

Expanded Report

Message from the Chair and Executive Director

We are pleased to publish the first Medicine Hat's Vital Signs report. Vital Sign's is a graded report card on the quality of life in and around Medicine Hat. Like any report card it covers a number of different subjects helping us to identify what we are doing well and where we need to improve.

It is often said that we are lucky enough to live in the best City, in the best Province, in the best Country in the world. This report reflects on many of the factors that support that statement but we must not be complacent. It is clear there are areas that need to be addressed.

We would like to thank the many community leaders, residents and organizations who have helped to identify, select, gather and grade the indicators for the 11 key categories. They have all contributed to produce a report specific to our community. We have taken care to try and produce a simple and easy to understand report that will assist everyone to obtain a clear image of our strengths and weaknesses.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Community Foundation of Medicine Hat & Southeastern Alberta. Since our inception we have been focused on the well-being of our community. Our mission is,

Improving the quality of life in Southeastern Alberta through the development of permanent endowment funds, making responsible grants and inspiring community leadership.

The Foundation now has assets of well over \$5.5 million and during the past 15 years has made 423 grants with a total value of nearly \$2.3 million.

Vital Signs is a unique and valuable method of pointing to areas of need. It measures the pulse of our community. Vital Signs will help the Community Foundation in our grant making decisions. It will also be invaluable to donors and grant recipients. It will help donors to gain a better understanding of what is going on in our community and assist them in how best to direct their gifts.

Grant recipients will have the latest information at their fingertips to better plan and develop their programs to meet the requirements of a rapidly changing community. We also hope it will be of some use to decision and policy makers as they formulate their plans for the greatest benefit of Medicine Hat.

We invite you to read Medicine Hat's Vital Signs 2007 and consider how it can help you and the organizations you work, or volunteer for, to make a positive impact and improve the quality of life in Medicine Hat and its surrounding communities.

Mike Christie
Executive Director

Kathy Mandeville
Board Chair

Measuring the health of our community in 2007

With the help of community graders, we have assigned one of the following to each indicator in this report:

In dire need of corrective action



Of concern, needs attention



Progress is being made



We're doing well and headed in the right direction



Awesome! Medicine Hat's the tops



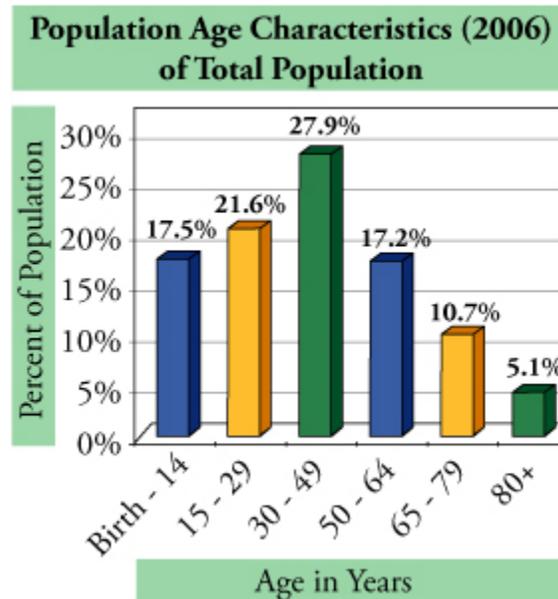
Grading was determined by using the weighted average of the results.

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Our Community

Medicine Hat has seen a population growth of just over a 10% from 51,249 in 2001 to 56,995 in 2006 (Census Canada, 2006). This is an average of approximately 2% per year. Canada, during the same period saw a population change of 5.4%. It is worth noting that 51% of the population consists of women and the Medicine Hat census area accounts for 2.09% of the Alberta population.



Source

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4801006&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Count&SearchText=medicine%20hat&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

Note: The median age in 2001 was 37.3 and had risen to 38.8 by 2006. The Alberta average was 36.0.

This significant population growth is a result of the strong economy in Medicine Hat and region. With unemployment rates at all-time lows and employee recruitment and retention a priority for most businesses the result is an increasing number of people immigrating from other provinces, territories and from around the world.

The strong economy has also affected family incomes. From 2001 to 2005 the median family income increased 20.9% from \$54,600 to \$66,000. This was better than both the Alberta average (18.5%) and the Canadian average (13.3%). However, the median in real terms still remains lower than the Alberta average of \$71,000.

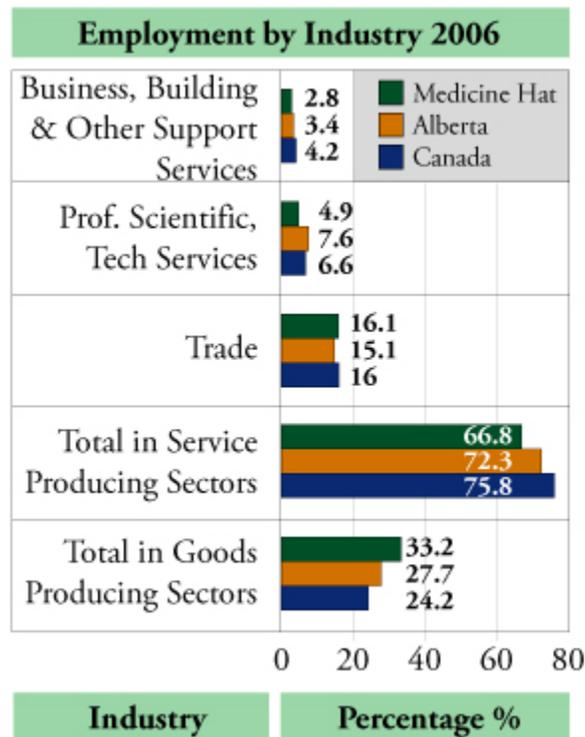
Median Census Family Income 2001-2005			
	2001	2005	% Change
Canada	\$53,500	\$60,600	13.3%
Alberta	\$59,900	\$71,000	18.5%
Medicine Hat	\$54,600	\$66,000	20.9%

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-XI-6-a.pdf>

The Government of Alberta has estimated that there will be 400,000 new jobs created in Alberta between 2006 and 2016. The concern comes with an estimated 300,000 new workers entering the labour force in the same period. Source http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/RRM/RRM-SO_mh_b_guide.pdf

In the Medicine Hat-Lethbridge economic region 33.2% of the population work in the Goods Producing Sector, this includes Agriculture, Oil and Gas, Forestry, Utilities, Manufacturing and Construction. The remaining 66.8% of work in the Service Producing Sectors, this includes Transportation, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Scientist and Technical Services, Educational, Health care and Social Assistance, Culture and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services and Public Administration.

Only 24.2% of Canadians work in the Goods Producing Sector, while 75.8% work in the Service Producing Sector. Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-XI-3-b.pdf>



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-XI-3-b.pdf>

Of 25,616 dwellings in Medicine Hat 48% have Internet, 34% have no Internet access and 18% did not specify. Source

<http://www.medicinehat.ca/City%20Government/Departments/City%20Clerk/summary.asp>

In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* published in 2007, 76% of respondents stated that “living in a city that has a small town feel” was important to them.

Medicine Hat is the sunniest city in all of Canada. In 2005 Environment Canada reported 2,513 hours of sunshine.

Environment

1. Greenhouse Gas Emissions are reported to Alberta Environment only by large industrial facilities that annually emit 100,000 tonnes or more of greenhouse gas emission in carbon dioxide equivalent units.

In the Medicine Hat region there is no community monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions (for example monitoring transportation emissions), other than the large volume emitters described above.



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VIII-2.pdf>

2. Environment Canada calculates Medicine Hat's 2006 residential daily flow of water per capita at 394 litres per person which was a reduction of nearly 25% from 2001. The average Canadian daily residential use in 2006 was 336.5 litres per person.



Source http://www.ec.gc.ca/water/en/manage/use/e_data.htm.

Waste, Recycling & Landfill Statistics 2004 – 2006

	2004	2005	2006
Household Waste Collected (tonnes)	13,195	12,943	13,222
Average HH Waste Collection/Buried Per Person (kg)	242	231	229
Material Collected at Residential Drop Off Depots (kg)	2,478,431	2,733,875	2,852,454
Average Recycling Through Drop Off Depots Per Person (kg)	45.4	48.7	49.4
Medicine Hat Landfill Tipping Fee (\$/tonne)	\$15.25	\$16.00	\$18.00
Average (Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Lethbridge) \$/tonne	\$38.00	\$39.25	\$40.75

3. The Medicine Hat Landfill Tipping fee per tonne of waste is less than half the provincial average.



Source <http://www.medicinehat.ca/City%20Government/Departments/Utilities/index.asp>

4. On May 10, 2007 Alberta Environment completed a report on the City of Medicine Hat giving the City water treatment facility and the quality of water a #1 rating on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the highest rating achievable. The City also regularly monitors the water using over 300 different parameters.



Source http://www.waterforlife.gov.ab.ca/html/assessments_home.html

The quality of drinking water was considered an important indicator by 91% of respondents in the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study*. Of this 91%, only 75% felt that the water in Medicine Hat was safe.

5. The Air Quality Index, or AQI, associates concentrations of five major air pollutants to both federal and provincial air quality objectives. Outdoor concentrations of carbon monoxide, fine

particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and sulphur dioxide are used to determine whether the quality of air is Good, Fair, Poor or Very Poor. “Good” air quality is best possible rating and means that there are no known harmful effects to human or environmental health.

In 2006 the Air Quality Index (AQI) measured “Good” 94.01% of the time.



Source <http://www.palliserairshed.ca/>

Air pollution was considered an important quality of life factor for 77% of the people interviewed for the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study*.

From August 2006 to July 2007 the use of the solar panel on the Medicine Hat Library has reduced the amount of energy used by 1,543.6 kWh.

Source <http://www.lassothesun.ca/pages/medicine-hat-bkgd.htm>

“We must improve water conservation in such a dry environment. Garbage tipping fees should increase to encourage more recycling.” – Survey Respondent

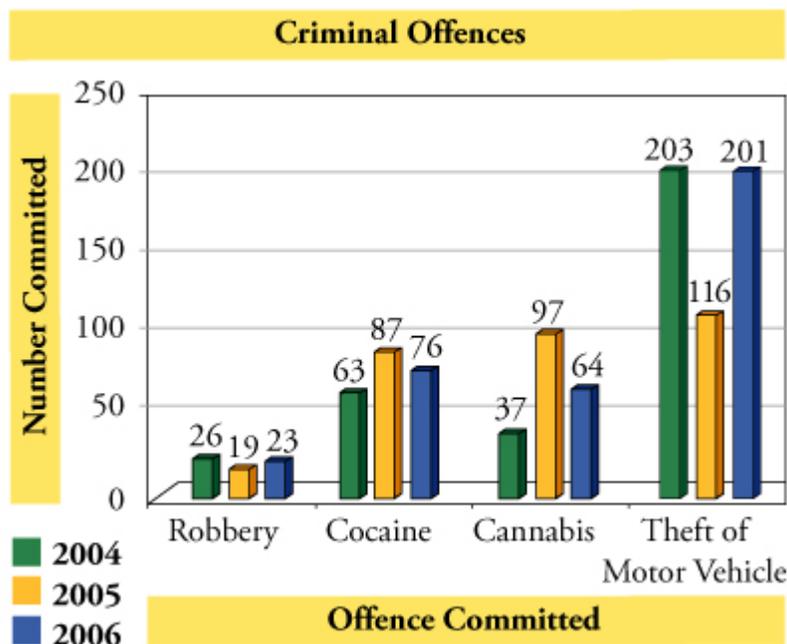
Safety

1. In 2005 there were 3,162 property crimes reported per 100,000 in Medicine Hat which is a 53.4% decrease from 1991. 🌞🌞🌞🌞

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-II-2.pdf>

2. Medicine Hat had 171 police officers per 100,000 in 2006. This was 2% higher than the provincial average and up 12% from that in 2000. 🌞🌞🌞🌞

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-II-4.pdf>



Source: <http://www.medicinehatpolice.com/docs/Areport/2005MHPSAnnualreport.pdf>

3. At 786 per 100,000 persons in 2005, the violent crime rate in Medicine Hat was 17% below the national average (943 per 100,000). The rate is down 12% from 1991. 🌞🌞🌞🌞

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-II-1.pdf>

4. Medicine Hat 911 is the first 911 centre in the world to receive the "Accredited Centre of Excellence" award in the Police Dispatch Protocol (EPD), and will be the first tri-service agency in the world to receive Accreditation in all three disciplines, Fire, (EFD), Police (EPD) and Ambulance (EMD). 🌞🌞🌞🌞🌞

Source <http://www.city.medicine-hat.ab.ca/Public%20Notices/MR/Medicine%20Hat%20911-%20First%20Accredited%20in%20Police%20Dispatch%20Worldwide.pdf>

“I’ve never had to use 911, however by knowing that, I feel quite confident if I ever had to use that service!” – Survey Respondent

The Medicine Hat Police Service receives its funding from various sources. These include 70% through municipal and provincial taxes, 6% from government grants, 19% is from fine revenue and 5% from community sources. These community sources include the funds to enhance community policing initiatives. Source <http://www.medicinehatpolice.com/>

When comparing policing internationally, Canada is policed far less than a significant number of countries. Per 100,000 population Canada (on average) has 186, while Italy has 559, the U.S.A. has 326, Australia has 304, just to name a few. Examples of countries with less police per 100,000 are Japan, New Zealand, Sweden and Finland. Source <http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=85-225-XIE>

In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* issued by the City of Medicine Hat in April 2007, the #1 ranked indicator of 36, was “feeling that your family lives in a safe place.”

Health

1. The number of active physicians (family practitioners and specialists) per 100,000 in Palliser Health Region was 130 in 2005, 32% lower than the national rate. Palliser's rate is up 12% from 2000, which compares with a national increase of 1.6%. The number of general family physicians has increased by 29.4% over the same period. 

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-III-2.pdf>

Having a family physician in Medicine Hat was important to 95% of respondents in the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* from April 2007.

2. The Alberta provincial average for low birth weight per 100 live births was 6.9% in 2005-2006. For the same period the rate in the Palliser Health Region was 6.1%, up from 4.5% the previous year. 

Source www.health.gov.ab.ca/resources/publications/reproductive06.pdf

3. In 2005 life expectancy in Palliser Health Region for women was 81.46 years and for men 75.70, which in both cases is slightly less than the provincial average of 82.69 year for women and 77.55 for men. 

Source <http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/regions/b1.htm>

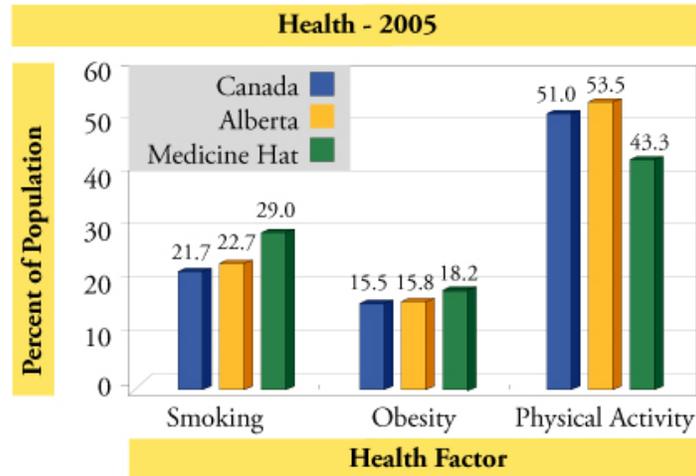
Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex and Health Region

	Female			Male		
	1986	1996	2005	1986	1996	2005
Alberta	80.39	81.38	82.69	74.12	75.92	77.55
Palliser Health Region	82.44	81.59	81.46	75.63	75.28	75.70

Source <http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/regions/b1.htm>

4. During the period 2003 – 2006, 51% of all human West Nile cases reported in Alberta were located in the Palliser Health Region. 

Source http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/public/wnv_evidence.htm



Obesity Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-III-4.pdf>

Smoking Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-III-5.pdf>

Physical Activity Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-III-6.pdf>

Pregnancy rate for women aged 15 – 49 in the Palliser region had increased from 65 to 69.4 per 1,000 from 2002 to 2005. The Alberta rate for the same time period went from 64 to 66.7 per 1,000. www.health.gov.ab.ca/resources/publications/reproductive06.pdf

Gap Between Rich & Poor

1. In 2005 a Place-to-Place comparison was conducted by Alberta Economic Development in order to compare the cost of living in Alberta's cities. Cost of living expenses included: food, shelter, utilities, household goods, clothing, transportation, health and recreation. The value of the index was generally established at 100. An index with a value greater than 100 indicates prices higher than the base price, or vice versa.

Medicine Hat has the lowest utilities in Alberta at 74.1. However, utilities are only weighted at 5.9% of total monthly costs. When considering all expenses, Medicine Hat's cost of living index was 97.7. 

Food categories ranked at 98.5, household supplies was 104.5, household equipment was 101.7, recreation and leisure 102.2, and transportation was ranked at 102.0.

Source <http://www.alberta-canada.com/statpub/costStudies/pdf/priceCompSurv2005.pdf>

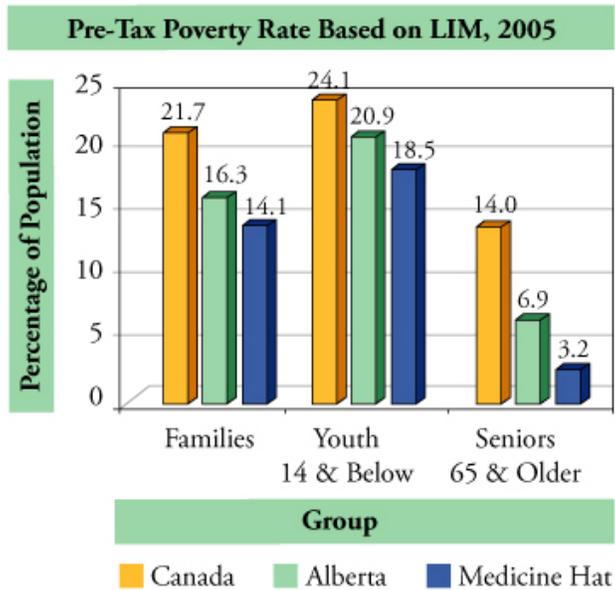
In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* conducted by the City of Medicine Hat in spring 2007, 87% of respondents stated that the cost of living indicator was an important one and 72% of these believe that Medicine Hat rates well on the indicator.

2. The retail cost of an average food basket in Medicine Hat in November of 2006 was \$195.38, compared to the average for all cities in Alberta of \$194.46. 

Source Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Economics and Competitiveness Division, Statistics and Data Development Unit, 2006.

3. In Medicine Hat the overall poverty rate, based on the Low Income Measure (LIM), an indicator of relative poverty, was 14.1% in 2005, down 8.7% from 2001. This was 13.9% lower than the provincial average and 35.2% below the national average.

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-I-2-a.pdf> 



4. In 2006, 1.2% of Albertans used food banks on a monthly basis. In Medicine Hat 1.6% (900) individuals used the local food bank on a monthly basis. This does not include food services provided by the Salvation Army, Champions Centre, and the Women’s Shelter. ☀️☀️☀️
 Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-I-4.pdf>

Food Bank use by Percent of Population

	1997	2005	2006
Canada	2.2	2.5	2.3
Saskatchewan	1.2	2.4	2.6
British Columbia	1.5	1.8	1.9
Alberta	1.3	1.4	1.2

Source www.cafb-acba.ca

The Food Bank usage may not be truly measured without considering Salvation Army, Santa Claus Fund and other supporters.” – Survey Respondent

Number of people to utilize the Salvation Army Medicine Hat Family Services Shelter

	Apr 06	May 06	June 06	July 06	Aug 06	Sept 06	Oct 06	Nov 06	Dec 06	Jan 07	Feb 07	Mar 07	TOTAL
#	125	210	189	155	189	155	153	193	144	149	135	124	1,921
Adults	106	206	187	149	179	153	146	190	144	149	135	123	1,867
Children	19	4	2	6	10	2	7	3	0	0	0	1	54

Source www.mhchs.ca

5. In 2005, those families in the top 10% (90th percentile) income earners in Medicine Hat made at least \$139,400, an increase of 22.5% since 2001. Those in the bottom 10% income bracket (10th percentile) made at most \$24,400, an increase of 17.5% since 2001. The top bracket made almost 6 times the lowest, and that gap increased by almost 4% between 2001 and 2005. ☀️☀️☀️

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-I-1-a.pdf>

Application for subsidized housing

	Jan - 05	July - 05	Jan - 06	July - 06	Jan 07	June - 07
Medicine Hat	122	132	153	166	168	204

Increase in active, approved applications for subsidized housing.

Source www.mhchs.ca

The indicator ranked #2 in level of important in the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* was 'adequate income to meet basic needs.' 88% of the respondents felt that Medicine Hat rates well for this indicator.

Getting Started

1. In Medicine Hat the unemployment rate of immigrants in 2001 was 6.9%. This was 28% above the average non-immigrant unemployment rate. 

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VI-2-a.pdf>

Unemployment Rate of Immigrants as a Ratio of the Non-Immigrant Unemployment Rate

	1996		2001	
	Entered country 6 to 10 years ago	Entered country within the last 5 years	Entered country 6 to 10 years ago	Entered country within the last 5 years
Canada	135.4	181.8	124.3	171.6
Alberta	123.6	152.8	117.3	123.1
Medicine Hat	180.6	104.2	185.2	127.8

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VI-2-a.pdf>

In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* published in April 2007, 71% of respondents felt that “newcomers being welcomed and accepted in the community” was important.

2. Students undertaking federally funded programming of English as a Second Language (ESL) as provided by SAAMIS Immigration increased 43.8% between 2004 and 2007. This does not include the Mexican Mennonite population who have naturalized Canadian Status and whose numbers are increasing dramatically. 

Source SAAMIS Immigration Services Association

3. In 2006-2007 SAAMIS Immigration served 283 clients, down slightly from the 294 clients served in 2005-2006. 

Source SAAMIS Immigration Services Association

4. In 2006 the youth (15-24 years old) unemployment rate for Medicine Hat-Lethbridge economic region was 5.9%, the lowest recorded in the 19 years of data available. This was 13% below the Alberta youth unemployment rate and 49% below the national rate. 

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VI-4-b.pdf>

Net migration – In 2001 the total percent of people in the Medicine Hat-Lethbridge economic area that lived in a different province, territory or country 5 years earlier was 11.4%. The rate for the country was 6.7%. Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VI-1-a.pdf>

'Keeping youth and adults in the community' is considered by 80% of the respondents in the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* to be important, while 28% felt that Medicine Hat was doing a good job on this indicator.

Learning

1. In the economic region of Medicine Hat-Lethbridge in 2006, 41% of the population (15 years and older) had completed a postsecondary education (university degree, post-secondary certificate or diploma). This is a 47% increase since 1990, the earliest year for which data are available. However, this is 14% below the provincial average. 

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-IV-2-a.pdf>

2. The proportion of the population (15 years and over) that had not completed high school is 29.2% in 2006 which was down 40% from 1990. The provincial average was 20.8% in 2006.



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-IV-3-a.pdf>

3. Between the 1995-1996 school year and the 2005-2006 school year there was an average Alberta Rural College enrolment growth of 4%. For this same period Medicine Hat College saw an enrolment growth of 26% and a 48.9% increase in the number of programs offered. Of all the Alberta Community Colleges, Medicine Hat College had the second highest Visa Student enrolment for the 2004-2005 school year. Source <http://www.mhc.ab.ca/>



4. When measuring literacy, scores in the 276-325 range are considered “level-3” proficiency – the proficiency level required for a modern economy and knowledge society.

The average adult literacy score for prose in Medicine Hat was 282 in 2003. This score was slightly below the provincial average of 283 and 4% above the national average of 272.



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-IV-1.pdf>

Rutherford Scholarship recipients

	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Alberta	28.6%	31.2%	32.5%	33.8%	35.3%
Medicine Hat CSRD no. 20	28.9%	27.5%	27.1%	33.0%	38.4%
Medicine Hat Sch Dist No 76	23.6%	28.2%	28.0%	31.6%	30.6%

Source http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/completion/

The Alexander Rutherford Scholarship for High School Achievement are awarded to high school students achieving an 80% average on five designated subjects.

Source <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/scholarships/info.asp?EK=11>

“First we need to look for ways to ensure better high school graduation rates in the hot economy.” – Survey Respondent

Housing

1. The ratio of average residential prices and median census family pre-tax income is an important indicator because the higher the ratio the more difficult it becomes for people to purchase their own home. The average Canadian ratio in 2005 was 4.11. In Medicine Hat in 2005 the ratio was 2.79, which was an increase of 20.8% since 2001. 

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-V-2.pdf>

2. From fall 2003 to spring 2007 the rental vacancy rate dropped 65%, to an overall vacancy rate of 1.7%. The average rent for a two-bedroom residence – the hardest to find – has increased 13.5%, from an average of \$554 to \$630. 

Source <http://boards.mls.ca/medicinehat/>

2003 – 2.8%

2004 – 1.6%

2005 – 2.1%

2006 – 1.0%

Spring 2007 – 1.7%

Source <http://boards.mls.ca/medicinehat/>

3. In Medicine Hat 67.9% of the homeless population are male. 97.6% are unattached individuals, as opposed to families. Visible minorities* represent 3.6% of the total population however, they account for 32.2% of the homeless population.

* The definition of visible minorities is consistent with the Employment Equity Act (1986) visible minorities are persons (other than Aboriginal persons) who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. 

Source <http://www.mhchs.ca/>

4. In 2006, 1,490 individuals used the emergency housing facilities available in Medicine Hat. This was an increase of 29.7% over the previous year and does not include the Women’s Shelter. Source <http://www.mhchs.ca/>

In 2004-2005, 88 clients used the Women’s Shelter. 19 of these clients were admitted more than once throughout the year – 29 women and 15 children were turned away. 

Source <http://www.psh-medhat.com/index.html>

5. Alberta has seen a 19% increase in multiple family residential building starts between 2005 and 2006. In Medicine Hat the number of similar housing starts in 2006 was 545, an increase of 43% from 2005. 

Source <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/>

Housing Statistics for Alberta, 2005 - 2006

	Single Detached			Multiple Family			Total		
	2006	2005	%	2006	2005	%	2006	2005	%
Medicine Hat CA	516	450	14.7%	545	381	43%	1,061	831	27.7%
Alberta (population 10,000+)	24,850	20,819	19.4%	16,032	13,482	18.9%	40,882	34,301	19.2%

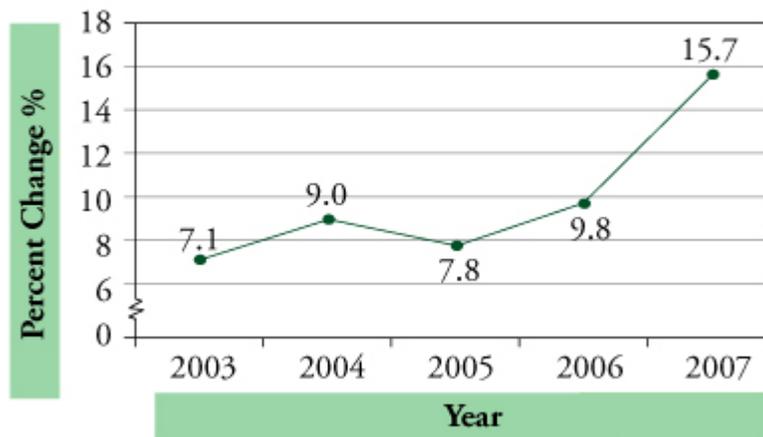
Source <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/>

Medicine Hat 5-year Multi-Family Building Development

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Duplexes	9	8	15	23	24
Tri & Four plexes	3	5	7	8	26
Apartment/Condo Buildings	23	32	55	75	77

Source www.medicinehat.ca

Residential Average Selling Price – 12 Month Average



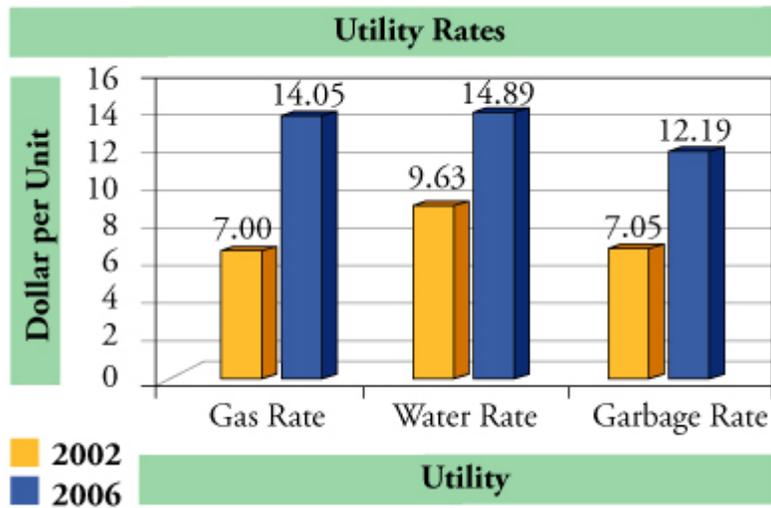
Source <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/corp/nero/nere/2007/2007-06-06-0815.cfm>

Average Annual Rent for 2 Bedroom Apartments as a Percent of Median Yearly Income

	2004	2005
Canada	14.9	14.5
Alberta	13.6	12.9
Medicine Hat	12.8	10.6

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-V-5.pdf>

“With an increasing population it is very important we monitor our housing situation and take steps to provide affordable housing to those in need.” – Survey Respondent



Source www.medicinehat.ca

In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* published in April 2007, 85% of respondents noted that the average cost of utilities was an important indicator to them. Of these respondents 54% believed that Medicine Hat was doing well on this indicator.

Work

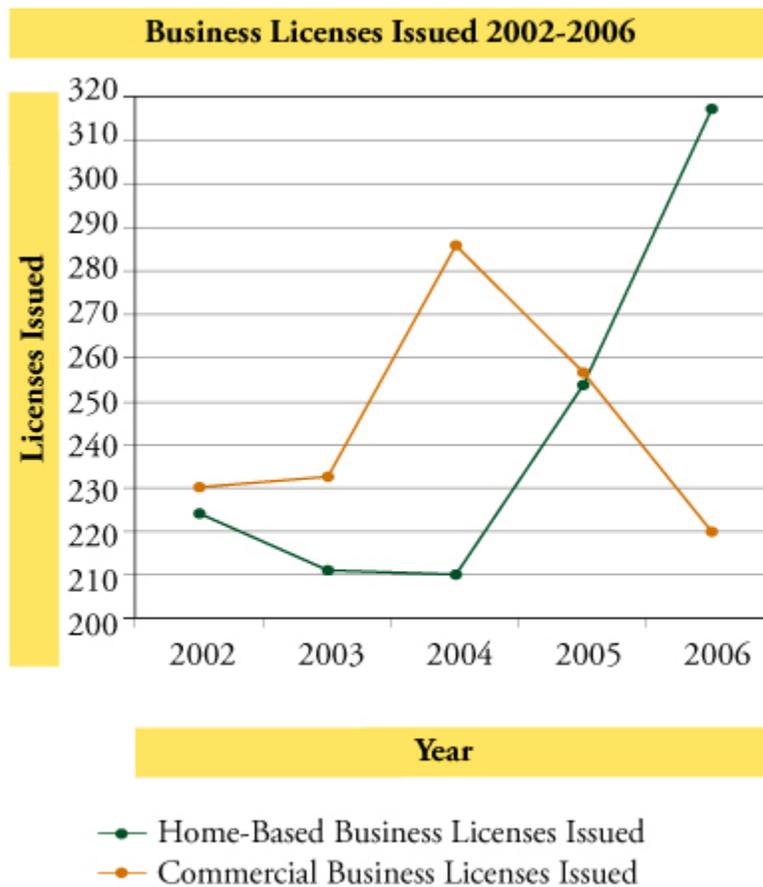
'Employment Rate' is the percentage of people working from a total number of persons of working age, 15 years and up. 'Unemployment Rate' is the percentage of the labour force that is actively seeking work but unable to find it at a given time.

1. At 68.6% in 2006, Medicine Hat-Lethbridge economic region had an employment rate 9% greater than the national rate but 3% lower than the provincial rate. This was down slightly from the 2005 rate of 70.5%. ☀️☀️☀️

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-IX-1.pdf>

2. In 2006 the unemployment rate in Medicine Hat-Lethbridge was 3.0%, the lowest in the 20 year history for which unemployment data is available. This was below both the national level (6.3%) and the Alberta level (3.4%). ☀️☀️☀️☀️

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-IX-2.pdf>



Source

<http://www.medicinehat.ca/City%20Government/Departments/Business%20Support%20Office/index.asp>

3. The number of new business licenses issued in 2006 in Medicine Hat increased 16% from 2005. Total licenses issued were 2,943; 312 licenses were not reissued. 

Source

<http://www.medicinehat.ca/City%20Government/Departments/Business%20Support%20Office/index.asp>

4. Within the Medicine Hat-Lethbridge economic region the average hourly wage in 2005 was \$18.78, the provincial average was \$21.04. 

2005 Alberta Wage Survey

	Medicine Hat-Lethbridge	Alberta
Agriculture	\$13.88	\$14.06
Forestry	--	\$20.16
Mining, oil & Gas	\$18.24	\$29.49
Utilities	\$24.18	\$31.72
Construction	\$23.13	\$25.85
Manufacturing	\$17.44	\$19.59
Wholesale Trade	\$17.71	\$17.75
Retail Trade	\$14.67	\$15.15
Transportation & Warehousing	\$18.21	\$18.88
Info, Culture & Recreation	\$10.16	\$13.22
Finance, Insurance Real Estate	\$20.72	\$21.80
Professional, scientific, tech	\$19.51	\$26.78
Business, Building, other support	\$14.34	\$12.69
Educational services	\$20.90	\$25.56
Health care, social assistance	\$16.57	\$17.97
Accommodation & food services	\$8.00	\$8.71
Other Services	\$16.00	\$17.01
Public Admin	\$28.00	\$28.04
Overall	\$18.78	\$21.04

Source http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-WSI_AvWage_IndustryER_2005.pdf

“If we allow wages to be lower than the provincial average we can and will lose qualified members of the workforce to other communities.” – Survey Respondent

Skilled labour shortage – Top 10 Alberta Job Vacancy Rates, 2005

Occupational Group	Estimated Job Vacancy Rate	Overall Average Hourly Wage	Overall Average Annual Salary
Other professional occupations in physical sciences*	17.7%	\$40.43	\$79,130
Structural metal and platework fabricators and fitters	13.2%	\$21.37	\$44,806
Oil and Gas Drilling, servicing and related labourers	9.7%	\$16.63	\$46,990

Food Service supervisors	9.4%	\$10.01	\$16,311
Glaziers	8.8%	\$16.17	\$33,889
Cooks	8.6%	\$10.39	\$19,305
Maitres d'hotel and Hosts/Hostesses	8.3%	\$7.43	\$9,115
Cashiers	7.8%	\$10.99	\$18,761
Automotive Service Technicians, Truck mechanics, and mechanical repairers	7.8%	\$22.47	\$48,687
Other medical technologists and technicians (Except dental health)	7.7%	\$32.69	\$61,047

The top vacancy rate of 17.7% was in the category of other professional occupations in physical sciences. This group includes metallurgists, soil scientists and physical science occupations.

Source http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-WSI_2005_WageSalarySurvey.pdf

78% of respondents to the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* published in April 2007 said that Medicine Hat offers the opportunity to work in the city. This was important to 77% of the respondents.

Getting Around

1. In Medicine Hat 2% of the population used public transportation to get to work in 2001. This compares with an Alberta average of 7.9%. ☀️☀️

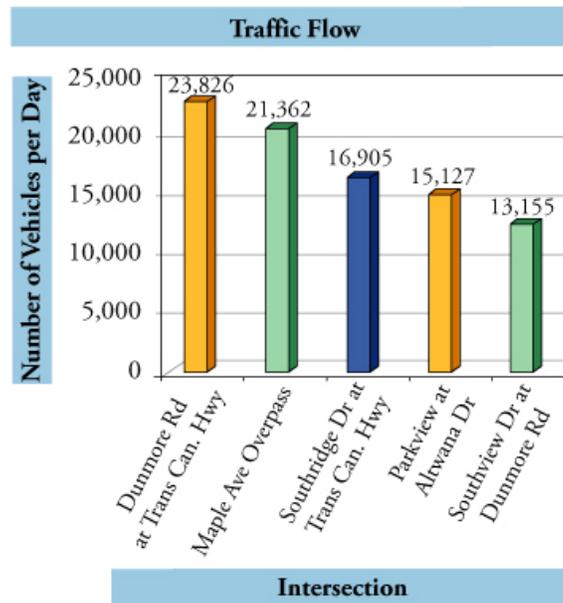
Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-XII-2.pdf>

2. Total traffic collisions reported by the Medicine Hat Police rose from 2,063 in 2005 to 3,020 in 2006, an increase of 31.6%. ☀️☀️

Traffic Collisions reported by Medicine Hat Police

	2004	2005	2006
People killed as a result of a traffic collision	3	1	5
Injured in traffic collisions	171	144	188
No injury	2,049	1,453	2,161
Hit & Run collisions	573	465	666
Total collisions	2796	2063	3020

Source <http://www.medicinehatpolice.com/docs/AREport/2005MHPAnnualreport.pdf>



The total number of times vehicles passed through the top five intersections in Medicine Hat on a given day in 2006 was 90,375. Source www.medicinehat.ca

92% of the survey respondents for the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* felt that 'getting around the city conveniently' is important. Of the 92%, 79% feel that Medicine Hat is doing a good job on this indicator.

Belonging & Leadership

1. In 2004 the volunteer rate in Medicine Hat was 53.2%. This was higher than both the national and the Alberta provincial rates of volunteering of 45.3% and 47.7% respectively.



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-2.pdf>

2. In an informal survey of 86 organizations conducted in 2007 by Medicine Hat's Volunteer Centre 47 respondents reported a 12% vacancy rate on community volunteer boards.



Source <http://www.volunteerinthehat.ca/About.asp>

3. The voter turnout for the 2006 Federal Election in Medicine Hat was 56.3%. This turnout was 8.4 percentage points lower than the national average (64.7%) and 5.6 percentage points lower than the provincial average (61.9%).



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-2-a-appendix.pdf>

4. The voter turnout for the 2004 Municipal Election in Medicine Hat was 34.36%. This turnout was 43.5% lower than the turnout for the 2001 Municipal Election.

Source www.medicinehat.ca



"Need a ward system... A ward system would make alderman ("councillors") responsible to a certain geographic area of the population." – Survey Respondent

The number of female candidates has varied over the 6 year period, as it more than doubled between 1998 and 2001 it then went back down in 2004. Further, the total number of candidates for mayor and aldermen was up for 2001. The most significant statistic is the rate of voter turnout over the three municipal elections. It decreased 23.64%. This is calculated as a percent who voted divided by the total eligible voters.

Source www.medicinehat.ca

In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* 'having control over one's own decision-making ranked #3 out of 36 indicators. 97% of the respondents felt that this was important and 88% of these thought that Medicine Hat was doing a good job in this area.

5. With the median charitable donations amounting to \$290 in 2005, Medicine Hat donors were 21% above the national average and consistent with the provincial average. Median donations have increased 12% since 2001.



Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-4.pdf>

Medicine Hat & District Health Foundation

	2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007
Total Donations	\$657,670	\$514,913	\$639,825
Average donor	\$138	\$135	\$117

Source <http://www.palliserhealth.ca/donations/medhat.html>

United Way of Southeastern Alberta

	2004	2005	2006
Total Donations	\$471,737	\$573,311	\$626,597
Average donor	\$69	\$74	\$60

Source: United Way of Southeastern Alberta

The national and provincial average for household donations, measured by tax filers, is 25%. This is the same for Medicine Hat. Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-1.pdf>

Proportion of Household Donors over Total Tax Filers

	1997	2001	2005
Canada	25.7	25.2	25.0
Alberta	25.9	25.1	25.3
Medicine Hat	na	25.3	24.6

Na = Not Available

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-1.pdf>

In 2003, 54.4% of households in the Medicine Hat-Lethbridge economic region reported spending income at local recreational facilities. This is higher than the national average, 46.8% and slightly lower than the provincial average, 54.9%.

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-5.pdf>

Community Organizations Membership for economic region 2003 – spending

	Contributions & Dues for social clubs & other orgs	Use of rec facilities
Canada	18.9	46.8
Alberta	19.7	54.9
Medicine Hat	na	54.4

Na = Not Available

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-X-5.pdf>

As of June 2007 there were 886 organizations registered in Volunteerism in Action Association's regional directory for South East Alberta. Of these 438 are in Medicine Hat of which 134 are Charities.

Source <http://www.volunteerinthehat.ca/Index.asp>

'Being able to trust others in the neighbourhood' was considered an important indicator by 92% of the survey respondents and 89% of those people thought that Medicine Hat was doing a good job. – *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study*

Arts, Culture & Recreation

1. The percentage of registered borrowers from the Medicine Hat Library in 2005 was 17%. This was down from 19% in 2000 and is less than half of the registered borrowers in similar sized Alberta communities. ☀️☀️☀️

Source <http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/lcvss/pdf/5-2005OutputMeasures-All.pdf>

Registered Borrowers, Circulation per Registered Borrower and Expenditures per Capita for Libraries 2000-2005

	Registered borrowers as a percent of the population		Circulation per registered borrower		Library expenditures per capita (\$)	
	2000	2005	2000	2005	2000	2005
Medicine Hat	19.04	17.06	54.50	n/a	27.19	31.37

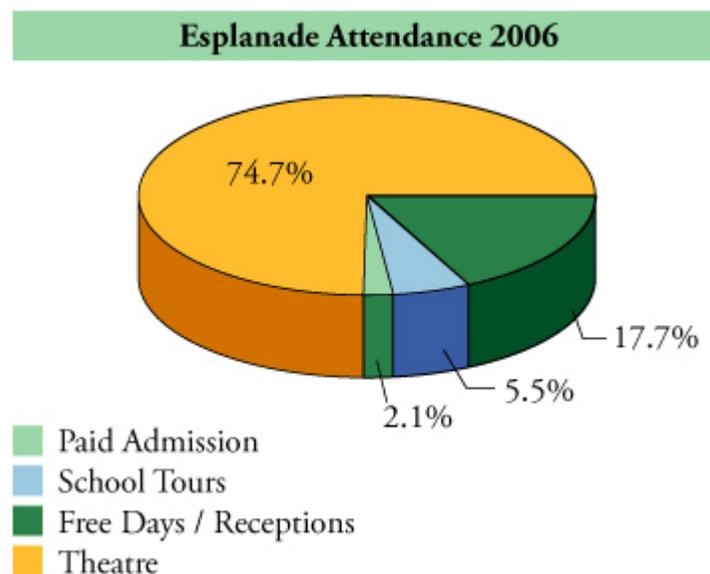
Na = not available

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VII-1-i-appendix.pdf>

2. In 2001 the proportion of the working population employed in arts, culture, recreation and sport in Medicine Hat was 1.78. This was 35% below the national proportion and nearly 20% below the provincial proportion. ☀️☀️☀️

Source <http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca/rpt2007/table-VII-2-b.pdf>

“Remember that many cultural and art workers are volunteers and not necessarily in it for the money.” Survey Respondent



Source <http://www.esplanade.ca/termsofuse.htm>

3. The total public open space per 100 persons in Medicine Hat is 2.77 hectares. The average of four similar sized communities in Alberta is 2.26 hectares per 100 persons.



Municipality Maintained Parks, Playfields and Open Spaces; comparable Alberta Cities

	Medicine Hat	4 City Average
Population 2001	52,571	
Parks* (ha)	243	
Developed Park Space per 100 persons (ha)	0.46	0.61
Natural Areas ** (ha)	1458	
Total Public Open Space 100 Persons (ha)	2.77	2.26

* Parks includes all (irrigated) turf that is under municipal control and is maintained by the municipality

** Natural areas include undeveloped areas such as Environmental Reserve, valleys, ravines, coulees, etc.

*** Total Public Open Space – includes all public open space, developed and natural

Source

<http://www.medicinehat.ca/City%20Government/Departments/Parks%20and%20Outdoor%20Recreation/index.asp>

4. The total length of the trail system in Medicine Hat is 92 kilometres. At the average human walking speed of 3.6 kilometres per hour, it would take 25.6 hours to walk all the trails. That does not include stopping for ice cream!

Sources

<http://www.medicinehat.ca/City%20Government/Departments/Parks%20and%20Outdoor%20Recreation/index.asp> & www.thinkmetric.org.uk/speed.html

In the *Medicine Hat Quality of Life Study* published in April 2007, 71% of survey respondents stated that the ‘availability of public walking paths and bike trails’ was important to them.

The Vital Signs project requested 140 respondents to rate the areas of most importance to them.

The Top 5 results were:

1. Health Care
2. Housing
3. Leadership
4. Cost of Living
5. Safety

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What can I do?

Discussion. Dialogue. Action. Those are the next steps for Medicine Hat's Vital Signs. If you or your organization is moved and motivated by what you have read in our report please do not stop there!

Here are three simple ways you can take action, today!

1. Pass it on. Share this report with your employees, your students, your friends, a neighbour, library or community centre, or a government representative at any level.
2. Contact us. We know the issues and organizations in our community. If you are looking for ways to make a difference, we can help. www.mhcf.ca
3. Find out more. Visit the website of the other organizations featured in this report for more information about their work and opportunities to further their efforts or make your own mark.

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