and industrial emissions during stagnant wind conditions in the wintertime.

**2016 Concentrations of Fine Particulate Matter**

- Calgary showed a decrease in ground level ozone and fine particulate matter where we are lower than Toronto and Montreal but not as low as Vancouver.

**NOTE:** Particulate matter episodes in Calgary are mainly influenced by forest fire smoke in the summertime. It is also influenced by vehicle and industrial emissions during stagnant wind conditions in the wintertime.

**Dogs to Person Ratio**

- Licensed Dogs
  - 1 in 12 (2003 benchmark)
  - 1 in 14
  - 1 in 30
  - 1 in 32
  - 1 in 50

- Number of off-leash areas in Calgary
  - 150 (2017)
Here’s what they had to say about their quality of life…

2,262 citizens shared their opinions by taking the Vital Signs survey. The good news is that 3 out of 4 citizens gave a favourable rating to their quality of life and there’s relatively few Calgarians (7%) who rated their quality of life as below average or poor.

TOP ISSUE Transportation
The number of downtown bike commuters has almost doubled since 2010, to 17,468 annually. Even in the cold winter months, 30% of cyclists continue to ride Calgary’s 290 km of on-street bikeways and 550 km of multi-use pathways.

CAR & TRANSIT
Although 62% of Calgarians rate their ability to get around in a car as good, attitudes turn negative with 28% rating public transit as below average or poor.

However, Calgarians ranked improved public transportation and more affordable housing as the top two issues that need addressing to make Calgary an even better place to live.

TOP ISSUE to improve quality of life in Calgary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP ISSUE</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transit/public transportation</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council listen to citizens</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living/make it more affordable</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better neighbourhood planning</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better infrastructure/roads</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less road congestion/better traffic control</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job creation</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity/less racism</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse economy/better economy</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike paths/walking paths</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower taxes</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOP ISSUE Housing
With a 6.7% vacancy rate in apartment rentals, and a 24% decline in condo sales over the last 10 years, data indicates availability of housing isn’t the issue, it’s the affordability of housing options in Calgary which currently has the third highest rental rates in Canada, behind the high priced markets of Vancouver and Toronto.

Community Connectedness
There is huge value in creating a caring, connected community. Here’s why… Those with a strong sense of purpose in life are more likely to be an active volunteer, a regular donor to charity, have a strong sense of belonging to their community and have a high rating for their quality of life in Calgary.

TOP ISSUE Housing

| Rented availability of affordable rentals as below average or poor | 39% |
| Rented availability of affordable home ownership as below average or poor | 38% |
| Rented availability of affordable rentals as average or better | 71% |
| Rented availability of affordable home ownership as average or better | 41% |
| Rented availability of affordable rentals as below average or poor | 18% |

Community Connectedness

| Rated housing affordability as below average or poor | 39% |
| Rated housing affordability as average or better | 38% |
| Rated housing affordability as below average or poor | 71% |
| Rated housing affordability as average or better | 41% |
| Rated housing affordability as below average or poor | 18% |

Sense of Belonging

| Rated their quality of life as below average or poor | 75% |
| Rated their quality of life as average or better | 25% |
| Rated their quality of life as below average or poor | 23% |
| Rated their quality of life as excellent | 52% |

Calgarians rated affordable housing (39%), followed by improved public transit (38%), affordable home ownership (71%), and better road congestion control (41%).

Helpful in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private vehicle</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Public transit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently (every day or almost every day)</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally (a few times a week)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely (a few times a month or less)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never (have not used in past year)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Speak Out: What would make Calgary an even better place to live?

A selection of citizen comments from the 2018 Vital Signs survey.

The Arts are only available in certain areas of the city. I live in the suburbs and don’t find it accessible.

If politicians would come to the realization that taxpayers are not an endless source of income for their vanity projects, Canada contributes less than 2% of the world’s carbon, so how is a carbon levy supposed to have any real impact on the world?

I would bike everywhere if I could, but the City is not designed for this.

Anything that makes the city a walk-able/cycle-able space would make it a better place to live.

Eliminate dependency on coal generated electricity.

A more diverse, robust economy that wasn’t as dependent on one industry.

Ban plastic bags, plastic that is not recyclable and make all take out places use recyclable products.

Events to actually learn more about aboriginal or other cultures and their belief systems and practices.

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Events to actually learn more about aboriginal or other cultures and their belief systems and practices.

Actual engagement with communities regarding community development/projects rather than telling us what’s going to happen & when.

Having more diversity in our neighbourhoods (in terms of cultures, housing types, demographics, etc.).

More access to free or very affordable mental health care in terms of counselling and therapy.

An education system that could support children of different learning needs.

As a senior, I find it difficult to find more advanced educational opportunities.

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More opportunities for low income Calgarians to participate in activities.

Do not give up on public art.

Stop spending taxpayer money on useless public art.

Accepting indigenous peoples history and role in our society without pandering or granting them special rights.

Educate young generations to understand multiculturalism in Canada.

Make housing something that does not require two incomes to afford a healthy quality of life.

More preventative mental health resources.

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Vital Signs® is a national program led by community foundations and coordinated by Community Foundations of Canada that leverages local knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities and supports action towards improving our quality of life.

calgaryfoundation.org/vitalsigns

2018 Calgary’s Vital Signs Report
Project management: Calgary Foundation communications team
Research and survey: NRG Research Group
Creative: Juice
Photography: Jennifer Friesen

calgaryvitalsigns.ca

Survey Respondent Demographics

2018 Calgary’s Vital Signs

Survey Respondent Demographics

2017 – 2018 Calgary Foundation

To build a healthy, vibrant community where everyone belongs… Calgary Foundation inspires philanthropy, supports the charitable sector, and builds a permanent endowment to address the current and future needs of people in our community.
calgaryfoundation.org

Survey Methodology

Two online surveys were conducted to validate the accuracy of the results:

- **Online Survey**: 1,262 citizens through the assistance of numerous community partners, Calgary Foundation initiated an extensive engagement process that invited citizens to take Calgary’s Vital Signs Survey.
- **Panel Survey**: NRG Research Group randomly selected citizens from a pool of 20,000 and used quotas based on age, gender, and quadrant to ensure accurate demographic representation of Calgary’s population.

The comparison of the results revealed no statistically significant differences between the two online survey methodologies. The survey results were combined to form the basis of the 2018 Vital Signs Report.

Margin of Error: +/- 2.06%, 19 times out of 20 based on a probability sample of 2,262 results
Further details on research and sources can be found at [calgaryvitalsigns.ca](http://calgaryvitalsigns.ca)

On our front and back covers: After spending six weeks creating a face mask as part of a puppetry workshop with WP Puppet Theatre Society, Melia Lam speaks through her mask to her peers with the Carya-Active Chinese Seniors Cultural Group.