

December 2019



## Home for the Holidays

With the winter holidays approaching, we anticipate the familiar comfort of abundant food, stockings over the fireplace, and the precious moments spent with friends and family. However, some in our region are struggling to make ends meet this holiday season.

In the Columbia Basin-Boundary, 15.2% of the population (25,485 individuals) is considered low income, based on the [2015 Low Income Measure](#). This percentage is slightly higher than the provincial average of 15.0%.

[Statistics Canada](#) shows that 20.2% of Columbia Basin-Boundary owner and tenant households (14,735 households) were living in unaffordable housing in 2016, meaning they spent 30% or more of their total income on shelter costs.

The price to rent a home in our region increased by 5.4% and 2.2% for Nelson and Cranbrook, respectively, between 2017 and 2018. (See [CMHC 2018 Rental Market Report](#).) This increase makes it harder for low-income families and individuals to find affordable housing.

Unaffordable housing makes it difficult for some of our neighbours to meet their basic needs. This contributes to the very real and growing concern regarding homelessness within

our region. This concern has sparked countless province-wide initiatives, including the release of the 2018 [Report on Homeless Counts in BC](#), and numerous community-focused homeless counts including one for [Nelson, Trail](#) and [Castlegar](#). Homelessness is quantified for a few Columbia Basin-Boundary communities in the table below.

Community	Year	Source	Homeless Count
Trail	2018	Getting to Home: Assessing Homelessness in Greater Trail 2018 Annual Report	<b>Total</b> ..... <b>104</b>
			% Males.....56%
			% Females.....44%
			% Youth.....31%
Nelson	2018	Nelson CARES Society 2018 - 10 <sup>th</sup> Annual Report Card on Homelessness	<b>Total</b> ..... <b>132</b>
			% Males.....54%
			% Females.....38%
			% Other gender.....7%
Nelson	2018	2018 Report Card on Homelessness Counts in B.C. - Homelessness Services Association of BC, Urban Matters and the BC Non-Profit Housing Association	<b>Total</b> ..... <b>115</b>
			% Males.....54%
			% Females.....39%
			% Other gender.....7%
Cranbrook	2018	2018 Report Card on Homelessness Counts in B.C. - Homelessness Services Association of BC, Urban Matters and the BC Non-Profit Housing Association	% Youth.....18%
			% Senior.....14%
			% Caring for youth..37%
			<b>Total</b> ..... <b>29</b>
Castlegar	2019	Castlegar and District Community Services Society – Labour Mobility in a Rural Setting: Point in Time Count – August 2019.	% Males.....67%
			% Females.....26%
			% Other gender.....7%
			% Youth.....4%
Castlegar	2019	Castlegar and District Community Services Society – Labour Mobility in a Rural Setting: Point in Time Count – August 2019.	% Senior.....35%
			% Caring for youth..33%
			<b>Total</b> ..... <b>31</b>
			# Males.....10
Castlegar	2019	Castlegar and District Community Services Society – Labour Mobility in a Rural Setting: Point in Time Count – August 2019.	# Females.....8
			# Children.....13

These homeless counts are under representative of actual total cases of homelessness within our region, as most communities do not have the capacity to conduct a homeless count survey. Those that do have capacity have trouble accounting for cases of hidden homelessness. Regardless, these incomplete statistics do show that hundreds of people within our region lack access to safe and secure shelter, clothing, and food.

### What can you do to help?

BC food banks help more than 80,000 individuals each month to meet their basic consumptive needs. There are 16 food banks in the Columbia Basin-Boundary. In the spirit of giving this holiday season, please consider helping families and individuals in need by donating to your local food bank. Visit <https://www.foodbanksbc.com/> to learn more about how you can help, and why we should continue to support food banks in our communities.

For more information on income and housing, please see the [2019 Snapshot Report](#) and past [State of the Basin](#) full reports.

## **Your Feedback is Requested to Improve State of the Basin Research**

We would like to hear from you about your experience using the State of the Basin research and data provision services. Your feedback is valuable to us so we can ensure our research continues to be a useful tool for your planning and decision-making. Please take a few minutes to fill out our survey.

[Click here for State of the Basin feedback form](#)

## **Selkirk College Makes Top 50 Research Colleges List**

Selkirk College made the top 50 research colleges list for the first time since its journey into research began in 2004. See Canada's Top 50 Research Colleges list [here](#).

Selkirk College's research activities also made the ranks on the top small research colleges [lists](#).

With over 20 students employed by Selkirk College on applied research and innovation projects over the past year, and many more students benefiting from faculty applied research and innovation activity, Selkirk College continues to advance applied research that supports community partners while also building rural capacity.

**Happy Holidays from all of us at the RDI!**

**COLUMBIA BASIN**  
**RDI**  
**RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**



*Selkirk College RDI Focus is a monthly e-blast highlighting stories of well-being in our region. You are receiving this email because you have attended an RDI event or have subscribed to receive updates on the RDI.*

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