

# north shore news

## North Vancouver District grabs 9th spot as best place to live

Jane Seyd / North Shore News

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The District of North Vancouver has landed in ninth spot on MoneySense magazine's list of best places to live in 2015, up from 25th spot in 2014. File photo Mike Wakefield

The North Shore is one of the best places to live in Canada — provided you can afford it.

That's the verdict from MoneySense magazine, which this week named the District of North Vancouver one of the top 10 cities to live in Canada.

Low unemployment, low taxes and a low crime rate combined with a high household income and strong arts and sports community combined to push North Vancouver into ninth spot on the magazine's annual "Best Places to Live" list.

The District of North Vancouver is the only Lower Mainland community to make the top 10. But West Vancouver — which came in at the 11th spot — wasn't far behind, buoyed by similarly appealing characteristics of high incomes, low taxes and low crime.

There's a catch, of course.

The districts of West Vancouver and North Vancouver also ranked number one and two respectively of the richest places in the country, with average net worth of \$3.5 million in West Vancouver and \$1.15 million in the District of North Vancouver — much of that likely linked to the high value of real estate here.

The City of North Vancouver came 20th on the "best places to live" rankings, with low unemployment, ready access to health care and ease of being able to walk to work among its favourable characteristics.

Delta was the only other community in the Lower Mainland to make it into the top 30.

District of North Vancouver Mayor Richard Walton certainly agrees with the magazine's assessment of his community.

"It's a very nice place to live," he said. "I have no idea why we're not first."

People who live on the North Shore are very involved in their communities through the arts and sports activities, he said.

Residents also place a high value on connection with the outdoors. "We have a tremendous amount of green space. There's almost nowhere that you can't be into the trees or green space within a few minutes."

When the district did a public survey on public recreation, investments in outdoor walking, hiking and biking trails topped the public's wish list, he said.

According to MoneySense's own explanation of the rankings, the magazine takes a look at information available through Statistics Canada, the national crime index, and real estate and labour market statistics — among other sources — to come up with its assessments.

The magazine acknowledges a bias in favour of economic factors, noting "we feel there is a strong correlation between the economics of a city and type of life you are able build there for your family. Everyone wants to live in a beautiful part of the country, away from sub-Arctic conditions, but we question how much you'll be able to enjoy a city if you have to work all the time—or if you can't find work at all."

The magazine also ranks cities on "best places to raise kids" which looks at factors like daycare costs and the number of young families and "best place to retire" which looks at weather, property taxes and the availability of doctors. None of the North Shore communities made those top 10 lists.

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