

REPORT ON SURVEY RESULTS

What Makes You Stay? Resident Attraction & Retention in New Denver & Area



**Prepared by the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI)
in partnership with the Village of New Denver**

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The overall well-being of a community contributes to the attraction and retention of its residents, and the community's assets and services build a foundation for community and economic development. The Village of New Denver partnered with the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Selkirk College on an asset-based community development research project. This project included a survey of residents in New Denver and area, aiming to gain an understanding of resident satisfaction, factors influencing quality of life, perceptions of community well-being, and interest and ideas for future services and infrastructure. Most survey questions required respondents to choose from a selection of pre-defined answers, but also included qualitative commentary, and some questions were used as inputs for five indices of community well-being.

Survey Participants

There was a good response rate with 261 valid responses, providing a reasonable representation of the community and allowing for estimation and prediction of residents' views across the community as a whole. The majority of survey participants are full-time residents and most have lived in the area for 11 years or more, with over a third for more than 20 years. About half are 55 to 74 years old and about a third are 35 to 54 years old. Two thirds are female and one third are male, with a small percentage identifying as non-binary. The vast majority of survey respondents indicated they are in good health.

Quality of Life

An emphasis of the survey was to assess residents' perceptions of the quality of life in New Denver and area. Participants were asked about their general opinion on quality of life, specific factors that contribute to their quality of life, and if they would recommend the area as a good place to live.

The vast majority of respondents said they are satisfied with the quality of life in the area. Some of the most important factors contributing to quality of life include a clean environment and the natural beauty / scenery, as well as the Slokan Community Health Centre, and the safety of community. Lucerne Elementary Secondary School was also identified as very important.

The vast majority also said they would recommend New Denver and area as a good place to live, citing reasons such as because it is beautiful, quiet, and peaceful, and that there are great opportunities for outdoor recreation in a healthy natural environment. Friendly people and a sense of community were other reasons, along with the small town atmosphere. Those who would not recommend the area said it was because finding employment is too difficult, housing is hard to find, or there is not enough to do. Some also felt that the community is cliquy, and not particularly welcoming. Several people responded saying that it depends on who they are talking to, as it depends on the needs and interests of a particular person or family, and the lifestyle they may be looking for.

Resident Migration

Full-time residents who responded to the survey were asked if they have any intention of moving away and part-time residents were asked if they intend to make the area their primary residence in the future. Those who recently moved to the area were asked about the reasons they chose to make the area their home.

The majority of full-time residents said they do not intend to move away in the next three years. For those who said they do intend to move, most cited moving to a place with more amenities or opportunities, such as larger rural communities or urban centres. Just over 40% of part-time residents said they do not intend to make the area their full-time home, but about 30% do within the next 10 years, and another 30% are not sure. When asked why people moved to the area, the majority said because of the natural beauty, the clean environment, and outdoor recreation opportunities. The small town / rural character was also a highly selected reason.

Community Well-being

This research study included two indices of community well-being: The Community Well-being Index (CWI) and the Change in Community Livability Index (CCLI). Residents were asked a series of questions to gauge how attached and positive they feel about living in New Denver and area and if they think the livability is changing. A 7-point scale was used for both indices.

The Community Well-being Index (CWI) is a measure of the overall “sense of community” a person feels. Most residents selected a value of 4 or higher, with a mean of over 5. The distribution of responses indicates that the majority of residents have a relatively strong sense of community, feeling positive and attached to the place.

The results from the CCLI indicate that a majority of residents also think that the community liveability is generally getting better with a mean of over 4. A community with high livability is more likely to support high levels of well-being for its residents, and attract and retain new residents.

Economic Well-being

While incomes are not necessarily high in the community (61% of households make less than \$60,000 per year), the majority of respondents say they are reasonably comfortable or better. Almost 20% say they are just getting by, and almost 3% say they are either poor or very poor.

The Community Economic Well-being Index (CEWI) is a measure of well-being that investigates the financial capital of a community, again using a series of questions with a 7-point scale. The distribution of responses for this index show that the majority of residents have given values of less than 4, with a mean value of just over 3. This indicates that financial capital and community economic well-being is perceived to be low.

Comparing the CEWI (mean value 3.1) to the CWI (mean value 5.1) illustrates that while the community may be experiencing lower economic well-being, there is still a strong sense of community and a positive perception about living in the community and its future.

Institutional Capital

Institutional capital considers the quality, representativeness, fairness, and inclusiveness of local organizations, such as local government, non-profits, and other agencies, as well as the associated decision making processes.¹ If local institutions and processes enable residents to be heard and listened to, and allow for equitable, inclusive, and transparent decision making, there is considered to be a high level of institutional capital.² Two measures of institutional capital were included in this survey: Having a Say & Being Heard and Equity & Inclusion.

The mean value for the Having a Say & Being Heard index is 4.3, indicating that the majority feel there are reasonably adequate opportunities to have a say and feel listened to; although many did rate this measure

lower. There does not appear to be a difference in perception between full-time and part-time residents, or between residents who live within the Village or outside the Village for this measure.

The mean value for the Equity & Inclusion index is lower at 3.3, showing that residents believe there are lower levels of equity and inclusion in the community. When comparing full-time and part-time residents, as well as those who live within the Village or outside, there does not appear to be a difference in perception.

The difference in values between the Having a Say & Being Heard index (4.3) and the Equity & Inclusion index (3.3) suggests that while residents feel that the governance and decision making processes by formal institutions in the community are generally representative and reasonable, the informal processes may not be as fair or inclusive. There is, overall, room for improvement with respect to institutional capital.

Services & Infrastructure

Survey participants were asked to rate access to a number of services and infrastructure. The majority rated access to general health services, recreational facilities, parks, and trails, arts and cultural experiences and opportunities, and community volunteer/ involvement opportunities all as good or excellent. About half said that access to education is good or excellent. Aged care services, child care, and opportunities for youth, however, received a higher percentage of poor or fair ratings, and two thirds rated access to housing as poor or fair. Public transit, retail shops, and food affordability were other aspects that most people felt access was either poor or fair, with eating establishments seeing the highest percentage for a poor rating. Just over half of respondents said that access to high speed internet is good or excellent, while mobile phone coverage received slightly poorer ratings, as well a higher percentage who were unsure or noted that this did not apply to them.

Survey participants were also asked how satisfied they are with respect to current levels of service delivered by the Village of New Denver. They were asked to identify whether they are satisfied and see no change needed, whether they think the Village should spend more on a service, or less on a service, or were not sure.

For several of the core services, survey respondents said they were satisfied and did not see a change needed, including drinking water quality, garbage collection, recycling depot, fire department, and arbour day collection. With respect to parks and open spaces, most residents expressed they were satisfied. For the buildings owned by the Village, there were mixed responses, except for the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre where the majority said they were satisfied and see no change needed. Over half of respondents said to spend more on Bosun Hall and almost half said to spend more on Knox Hall. There was not a single service listed where residents said they would like to see the Village spend less. Economic development received the highest majority saying the Village should spend more. Several respondents added qualifying or expanding comments and ideas which are included in this report.

Some of the ideas shared were already included with a following survey question asking residents about which services not currently provided should be considered by the municipality. Some of the highest interest is in a rental housing initiative, as well as a downtown public washroom facility. Organics waste diversion/community composting received some of the higher number of responses, followed by a pedestrian bridge, high speed internet, and new recreational facilities. There was less interest in curbside recycling collection, sewer system, municipal transit, and a tourist information centre. Several other ideas were offered. Comments were diverse, with differences in opinion particularly with respect to tourism and economic development.

Future Population

The Village of New Denver has seen a decline in population, with a drop of 6% in the last five years to 473 residents. Regional projections show a continuing decline. With an interest in knowing if residents support population growth, participants were asked what population size they would like to see for the Village within the next 10 years. The vast majority said they would like to see a larger population than it is today, with most saying they would like to see a population of 500 to 800, and some interested in 800 to 1,000 and over 1,000.

Additional Comments

Survey participants were invited to provide additional thoughts and comments related to community well-being and resident attraction and retention in a final open-ended question. Some responses reiterated themes from previous questions, such as the need for job creation and meaningful employment, and the importance of maintaining services, with particular mention of medical and educational services, as well as the need for a restaurant or other places to socialize. Housing was a major theme, with mention of the importance of year-round rental houses, as well creating regulations regarding seasonal home ownership and vacation rental. Many comments stressed attracting full-time residents, instead of an emphasis on tourism or seasonal residency.

Another theme was the need for more youth initiatives in order to retain and attract families and young people. The general care and attractiveness of the community was also noted as being important. While several survey respondents thanked and applauded the local governments, a few expressed they would like to see better communication and more engagement, and that more could be done with respect to community development.

Conclusions

Some broad conclusions can be gleaned from this research to help aid local governments and other organizations in community and economic development planning and action for New Denver and area.

The survey results indicate that a vast majority of residents are generally satisfied with the quality of life in the area, plan to stay, would recommend it to others, and see a positive future for the community. Maintaining existing assets and services is very important, and there is interest in expanding on amenities to ensure the area stays viable and can attract new people.

Most residents support modest population growth, and suggest that more resources be spent on economic development initiatives. Job creation is important, however a focus on tourism does not appear to be generally supported. Concerns relate to housing availability and affordability with a potential increase in vacation properties. There is a fear of losing the small town character and strong sense of community that has attracted and retained many of the current residents. A preference for attracting full-time residents was evident in the survey results.

While the area may be currently experiencing lower economic well-being, there is a positive perception about quality of life and community livability into the future. The area has many strengths, including its natural beauty, peaceful atmosphere, and community spirit. Building on the community's strengths and assets is at the foundation of an asset-based community development approach. Through the process, it is important to ensure that a diversity of residents is included, with opportunities to contribute to the discussion and decisions that will shape their community's future.

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Introduction

The Village of New Denver provides a suite of services and plays an integral role in managing important community assets, both for residents within the municipal boundaries, as well as residents of Silverton and the surrounding rural area. Community services and assets are part of the foundation for community and economic development, and the overall well-being of a community assists in attracting and retaining residents. The Village of New Denver applied and was selected to participate in the [Asset-Based Rural Development Applied Research Project](#) in partnership with the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Selkirk College. Through a resident survey, the research focus was to gain an understanding of current resident satisfaction, factors influencing quality of life, perceptions of community well-being, and interest and ideas for future services and infrastructure for New Denver and area.

Study Area

The Village of New Denver is a small municipality of just under 500 residents, and is fully serviced including a kindergarten to grade 12 public school, health care centre, RCMP station, post office, liquor store, pharmacy, credit union, insurance agency, gas stations, grocery stores, and more. New Denver acts as a hub for the North Slocan region. **Figure 1** shows the study area for this research project which includes New Denver, Silverton, and the northern portion of the Regional District of Central Kootenay Electoral Area H (from just south of Summit Lake to just north of Slocan, including Red Mountain Road, Sandon, Rosebery, and Hills). Full-time and part-time residents of the North Slocan were invited to participate in the research.



Figure 1: Map of New Denver & Area

Methodology

The primary tool for this research was a survey. The survey was designed in collaboration with staff of the Village of New Denver and RDI, with feedback and testing by local government staff and members of the Council of the Village of New Denver. The research tool was reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee at Selkirk College. Most questions required respondents to choose from a selection of pre-defined answers, but also included qualitative commentary (see Appendix A for questionnaire). Responses to three questions were used as inputs for five indices of community well-being. These indices are similar to those included in the RDI's [State of the Basin: Subjective Well-Being report](#), informed and inspired by the Organisation for Economic Co-

operation and Development's (OECD) Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Wellbeing³ and a regional well-being survey conducted by the University of Canberra⁴ in Australia. For each index of well-being, descriptive statistics and histograms are provided. A histogram is a graphical representation of the distribution of numerical data and estimates the probability distribution of a particular value – in this case, the sample of residents surveyed is used to estimate the entire New Denver and area population. Qualitative responses were analyzed using grounded theory to identify common themes and key insights.

Part-time and full-time residents of all ages from across the North Slokan region were invited to complete the 15 to 20-minute online survey (hardcopies were also available). Survey participation was solicited via local communications channels including the Valley Voice Newspaper through earned and paid media, the 358-Exchange Newsletter, and the New Denver & Area Community Bulletin Board on Facebook. Word of mouth played a role in soliciting respondents, as well as earned media in print and radio across the West Kootenay.

A total of 272 people responded to the survey; however, 11 did not select 'yes' to the Informed Consent Form, therefore there were **261 valid responses**. Based on the 2016 Census, New Denver's population is 473 and Silverton's is 195. Census data is only provided for the entire Electoral Area H which is 4,667 for 2016. The vast majority of residents in Area H live south of Slokan, outside the study area. According to a 2007 land use planning report⁵, the Regional District of Central Kootenay estimates Electoral Area H North to be 656 residents based on BC Assessment Data. This provides an approximation of 1,324 residents for New Denver and Area, which means about 20% of the population responded to the survey. Using a confidence level of 95%, the confidence interval is $\pm 5.4\%$, meaning that, 95% of the time, there is a margin of error of $\pm 5.4\%$ for any of the results detailed below in estimating area residents' responses.

For a few questions, comparison is included with the 2007 land use planning survey commissioned by the Village of New Denver. There were 131 respondents to the 2007 survey, with the majority (70%) residing within the Village of New Denver and about one quarter being from "distant places" (part-time residents).

For some of the well-being indices included in this research study, comparisons to the regional well-being research conducted by the RDI in 2016 (report forthcoming) are provided. Respondents were part of a statistically significant random sample of 400 residents across the entire Columbia Basin-Boundary region.

Participant Profile

Place of Residence

Survey participants were asked where they live (their primary residence) and had the choice of:

- 1) Within the Village of New Denver,
- 2) Within the Village of Silverton,
- 3) Area H North (including Hills, Red Mt. Road, Denver Siding, and other surrounding rural areas), or
- 4) In another more distant place (I'm a part-time resident of the area).

Figure 2 shows the percentage of respondents for each of these categories, with 51% of all respondents living within the Village of New Denver, 8% within the Village of Silverton, 27% in Area H North, and 14% having their primary residence not within the area, being part-time residents.

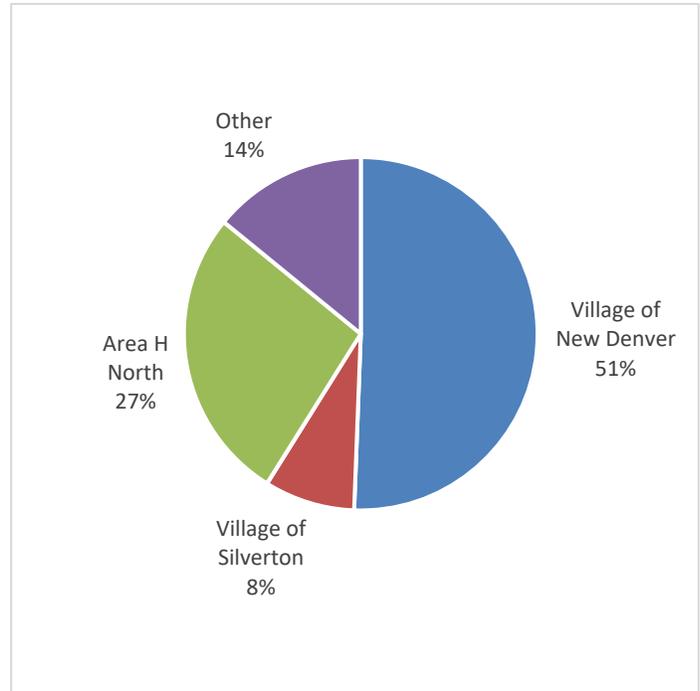


Figure 2: Primary residence of survey participants (n = 241)

Length of Residence

Survey participants were asked for how many years they have lived in the New Denver area, including indicating for how long they have lived as part-time and full-time residents. As shown in **Figure 3**, most respondents (62.7%) have lived in the area for 11 years or more, and over a third (36.4%) for more than 20 years. The vast majority of these are full-time residents. Another 21.9% have lived in the area for 6 to 10 years, and again, are mostly full-time residents. A much smaller portion (5.7%) have lived in the area for less than one year.

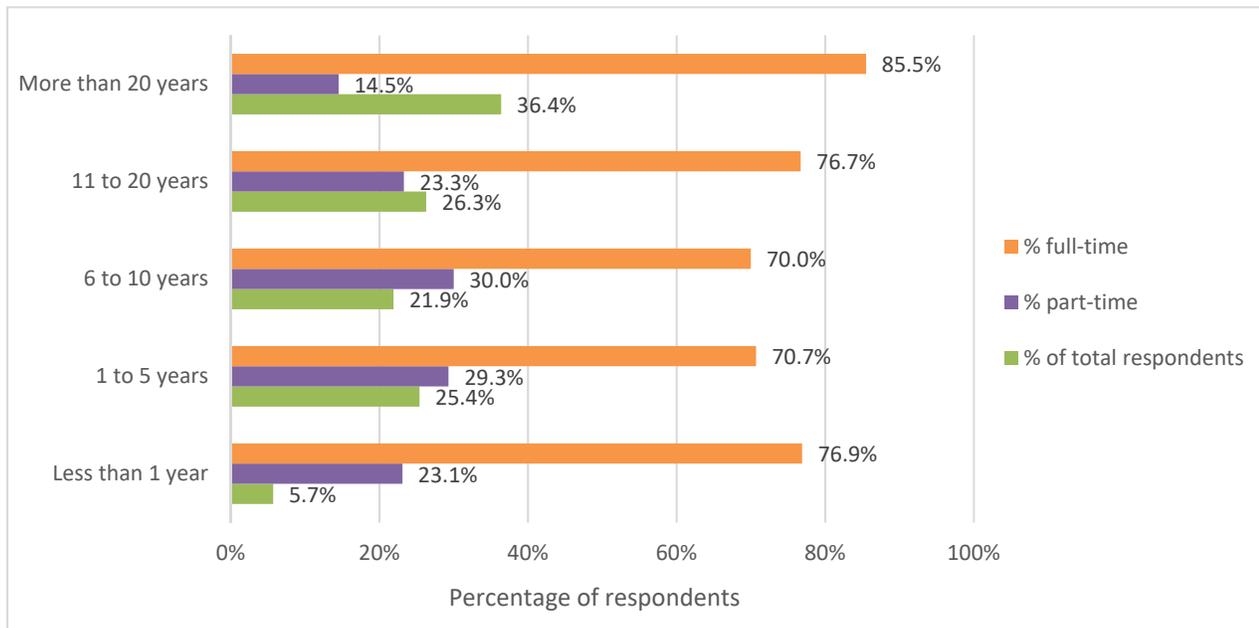


Figure 3: Length of residence of survey participants (n = 228)

Age & Gender

As shown in **Figure 4**, about half (52.9%) of survey respondents are 55 to 74 years of age, almost equally split between the categories of 55 to 64 and 65 to 74 years of age. 15.1% are 45 to 54 years old and 16.4% are 35 to 44. Only 5.5% of respondents are under the age of 19, and similarly, over the age of 75.

When asked what gender respondents identify with, 61.4% said female, 36.4% said male, and 2.1% identified as non-binary.

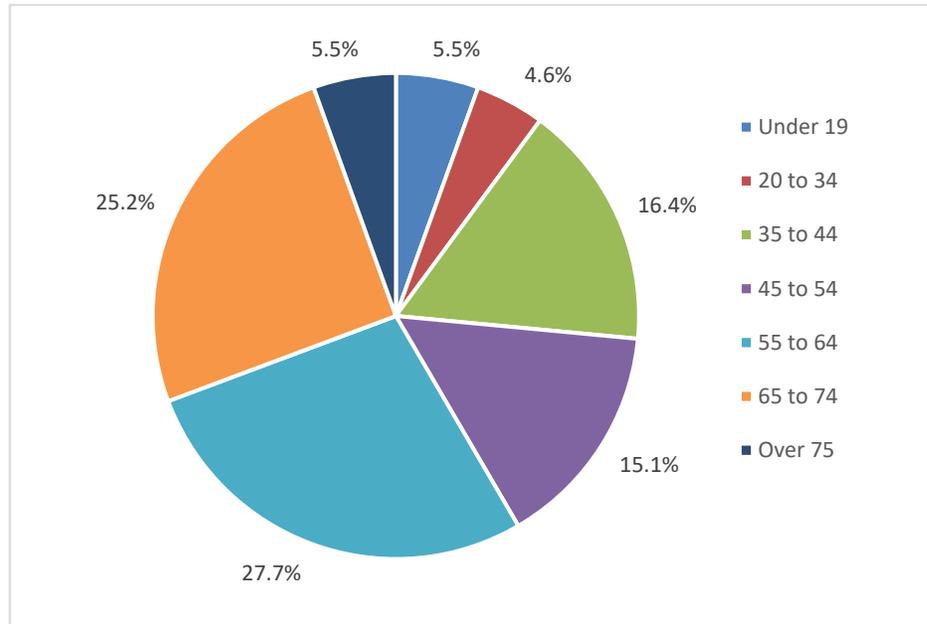


Figure 4: Age of survey participants (n = 238)

General Health

The vast majority of survey respondents indicated that they are in good health, with 38.7% saying their general health is very good and 30.2% saying it is good. As shown in **Figure 5**, another 20.3% indicated that their health is excellent. Very few (1.8%) said their health is poor, and 9.0% rate their general health as fair.

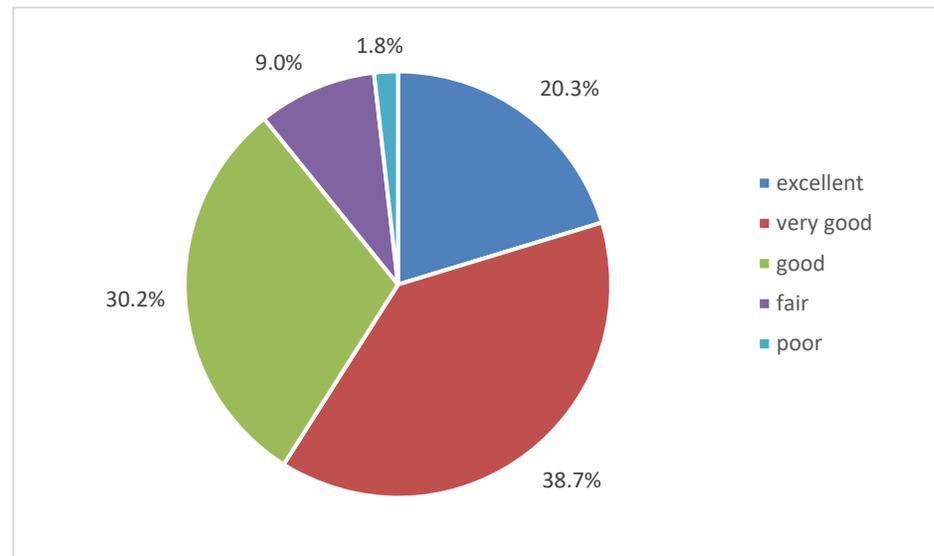


Figure 5: General health survey participants (n = 222)

Also see the section below on *Household Income & Level of Prosperity* which details total household income and perceptions on residents' financial situation, adding to an understanding of the profile of survey respondents.

Quality of Life in New Denver & Area

An emphasis of the survey was to assess residents' perceptions of the quality of life in New Denver and area. Residents were asked early in the survey about their general opinion on quality of life, and later, questions specific to the factors that contribute to their quality of life and if they would recommend the area to others.

Level of Satisfaction

When asked "what is your opinion about quality of life in the New Denver area?" the vast majority of respondents (84%) said they are satisfied, with 53.2% saying they are *satisfied*, and 30.8% saying they are *very satisfied*. 11.4% said they are *dissatisfied* and 4.6% said they are *very dissatisfied*.

Although through a slightly different methodology, the exact same question was asked of residents in a 2007 land use planning survey commissioned by the Village of New Denver. Results from the 2007 survey show that levels of satisfaction were also very high. Ten years ago, most residents (87%) said they were satisfied with the quality of life in New Denver. A slightly smaller percentage said they were *satisfied* (49%) and a larger percentage said they were *very satisfied* (38%). Only 4% said they were *dissatisfied* and 2% said they were *very dissatisfied*. 7% said they had *no opinion*.

Factors Contributing to Quality of Life

To gain a better understanding of what contributes to quality of life for residents, survey participants were asked to review a list of factors and indicate if each factor was *not important*, *somewhat important*, *important*, or *very important* in contributing to their quality of life. **Table 1** shows the percentage of respondents for each of these ratings for all the factors listed in the questionnaire.

Some of the most important factors include **clean environment**, where 74.1% of respondents said this was very important. Similarly, 70.8% said **natural beauty / scenery** was very important in contributing to their quality of life. The **Slocan Community Health Centre** was also rated high with 69.6% saying this is very important. **Safety of community** was the next highest, with 58.1% of respondents saying this is very important.

Family close by shows the highest percentage of those saying it is not important, at 27.7% of respondents. While almost half (47.9%) said that **Lucerne Elementary Secondary School** is very important, 19.3% indicated that it is not important. **Business opportunities** and **employment options** also show about 17% of respondents saying these are not important to their quality of life. These responses are likely reflective of the demographics of the survey respondents and the community in general having an older population. For all factors listed, the majority of respondents said that each was at least somewhat important in contributing to quality of life.

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Friends close by	4.6%	32%	39.3%	24.2%
Family close by	27.7%	24.9%	28.2%	19.3%
Sense of community	2.8%	16.4%	43%	37.9%
Safety of community	0.9%	6.5%	34.6%	58.1%
Small town character / quiet	5.1%	18.4%	30.3%	46.3%
Walkability	4.6%	15.7%	35.9%	43.8%
Lucerne Elementary Secondary School	19.3%	16%	17.8%	47.9%
Slocan Community Health Centre	1.8%	7.3%	21.4%	69.6%
Community events	3.2%	23.6%	39.4%	33.8%
Arts & cultural opportunities	8.6%	25.5%	35.9%	30.0%
Learning & educational opportunities	8.8%	22.2%	43.5%	25.5%
Recreation opportunities	0.9%	14.6%	41.4%	43.2%
Volunteer/community engagement opportunities	6.4%	27.4%	43.4%	22.8%
Food & agricultural opportunities	5.5%	23.5%	40.6%	30.4%
Business opportunities	16.7%	22.8%	35.8%	24.7%
Employment options	17%	18.8%	27.1%	37.2%
Cost of living / affordability	1.4%	10.1%	41.3%	47.3%
Good place for kids	9.3%	13.9%	28.7%	48.2%
Clean environment	0.5%	5%	20.5%	74.1%
Climate	3.2%	15.5%	38.4%	42.9%
Natural beauty / scenery	1.4%	5%	22.8%	70.8%

Table 1: Factors contributing to quality of life in New Denver & area (n = 221)

Respondents were also invited to specify other important factors through a comment box in the questionnaire. Several people specifically noted the **services available** as important to their quality of life, such as the local grocery store, newspaper, pharmacy, post-office, credit union, reading centre, and community halls, all **within walking distance**. The building supply store, as well as “good internet and highways” were noted. The volunteer fire department and emergency medical resources were other services important to some people’s quality of life. The **drinking water** was mentioned by several people, with one person saying the “clean unchlorinated water is one of the top reasons I moved here over 20 years ago”. **Affordable housing** was also noted, as well as

having a local government that listens to the concerns of the community. Others commented on the **friendliness** and caring attitude of residents as important to their quality of life, and the “peace and quiet around the lake”.

A Good Place to Live

Survey participants were asked if they would recommend New Denver and area as a good place to live. The vast majority said yes (85%) and 15% said no (n = 221). Most provided comments when asked to explain why or why not, and several themes emerged from this qualitative data.

For those who said they would recommend New Denver and area as a good place to live, almost half noted that it is because it is **beautiful, quiet, and peaceful**. There were several comments about the “natural beauty” and “beautiful natural surroundings”, as well as how the area is “away from the bustle of urban areas and busier rural centres” and there is “no traffic”.

Another major theme that emerged is the **sense of community and friendly people**. “There is a sense of community amongst most residents here that help make this place even more special than it already is with all the natural beauty”. “Strong community values” and “community spirit” were noted several times, with a mention of all the active community groups, and how people are generous and caring. There are “so many community-minded citizens” and “friendly engaged people”. As one person stated, “New Denver is like stepping back in time. People are friendly, inclusive and helpful”. Another stated that the “community [is] based on reciprocity, respect, and volunteerism... where people genuinely care about one another and are always working to make it a more vibrant community”.

Opportunities for outdoor recreation and the **healthy environment** were two other themes that emerged as main reasons residents would recommend the area as a good place to live. Many residents noted the access to the lake and the “spectacular wilderness” of the region. One person noted how there is “access to recreation without the crowds”. Several survey respondents also noted **clean air and water** as key reasons to recommend the area to others. There is the “best water in the world” said one respondent.

The **small town atmosphere** and **safety** of the community were additional themes. Some people really appreciate the “slow pace” and feel the area has “rural community advantages”. It is safe for people, where many “people do not lock their doors”, and it is a “safe place for kids to grow up”.

Another theme was that the area has **good amenities and services** for its size. “Most things are available here” said one respondent, while another noted that it is “close driving distance to large city amenities” when needed. The school was noted several times as being excellent, as well as the health services, and there was also mention of other specific assets, such as the grocery store and pharmacy. In addition to these services, the **arts and cultural events and activities** were also noted several times as a reason to recommend the area.

A handful of respondents noted that the area is **affordable**, including the affordability of housing. One person included a final comment of, “I love New Denver and wouldn’t want to live anywhere else”. There are many reasons why current residents would recommend the area as a good place to live. While varied in their views, some strong common themes are evident.

For the 15% of respondents who said they would not recommend the area as a good place to live, the strongest theme across the comments was because finding **employment is too difficult** or because of the **economy**. A “lack of jobs” was noted; that it is “really hard to find work”. An interest in having more full-time residents was mentioned to help keep a year round economy, otherwise “we will be in danger of becoming another summer resort town and [potentially] lose our school and hospital”. One person felt that the area is “becoming a ghost town... infrastructure is declining, shops closing, school and hospital declining, too many summer residents”. This mention of decline was noted by others, saying that the “town is stagnant” and “lacks a viable business community”. One respondent said that “overall the Village looks run down... need to spruce up the downtown”. Connected to employment and the economy, there were a handful of people who mentioned there is a **lack of housing**, particularly long-term stable rental housing.

The other theme that emerged from these comments was that people felt they would not recommend the area because there are **not enough opportunities or things to do**. This was noted especially with respect to youth, as well as seniors. The lack of evening entertainment, no restaurant, and the “need to drive for a lot of things” were noted.

The final theme that emerged was that the **community is cliquy**. While most residents feel there is great community spirit and a friendly atmosphere (as described above), there are some people who have had negative experiences. The place “feels hollow and unfriendly” said one survey respondent. “New residents and business [are] not appreciated” and the “community is quite closed to new residents and it’s hard to make friends” said others. Comments noted newcomers and part-time residents in particular, saying that the “community is too insular... [and] treat[s] newcomers with suspicion”, as well as “activities don’t seem inclusive of part-timers”. The local politics were noted to be challenging, and one said it is “better to live here full-time vs part-time because seasonal residents are not treated with much, if any, respect by locals”.

Several people responded with yes and no as an answer to whether they would recommend New Denver and area as a good place to live, saying that it **depends on who they are talking to**. Some also included caveats with their yes and no responses. One said they “would recommend [it] for some, but it’s definitely not for everyone!”. Whether one recommends the area depends on the needs and interests of a particular person or family. Some survey respondents noted the positive aspects, such as a good community and quiet place with nice people, but then also mentioned drawbacks, such as how the place needs more or improved amenities. Some comments reinforced the theme that emerged with the “no” comments regarding employment and the local economy. One person said “it’s a wonderful place to live if you are financially secure, [but] employment opportunities are bleak and... the majority of small business owners seem to struggle mightily”. Other similar comments included that “good employment/careers are difficult to come by” and that “there is very little meaningful work if you don’t bring it with you”. One person noted that while jobs may be difficult to find, the area is “great for entrepreneurs with strong work ethics”. Others mentioned that living in New Denver and area is a lifestyle, and that “some people are not suited to this lifestyle”, while others may be. “It takes a certain individual to want to make a living in a community like this work”, remarked one respondent.

Resident Migration

The survey included a few specific questions related to residents' intentions with respect to staying in the area. Full-time residents were asked if they have any intention of moving away and part-time residents were asked if they intend to make the area their primary residence in the future. For those who recently moved to the area, they were asked about their motivations and interests in making the New Denver area their home.

Full-Time Residents

Full-time residents responding to the survey were asked if they intend to move in the next three years, and if so where and why. The majority (76%) of respondents said they do not intend to move, while 24% said they do (n = 181). For those who said they do intend to move, most were interested in moving to a place with more amenities, opportunities, and choices, and noted larger communities such as Nelson and Trail, and urban centres such as Kamloops and Vancouver. Several mentioned they would move if the health centre services were to deteriorate, expressing concern about a doctor shortage and changes to health services. Younger survey participants said they intend to move for school, and others said for employment opportunities. There was also mention of a lack of housing as a reason to move, as well as "no help for seniors". A few said they would move to be closer to family and friends. There were also a few comments from people who said they may consider moving "if the town becomes flooded with part-time residents and vacationers in the summer months" or "gets too developed".

Part-Time Residents

Part-time residents were asked if they intend to make the New Denver area their primary residence in the future. As shown in **Figure 6**, 41.3% of part-time residents said they do not intend to make the area their full-time home. Another 30.4% said they were not sure. 17.4% said they do intend to move to the area full-time in the next 4 to 10 years and 10.9% said within the next 1 to 3 years.

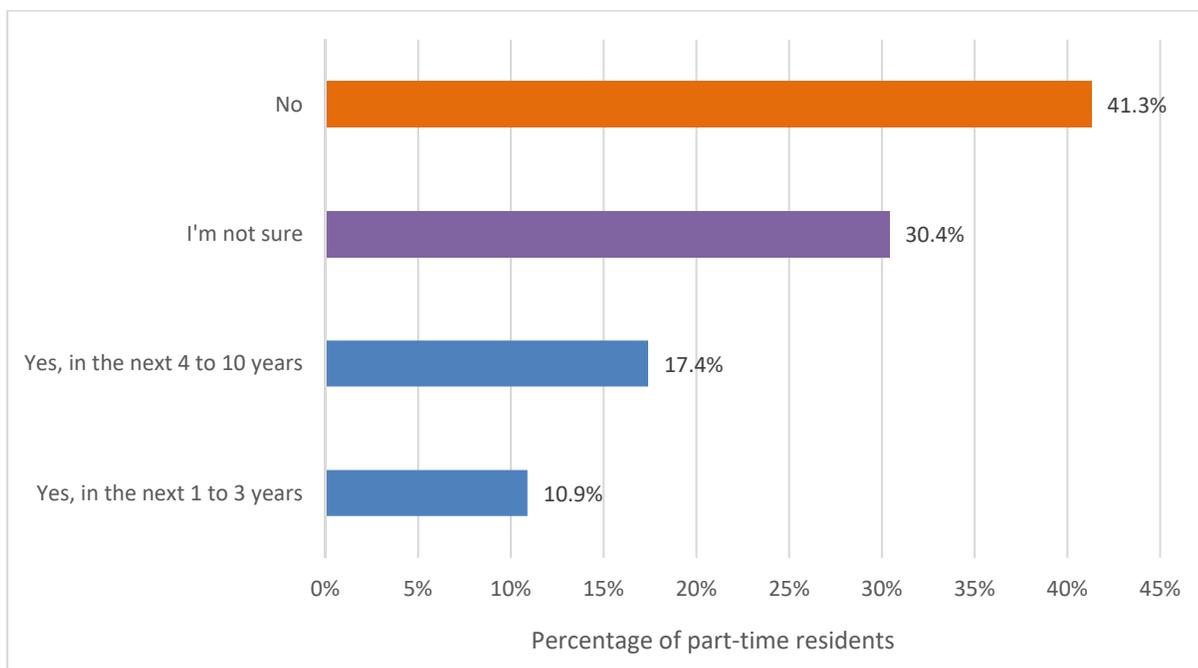


Figure 6: Percentage of part-time residents intending to make New Denver and area their primary residence (n = 46)

Reasons for Moving to New Denver & Area

When asked “if you recently moved to the New Denver area, why did you move here?” 89 people responded.

Figure 7 shows the percentage who responded for each of the reasons listed in the survey questionnaire.

Natural beauty (76.4%) and **clean environment** (64.0%) had the highest percentages, with some respondents adding qualifying commentary, such as “the purest air and water... exquisite lake, glacier and mountains...”.

Outdoor recreation opportunities was also a top reason at 60.7% of respondents selecting this as a reason they moved to the New Denver area. **Small town / rural character** was the next most selected reason at 56.2% of respondents. Employment was the least selected reason, with 14.6% of respondents saying it was a reason they moved to the area. 19.1% of respondents included commentary or noted other reasons for moving to the area, including “returned to my home town”, “online employment from rural home”, the “many cultural activities”, and the “best water”.

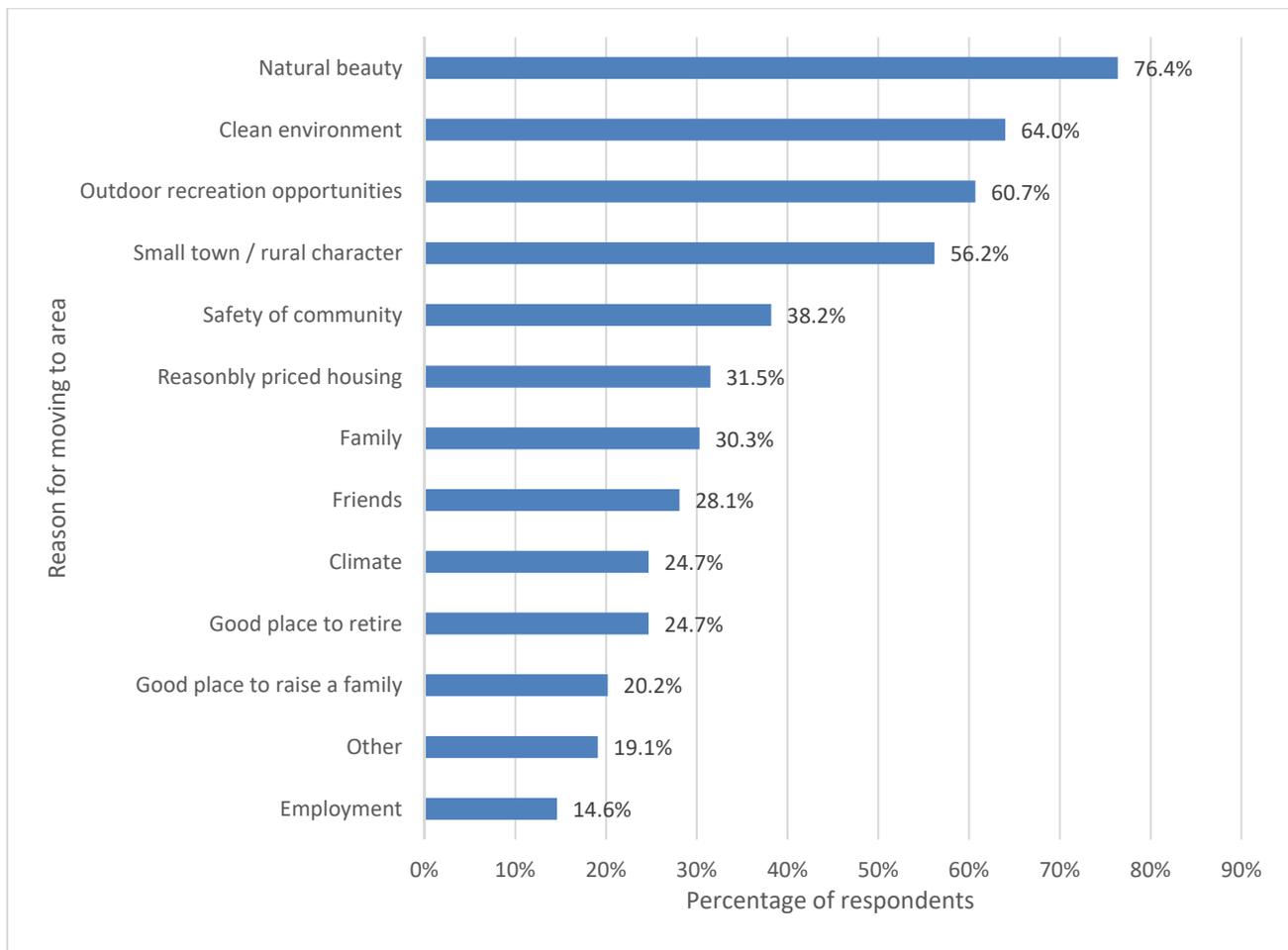


Figure 7: Reasons people moved to New Denver and area (n = 89)

The 2007 land use planning survey conducted by the Village of New Denver included a question about the top three reasons why people chose to move to New Denver or continue to live in the area. **Small town / rural character** had the highest rankings, followed by **outdoor activities**, and that they **enjoy the people who live here**.

Community Well-Being

There are many ways to investigate community well-being. This research study included two indices: The Community Well-being Index and a Change in Community Livability Index. Residents were asked a series of questions to gauge how attached and positive they feel about living in the community of New Denver and area and if they think the livability is changing.

Community Well-Being Index

The Community Well-being Index (CWI) is a measure of the overall “sense of community” a person feels.⁶ This index is the average value of a survey respondent’s answers to the following five questions:

- 1) This community is a great place to live.
- 2) This community copes pretty well when faced with challenges.
- 3) I feel proud to live in this community.
- 4) This community has a bright future.
- 5) There’s good community spirit around here.

Survey participants were asked to respond using a scale from 1 to 7 with 1 being *strongly disagree* and 7 being *strongly agree*. These statements collectively provide a measure of how attached and positive people feel about living in their community, and about the future of their community.¹

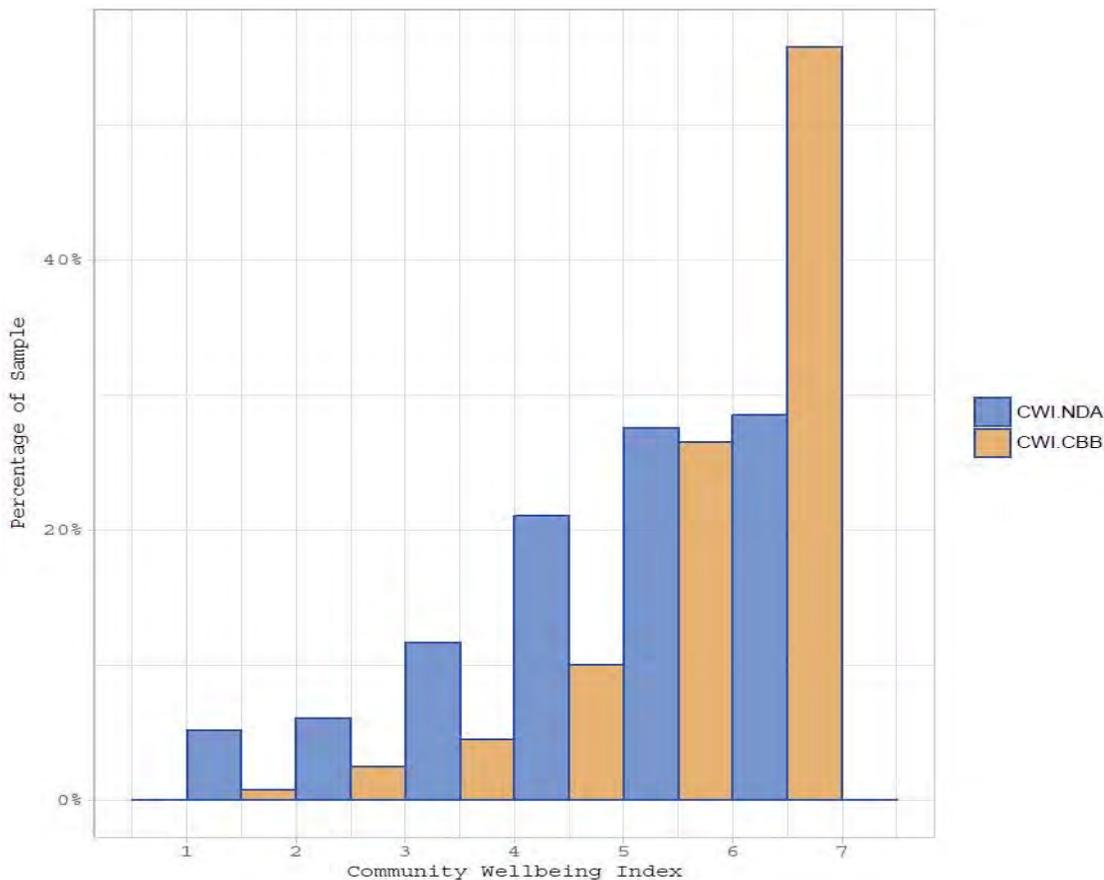


Figure 8: Histograms for Community Well-being Index for New Denver & Area (CWI.NDA) and Columbia Basin-Boundary (CWI.CBB)

Figure 8 shows the CWI values for New Denver and area and for the Columbia Basin-Boundary region for comparison. The regional figures are based on the results from the RDI’s 2016 Subjective Well-being survey. As shown, most New Denver and area residents selected a value of 4 or higher, with a mean of 5.1 (n = 214). This indicates the majority of residents have a relatively strong sense of community, feeling positive and attached to the place. This mean value is lower than the Columbia Basin-Boundary (5.9) with considerably more respondents selecting the highest value of 7 for the region compared to New Denver and area.

The RDI’s 2014 poll of residents⁷ included a related question where respondents were asked their level of agreement with the statement “I love where I live”. The responses also indicate a high level of relation to community, with 86% saying they strongly agree or agree, and only 3% saying they strongly disagree or disagree.

Change in Community Livability

Community livability is another measure used to investigate community well-being. A community with high livability is more likely to support high levels of well-being for its residents, and attract and retain new residents.¹ In order to measure changes in community liveability, an index is used which takes the average value of a survey respondent’s answers to four questions about whether the (a) livability, (b) friendliness, (c) local economy, and (d) landscape in the community is changing. Survey participants were asked about these four factors using a scale from 1 to 7 with 1 being *getting worse* and 7 being *getting better*.

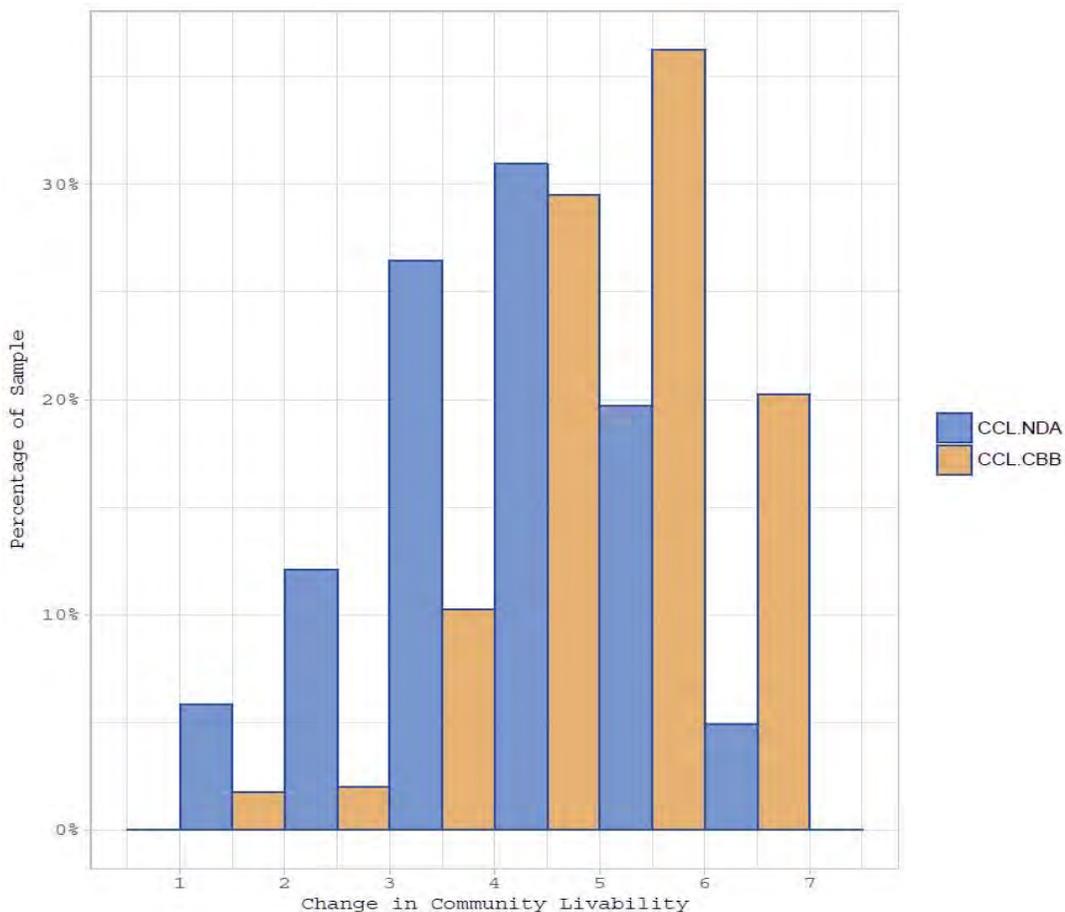


Figure 9: Histograms for Change in Community Livability for New Denver & Area (CCL.NDA) and Columbia Basin-Boundary (CCL.CBB)

Figure 9 shows the Change in Community Livability (CCL) index values for New Denver and area as well as for the Columbia Basin-Boundary region. As indicated by the blue bars on the chart, the majority of New Denver and area residents think that community liveability is generally getting better (majority of values are 4 or higher) with a mean of 4.3 (n = 223). A high percentage do also think community liveability is getting worse as indicated by the distribution of responses below 4. The mean value for New Denver and area is lower than the mean value for the Columbia Basin-Boundary region (5.2). As indicated by the orange bars, the regional distribution reveals that most residents feel that community livability is getting better.

Economic Well-being

The survey included questions related to economic well-being. Respondents were asked about their household income as well as their perceived level of prosperity. Four questions were also asked to generate results for the Community Economic Well-being Index (CEWI), a measure of the financial capital of a community.

Household Income & Level of Prosperity

To gain a sense of the financial security and prosperity of residents, the survey asked respondents to indicate their total household income (before taxes) for the last year. As shown in **Figure 10**, 61% of households make less than \$60,000 per year and 76% make less than \$80,000 per year. Just over 14% of households make less than \$20,000 per year, while about 6% make over \$150,000 per year.

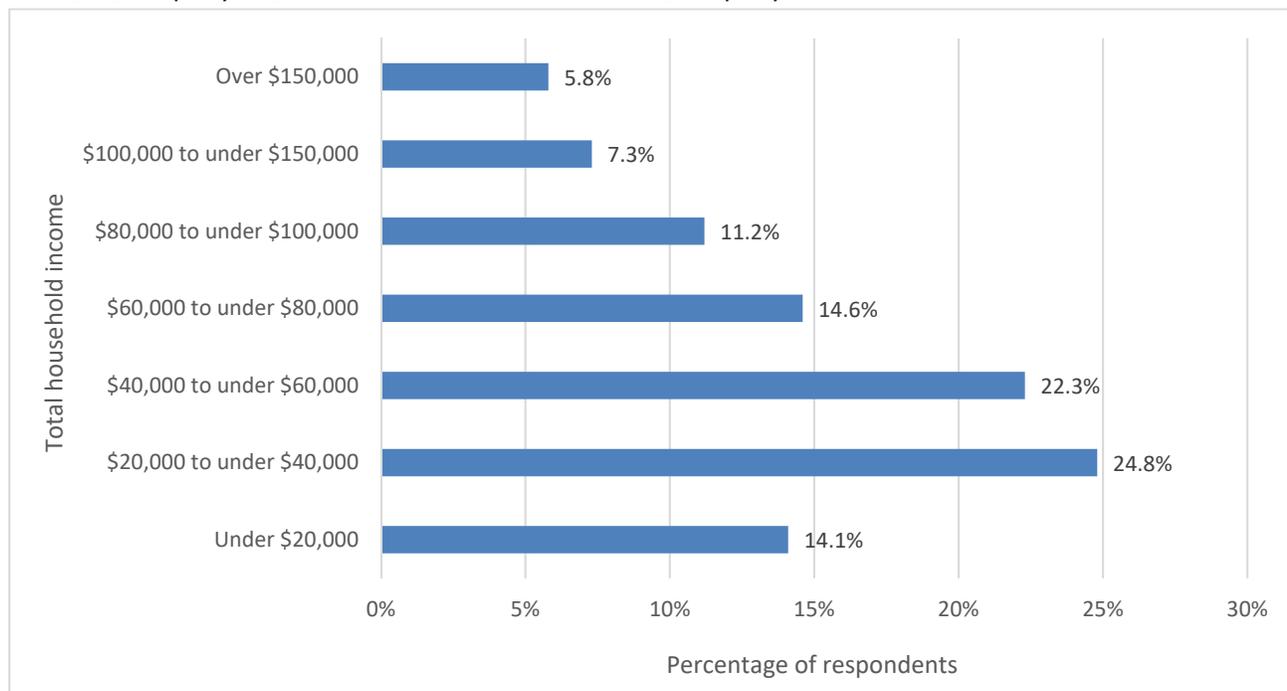


Figure 10: Total household income (n = 206)

In addition to this quantitative question, survey participants were asked about their perception of their level of prosperity. Given current needs and financial responsibilities, respondents were asked to state which category they believe their family is in. **Figure 11** shows the categories and percentage of people who responded for each level of prosperity. As shown, the majority (77.4%) of respondents say they are **reasonably comfortable or better**. Almost 20% say they are just getting by, and almost 3% say they are either poor or very poor.

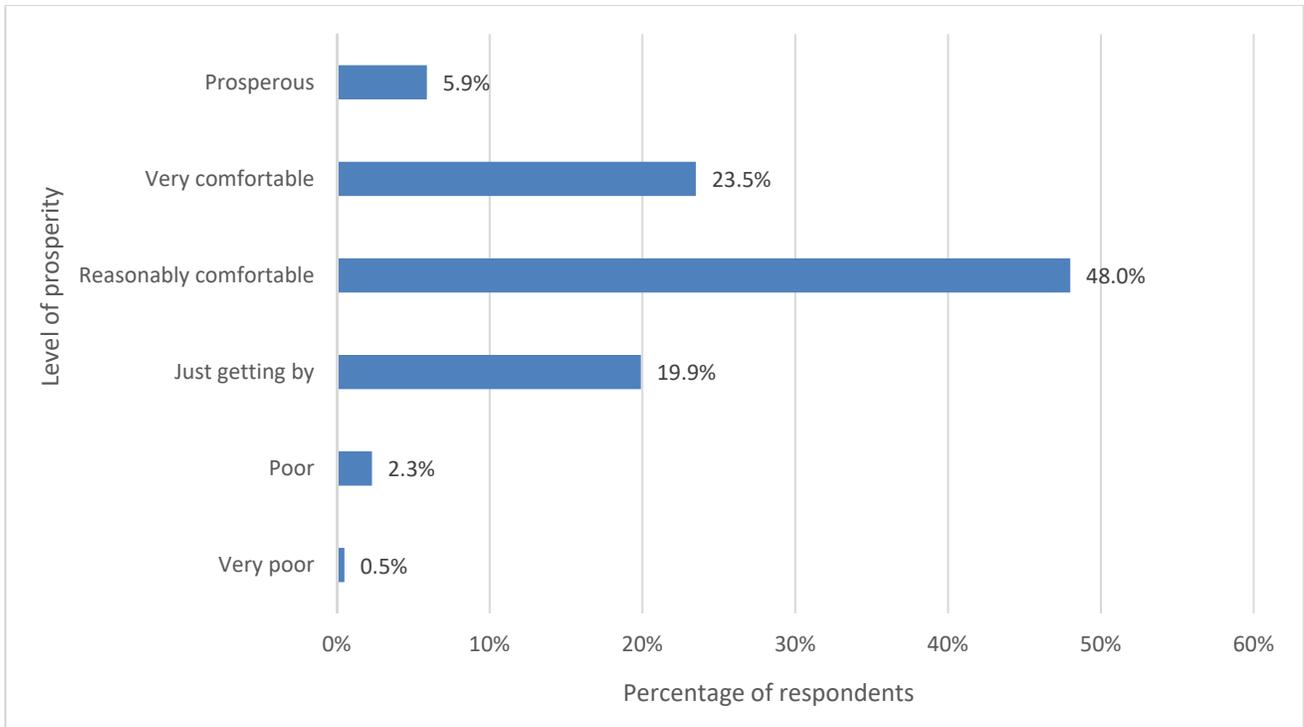


Figure 11: Perceptions on level of prosperity (n = 221)

Digging a bit deeper into the data, it is interesting to note that 45% of those who said they make less than \$20,000 also said they are either very comfortable or reasonably comfortable. Those who said they were poor or very poor indicated a household income level of either under \$20,000 or \$20,000 to \$40,000. Those who said they are prosperous varied through the full range of household income levels (except none were in the under \$20,000 category). For those who said they are reasonably comfortable, 36% make under \$40,000 per year.

Wealth can be measured in many ways and comparing these two data sets illustrates the difference in perceptions depending on household and life circumstances. Some households are very comfortable with less than \$20,000 per year, while others feel they are just getting by with \$80,000. According to taxfiler statistics, in 2015, 21% of New Denver families and 17% of Silverton families were considered low income (which is above the provincial average of 15%). The Low Income Measure (LIM) is a commonly used indicator of poverty and is a relative measure of low income, where the median household income is “adjusted” to take into account household sizes and needs.⁸ A family is considered to be low income when their income is below the LIM for their family type and size. This survey did not ask about family characteristics, and the differences in perception are likely related to differences in family sizes and needs, as well as additional financial supports that may not be reflected as income. With the LIM at 17% to 21% for the New Denver area, about 1 in 5 families are living in poverty according to Statistics Canada definitions. Survey results concur, with about 23% saying that they are either just getting by or are poor or very poor.

Community Economic Well-being Index

The Community Economic Well-being Index (CEWI) is another measure of well-being that investigates the financial capital of a community. To calculate this index, an average from responses to the four following statements are used to form a single measure:

- 1) Living costs are affordable here (e.g. food, gas, housing).
- 2) This community is financially well-off.
- 3) There are plenty of jobs available around here.
- 4) Businesses in this community are doing pretty well at the moment.

Figure 12 shows the histogram for the CEWI for New Denver and area. As shown in the distribution, the majority of residents have given values of less than 4, with a mean value of 3.1 (n = 214). This indicates that financial capital and community economic well-being is perceived to be low.

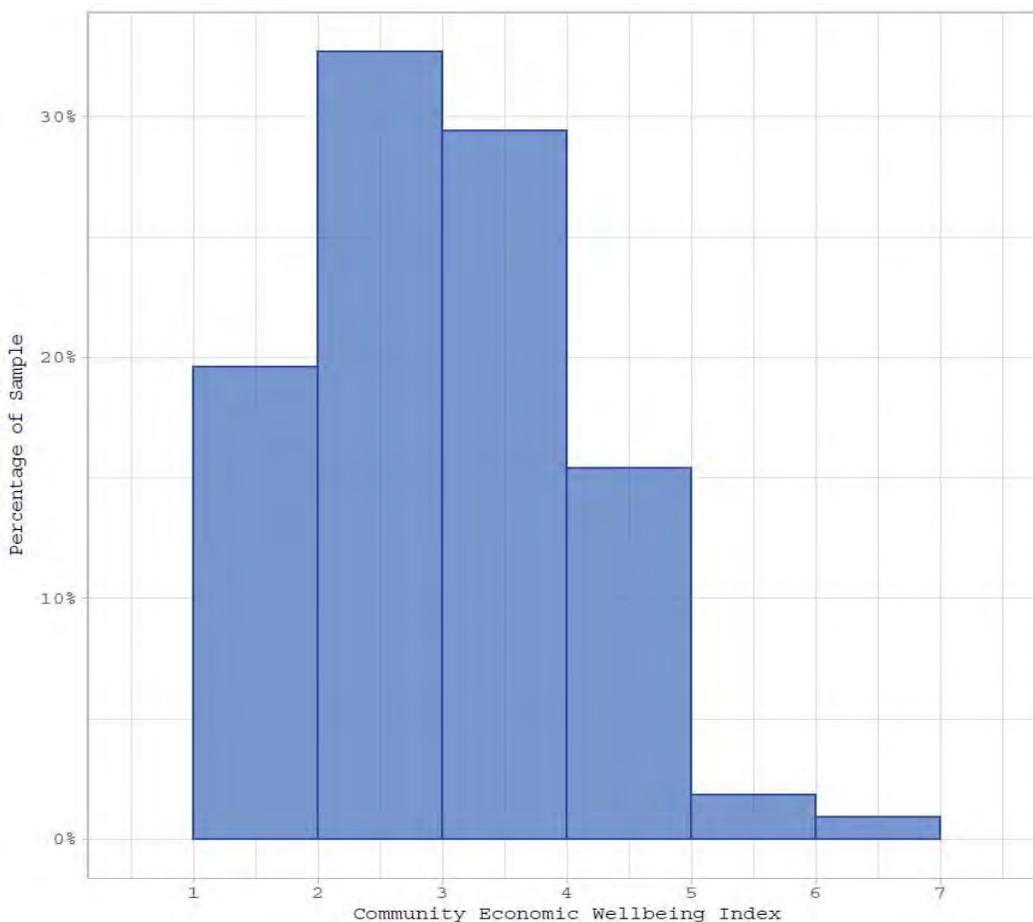


Figure 12: Histogram for Community Economic Well-being Index for New Denver & Area

Community and Economic Well-being Indices Compared

It is interesting to compare the results for the Community Well-being Index (CWI) (**Figure 8**) and the Community Economic Well-being Index (CEWI) (**Figure 12**) for New Denver and area. As noted, the mean value for the CWI was 5.1 and the mean value for the CEWI was much lower at 3.1. **Figure 13** shows a box plot comparing these

indices. The top of the line indicates the maximum value given by any survey respondent while the bottom of the line indicates the minimum value. The top of the box is the 75th percentile while the bottom of the box is the 25th percentile, and the thick line in the middle is the mean value. The dots are outliers in the distribution. Comparing these box plots shows that community well-being was rated higher than economic well-being by residents, with very few giving the lowest value for the CWI and nobody giving the highest value for the CEWI. This comparison illustrates that while the community may be experiencing lower economic well-being, there is still a strong sense of community and a positive perception about living in the community and the future of the community.

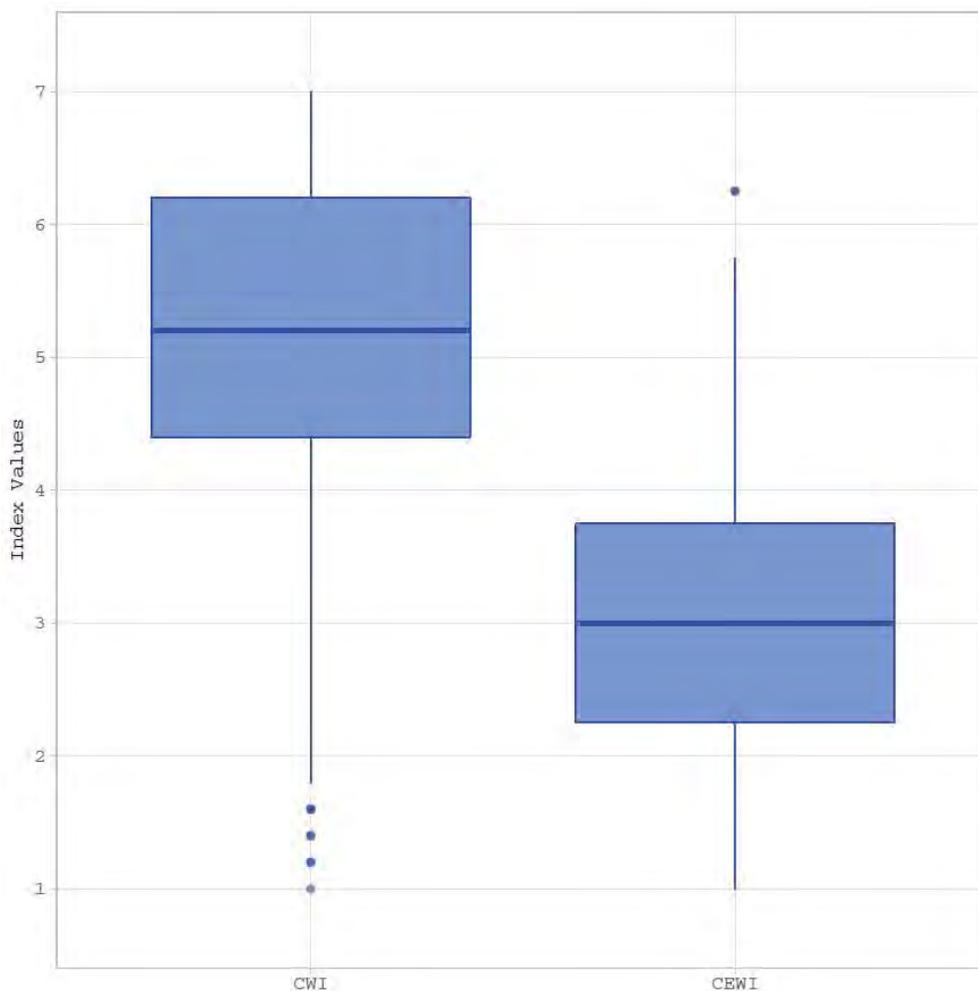


Figure 13: Box plot of Community Economic Well-being Index (CEWI) and Community Well-being Index (CWI) for New Denver & Area

Institutional Capital

Institutional capital considers the quality, representativeness, fairness, and inclusiveness of local organizations, such as local government, non-profits, and other agencies, as well as the associated decision making processes.¹ If local institutions and processes enable constituents to be heard and listened to, and allow for equitable, inclusive, and transparent decision making, there is considered to be a high level of institutional capital.² Two measures of institutional capital were included in this survey: Having a Say & Being Heard and Equity &

Inclusion. These indices were included in the RDI’s subjective well-being survey in 2016 and regional results are shown for comparison.

Having a Say & Being Heard

Having a Say & Being Heard is a measure of institutional capital that investigates the governance and decision making processes in a community with an interest in the quality, representativeness, fairness, and inclusiveness of these organizations.¹ The index is calculated by taking the average of a respondent’s answers to the following four questions, using a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being *strongly disagree* and 7 being *strongly agree*:

- 1) Area local governments are able to help our community face challenges.
- 2) The people who make decisions for my community represent the whole community, not just part of it.
- 3) I can get involved in local decision-making processes if I want to.
- 4) Most people around here get a fair go.

Figure 14 is a histogram of the results of the Having a Say & Being Heard index for New Denver and area and for the Columbia Basin-Boundary region. The mean value for New Denver and area is 4.3 (n = 212), while the regional value is higher at 5.2. The distribution for New Denver and area shows that while the majority of people feel there are reasonably adequate opportunities to have a say and feel listened to, many rated this measure of institutional capital lower. Overall for the Columbia Basin-Boundary region, the index is reasonably high.

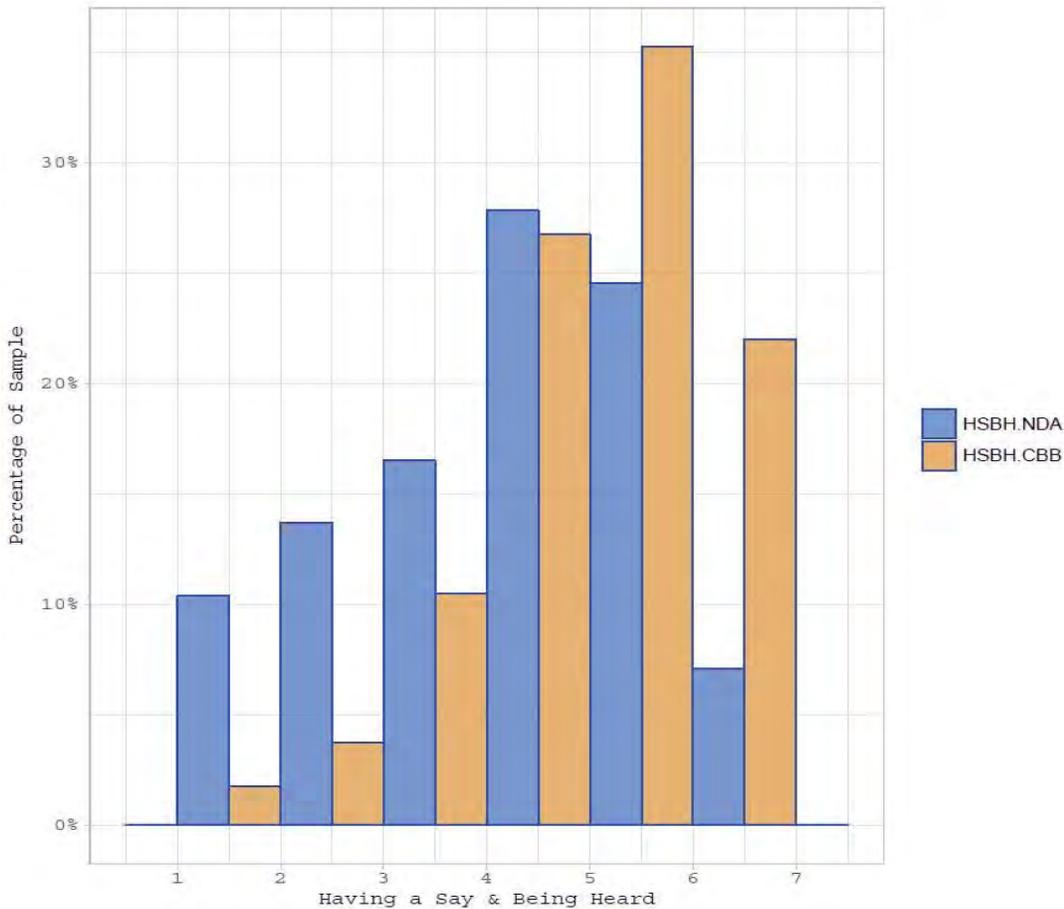


Figure 14: Histograms for Having a Say & Being Heard index for New Denver & Area (HSBH.NDA) and Columbia Basin-Boundary (HSBH.CBB)

Another interesting comparison is the perception of part-time versus full-time residents. **Figure 15** shows a side-by-side comparison of results. The majority of both part-time and full-time residents selected values of 4 or higher, with similar mean values of 4.5 (n = 28) for part-time residents and 4.3 (n = 184) for full-time residents. The histogram illustrates that some full-time residents rank this index high with a value of 7 and some also rank it low with a value of 1. Responses from part-time respondents are not found on these ends of the scale.

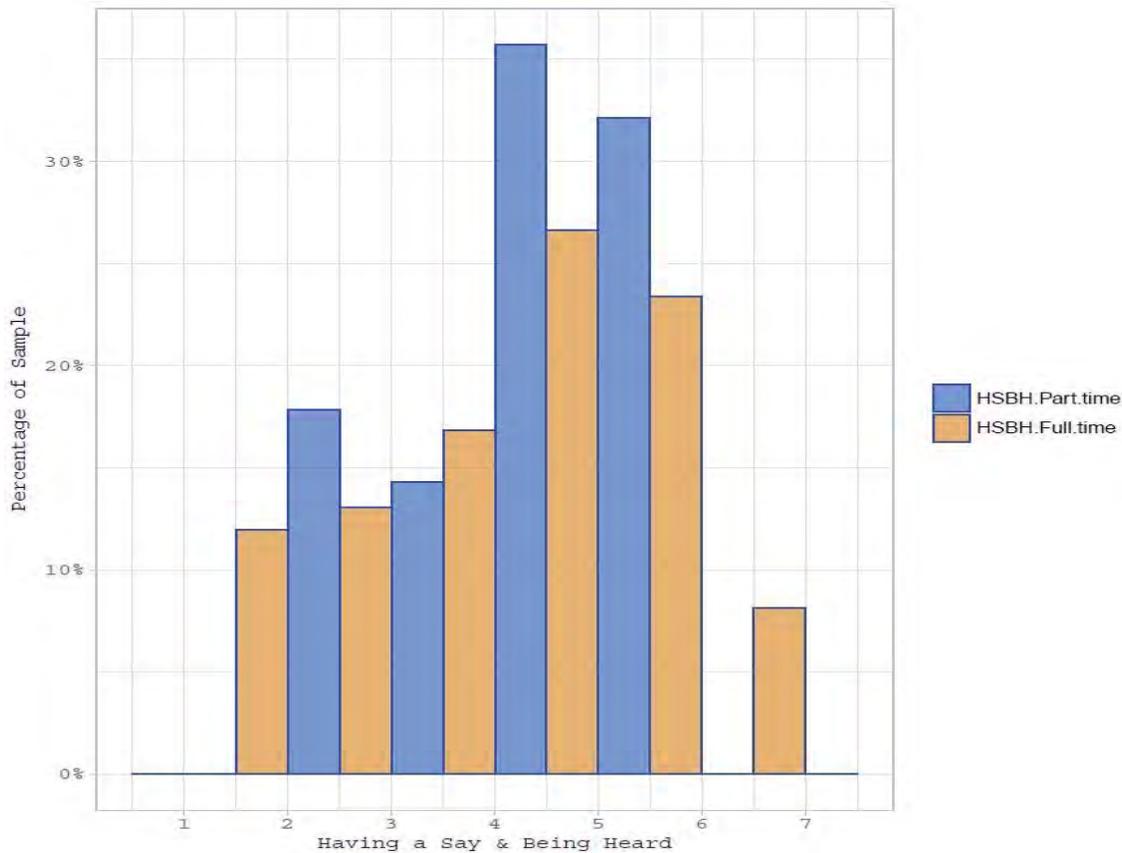


Figure 15: Histograms for Having a Say & Being Heard Index for part-time versus full-time residents

The Village of New Denver was also particularly interested in exploring the perceptions of residents within the Village of New Denver compared to those in the surrounding area. The mean value for these two groups of respondents are also quite similar at 4.2 (n = 109) for residents within the village and 4.4 (n = 75) for those residing outside the village. **Figure 16** shows the side-by-side histograms for these two groups, illustrating a fairly similar distribution across the range of values except for the 6 to 7 range where the percentage is higher for residents' in the surrounding area.

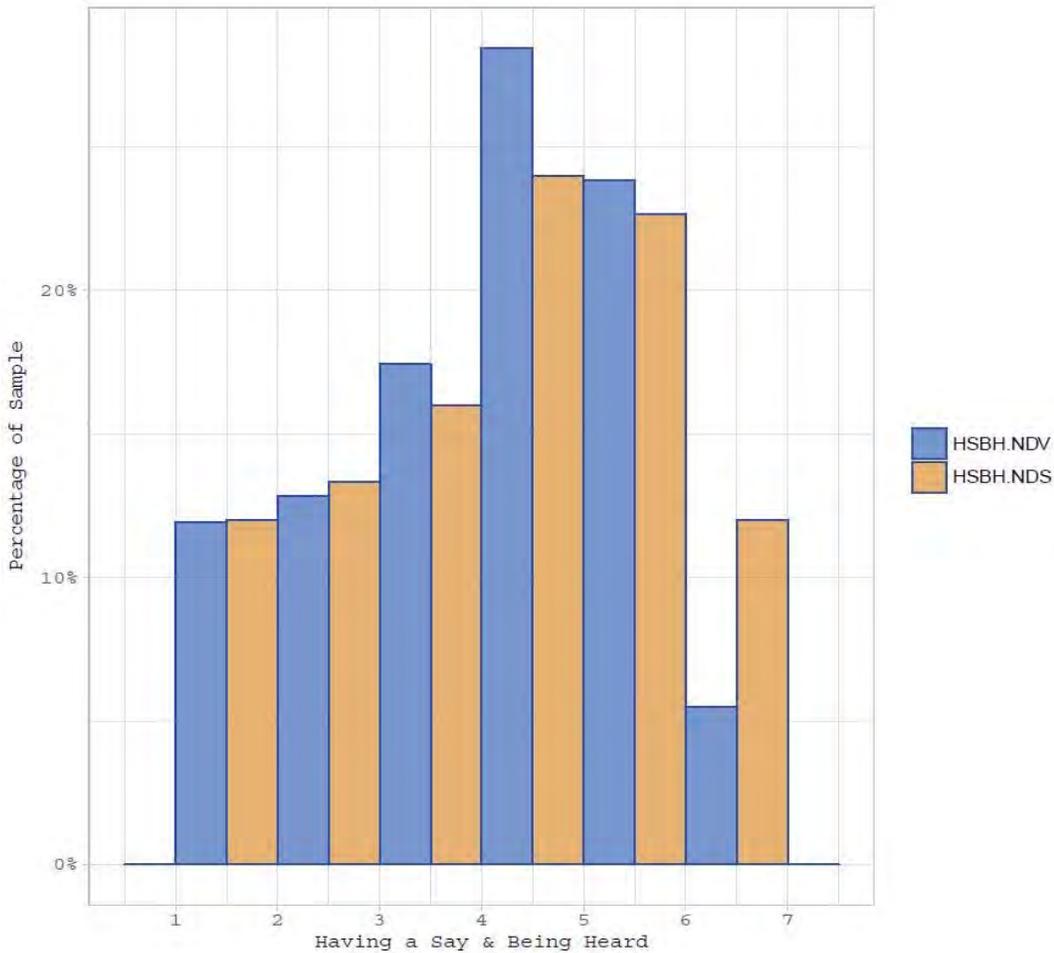


Figure 16: Histograms for Having a Say & Being Heard index for Village of New Denver residents (HSBH.NDV) and surrounding area residents (HSBH.NDS)

Equity & Inclusion

Institutional capital refers not only to the formal organizations within a community, but also the informal, such as the unspoken rules about human interaction or about access to resources. These unspoken rules of behaviour can determine which people are included or excluded in community activities and decision making, and are often discussed as critical to the future of communities and management of rural areas.¹ To calculate the Equity & Inclusion index, three questions were asked:

- 1) Some groups in this community keep to themselves.
- 2) Some individuals get left out in this community.
- 3) There is a lot of disagreement between people in this community.

The response scores for each of the three questions were reversed, such that high values were associated with high levels of Equity & Inclusion, and vice versa. The average value of the three reversed scores was calculated for each respondent.

The mean value for the Equity & Inclusion index for New Denver and area is 3.3 (n = 208), similar to the Columbia Basin-Boundary (3.5), and the distribution of residents' views on this at the local level and regional

scale are similar (**Figure 17**). The highest percentages of responses occur in the ranges of 2 to 3 and 3 to 4, illustrating that residents locally and regionally believe there are lower levels of equity and inclusion. Some do see higher values (5 to 6 and 6 to 7 ranges), but the majority are in the medium to low ranges.

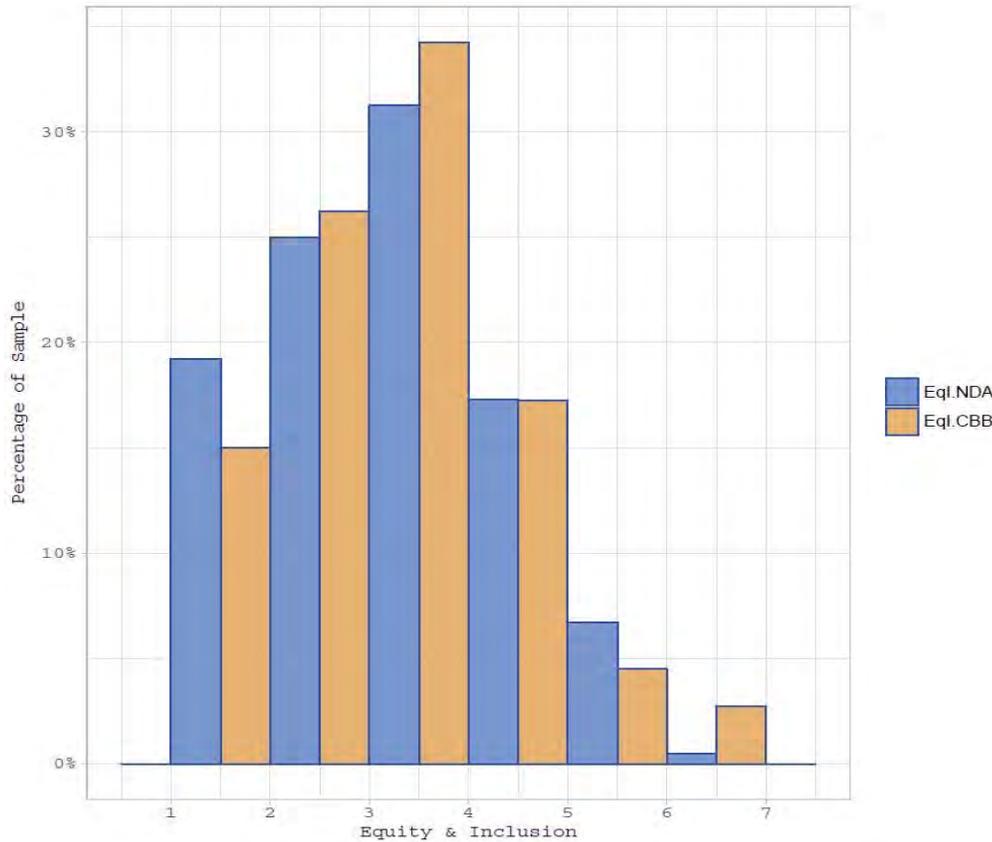


Figure 17: Histograms for Equity & Inclusion index for New Denver & Area (Eql.NDA) and Columbia Basin-Boundary (Eql.CBB)

Part-time and full-time residents were again compared for this index. The mean value was similar for these two groups at 3.3 (n = 181) for full-time residents and 3.4 (n = 27) for part-time residents. As shown in **Figure 18**, the bulk of the responses are in the 2 to 3 and 3 to 4 range, indicating that people do not see the equity and inclusion in the community as high. Some higher values suggest that some residents do consider equity and inclusion levels to be reasonable, but more so for full-time residents than part-time residents.

When comparing residents within the village boundaries and outside the village boundaries, the range of views on equity and inclusion are again similar (see **Figure 19**). The mean value for Village of New Denver residents is 3.4 (n = 107) and for surrounding area residents is 3.3 (n =74).

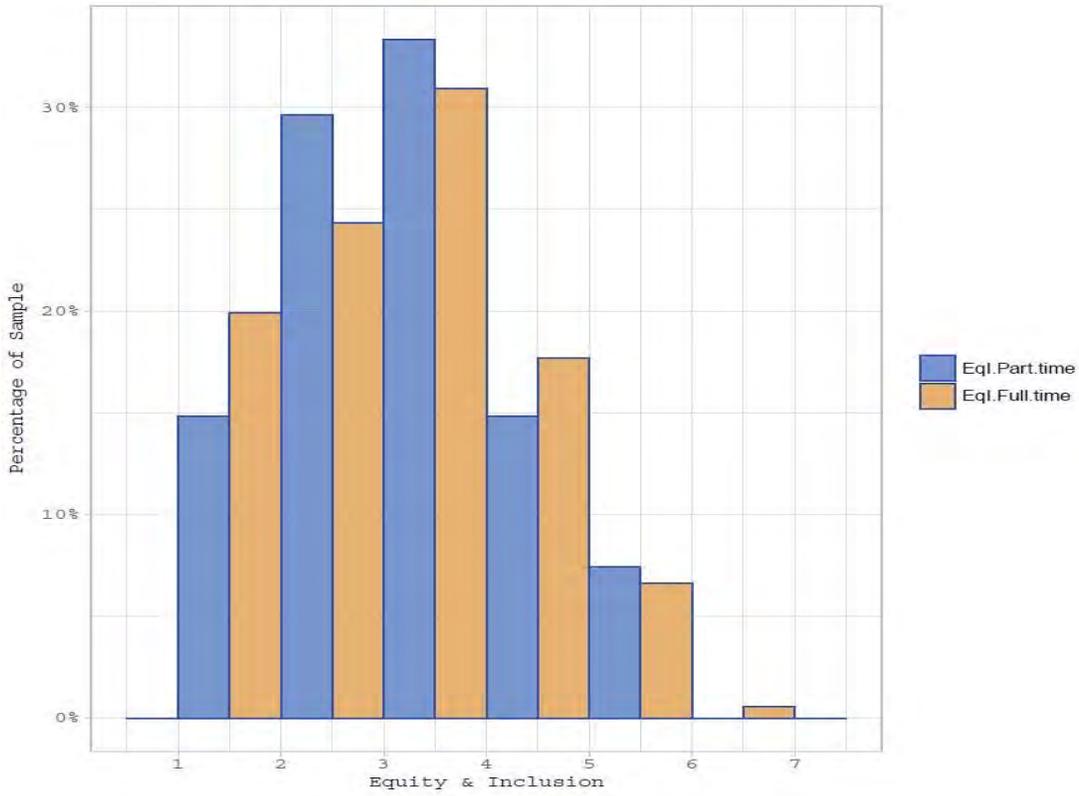


Figure 18: Histograms for Equity & Inclusion index for part-time versus full-time residents

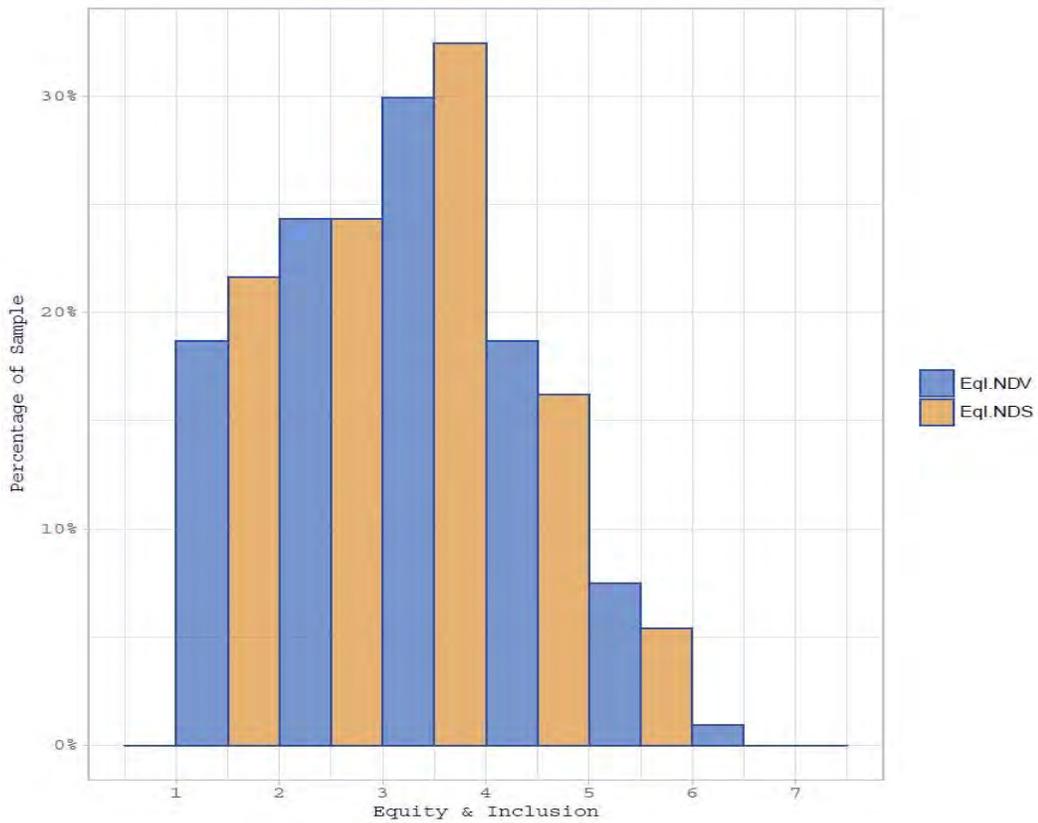


Figure 19: Histograms for Equity & Inclusion index for Village of New Denver (NDA) and surrounding area (NDS)

Another interesting comparison in the survey results is to review the Having a Say & Being Heard Index with the Equity & Inclusion Index. The mean for the Having a Say & Being Heard index is higher at 4.3 (n = 212) than the Equity & Inclusion index at 3.3 (n = 208). This suggests that while residents feel that the governance and decision making processes by formal institutions in the community are generally representative and reasonable, the informal processes may not be as fair or inclusive.

Figure 20 shows a box plot comparing these indices. The top of the line indicates the maximum value range given by survey respondents while the bottom of the line indicates the minimum value. As shown, higher maximum values were selected for the Having a Say & Being Heard index, however for both indices the minimum value of 1 was also selected. The top of the box is the 75th percentile of all respondents, while the bottom of the box is the 25th percentile, and the thick line in the middle is the mean value.

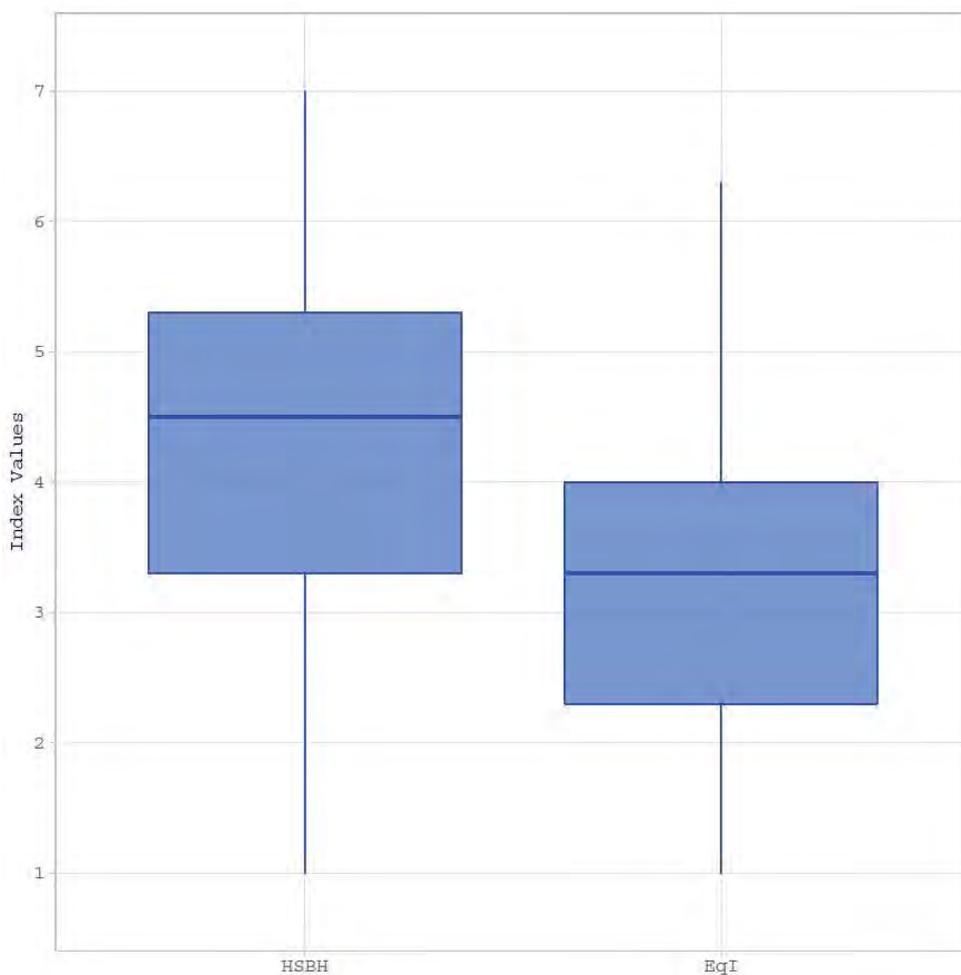


Figure 20: Box plot comparison of Having a Say & Being Heard (HSBH) index and Equity & Inclusion (EqI) index for New Denver & Area

Services & Infrastructure

Access to Services

The survey included a question which aimed to gauge residents’ perceptions on access to specific services and infrastructure. Participants were asked to rate access to each of the services and infrastructure listed in **Table 2**. The percentage who selected each rating is shown.

While most respondents (73.3%) rated access to **general health services** as good or excellent, others were either not sure or rated access to **mental health services** and **specialist health services** as poor or fair. About half of respondents said that access to **education** is good or excellent, while another third said it is fair. A majority (66.2%) rated access to **housing** as poor or fair. A large majority (79.3%) said access to **recreational facilities, park, and trails** is good or excellent, as well as access to **arts and cultural experiences and opportunities** (72.4%). Access to **community volunteer/ involvement opportunities** was also rated high by survey respondents (78.2% rated it as good or excellent). **Aged care services, child care, and opportunities for youth**, however, all received a higher percentage of poor or fair ratings. A larger percentage of respondents were also not sure or indicated these did not apply to them, such as for child care, where 46.6% of respondents selected not sure or not applicable.

Public transit, retail shops, and food affordability were other aspects that most people felt access was either poor or fair, with **eating establishments** seeing the highest percentage for a poor rating (54.7% saying poor and 34.0% saying fair). While access to **banking and financial services** received good to excellent ratings (68.7%), access to **professional services** received poor to fair ratings (57.5%). Most people felt that access to **protective services** was good or excellent (74.8%). Just over half of respondents (52.4%) said that access to **high speed internet** is good or excellent, while 42.1% said it is poor or fair. **Mobile phone coverage** received slightly poorer ratings, as well a higher percentage of respondents being unsure or noting that this did not apply to them. Access to **home cleaning/maintenance services** received ratings across the spectrum of options.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Not sure	N/A
General health services (e.g. doctor, pharmacist)	3.8%	20.7%	54.0%	19.3%	1.4%	0.9%
Mental health services (e.g. psychologist, counseling)	19.5%	21.4%	14.3%	2.9%	23.8%	18.1%
Specialist health services (other than mental health)	36.7%	22.9%	11.9%	1.9%	17.1%	9.5%
Education (schools, distance education, continuing education)	7.1%	25.6%	39.3%	13.7%	4.7%	9.5%
Housing	29.5%	36.7%	24.8%	1.0%	5.2%	2.9%
Recreational facilities, parks, & trails	1.9%	14.1%	33.8%	45.5%	2.4%	2.4%

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Not sure	N/A
Arts & cultural experiences & opportunities	2.9%	16.2%	43.8%	28.6%	5.2%	3.3%
Community volunteer/ involvement opportunities	1.0%	11.9%	39.8%	38.4%	6.2%	2.8%
Aged care services (e.g. supports for seniors)	13.2%	25.0%	25.5%	5.2%	17.9%	13.2%
Childcare	14.9%	22.6%	13.5%	2.4%	22.1%	24.5%
Opportunities for youth	24.6%	33.8%	11.1%	1.9%	12.6%	15.9%
Public transit	30.1%	35.0%	18.9%	2.4%	6.8%	6.8%
Eating establishments (e.g. restaurants, cafes)	54.7%	34.0%	8.5%	1.4%	1.4%	0%
Retail shops	31.3%	44.1%	21.3%	0.5%	2.4%	0.5%
Food affordability	16.7%	44.8%	32.9%	4.8%	1.0%	0%
Banking & financial services	5.2%	23.2%	51.2%	17.5%	1.9%	1.0%
Professional services (e.g. accountants, lawyers)	27.1%	30.4%	23.7%	1.0%	10.6%	7.3%
Protective services (e.g. police, fire)	2.3%	15.0%	37.9%	36.9%	5.6%	2.3%
Home cleaning/maintenance services	15.6%	19.4%	27.0%	8.0%	18.0%	11.9%
High speed internet	16.4%	25.7%	34.6%	17.8%	2.3%	3.3%
Mobile phone coverage	13.2%	21.1%	35.7%	12.7%	6.6%	10.8%

Table 2: Survey respondent ratings of access to services and infrastructure (n = 214)

Satisfaction with Services

The Village of New Denver is directly or indirectly involved in the delivery of services in the area. Survey participants were asked how satisfied they are with respect to current levels of service for the services delivered by the Village. They were asked to identify for each service whether they are satisfied and see no change needed, whether they think the Village should spend more on a service, or less on a service, or were not sure.

Table 3 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated their view for each of the listed services.

For several of the services, survey respondents said they were satisfied and did not see a change needed. **Drinking water quality** received the highest percentage of people who said they are satisfied and see no change needed, at 85.6% of respondents. **Waste management services** also received high percentages of people who are satisfied, such as **garbage collection** (83.4%), **recycling depot** (81.2%), and **arbour day collection** (69.4%). **Street and boulevard maintenance services**, including **snowplowing**, also received high satisfaction.

While the majority (73.4%) were satisfied and see no change needed regarding the **fire department**, there were mixed responses with respect to **wildfire protection**, with 35.3% saying spend more and 18.8% saying they were not sure. Responses were also mixed regarding the **cemetery**, with 31.2% saying they were not sure. These uncertainty responses may be related to residents not knowing much about these particular services. The **light bulb recycling depot** received the highest percentage of people who are not sure (39.0%), which may indicate that this service could be better publicized.

With respect to **parks and open spaces**, most residents felt they were satisfied. These services include the **Kohan Garden** (76.9%), **campground** (72.6%), **Greer Park** (71.6%), and **Centennial Park** (67.5%). The **marina** received a mixed response, with 50.2% saying they are satisfied and 30.7% saying they are not sure. The buildings owned by the Village also received mixed responses, except for the **Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre** where 73.0% of respondents said they were satisfied and see no change needed. Over half of respondents (53.1%) said to spend more on **Bosun Hall** and almost half (45.9%) said to spend more on **Knox Hall**. There was not a single service listed where residents said they would like to see the Village spend less. **Economic development** received the highest percentage of respondents saying the Village should spend more, at 71.3% of respondents.

	I'm satisfied, no change needed	Spend more on this	Spend less on this	I'm not sure
Garbage collection	83.4%	2.4%	2.0%	12.2%
Recycling depot	81.2%	15.5%	1.0%	2.4%
Light bulb recycling depot	50.2%	8.3%	2.4%	39.0%
Arbour day collection	69.4%	6.8%	1.9%	21.8%
Street maintenance	69.7%	21.2%	1.0%	8.2%
Boulevard maintenance	66.2%	18.1%	3.9%	11.8%
Sidewalk maintenance	52.9%	31.7%	1.9%	13.5%
Snowplowing	67.3%	18.8%	1.0%	13.0%
Street lighting	65.9%	14.9%	9.1%	10.1%
Fire department	73.4%	14.5%	1.5%	10.6%
Wildfire protection	43.0%	35.3%	2.9%	18.8%
Cemetery	56.6%	8.3%	3.9%	31.2%
Kohan Garden	76.9%	10.1%	3.9%	9.1%
Centennial Park	67.5%	22.5%	2.4%	7.7%
Campground	72.6%	12.5%	4.3%	10.6%

	I'm satisfied, no change needed	Spend more on this	Spend less on this	I'm not sure
Greer Park	71.6%	9.3%	2.0%	17.2%
Dog off-leash area (south side of creek)	63.5%	8.2%	7.7%	20.7%
5 th Avenue Dike (north side of creek)	62.6%	10.7%	4.9%	21.8%
Mori Trail (and related amenities)	64.4%	12.5%	8.7%	14.4%
Marina	50.2%	12.2%	6.8%	30.7%
Drinking water quality	85.6%	7.7%	1.0%	5.8%
Silvery Slocan Museum	59.1%	19.2%	6.4%	15.3%
Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre	73.0%	14.0%	2.4%	10.6%
Reading Centre	45.2%	37.4%	1.9%	15.5%
Knox Hall	34.8%	45.9%	4.8%	14.5%
Bosun Hall	26.1%	53.1%	7.8%	13.0%
Radio/TV service	56.4%	16.7%	8.3%	18.6%
Economic development	14.4%	71.3%	3.4%	11.0%

Table 3: Survey respondent ratings of Village of New Denver service delivery (n = 212)

Survey participants were invited to include any comments related to service delivery by the Village of New Denver. There were several comments related to **economic development**, with statements such as the “vitality of downtown is lacking” and that the Village should “welcome investment/development”. A few people specifically noted “attracting more full time residents [to help] boost the economy”, and particularly “young families”. **Activities for young people and families** was a theme in the comments, with a skate park receiving several mentions, suggesting that “more money [be] spent on things that the community can use (not specifically for tourists), like a skate park or some dirt jumps.” A “community recreation centre” was suggested, and another person said they “would love to see a better gym [and] a pool would be amazing!”. Another suggested that Centennial Park be managed less as “a campground for tourists and more about a place for locals to spend time”.

Several people provided accolades to the Village regarding the recent **trail upgrades** and generally “doing a good job”, although a few were disappointed with the Village, specifically commenting on the recent installation of vault toilets along the trail network and expressing their wish for them to be removed. A few people also specifically noted that **accessibility** should be further increased, particularly with respect to sidewalks. There were also a few people who specifically said that the Bosun Hall should be demolished and a new building “could accommodate a variety of activities and interests”.

Other comments included ideas related to **waste management**, such as moving “towards [a] user pay system, incentivizing reduction”, as well as having “curb side recycling collection” and a “community composting centre”. Ideas related to **new recreational facilities, high speed internet, public washrooms, a pedestrian bridge, and rental housing** were also suggested. These ideas were already included in the following survey question where participants were asked about which services not currently provided should be considered by the Village of New Denver (see next section *Interest in New Services*).

Interest in New Services

The survey questionnaire noted that municipal assets and services contribute to community well-being and help to attract and retain residents. Survey participants were asked “which of the following services not currently provided by the Village of New Denver should the Village consider providing in the future?” with a list provided. **Table 4** shows the number and percentage of respondents who selected each item.

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Pedestrian bridge over lower Carpenter Creek	94	44.8%
Organics waste diversion/community composting	102	48.6%
Curbside recycling collection	40	19.1%
Full service library	69	32.9%
New recreational facilities (e.g. skate park, bike pump track)	89	42.4%
Tourist information centre	51	24.3%
High speed internet	92	43.8%
Fully serviced public washroom facility in downtown	106	50.5%
Municipal transit	46	21.9%
Municipal agriculture (e.g. community farm)	59	28.1%
Rental housing initiative	119	56.7%
Sewer system	44	21%
Other	58	27.6%

Table 4: Number and percentage of respondents indicating assets or services to be considered in the future (n = 210)

Some of the highest interest is in a **rental housing initiative**, with over half of survey respondents making this selection. A **fully serviced public washroom facility in downtown** was also selected by just over half of respondents. **Organics waste diversion/community composting** received some of the higher number of responses, followed by **pedestrian bridge**, **high speed internet**, and **new recreational facilities**. There was less interest in the curbside recycling collection, sewer system, municipal transit, and tourist information centre.

Several other ideas were offered for consideration. Seniors housing and affordable housing initiatives were suggested the greatest number of times. Other ideas were “community services for younger people” and alternative energy initiatives to promote energy self-sufficiency. A walking path between New Denver and Silverton was also mentioned a few times, along with one person noting that trails and backcountry access management planning is important. A “community tool library” was another idea and a car-free “community and market space” in the downtown, as well as “waterfront improvement as Nakusp has done”. Public wifi and public phones were additional ideas.

Some respondents also re-iterated or expanded on their selections, with several specific mentions related to recreation, such as “no new noisy recreation facilities”, a skate park, skating rink, “upgrade the fitness centre”,

and “more walking and biking opportunities”. One felt a sewer system was top priority, while another was against it. Again, the comments were diverse with obvious differences in opinion, particularly with respect to tourism and economic development initiatives.

Future Population

The Village of New Denver has seen a decline in population, with a drop of 6.2% in the last five years, from 504 residents in 2011 to 473 in 2016. Fifteen years ago the population was 538 (2001 Census). BC Stats population projections for the Arrow Lakes Local Health Authority show a decline.⁹ With an interest in understanding whether residents support population growth, survey respondents were asked, “what population would you like to see for the Village within the next 10 years?”.

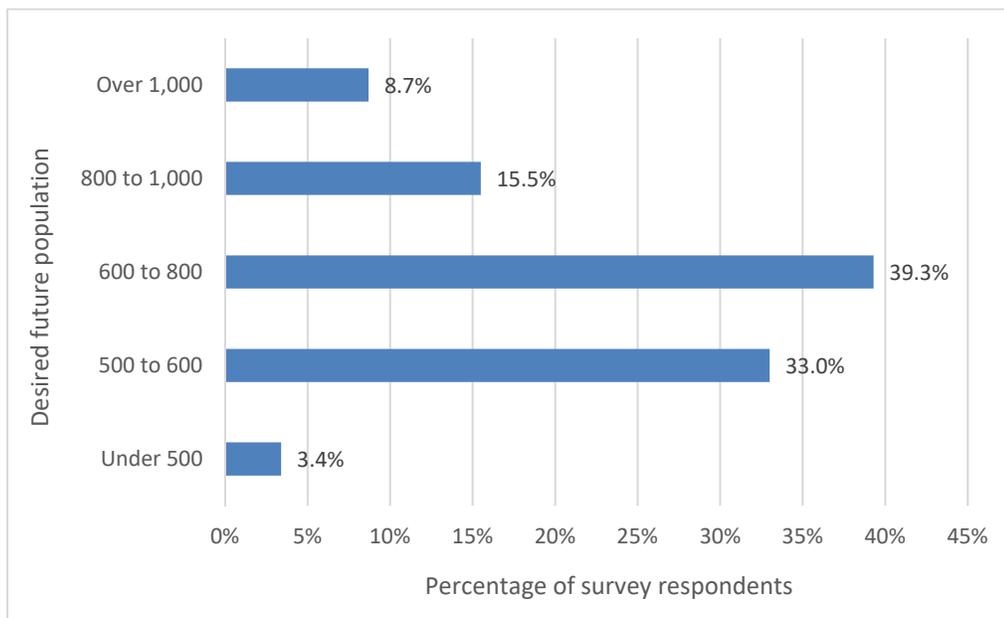


Figure 21: Percentage of respondents and desired future population (n = 206)

As shown in **Figure 21**, the vast majority (96.6%) would like to see the population of New Denver be larger than it currently is today. Most (72.3%) would like to see a population of 500 to 800, while 15.5% would like to see it at 800 to 1,000 and 8.7% would like to see a population of over 1,000. The results from the 2007 land use planning survey also showed interest in population growth, with the majority (72%) indicating a desired population of 600 to 1,000.

Additional Thoughts & Comments

Survey respondents were invited to provide additional thoughts and comments related to community well-being and attracting residents to New Denver and area in a final open-ended question. Some responses reiterated themes from previous questions, such as the need for job creation and **meaningful employment**, and the importance of **maintaining services**, with particular mention of medical and educational services, as well as several comments on the need for an evening restaurant or somewhere to “dine, dance, and be social”.

Affordable housing was a major theme, with mention of the importance of having rental houses available for new people to move to the community. Connected to the housing theme was considerable commentary and ideas for limits and **regulations regarding seasonal home ownership and vacation rentals**. “There are too many houses that sit empty” said one survey participant. “I would like to see New Denver gain more full-time residents to keep our village a robust and diverse community”, said another. Many comments stressed **attracting full-time residents**, such as young families, entrepreneurs, knowledge workers, and year-round seniors, instead of an emphasis on tourism or seasonal residency. “The focus needs to shift from tourism to attracting long term residents with families who will support our school and run businesses all year”. This interest in full-time versus part-time residency also emerged through comments from part-time residents, who noted that they do not feel welcome in the community and that full-time residents seem to have a “bad attitude towards outsiders”. There was also cautionary comment by a few residents regarding attracting more people at all. “We don’t want this place to be loved-to-death, which happens to many communities who focus heavily on tourism”, said one. Another noted that, “New Denver is a treasure. While it’d be nice to see some things refined or improved, I’d hate to see anything about the essence of New Denver be changed.”

Another theme that emerged was the need for **more youth initiatives** in order to retain and attract families and young people. “There are lots of activities for older people in New Denver, but the youth are bored out of their mind,” said one respondent. Several suggested that the skate park be built, and that the youth centre continue to be supported. “Children and youth programs encourage new families to live here. We should invest in them to invest in our future growth.”

There were also several comments related to the **attractiveness of the community** in terms of its “curb appeal”. Comments noted cleaning up “unsightly residences”, improving sidewalks, and avoiding looking like it is “a dying town”. “Perception is important. We have to show we are making incremental improvements if we want to attract people to the community”. While several thanked and applauded the local governments, a few expressed that local governments could be doing more with respect to community development, and a few also specifically mentioned they would like to see better communication by village staff with residents to avoid conflict and ensure that residents are being heard.

Conclusions

Analysis of this survey of New Denver and area residents offers insight into what the population of the area thinks and believes about their own state of community well-being and the future they would like to see. Some broad conclusions can be gleaned from this research study to help aid local governments and other community organizations in their planning and action related to community development.

The vast majority of residents are generally satisfied with the quality of life in the area, plan to stay, would recommend the area to others, and see a bright future. The healthy natural environment and strong sense of community appear to be key assets and contributors to well-being. While most residents are generally satisfied, there are needs and suggestions for improvement. Maintaining key assets and services such as the health centre, school, and small businesses, are important to ensure the area remains relatively well-serviced for its size. Additional services are desired including child care, more opportunities for youth, seniors support, and more evening eating establishments.

The sense of community is strong, however, this research also exposed a sentiment by some that it may not always be equitable and inclusive, where some people may get left out and disagreement is occurring. There appears to be some division between full-time residents and part-time residents in particular, with full-time residents expressing that they prefer people to live in the community full-time, and part-time residents expressing they do not feel particularly welcome.

The majority of residents want to see modest growth in the area's population, and suggest that local governments spend more resources on economic development. There appears, however, to be a preference for attracting and retaining people who intend to reside full-time. Tourism and seasonal residency appear to be a divisive issue, with some expressing interest and support, but most articulating caution. The caution seems to be connected to housing issues in particular, with a lack of housing for full-time residents being a real concern, and a top suggestion for the municipality to pursue a rental housing initiative. There is a fear of becoming a "resort town" and losing the small town character that currently exists and is a reason people have come and stay.

Community and economic development are inherently complex challenges. While job opportunities and the local economy in the New Denver area may not be strong, there is a positive sense of prosperity and community well-being. Focussing on those assets that make people want to stay is an appropriate approach, building on the strengths of the community. Through that process it is important to ensure that residents have opportunities to contribute to the decisions that will shape their future.

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Appendix A – Survey Questionnaire



WHAT MAKES YOU STAY?

Resident Attraction & Retention in New Denver & Area Community Survey

The Village of New Denver is working in partnership with the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Selkirk College to conduct research on the well-being of our community with an interest in resident attraction and retention. This survey asks you about quality of life and several aspects related to community services and livability in and around New Denver.

While the survey is created to assist with community planning and decision-making by the Village of New Denver, residents of Silverton and Area H North are invited to share their views. Part-time residents are also encouraged to take the survey. We invite all members of all households to please take the survey.

The Selkirk College Research Ethics Committee has approved this survey, which is anonymous and completely voluntary. By participating you are giving your free and informed consent. You can stop participating at any time and you may choose not to answer any question. This survey should take about 15 minutes of your time.

Findings from the survey will be shared publicly through a report in early 2018.

For information about research participation, confidentiality, and benefits of participation, please review the **Informed Consent Form attached to this document**. By completing this survey, you agree that you have read the Informed Consent Form and agree to participate in this study.

If you are under the age of 19, please have your parent or guardian review the form before taking the survey.

SURVEY QUESTIONS:

1. Did you read the informed consent form? And, if you are under the age of 19, did your parent or guardian read the form?
 - yes
 - no

2. Where do you live (your primary residence)?
 - Within the Village of New Denver
 - Within the Village of Silverton
 - Area H North (including Hills, Red Mt. Road, Denver Siding, and other surrounding rural areas)
 - In another more distant place (I'm a part-time resident of the area)

3. What gender do you identify with?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary

4. How old are you?

- Under 19 years of age
- 20 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- Over 75

5. In general, what is your opinion about quality of life in the New Denver area?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

6. For how many years have you lived in the New Denver area?

If you are (or were) living part-time, please note for how long you have lived part-time, and if applicable, for how long you have lived full-time.

	Part-time	Full-time
Less than 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 to 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 to 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 to 20 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 20 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. If you are a **part-time resident**, do you intend to make the New Denver area your primary residence in the future? *(full-time residents skip this question)*

- Yes, in the next 1 to 3 years
- Yes, in the next 4 to 10 years
- No
- I'm not sure

8. If you are a **full-time resident**, do you intend to move in the next 3 years? *(part-time residents skip this question)*

- No
- Yes

If yes, where and why? _____

9. If you recently **moved to the New Denver area**, why did you move here?

- Friends
- Family
- Reasonably priced housing
- Employment
- Small town / rural character
- Safety of community
- Good place to raise a family
- Good place to retire
- Climate
- Clean environment
- Natural beauty
- Outdoor recreation opportunities
- Other (please specify): _____

10. Would you recommend New Denver and area as a good place to live?

- Yes No

Why or why not? _____

11. When thinking about community livability, please rate the following using a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being “getting worse” and 7 being “getting better”. (Use an X to mark your rating.)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	getting worse						getting better
The livability of this community is...							
The friendliness of this community is...							
The local economy is...							
The landscape in this community is...							

12. Which of the following categories applies to your total household income for last year (before taxes)?

- Under \$20,000
- \$20,000 to under \$40,000
- \$40,000 to under \$60,000
- \$60,000 to under \$80,000
- \$80,000 to under \$100,000
- \$100,000 to under \$150,000
- Over \$150,000

13. Given your current needs and financial responsibilities, would you say that you and your family are:

- Prosperous
- Very comfortable
- Reasonably comfortable
- Just getting by
- Poor
- Very poor

14. How would you rate your general health?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

15. How important are the following factors in contributing to your quality of life in the New Denver area?
 (Use an X to mark your rating.)

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Friends close by				
Family close by				
Sense of community				
Safety of community				
Small town character / quiet				
Walkability				
Lucerne Elementary Secondary School				
Slocan Community Health Centre				
Community events				
Arts & cultural opportunities				
Learning & educational opportunities				
Recreation opportunities				
Volunteer/community engagement opportunities				
Food & agricultural opportunities				
Business opportunities				
Employment options				
Cost of living / affordability				
Good place for kids				
Clean environment				
Climate				
Natural beauty / scenery				

Other important factors or comments?

16. Using a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 7 being “strongly agree”, please rate the following. (Use an X to mark your rating.)

	1 strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 strongly agree
This community is a great place to live							
This community copes pretty well when faced with challenges							
I feel proud to live in this community							
This community has a bright future							
There’s good community spirit around here							
Living costs are affordable here (e.g. food, gas, housing)							
This community is financially well-off							
There are plenty of jobs available around here							
Businesses in this community are doing pretty well at the moment							

17. Using a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 7 being “strongly agree”, please rate the following. (Use an X to mark your rating.)

	1 strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 strongly agree
Area local governments are able to help our community face challenges							
The people who make decisions for my community represent the whole community, not just part of it							
I can get involved in local decision-making processes if I want to							
Most people around here get a fair go							
Some groups in this community keep to themselves							
Some individuals get left out in this community							
There is a lot of disagreement between people in this community							

18. Please rate local access to the following services and infrastructure. You may indicate not applicable for the statements that do not apply to you. (Use an X to mark your rating.)

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Not sure	Not applicable
General health services (e.g. doctor, pharmacist)						
Mental health services (e.g. psychologist, counseling)						
Specialist health services (other than mental health)						
Education (schools, distance education, continuing education)						
Housing						
Recreational facilities, parks, & trails						
Arts & cultural experiences & opportunities						
Community volunteer/involvement opportunities						
Aged care services (e.g. supports for seniors)						
Childcare						
Opportunities for youth						
Public transit						
Eating establishments (e.g. restaurants, cafes)						
Retail shops						
Food affordability						
Banking & financial services						
Professional services (e.g. accountants, lawyers)						
Protective services (e.g. police, fire)						
Home cleaning/maintenance services						
High speed internet						
Mobile phone coverage						

19. The Village of New Denver is directly or indirectly involved in the delivery of services in the area. Delivery of these services requires human and financial resources. How satisfied are you with respect to current levels of service for each of the following: (Use an X to mark your rating.)

	I'm satisfied, no change needed	Spend more on this	Spend less on this	I'm not sure
Garbage collection				
Recycling depot				
Light bulb recycling depot				
Arbour day collection				
Street maintenance				
Boulevard maintenance				
Sidewalk maintenance				
Snowplowing				
Street lighting				
Fire department				
Wildfire protection				
Cemetery				
Kohan Garden				
Centennial Park				
Campground				
Greer Park				
Dog off-leash area (south side of creek)				
5 th Avenue Dike (north side of creek)				
Mori Trail (and related amenities)				
Marina				
Drinking water quality				
Silvery Slocan Museum				
Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre				
Reading Centre				
Knox Hall				
Bosun Hall				
Radio/TV service				
Economic development				

Comments:

20. The population of the Village of New Denver was recorded as 538 in the 2001 Census, 504 in 2011, and 473 in 2016. What population would you like to see for the Village within the next 10 years?

- Under 500
- 500 to 600
- 600 to 800
- 800 to 1,000
- Over 1,000

21. Municipal assets and services contribute to community well-being and help attract and retain residents. Which of the following services not currently provided by the Village of New Denver should the Village consider providing in the future?

- Pedestrian bridge over lower Carpenter Creek
- Organics waste diversion/community composting
- Curbside recycling collection
- Full service library
- New recreational facilities (e.g. skate park, bike pump track)
- Tourist information centre
- High speed internet
- Fully serviced public washroom facility in downtown
- Municipal transit
- Municipal agriculture (e.g. community farm)
- Rental housing initiative
- Sewer system
- Other: _____

22. Do you have any additional thoughts to share about community well-being or attracting new residents to New Denver and area?

Informed Consent Form

New Denver Community Well-being Research Project

October 2017

The *New Denver Community Well-being Research Project* is a research partnership between the Village of New Denver and the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Selkirk College. The project aims to conduct research to help inform community planning and decision-making related to current and future community well-being for New Denver and area. This survey asks you a series of questions about life satisfaction and well-being, and about several aspects related to community services in New Denver and area. Participation will benefit the community overall by providing insight into residents' views and values, highlighting opportunities for improvement, with particular interest in local resident attraction and retention. Findings from the survey will be shared publicly through a report available in early 2018.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice, including skipping some of the survey questions if you prefer to not answer. There are no risks associated with your participation and at no time will any specific comments be attributed to any participant. All information provided from the survey will be kept confidential and will not be used in any identifiable way. Survey results will be shared with Village of New Denver staff. It is possible that you may be identifiable given the details of your responses, however all Village staff involved are committed to complete confidentiality. All electronic and hard copy records from the survey will be kept in a secured environment. Raw data will be destroyed after 10 years. Raw data may be used for future longitudinal analysis. You will also be provided with a copy of the research study at your request. The survey will take 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions about the study please contact Principal Investigator: Dr. Terri MacDonald, Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, Applied Research & Innovation Centre, Selkirk College, at (250) 365-1434 or tmacdonald@selkirk.ca. This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee. If you have ethical concerns about the study, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee – Human Participants, Paula Vaananen at pvaananen@selkirk.ca or 250-365-1430.

If you are under the age of 19, you must have your parent or guardian read this form before taking the survey.

By completing this survey, you give free and informed consent to participate.

Thank you!