

# TRENDS ANALYSIS: TRAFFIC



## *What does this measure & why is it important?*

This indicator monitors annual average daily traffic volumes at 21 permanent traffic count stations across the region. Data were acquired from the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's [Traffic Data Program](#).

Traffic volumes indicate demand on a component of our publicly-funded infrastructure, helping planners to properly design and construct transportation networks. Our roads are used for commuting, tourism, and transportation of goods, among other purposes. Traffic data can help us understand how shifts in the economy affect our communities and our transportation needs.

## *What are the trends & current conditions?*

Over the past decade, across the region, traffic has increased at an average rate of approximately 1.5% per year (Figure 1). However, trends vary by community. In Castlegar, for example, traffic increased at an average rate of 4.8% per year, while in Silverton, traffic actually decreased by 0.3% per year. Detailed, site-specific data are available on the [Digital Basin](#) under the infrastructure theme of the economic pillar.



**Figure 1: Sum of average annual daily traffic volumes recorded at permanent traffic count sites in the region**  
Source: BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (2014)

Traffic volumes on Basin-Boundary highways are generally much higher during the summer months. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure characterizes traffic at eight of 21 stations as “highly seasonal”, another 12 as “seasonal”, and only one as consistent. In some cases, traffic doubles or triples in August as compared to January. This significant variation in infrastructure demand presents noteworthy planning challenges for communities and transportation managers.



*The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, at Selkirk College, is a regional research centre with a mandate to support informed decision-making by Columbia Basin-Boundary communities through the provision of information, applied research and related outreach and extension support. Visit [www.cbrdi.ca](http://www.cbrdi.ca) for more information.*

### *References*

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. (2014). Traffic Data Program [Station Reports]. Retrieved from: <http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/trafficData/index.html>