

Castlegar Community Wellness Assessment

Part 1 – Community Profile

April 7th, 2006

This Community Wellness Assessment for Castlegar has been developed under the direction of the Castlegar District Social Planning Council. The wellness assessment is part of a process of promoting informed planning and collaboration on a broad range of community issues.

This report consists of two main sections:

Part 1: A ***Community Profile*** of the Castlegar area, including sections on:

- a) Population trends: general, age composition, ethnicity and labour force.
- b) Income and income security
- c) Health
- d) Castlegar's performance relative to the rest of the province: the BC Socio-Economic Index
- e) Building Activity and Real estate
- f) The Environment (to be developed in the future, though local information is scarce).

Part 2: The ***Wellness Assessment*** of Castlegar, based on seven determinants of community well-being:

- a) Personal Health and Well-being
- b) Personal and Family Security: Economic and Physical
- c) Educational Skills and Learning Culture
- d) Strong and Sustainable Local Economy
- e) Environmental Health
- f) Strong and Inclusive Identity
- g) Community Capacity and Leadership

This report will be presented at a Community Wellness Forum on May 6th 2006, at which time community priorities and opportunities for collaboration will be determined. After this Community Forum, the Social Planning Council will provide staff resources to assist in developing and implementing collaborative action plans. Funding for staff resources will be available through the spring and fall of 2006.¹

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¹ Other documents and reports related to the Castlegar Community Wellness Assessment include:

- Ø Castlegar Wellness Assessment Tool
- Ø Community Survey: Detailed Responses
- Ø Research Report on Community Wellness Initiatives in BC and North America

Part 1: Castlegar Community Profile

Introduction

This community profile provides a broad range of information about the communities of the Castlegar Area. The information is descriptive in nature. Assessing the data and its implications is one of the tasks of the Castlegar Community Forum to be held in May 2006.

At the direction of two community workshops², this profile gathers information that includes comparisons with other parts of British Columbia, in order to provide a sense of how Castlegar compares to other rural communities, especially in the southern interior of BC. An effort has also been made to identify trends, by looking at information over a number of years, including forecasts for coming years. All of the information presented in this Castlegar Profile comes from government sources, except for Real Estate MLS data that comes from the Kootenay Real Estate Board. All data sources have been identified. For those interested in delving further into this information, web links have been provided wherever possible.

This profile covers the Castlegar area, including the City of Castlegar, Robson, Raspberry, Ootischenia, Pass Creek and other parts of Areas I and J of the Regional District of Central Kootenays. This area is essentially the same as the Castlegar Local Health Area, as defined by the Interior Health Authority. The decision to define the community of Castlegar in this broad manner was a decision of a community workshop held to design the assessment process.

This profile is intended to be a work in progress, with periodic updates as new information is added, errors are corrected, and updates from data sources are made available. The Social Planning Council is also exploring possibilities of placing the profile and wellness assessment on a web site. If the reader is aware of any errors or has opinions on how the profile could be improved, you are invited to contact either the author or the Social Planning Council³.

² Two community workshops were held in October and December 2005, to elicit community input into the focus and design of the Castlegar Wellness Assessment. Between 30 and 40 people attended each of the two workshops.

³ The author, Derek Murphy, can be contacted at murphy@netidea.com; the Social Planning Council can be contacted through its Co-Chair, Rona Park - rona.park@telus.net.

1. Population – General Trends

- a) **Composition of Castlegar’s Population:** The communities that make up the Castlegar area include a large rural and unincorporated component, equal to approximately 38% of the area’s population. This is not untypical of other parts of the Kootenays.

Castlegar Local Health Area: 2004

	Totals	Castlegar	Robson / Raspberry	Ootischenia	Remaining Rural Areas
Population	13,473	8,323	1,599	850	2,701
Percentage	100%	61.8%	11.9%	6.3%	20%

- b) **Population Trends: Past, Present and Future** – The overall size of Castlegar’s population has been and is forecast to continue to be stable. A very slight decline over the last ten years is forecast to shift towards a very slight increase. This trend is similar to many other areas of the West Kootenay Boundary region⁴ where population growth has been either negative or very low. This is in contrast to the rest of the Southern Interior⁵ where there has been and will continue to be steady population growth (see chart). According to the provincial government, in the past, a major positive component of Castlegar’s population growth came from a natural increase (more births than deaths among the local population). However, in the future, this trend will be reversed, with more deaths than births. Increasingly, any population growth or even stabilization in the Castlegar area will have to come from positive net migration (more people moving to Castlegar than moving away).

	1996	2006	2011	2021	% Increase 2006 - 11	% Increase 2006 – 21
Castlegar Area	13,752	13,497	13,617	13,761	0.9%	2.0%
West Kootenay Boundary		79,954	81,227	82,908	1.6%	3.7%
BC Southern Interior		717,545	754,796	828,486	5.2%	15.5%

Source: BC Stats – PEOPLE 30 Population Forecasts

Link: <http://www.interiorhealth.ca/Information/Reports/Population+Profiles/>

- c) **Age Composition: Present and Future** – While the total population is expected to remain stable, the make-up of Castlegar’s population is expected to change dramatically. Like the rest of BC, Canada, and Western countries, Castlegar will experience a rapid increase in the average age of its residents. At present, Castlegar’s age structure is similar to other parts of the Southern Interior.

⁴ The West Kootenay Boundary area referred to in this report is borrowed from the Interior Health Authority. The precise boundaries of this area can be found on their web site. The area includes the Boundary area and the Upper Arrows area, but does not include Creston or Revelstoke.

⁵ The BC Southern Interior is also a region of the Interior Health Authority. It includes the sub-regions of the East Kootenays, West Kootenay Boundary, the Okanagan, and Thompson/Cariboo/Shuswap.

Over the next 5 – 15 years, Castlegar will experience an aging of its population that is more dramatic than the shift in other areas of the South Interior. The key aspects of this shift are:

- θ A 13% decline in the population under 20 years old over the next five years; with a further decline to 20.5% over the next 15 years. The latter represents over 600 youth individuals.
- θ A 13% increase in seniors (over 65) in the next 5 years, increasing to 50.4% over the next 15 years. This represents an increase of over 1,000 seniors. Seniors will increase their current 15.9% share of the population to 23.4%.
- θ A 9.2% and 41.3% increase of those over 75 over the next 5 and 15 years respectively.
- θ A 6.7% and 26% increase of those over 85.
- θ The percentage decline in Castlegar in the age group under 20 will be twice that of the West Kootenay Boundary region. Moreover, in the Southern Interior region, there is forecast to be virtually no long-term reduction in this under 20 age group, in contrast to Castlegar’s 20.5% loss.
- θ In the age group 65 – 85, Castlegar’s growth will be roughly the same as the West Kootenay Boundary and the Southern Interior. For the group 85 and older, Castlegar’s growth is projected to be significantly lower the other regions.
- θ There will also be a slight increase in 20 –44 age group over the next 15 years, and a reduction in 45 – 64 age group, with the decrease happening in the five years from 2016 – 2021 (as more of the baby boomers become seniors).

Castlegar Area	2006		2011		2021		% Increase 2006 - 11	% Increase 2006 – 21
	% of population	#	% of population	#	% of population	#		
Under 20 years	21.9%	2,952	18.9%	2,567	17.1%	2,347	-13.0%	-20.5%
65 and older	15.9%	2,141	17.8%	2,420	23.4%	3,221	13.0%	50.4%
75 and older	7.3%	984	7.9%	1,075	10.1%	1,390	9.2%	41.3%
85 and older	2.3%	312	2.4%	333	2.9%	369	6.7%	26.9%

West Kootenay Boundary	2006		2011		2021		% Increase 2006 - 11	% Increase 2006 – 21
	% of population	#	% of population	#	% of population	#		
Under 20 years	21.1%	16,847	18.9%	15,332	18.1%	15,036	-9.0%	-10.7%
65 and older	17.2%	13,736	18.7%	15,195	25.0%	20,733	10.6%	50.9%
75 and older	8.3%	6,613	8.9%	7,264	10.5%	8,693	9.8%	31.5%
85 and older	2.4%	1,910	2.7%	2,216	3.1%	2,604	16.0%	36.6%

BC Southern Interior	2006		2011		2021% of population		% Increase 2006 - 11	% Increase 2006 – 21
	% of population	#	% of population	#	% of population	#		
Under 20 years	22.0%		20.0%		19.0%		-4.3%	-0.2%
65 and older	17.3%		18.4%		22.4%		11.7%	49.5%
75 and older	8.4%		9.0%		10.0%		13.0%	37.7%
85 and older	2.2%		2.6%		3.0%		23.4%	60.2%

Source: BC Stats PEOPLE Population Project

Link: <http://www.interiorhealth.ca/Information/Reports/Population+Profiles/>

d) Ethnicity: The Castlegar area population is less diverse than the rest of the Southern Interior, though the really significant difference is between the entire Southern Interior (including Castlegar) and the Lower Mainland. Visible minorities (representing people largely of non-European origins) represent only 1.6% of the Castlegar population and 3.7% of the Southern Interior, while they constitute 21.6% of BC as a whole. The proportion of visible minorities has been growing in BC and Canada. While there are no forecasts regarding the growth of visible minorities in rural BC, it is a fairly safe prediction that visible minorities will be a growing percentage of the local population, especially with an increasingly tight labour market (see below).

	Visible Minorities		First Nations	
	Total Number of Individuals	Percentage of Population	Total Number of Individuals	Percentage of Population
Castlegar Area	210	1.6%	390	3.0%
West Kootenay Boundary	1,760	2.3%	2,325	3.1%
BC Southern Interior	23,860	3.7%	36,770	5.7%
BC		21.6%		4.4%

Source: 2001 Canadian Census (as presented by BC Stats community profiles)

Link: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/lha/lha_main.asp

e) Labour Force: Another characteristic that distinguishes the Castlegar area is its dependence on the resource sector. 33% of income in the Castlegar area is generated by extraction or processing of natural resources. This compares to a dependence of 16.9% for the Southern Interior. This heavy dependence on the resource sector is also reflected in the labour force which has a higher than average representation of “blue collars” jobs in the manufacturing sector.

	<i>Castlegar Area</i>	<i>West Kootenay Boundary</i>	<i>Southern Interior</i>	<i>BC</i>
Dependency on forestry, mining and fisheries: % of income	33%	25.6%	16.9%	10%
Provincial ranking (lower means higher dependency)	19 out of 78	6 out of 16	2 out of 5	
% of labour force in Trades & Skilled Transportation and Equipment Operators	18.4%	16.7%	15.6%	12.3%
% of Labour Force in Manufacturing	18.5%	14.0%	10.6%	9.6%

Source = Census Canada (as presented by BC Stats community profiles)

Link: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/lha/lha_main.asp

An aging population and technological innovation have had an impact on the labour force. Since local data were not available, regional data from the Kootenays was utilized. In the Kootenays a number of striking trends have emerged in the last two years: lower participation of employable people in the labour market; lower unemployment rates; lower employment levels; and more people working part time. This combination of low unemployment and low participation rates has not been common in the past. This Kootenay trend is in contrast to the southern interior of

BC where employment is growing, participation rates are increasing and so are full time positions. The explanation given by Service Canada and HRCC is that young workers are leaving the Kootenays and the older workers who are staying tend to retire early or work part time. Some of these may be longer-term trends related to an aging work force. One of the consequences is that there is growing evidence that employers in the Kootenay region are having major difficulties hiring skilled workers. It is uncertain how much this regional trend is reflected in Castlegar, but there is no reason not to believe that these trends are happening in this area.

Labour Market (2000 – 2005)	Kootenays			Thompson Okanagan		
	September 2000	September 2005	Change	September 2000	September 2005	Change
Labour Force	79,700	76,600	-3,100	231,800	264,000	32,200
Employed	72,300	71,700	-600	219,000	251,000	39,200
Full Time	55,700	53,700	-2,000	165,500	205,100	39,600
Part Time	16,600	18,000	1,400	49,400	46,100	-300
Unemployed	7,400	4,900	-2,500	19,900	12,900	-7,000
Participation Rate*	65%	61.4%	-3.6%	61.4%	65.5%	4.1%
Unemployment Rate	9.3%	6.4%	2.9%	8.6%	4.9%	3.7%

Source: Southern Interior Labour Market Review – HRCC and Service Canada

Link: http://www.labourmerketinformation.ca/standard.asp?pcode=lmiv_main&lcode=e

2. Income and Income Security

In 2001, Castlegar had an average family income of \$60,567. This was higher than the average for both the West Kootenay / Boundary and Southern Interior regions. Castlegar also has a slightly smaller than average percentage of families considered to be low income. This is also reflected in the percentage of individuals receiving Income Assistance or Employment Insurance support. The one area where statistics show a higher rate of financial stress for Castlegar residents is for seniors. 2.5% of seniors in the Castlegar area received income supplements through GAIN, compared to 2.0% for the Southern Interior.

	Castlegar Area	West Kootenay Boundary	Southern Interior
Average/Median Family Income (doesn't include single person households)	\$60,567	\$55,943	\$56,893
% of households below low income cut-off	10.1%	10.3%	10.6%
% Dependent on (Sept. '04):			
Employment Insurance,	2.7%	3.2%	3.2%
Income Assistance (Sept. '04)	4.2%	5.5%	4.7%
Duration over 2 years	0.9%	1.1%	0.8%
Seniors on GAIN (Sept. '04)	2.5%	2.2%	2.0%

NOTE:

Source: Census Canada 2001, (as presented by BC Stats community profiles)

Link: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/lha/lha_main.asp

3. Health Profile

The health of Castlegar's residents is similar that of the rest of BC, especially when using such measures as life expectancy and standard mortality rates (see later on in this sector). The average life expectancy at birth is 79.6, compared the 79.9 for the Southern Interior. In contrast, there are proportionally less new births in Castlegar than in the Southern Interior⁶.

The top five causes of death in the Castlegar area between 1999 – 2003 were:

Cause of Death	# of Deaths	% of Total Deaths	% of deaths occurring in people 75 and older
Diseases of the Circulatory System	204	38.0%	33.7%
Cancer (all sites)	135	24.7%	48.1%
Diseases of the Respiratory System	50	9.1%	28.0%
Alcohol Related Deaths	44	8.0%	70.5%
Endocrine and Metabolic Diseases	25	4.6%	40.0%
Sub Total	462	84.5%	41.1%
All Causes of Death	547	100%	40.2%

On some health issues Castlegar differs from the BC average. These differences are captured through a measure called the standard mortality ratio. The Standard Mortality Ratio (SMR) is ratio of the number of deaths occurring to residents of a geographic area (e.g. Castlegar area) to the expected number of deaths based on provincial mortality rates. An SMR less than one indicates fewer deaths than expected, while an SMR over 1 means more deaths than expected.

The Table below notes the top five causes of death where the Castlegar area was worse (higher) than the rest of the province. The top three causes are significantly higher than the provincial norm and are also areas where human choices and local responses can make a difference.

Motor Vehicle Accidents (2.24)*
Accidental Falls (2.13)*
Diabetes Mellitus (1.79)*
Diseases of the Arteries (1.55)
Alcohol Related (1.35)

*Indicates that the variation is statistically significant.

Only four categories showed SMRs below the norm, none of which was statistically significant.

In looking at trends over the period from 1986 to 2003, a number of causes of death showed significant changes. Notable among those with increasing SMRs were Accidental Falls and Alcohol-Related Deaths.

Source: Interior Health Authority

<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/Information/Reports/Local+Health+Profiles/>

⁶ Fertility rates for Castlegar in 2006 were estimated at 1,187 per thousand woman between the ages of 15 and 49. This compares to a fertility rate of 1,400 in the Southern Interior. Source: People 30 Projections.

4. Socio-Economic Index(2005)

How does Castlegar compare to other communities and regions of BC? The provincial government has developed an index to help understand how communities compare in key areas. The index measures how communities and regions rank compared to each other on a number of measures: human and economic hardship; crime; health; education; children at risk; and youth at risk. ⁷ (In the opinion of the authors of this report, this index and its measures have significant limitations and perhaps even flaws in methodology. Nonetheless, the index is informative).

The table below shows that the Castlegar area rates quite well compared to the rest of BC. Overall, Castlegar ranks in the top third of communities in BC, both rural and urban. In none of the six sub-indexes does Castlegar rate below the average score. Areas where Castlegar scores significantly better than average are: crime rates, education, and children at risk.

Please note: * A score of 0 = average. Less than zero is better than average. More than zero is worse than average. ** Higher ranking among communities of regional districts is better.

	Castlegar area		RDCK		RDKB	
	Score *	Ranking **	Score *	Ranking **	Score *	Ranking **
Overall BC Regional Socio-Economic Index	-.31	60 out of 77 BC communities**	-.39	22 out of 27 regional districts	-.17	18 out of 27 regional districts
Human and Economic Hardship	-.15	50 out of 77	+.13	11 out of 27	+.28	6 out of 27
Crime	-.36	54 out of 77	-1.05	25 out of 27	-1.06	26 out of 27
Health	-.36	61 out of 77	-.30	18 out of 27	+.28	10 out of 27
Education	-.44	56 out of 77	-.50	21 out of 27	-.52	23 out of 27
Children At Risk	-.43	66 out of 77	-.42	23 out of 27	+.36	7 out of 27
Youth At Risk	-.14	49 out of 77	-.67	24 out of 27	-.30	17 out of 27

Source: BC Stats

Link: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/i_lha/charts/charts.asp

⁷ Factors included in each sub-index:

- ♣ Human and Economic Hardship = % on income assistance; % seniors receiving gain.
- ♣ Crime = Violent crime, property crime, # of serious crimes per police officer;
- ♣ Health = Potential years of life lost due to accidents, natural causes, suicide and homicide;
- ♣ Education = % of adults without post secondary completion; % of 18 year olds who did not graduate; grade 12 exam not completed; grade 12 English exam not completed; % of grade 4 students below standard.
- ♣ Children at Risk = % of population under 19 on income assistance; children in care; child mortality rate; % of students below standard in Reading – grades 4 and 7; serious juvenile crime rate.
- ♣ Youth at Risk = % of population between 19 and 24 on income assistance; % of 18 years who did not graduate; total serious crime rate.

5. Housing, Building Activity and Real Estate

The Castlegar area has a disproportionately large percentage of homeowners, and a relatively small percentage (20%) of renters. Regardless of where they live in BC's interior, renters pay a very high percentage, almost 50%, of their income for housing costs (rent, utilities, insurance). Homeowners pay significantly less. In Castlegar, homeowners pay 12.7% of their income for housing, less than homeowners elsewhere in the West Kootenays or Southern Interior (15.7% and 17.3% respectively).

Rental Households

	Castlegar	West Kootenay Boundary	Southern Interior
% of householders who are renters	20.3%	23.2%	26.2%
% of renters paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs	47.9%	46.8%	46.6%
% of homeowners paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs	12.7%	15.7%	17.3%

Building Activity: There was a very significant increase in building activity in the Castlegar area over the last four years. This increase was particularly pronounced in the construction of new houses (single family, multiple residential and manufactured homes) where there has been a steady increase from 37 new units in 2002 to 54 units in 2005. Even more pronounced has been the amount spent for each housing start or residential renovation. This is consistent with data from other parts of the Regional District of central Kootenays.

Municipal building permits issued in City of Castlegar and Areas I and J (2002 – 2005) By Dollar Value and Number of Permits

	2005		2004		2003		2002	
	Value	Permits	Value	Permits	Value	Permits	Value	Permits
Residential Starts	\$7,817,685	54	\$5,131,342	47	\$3,807,761	37	\$3,749,481	37
Residential Renovations	\$1,701,000	151	\$1,395,225	138	\$1,394,269	156	\$1,056,611	142
Commercial % Industrial	\$3,510,782	42	\$5,466,700	45	\$2,227,829	47	\$2,169,500	43
TOTALS	\$13,028,784	247	\$11,993,267	230	\$7,429,859	240	\$6,975,592	222

Sources: City of Castlegar and Regional District of Central Kootenays

Link: RDCK data only http://www.rdck.bc.ca/development/building/statistics/2004_monthly_summary.html

Does not include dam construction

Real Estate Activity (2004 & 2005): Activity in the real estate sector, as measured by MLS Sales, has grown, though more in prices than for total number of units sold. And more in the rural areas than in the City of Castlegar.

MLS (Multiple Listing Services) Sales of Single Family Detached

	2005		2004		% Change in Units Sold	% Change in Average Price
	# of Units Sold	Average price	# of Units Sold	Average price		
Castlegar	151	\$154,692	149	\$135,938	+1%	+14%
Castlegar Rural	73	\$177,171	70	\$145,815	4%	22%
Kootenays*	2,351	\$181,246	2,301	\$152,223	2%	19%

All MLS Sales

	2005		2004		% Change in Units Sold	% Change in Average Price
	# of Units Sold	Average price	# of Units Sold	Average price		
Castlegar	192	\$149,426	186	\$134,590	+3%	+11%
Castlegar Rural	124	\$146,393	105	\$123,080	18%	19%
Kootenays*	4,140	\$158,936	3,813	\$143,472	9%	11%

* Includes East Kootenays, West Kootenays, and Boundary.

Source: Kootenay Real Estate Board

Note: Does not include private sales of those properties not listed on MLS.

6. Environment

θ *Water Quality*

Drinking Water: In the City of Castlegar, according to its 2005 Drinking Water Report, the municipal systems meets all the government standards and passed all 139 samples tested during 2005 (City Report). However, in the rural areas around the City, the quality of drinking water is largely unknown. (The next draft of this assessment will hopefully include any data on gastrointestinal illnesses reported by rural residents.)

River Water: Water quality monitoring has been undertaken for many years at Birchbank, between Castlegar and Trail. Overall water quality reported by the CRIEMP (Columbia River Integrated Environmental Monitoring Program) has been rated as good or excellent since the early 1990's. Testing of river water demonstrates that it meets all provincial standards and has been improving over the last couple of decades. Sedimentation from the Celgar plant has been a significant issue in the past. However, CRIEMP states that the situation has been steadily improving since 1994, with all key targets having been achieved.

Source: CRIEMP

Link: <http://www.criemp.org/>

Percent of municipal population not on municipal sewage treatment:

City of Castlegar = 0 BC = 13.7

Percent of municipal population on sewage system that is primary only

Castlegar = 0% BC = 35.9%

Source: Environment Canada

Link: http://www.ec.gc.ca/Water/en/manage/use/e_data.htm

θ *Water Usage*

In the City of Castlegar, usage is 262 Imperial Gallons per person per day in 2005, down 5% from 2004. The average in Canada is 141 Imperial Gallons per person per day.

θ *Air Quality*: Data pending on particulates and TSRs.

If you are aware of information that would improve this section of the report, please contact Derek Murphy at 359-5998 or Murphy@netidea.com.