

## **Bridgeview - Surrey, British Columbia**

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Bridgeview lies at the bottom of a valley on a flat, largely open piece of land bounded by the four-lane Pattullo Bridge, the four- and six-lane King George Highway, the Fraser River and an industrial park. A 1976 National Film Board video entitled, "Some People Have to Suffer" documented Bridgeview's 24-year struggle (1953 to 1977) with the municipality of Surrey to replace open sewage ditches with a sewer system.

Other structures within the neighbourhood today include the Bridgeview Community Hall (situated on a large park space), a mixture of old and new houses on wide, ditch-lined streets, one temple, one elementary school, a convenience store and a small trailer court. The drainage ditches have the effect of dividing properties into rural-looking lots and they overflow and flood footpaths during rainy weather. Warehouse and industrial facilities run along the riverfront boundary, with a used car and parts lot, workshops and one hotel situated along the highway. In order to buy goods, visit a doctor or dentist, attend high school, access employment or other social programs, residents must travel "up the hill." Transit service is available, though limited; it skirts around Bridgeview. In order to reach the nearest transit station, people have to walk over the highway on a walkway that becomes impassable in bad weather. Students must take the Sky Train and a bus to reach the high school.

Bridgeview has a population of 1,895. The proportion of visible minorities is higher in Bridgeview than in Surrey (43.8 percent versus 36.5 percent). Of the 830 visible minority community members, South Asians and South East Asians represent 38.6 and 28.3 percent respectively. Punjabi (5.2 percent), Hindi (5.2 percent), Tagalog (2.2 percent) and Chinese (1.6 percent) are the most commonly spoken languages after English (60.6 percent).

Among the 720 households, the average income is \$41,607, compared with the Surrey average of \$63,197 [UW LM 200]. More than two-thirds (68.1 percent) of residents own their homes, 32.6 percent are renters [Statistics Canada 2001]. The majority (70.8 percent) live in single family homes. BC's 2004 Early Development Indicators – which measure kindergarten-age children's readiness for school – showed that Bridgeview children rated at the extreme lower end of the scale. In all areas – gross and fine motor skills, sociability, language, ability to relate to others – their results were similar to those achieved by children in isolated northern communities.