

ABBOTSFORD'S

# VitalSigns

## Executive Summary

### **How do people in Abbotsford feel about their community?**

Abbotsford Community Foundation, like community foundations across BC, wants to build a stronger community and learning about the experiences and priorities of the people who live here helps guide our work.

Our report shows that Abbotsford is a great place to call home but it has challenges to overcome.

### **We feel good about where we live**

In Abbotsford and across the province the research showed we feel positive most of the time and share a sense of leading meaningful and purposeful lives. Fraser East communities of Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Mission and Agassiz and Hope, value the natural beauty, enjoy the quality of life, affordability of the cost of living and being close to family and friends.

### **We are concerned about Safety, Housing and Transportation**

In Abbotsford (52%) and Fraser East (50%) Safety was the number one concern compared to all of BC (35%). Housing was the second highest concern and Transportation the third. Housing was the number one concern throughout BC.

### **Solutions for improving Safety**

Abbotsford and Fraser East departed significantly from BC as whole when it came to identifying solutions for improving Safety. Some 47% of respondents ranked Reducing Use of Illegal Drugs as their number one priority compared to only 33% of respondents across BC. Abbotsford and Fraser East also departed from the province in their second priority for improving Safety where 44% in Abbotsford and 39% in Fraser East chose Reducing Levels of Gang Violence compared to only 25% province wide.

### **Solutions for improving Housing**

Among Abbotsford respondents who chose housing as the top issue for our community, improving the affordability of rental housing was their top choice at 44% compared to 27% Fraser East respondents and 46%. Improving affordability of home ownership was a close second for Abbotsford at 43% but it was the top improvement for Fraser East respondents (63%) and also for all of BC (56%). The third improvement was providing housing for the homeless with Abbotsford respondents at 19%, Fraser East 19% and all of BC 16%.

## **Community Connections**

Taking part in community life is important to all of us in BC. We love our local libraries, and community and recreation centres. However when Abbotsford respondents were asked what they had done in their community in the last 12 months “donating to a cause” (73%) was the top response compared to Fraser East (66%) and all of BC (67%). Their second choice was “Visiting local library or community centre” followed by volunteering and helping non family members. In fifth spot for Abbotsford respondents was “Attended faith based service/activity” at 37% compared to BC (22%) and Fraser East (33%).

## **What Would We Do to be More Involved in Our Community**

The top three activities for Abbotsford were: Neighbourhood Project, Volunteer, and Community Meeting. Across the province volunteering was the top activity at 72%. Some 37% of Abbotsford respondents said they don't want to be more involved compared to 22% province wide.

## **Other Areas Where Abbotsford results differed from all of BC**

When Abbotsford respondents were asked if they feel safe walking in their neighbourhoods after dark 68% said “yes” compared to 78% across BC. Their main concern was a violent attack (26%) compared to the province at 19%. Only 64% of Abbotsford respondents thought if they lost their wallet in their neighbourhood it would be returned compared to 70% of all BC respondents. However, when it comes to welcoming new people into their neighbourhood 50% of Abbotsford respondents said newcomers would be welcomed compared to 45% province wide.