



## Greater Victoria Tops in Youth Education and Creative Arts

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — For the first time, Greater Victoria has been included in the YouthfulCities Index placing number one out of 22 Canadian cities for education and creative arts for youth.

Placing seventh overall, Victoria is shown to be a well-balanced City for youth to live (8<sup>th</sup> place), work (9<sup>th</sup> place), and play (8<sup>th</sup> place). Additionally, the City was in the top five for employment, diversity and gender equity.

The [YouthfulCities](#) Index is the first public, national comparable urban index, measuring 121 indicators spanning 20 areas in which data has been collected by youth across the country. The Index is intended to create credible data for decision-makers, provide inspiration for urban innovation efforts, launch a network of young urban decoders, and provide national exposure for Canadian cities.

“We’re building a city where young people feel that they have a place and a voice,” said Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps. “That’s why we are investing more than \$1 million every year in programs that directly support youth and taking action to make Victoria a more affordable place live, raise a family, start a business and grow. What we learn from this national survey will help us plan how we can do even better.”

Through a partnership, the City of Victoria and the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) worked with Youthful Cities to have Victoria included in this year’s Index.

“It’s essential for the region to be an attractive and viable location for young people to stay here, or move here, and grow roots. The next generation of residents will be the driving force in our local economy, but we need to ensure we can continue to attract them here. The data from the YouthfulCities Index provides valuable insight about where we need to improve, but the findings also help us promote Greater Victoria and work collaboratively with organizations, like the Victoria Foundation, on youth-related initiatives, said Bruce Williams, Interim CEO of SIPP.

“As a recent graduate living and working in the region, the findings were definitely in line with the aspects of the city that my peers and I love about living here, but it also shines a light on some of the things we are frustrated with,” says Veronica Plihal, Chair of SIPP’s Youth Liaison Taskforce. “Our region needs to address issues like affordability, transportation, and access to well-paying career options.”

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**About South Island Prosperity Partnership**

The South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) is the economic development organization for Greater Victoria, B.C., comprised of 50+ members, including 10 local governments, seven First Nations, three post-secondary institutions, seven industry associations and non-profits, and more than 20 major employers, all working together to bolster the region's economic and social prosperity. For more information: <http://www.southislandprosperity.ca/>