An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood. The houses are multi-story, with dark brown tiled roofs and walls in various colors including yellow, light blue, and white. There are many palm trees and other greenery interspersed among the buildings. The scene is captured from a high angle, looking down on the rooftops and yards.

2021/2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Vancity
Community Foundation

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Territorial Acknowledgement

Vancity Community Foundation operates on the lands of many Indigenous Nations. We bring our hearts and minds together and acknowledge the territory of these nations. Our office, 312 Main, is located on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and sə́lilwətaʔ /Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

Message from our CEO

Dear friends, partners, and changemakers,

It's my privilege to share with you Vancity Community Foundation's 2021/2022 Annual Report — a snapshot of a year defined by both challenge and possibility.

When I joined VCF in February 2022, I stepped into a community already moving with purpose. My heartfelt thanks to Allison Felker, who served as Interim Executive Director until my arrival. Allison's steady leadership through a period of uncertainty kept our work grounded and our partnerships strong. I'm grateful for the bridge she built.

This year asked a lot of our communities: a deepening housing crisis, escalating costs of living, and climate events that landed hardest on those with the least cushion. Because of you—donors, advisors, partners, and neighbours—we were able to meet those moments with action:

- We mobilized \$33.9 million in contributions and delivered \$36.8 million in grants and community programs—resources moving quickly where they were needed most.
- Through Donor Advised Funds—now 247 strong, with 28 new funds—we made 1,571 grants to 636 charities, backing grassroots leadership and system-changing work.

- With the Affordable Community Housing Program, we continued to accelerate community-owned, climate-ready rental homes—part of a pipeline totalling 4,000 new affordable homes supported to date.
- With Reaching Home, in partnership with Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society, we helped place 1,337 people (plus 646 dependents) into housing and prevented homelessness for more than 1,000 others, while advancing a region-wide Coordinated Access system.
- BC Rent Bank reached province-wide coverage and provided financial assistance to 1,464 households in 2021/22; 94% of respondents maintained or improved their housing stability, with many avoiding homelessness altogether.
- Living Wage for Families BC rejoined VCF and helped lift wages for over 1,300 workers amid the cost-of-living crisis.
- And through the Vancity Humanitarian Fund, we stood with communities facing wildfires, floods, and global conflicts—because solidarity can't wait.

Equally important is how we do this work. We're embedding reconciliation and anti-racism across our grantmaking, investing, staffing, and partnerships. This is not a project with an end date—it's a commitment we renew daily. I'm deeply grateful to everyone who makes this work



possible: our staff and Board, our donors and fund advisors, our partners and collaborators. Your trust, generosity, and belief in the power of community are what allow us to keep moving forward.

The challenges ahead are complex. But the solutions are already taking root — in the creativity of our partners, the courage of our communities, and the willingness of people like you to act.

Thank you for walking this path with us. Together, we can — and will — build a future where everyone has what they need to thrive.

With gratitude,,

GENESA GREENING
Chief Executive Officer

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Vancity Community Foundation & Vancity

With an initial contribution of \$1M, Vancity Credit Union established Vancity Community Foundation in 1989 to further enrich community well-being by building directly on the values and guiding principles of the Credit Union.

In the same way Vancity members pool their deposits and savings to invest in each other and make positive impacts in the community, donations made to Vancity Community Foundation are pooled to make investments and to support non-profit organizations that create positive impact in community.

Vancity is a values-based financial co-operative serving the needs of its more than 519,000 member-owners and their communities in the Coast Salish and Kwakwaka'wakw territories, with 59 branches in Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, Victoria, Squamish and Alert Bay.

As Canada's largest community credit union, Vancity uses its \$19.8 billion in assets to help improve the financial well-being of its members while at the same time helping to develop healthy communities that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

Our Vision

Our vision, shared with Vancity, is a transformed economy that protects the earth and guarantees equity for all.

Our Mission

Our mission is to be a catalyst for community change. We help communities thrive and prosper by using and leveraging financial tools, and providing direct support to community organizations in innovative ways, through an independent non-profit legal structure and donated contributions.



Towards Reconciliation



We acknowledge, with deep respect and gratitude, that our offices are situated on the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and sə́lilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years.

Along with a number of other foundations and charities, our Foundation has signed the Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action to declare our commitment to take action towards Reconciliation. We continue our work to embed this commitment in our operations, staffing, grant making, investment strategies and partnerships. We recognize the historic legacy and continued harmful impact of colonization, and understand that our Reconciliation and anti-racism work is both urgent and ongoing

By the Numbers

Financial highlights for the year ending December 31, 2022

Consolidated Total Assets	\$94,267,233
Contributions Received	
Unrestricted Community Foundation	\$684,475
Community Programs & Partnerships	\$28,479,357
Restricted Donor Advised Funds	\$4,793,339
Total	\$33,957,171
Disbursements	
Grant Distributions	\$28,774,058
Community Programs & Partnerships	\$6,038,415
VCF Management and Administration	\$2,007,643
Total	\$36,820,116

*Audited financial statements are available in full [on our website](#)

Investments by Class

Vancity Community Foundation	
Socially Responsible Financial Investments (invested with Vancity/VCIM)	\$50,352,152
Impact Investments	\$2,225,955
Total Investments	\$52,578,107
Greater Vancouver Community Assistance Foundation (GVCAF)	
Short-Term Financial Instruments (invested with Vancity)	\$6,010,082
Affordable Housing Accelerator Fund Loans	\$18,697,393
Other Impact Loans & Investments	\$2,775,395
Total Investments	\$27,482,870
Total Investments	\$80,060,977
Total Invested in SRI/Financial Instruments	70%
Total Invested in Impact	30%



Philanthropy

Our Foundation is proud to support individuals, families and organizations in their efforts to mobilize community capital, whether through our online giving platforms, Donor Advised Funds or philanthropic services such as the donation of Vancity Visa reward points.

Impact Through Granting

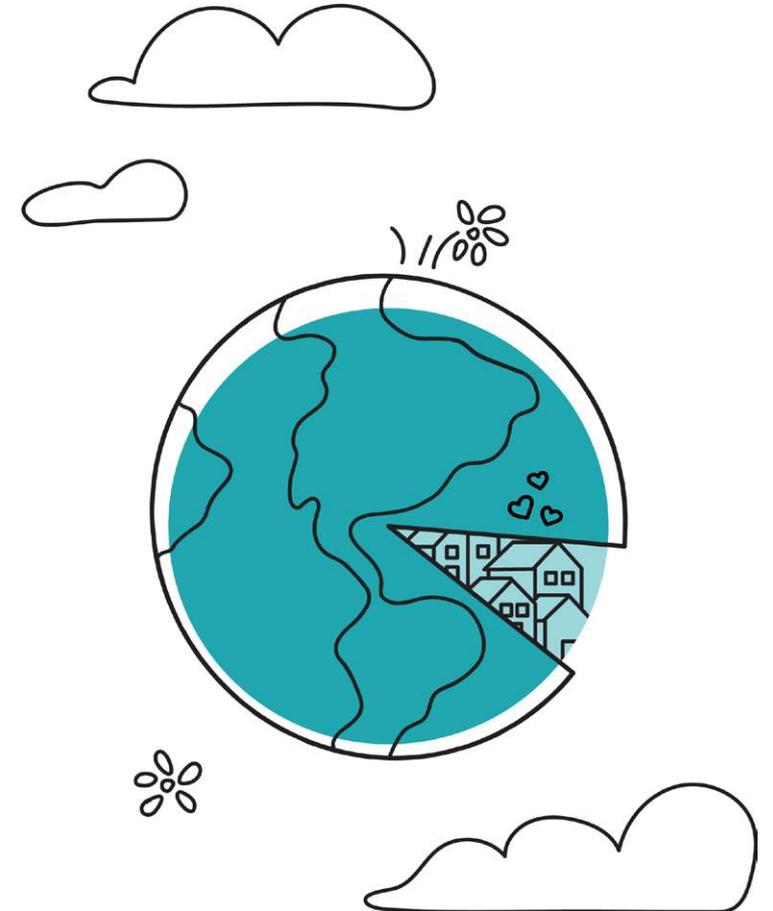
Donor Advised Funds make annual grants that invest directly in community wellbeing. Throughout 2021-2022, the Philanthropy team has received more requests for grant recommendations from fund advisors who wish to learn more about organizations that are grassroots or working on specific causes or issues, more grants to support Indigenous-led organizations and generous support from Vancity members in response to local climate-related emergencies with matching funds provided by the credit union.



Impact Through Investing

The capital of our long-term funds (Donor Designated Funds, Donor Advised Funds, and Agency Self-sustaining Funds) is pooled and invested together for greater impact:

- Approximately 90% of the capital of the Donor Advised Fund pool is invested in socially responsible investments with **Vancity Investment Management (VCIM)**. Socially responsible investments screen out harmful practices and industries, including fossil fuels. VCIM's approach to investing is hands-on and in-depth. They look for responsible, progressive companies with competitive growth potential. Once a company is selected, it is actively monitored for its environmental, social and governance (ESG) progress. VCIM uses shareholder advocacy and resolution processes to encourage companies to continually improve their practices.
- The remaining capital is invested more directly, without sacrificing financial returns. These investments are mainly held in the Affordable Community Housing Accelerator Fund, which advances the creation of climate-ready, community-owned affordable rental housing by working with not-for-profit, cooperative and Indigenous organizations to fund affordable housing development projects.



Donor Advised Funds

Donor Advised Funds, established by individuals, groups, families or organizations, create a lasting legacy to support charities in the community and provide an opportunity to respond to immediate community needs. Donor Advised Funds also allow the Foundation to manage, invest and mobilize the capital of individual community members for even greater impact.

We are honoured to support all of our Donor Advisors in achieving their unique vision.

NEW DONOR ADVISED FUNDS

We are continuing to grow community impact through a variety of fund types and welcome the following new funds that have been activated during this period.

STANDARD DONOR ADVISED FUNDS

Haro Street Fund supports grassroots organizations working for social justice in Vancouver, particularly in the areas of migrant and refugee justice, housing and education for women and youth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Chris Webb Legacy Fund supports animal welfare, species and habitat protection and conservation.

Joe Barrett Charity Fund supports organizations working in the areas of social justice, food security and health.

Randall Tyler Fund supports organizations working in the areas of environmental protection and social justice.

Eden's Bounty Fund supports health, well-being and justice, both locally and globally.

Ting Family Fund supports Canadian charities at the local and international level.

Wes Knapp & Kathleen MacKinnon Fund supports organizations working in the areas of social justice, reconciliation, arts and culture and environmental protection.

Garden Club of Vancouver Legacy Fund honors the legacy of past members' six decades of service to the community while building support for the future.

Marta Rose Eliasberg & Stefan Martin Heyman Legacy Fund supports organizations working in the areas of refugee settlement and support for new immigrants, poverty reduction and environmental initiatives.

Better World Fund supports a variety of charitable causes.

Ritchie Bros. Community Impact Fund supports local economies and the communities in which Ritchie Bros. operates in the areas of supporting local businesses, addressing homelessness and food insecurity and employment training.

Michele and Dave Pringle Legacy Fund supports organizations working in the areas of health and animal welfare.

Michael Rees Memorial Fund provides an annual bursary for a graduating student artist at Nechako Valley Secondary School.

Wm. Murphy Memorial Fund supports addressing homelessness, addiction and poverty reduction.

Chie Hirate Fund supports refugee children and children from single mother families with education and access to opportunities they might not otherwise have.

K2 Fund supports social justice, health, animal welfare and environmental protection.



GIVE & GRANT FUNDS

Nancy Bradshaw and Robert Brown Fund supports organizations working in the areas of environmental protection and social justice.

Leona and Carl Fund supports a variety of organizations working in the areas of social justice, humanitarianism and environmental protection.

DeLaDuck Windfall Fund supports organizations addressing climate change, reconciliation, social justice, health and the arts.

Financial Support Fund supports financial literacy, with a focus on education around fraud prevention for vulnerable communities.

IMPACT FUNDS

Ken Lyotier Fund will support initiatives in the DTES which are intended to improve the quality of life for members of the community through social justice, economic inclusion and social and environmental innovation.

Youth Civic Education Fund supports CityHive’s cutting edge programming that builds youth civic literacy and supports the development of youth-led local solutions to our most pressing urban challenges.

Woodwind Fund supports innovative approaches to the availability, affordability and environmental sustainability of housing.

AGENCY FUNDS

Environmental Youth Alliance Fund generates sustainable revenue for EYA’s land-based education and employment training programs in East Vancouver. Their programs empower youth facing barriers to become environmental stewards.

Kiyooka Land Trust Tête Jaune Property Stewardship Endowment Fund supports the activities of the Kiyooka Land Trust Foundation.

DONOR DESIGNATED FUNDS

LHPR Fund was established to support the BC SPCA and Knowledge Network.

Eve and Adam Farson Fund supports the Vancouver Early Music Society.



WE THANK ALL OUR DONORS – past, present and future – for their generosity and commitment to making a difference in the community. We also thank the Financial Advisors who have directed their clients who are interested in philanthropy towards the Foundation for estate planning and to design their personalized giving strategy.

Thank you for your continued support.

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS • 2021-2022 COMBINED

Total number of Donor Advised Funds

247

Number of new Donor Advised Funds

28

Total value of assets in Donor Advised Funds

\$47,686,048

Total donations to the Foundation

\$5,719,736

Total grants distributed to the community

\$5,888,370

Number of grants made to operating charities

1,571

Number of charities supported

636



Give



Grow



Grant

Stories of Giving

A FAMILY LEGACY OF GIVING

Noel Armstrong was a musician, carpenter, proud engineer and avid golfer. He met Joan in Dawson Creek where they were working as teachers, and they married in 1953. In the years following, they moved to the Lower Mainland so Noel could pursue a university education – he graduated in June 1960, debt-free and with three young children.

The **Joan and Noel Armstrong Fund** was opened on the recommendation of the family's Vancity financial advisor, following Joan's passing and in anticipation of selling their home. When creating the Fund, Noel was adamant that his wife's name be listed before his, as she was always the key in his life. As their kids say, she managed the money and he just spent it.

One of Joan and Noel's daughters, Pat, had attended music rehearsals at Saint James Music Academy and had seen the good work taking place there. Noel visited alongside Allison Felker, who was managing donor engagement for the Foundation at the time, and connected immediately with the organization's work. After seeing the kids arriving, meeting with music teachers and witnessing how SJMA was supporting youth in the community, Noel was certain he wanted to direct grants from his fund there. Through the years, Noel always loved receiving updates from the academy and was very proud of his ongoing support – he wore the t-shirt they gifted him with pride.

"The Armstrong family has provided substantial support each year, making a significant impact on our music program needs," says Paul Myers of the Saint James Development Team. "Because of Noel, and

now with his 'next generation,' we are able to bring music and life skills to the children of the downtown eastside community of Vancouver. The Armstrong family, and the Vancity Community Foundation as intermediaries, can be proud of the success they share with us in our work of social transformation."

Noel passed away in 2019, leaving a bequest to the Fund to support its growth and impact after his life. The Joan and Noel Armstrong Fund is now advised by their three daughters, as Noel had planned.

Noel has also been keenly interested in environmental issues since the late 1970s, following the first international oil crisis. His daughters agree that this would be his top priority today and are moving to direct grants towards climate emergency and response efforts – of course, alongside their continued support of Saint James Music Academy.

"It's all been very positive, I've been impressed with people's dedication," says Janet, one of Joan and Noel's daughters, on her experience as a fundholder with the Foundation.

With the creation of the Joan and Noel Armstrong Fund, a long-lasting legacy of generosity and giving was established and will continue for generations. Vancity Community Foundation is honoured to host and support this Fund, which is dedicated to making important and meaningful impacts in the community.



BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

As a non-profit organization with deep roots in the community, Vancouver Farmers Markets believe that healthy, locally grown food should be available to everyone, regardless of income. Thousands of households in Vancouver struggle to access fresh food on a daily basis. Vancouver Farmers Markets' **Fresh to Families Fund** helps bridge that gap by providing fresh, local food from small BC farms and producers to families in need in our community.

An expansion project of the BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program, a province-wide healthy eating initiative led by the BC Association of Farmers Markets and the Province of BC, the Fresh to Families Fund has provided fresh food coupons to community members in need through partner agencies in Vancouver since 2015. The coupons can be used to purchase fresh produce, meat, eggs, nuts and dairy direct from vendors at any farmers market in BC – giving participants the dignity of choice and allowing them to shop for food that suits their diets and needs, while also supporting the livelihoods of small-scale producers and helping family farms across the province, thus contributing to resilient local food systems and strengthening the local economy. This program serves 18,000 families, seniors and pregnant people throughout 85 communities across the province.



SUPPORTING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

CityHive was founded in 2017 to address a pressing need – youth aren't being included in the decisions being made in our cities, despite being one of the demographics most impacted by issues like housing, affordability and climate change. A gap in our provincial curriculum paired with inaccessible municipal processes make it hard for youth to even know where to start.

The **Youth Civic Engagement Fund** supports CityHive's cutting edge programming that builds youth civic literacy and supports the development of youth-led local solutions to our most pressing urban challenges. We believe our cities would be more just, sustainable and joyful for all with youth engaged in key decisions.

Whether developing youth skills through multi-month cohort programs, offering workshops in K-12 classrooms, or hosting educational outreach events, the Fund aims to ensure that Metro Vancouver youth, and in particular those who have been systemically excluded, are equipped to engage with their cities and communities.



Supporting Humanitarian Causes

- In May 2021, a \$25,000 contribution was made to the India COVID-19 Response Appeal through the Canadian Red Cross. This donation will help the Red Cross support COVID-19 preparedness, response and recovery activities in India, including the distribution of COVID-19 prevention information, providing hygiene items and food packages, supporting ambulance services, and providing logistical support for healthcare services.
- In August 2021, a \$25,000 grant to the Canadian Red Cross was designated to the Haiti Earthquake Appeal, to support the humanitarian relief efforts in Haiti following a devastating earthquake on August 14. Donations to the appeal support immediate and ongoing relief efforts, long-term recovery, resiliency and preparedness for future events in Haiti and impacted regions.
- In August 2021, a \$25,000 grant to the Canadian Red Cross was designated to the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) to support a humanitarian response in Afghanistan where tens of thousands fear persecution under the Taliban. ARCS works tirelessly to bring basic vital humanitarian services to many of the hardest to reach places and has a unique role as an officially recognized disaster response organization.
- In Summer 2021, to support the communities affected by wildfires across BC, Vancity Credit Union, through the Vancity Humanitarian Fund made an immediate donation of \$25,000 to the Canadian Red Cross 2021 British Columbia Fires Appeal. Vancity then launched a member matching campaign: through the Humanitarian Fund, Vancity matched each donation received from members and the public between July 3 and August 3 up to \$50,000. The community responded with incredible generosity, donating over \$149,000. These funds, plus the \$50,000 from Vancity, were sent to the Canadian Red Cross where they were then matched by the Provincial and Federal governments. In addition, Lytton First Nation was directly supported with a \$10,000 grant from Vancity Community Foundation and Vancity Humanitarian Fund.
- In November 2021 and into 2022, the Vancity Humanitarian Fund mobilized support to communities impacted by devastating weather events across British Columbia. Through the Fund, Vancity matched donations from members and the public between November 19 and December 19 up to \$100,000. Vancity members and the public gave generously to support BC Communities, donating more than \$195,000 for a combined total of over \$295,000. Funds were deployed to a number of regional flood responses through the Canadian Red Cross as well as through grants and direct support for First Nations, farmers, migrant workers and more.
- In February 2022, a \$25,000 contribution was made to the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal established by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) and the Canada Ukraine Foundation (CUF) to support those in need in the Ukraine.
- In Fall 2022, the Vancity Humanitarian Fund granted \$35,000 to support the humanitarian relief efforts in the Newfoundland, following Hurricane Fiona. A \$10,000 grant was designated to the Atlantic Edge Credit Union's Fiona Disaster Relief Fund and a \$25,000 grant was designated to the Canadian Red Cross.
- In September 2022, a \$25,000 grant was made to Islamic Relief Canada to support a humanitarian response in Pakistan, where monsoon rains had resulted in flooding across the country.

IN 2021-2022

We processed more than **1,686** Visa Points contributions totaling **\$246,974.43** which together supported more than **39** organizations.



VANCITY HUMANITARIAN FUND

As a values-based financial cooperative, Vancity is committed to promoting social justice and financial inclusion for its members and those who reside in the communities it serves. The [Vancity Humanitarian Fund](#) was established in September 2015 in response to the Syrian refugee crisis and to provide ongoing support for organizations that address this and other humanitarian causes.

Vancity invests in this Fund and undertakes many other initiatives to promote member well-being and to build healthy, sustainable communities – all contributing to a more resilient local economy.



Affordable Community Housing Program

In close partnership with Vancity Savings Credit Union, our Foundation makes ongoing investments in the capacity of community organizations to build and redevelop their affordable housing portfolios to increase housing availability and security in the region. This includes providing grants and support for early-stage project planning, as well as accessible financing for acquisition and pre-development costs.

Together with Vancity, a key area of accomplishment in 2020 was the expansion of the Vancity Affordable Housing Accelerator Fund to continue to meet the growing need for capital for affordable housing development and providing an impact investment opportunity for institutional and individual investors interested in using their capital to support affordable housing, while still generating a reliable financial return.

To date, we have secured \$4.2 million in new investments in the form of loans to the Accelerator Fund, including \$3.2 million from our donor advised fund endowment, and \$1 million from three individual investors, growing the total capital available to \$17 million.

By providing easy-to-access affordable loans that support the most intensive stages of development when capital can be

hard to find, the Accelerator Fund continues to fill a critical gap for community housing organizations that are developing affordable rental housing. These loans help 'de-risk' a project and allow organizations to secure the necessary approvals and financing to move into construction.

In 2020, 18 new loans were issued, totalling \$9.3 million in financing, to 13 community-owned affordable housing projects, contributing to 1619 new affordable rental homes for low – and moderate-income seniors, families, women and children and people with disabilities.

THE ACCELERATOR FUND IN ACTION: BRIGHTSIDE COMMUNITY HOMES FOUNDATION

Brightside Community Homes Foundation (Brightside) is a non-profit organization that provides safe and secure affordable homes for those struggling to pay market rents: specifically seniors, families and people with disabilities.

With 26 buildings that provide more than 900 homes for people, Brightside has the ambitious goal of doubling the number of affordable homes it provides over the next decade. Some of its current buildings are aging and do not offer the accessibility features often required for seniors aging-in-place.



By providing more than **\$26 million in financing** between 2011 and 2022 **to 58 community-owned housing projects**, the Vancity Affordable Housing Accelerator Fund has contributed to the development of 4000 new affordable homes.

Reaching Home

Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society has partnered with Vancity Community Foundation since 2020 as the Community Entity for the Greater Vancouver Designated Community with Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, becoming the first Indigenous-led organization to serve as a Community Entity for a Designated Community in Canada. Lu'ma continues to deliver the Indigenous stream of Reaching Home provincially and has been acting in this capacity for over 20 years.

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. This program provides funding to urban, Indigenous, rural and remote communities to help them address their local homelessness needs. Reaching Home supports the goals of the National Housing Strategy, and in particular, to support the most vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable and affordable housing with a focus on the following community-wide outcomes:

- Reduce chronic homelessness in the community (specifically, by 50% by 2027-2028)
- Reduce homelessness in the community overall, and for specific populations (Indigenous homelessness is a priority)
- Reduce new inflows into homelessness
- Reduce returns to homelessness

With the ongoing pandemic, we saw the need for housing, prevention and support within the community increase. Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society and Vancity Community



Foundation's Reaching Home team worked closely with the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board to administer \$31 million in 2021 (this includes additional COVID funding from Service Canada) and \$30 million in 2022. These funds went directly into the community to fund housing placement and prevention programs as well as capital improvement projects directly impacting people at risk or experiencing homelessness.

For the 2022-2024 funding cycle, a total of 47 Service projects, 22 Capital projects, and 6 Coordination of Resources and Data projects were approved by the Community Advisory Board through a call for proposal process held in early 2022.

At the end of the 2022 fiscal year, 1337 individuals plus 646 dependents experiencing homelessness were placed in housing, and 1043 individuals plus 288 dependents were prevented from experiencing homelessness. There has been a noted increase in the need for preventing housing

loss since the pandemic. This includes providing support through short-term financial assistance for rent, utility payments and/or temporary accommodations. Ensuring people stay housed plays a vital role as we work to reduce homelessness in the community.

Reaching Home continues to prioritize the aforementioned community-wide outcomes while engaging in regional initiatives, which include a Coordinated Access System. The shift to Coordinated Access supports an integrated systems-based approach where service providers, local communities and orders of government work together to achieve common goals that support those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. It is an integrated process that will streamline access to resources in the community and thereby improve outcomes for clients and support for service providers. The Greater Vancouver Community entity is set to roll out the Coordinated Access System for the region in March 2023.

312 Main

While we were adapting our own operations to meet the demands of the pandemic, we were also helping our partners find ways to be nimble and responsive.

At 312 Main, the Foundation's headquarters and a centre for social and economic innovation located in the Downtown Eastside, it was essential to stay open throughout the pandemic.

"It was because of the organizations in the building and the essential services they provide to vulnerable community members that we worked hard to keep 312 Main remain open during the pandemic," said Sean Condon, 312's managing director. "It was important to be open and available when the community organizations needed the space."

Staying open required a new approach to creating a space where people could work safely. Operations in the building needed to be revised in order to adhere to the strict public health requirements so that services could continue to be accessed. Once safety measures were in place, both members and community organizations were able to continue their socially distanced in-person activities, when provincial restrictions allowed. For example, were able to hold their AI coding labs in the community training rooms on the ground floor of 312 Main.

The 312 Main team quickly found ways to be responsive to members' needs, whether through rent deferrals or flexibility on tenant agreements. Virtual memberships were introduced to keep people connected to their social



innovation community. Programming was made available to members to help them adapt to remote work, cope with the stress of COVID-19, and share information and ideas including weekly online conversations around anti-racism and decolonization and how to take positive actions on issues of social justice.



BC Rent Bank

BC Rent Bank, a project of Vancity Community Foundation, is proudly continuing its work to ensure that rent bank services are accessible to all renters across British Columbia. The start of its journey began in 2019 with financial support from the Government of British Columbia and a mandate to work with existing rent banks, seed new rent banks and support the development of a province-wide rent bank system. The program started with seven existing rent banks, and by November 2021, it had expanded its services to reach every renter in the province. This was a major accomplishment for the project.

Other highlights from 2021/2022 include:

- Provision of \$1.78m dollars in funding to support rent bank partners, which provided a total of 1464 households with financial assistance to prevent eviction or have essential utilities disconnected.
- Creation of customized client management software to centralize and manage online applications, enhance reporting capabilities, standardize data collection practices and reduce barriers for applicants.
- A housing stability survey sent to individuals six months after they received financial assistance found that 94% of respondents had maintained or improve their housing situation, 91% credited their housing stability to rent bank assistance and 61% said they would have faced homelessness had they not received rent bank assistance.

In 2022/2023, BC Rent Bank's focus shifted from growing the provincial system to strengthening it and ensuring

that it had a solid foundation for the future. This involved opening several new rent bank sites to support more local ownership of the program and bolstering funding and reporting structures. The primary focus was on creating a new strategic plan for the program. This plan was presented to government and has resulted in over \$10m of financial support over the next three years.

Other highlights from 2022/2023:

- Financial assistance provided support for nearly 2300 residents in crisis – a 31% increase in the number of renters that received an interest free loan.
- Over 4000 supports were provided to renters in the form of a referral or assistance in accessing resources focused on improving their housing stability. This included access to local food banks, credit counselling services, poverty law advocates and access to benefits.
- In partnership with SPARC BC, 10 participating rent banks distributed 299 Welcome Home kits that provided basic household goods for those moving out of homelessness and into housing.

As Cynthia's story exemplifies, these are difficult times as renters are facing unprecedented challenges in maintaining their housing. Rising inflation rates and rental costs and a lack of affordable rental units has meant more people are precariously housed in the province.

With that in mind, BC Rent Bank looks towards new opportunities in the near future to ensure more renters stay housed. It is looking at:

Rent banks look to engage vulnerable renters from a place of a place of compassion and empathy as illustrated in the story of Cynthia^[1].

At only 22 years old, Cynthia was alone, struggling and suffering from serious injuries inflicted by her estranged parent who had been jailed for attacking her. After experiencing the loss of her partner by suicide, Cynthia had no option but to return to an unsafe home. Due to the trauma she was experiencing, she had not been able to maintain her job, and without income she was running out of time and options. Within a few days of reaching out to BC Rent Bank, Cynthia's landlord received a rent cheque that prevented her from becoming homeless. The local rent bank also put Cynthia in touch with a community agency that assisted her with a \$450 per month housing subsidy to be accessed throughout the year. The quick action, trauma-informed practices and client-centered response ensured that Cynthia could move to a safe and secure home where she could continue to focus on her healing.

- Increasing financial support to rent banks so that they have adequate staffing in place and can respond to the increase in demand of services.
- A commitment to improving the applications process and streamlining services for renters.
- Improving technology to ensure data is captured and reported in a way that informs housing policy for low to moderate renters in the province.
- Securing key partnerships, such as Reaching Home and SPARC BC, that ensure the program can enhance its services and support to renters.

^[1] Name changed for privacy.

Surrey Homelessness & Housing Society

In 2022, Surrey Homelessness & Housing Society celebrated 15 years of impact since its initial seed endowment from the City of Surrey in 2007. Over this time, the Society has supported several community organizations in Surrey that are working to end homelessness and provide safe, accessible and stable housing for those in need, granting more than \$10 million to over 150 projects since its inception.

In 2021 and 2022, Surrey Homelessness & Housing Society launched two annual calls for proposals for its three key funding priorities: capital initiatives, innovative projects and capacity-building initiatives. In 2021, a total of \$290,000 was granted to 9 projects across these priority areas. In 2022, a total of \$250,000 was granted to 9 projects.

Surrey Homelessness & Housing Society also launched a public awareness campaign during Homelessness Action Week in October 2021, to bring awareness and understanding to the issue of homelessness in the Surrey community. As the impacts of the pandemic continued to evolve and housing affordability issues were exacerbated, members of the community who were already struggling to get connected to housing or keep up with paying rent were at even higher risk of experiencing homelessness. The campaign, **Housing for Hope**, was about raising awareness of these issues. There are many pathways into homelessness and many causes of housing instability, and connection to safe, stable and supportive housing is crucial. Everyone deserves housing, and it is the foundation that helps people move forward and live full lives.



TOGETHER,
LET'S SUPPORT HOUSING
FOR HOPE IN SURREY



Living Wage For Families BC

In the fall of 2022, Living Wage for Families BC rejoined Vancity Community Foundation, where it had previously been held from 2014 and 2021.

Rejoining the Foundation came at a crucial time for Living Wage for Families, as they published their annual living wage calculations in the height of the cost-of-living crisis. The living wage is the minimum hourly wage required for a family with two young children to cover necessities, support the healthy development of their children, escape severe financial stress and participate in the social, civic and cultural lives of their communities. It affords a decent but still very modest standard of living – without the extras many take for granted.

In November, the living wage increased in British Columbia due to significant rises in the cost of food and housing. In Metro Vancouver, the living wage went up to \$24.08 —the highest increase since the living wage was first calculated in 2008 and significantly higher than the rate of inflation. And for the first time, Victoria's living wage of \$24.29 an hour was higher than Metro Vancouver, because of the increased cost of food on Vancouver Island.

A strikingly large gap exists between the 2022 living wages for communities across BC and the province's minimum wage, which was \$15.65 as of June 1, 2022.

Living Wage Employers have six months to lift the wages of their staff and recertify to stay part of the program. Since Living Wage for Families rejoined VCF, over 1300 people have received a pay increase (often as much as \$6000 a year) to be brought up to the new living wage.



To find out more information about the Living Wage program, please visit:

livingwageforfamilies.ca/



Our Team

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To learn more about our Board of Directors, please visit: vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/about/board

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For a complete list of Vancity Community Foundation staff, please visit: vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/about/staff

Join Us

Vancity Community Foundation has been working to build a society that is more inclusive, just and sustainable since 1989. With our history of working in the community and with Vancity credit union, we are uniquely positioned to bring together people, expertise and financial tools to make the most impactful projects happen. We continue to reflect, learn and act to bring systemic change to the most pressing challenges in our region: economic disparity, social injustice, racial inequity, housing insecurity, the climate emergency and the deep impacts of colonization. We do not and cannot do this alone. Every contribution helps make a difference. Whether you're making a one-time donation, or partnering with us over the long-term, or contributing to an existing Donor Advised Fund, or establishing a new one, you are contributing to community change.



To learn more about supporting our initiatives through a donation, grant or impact investment, as well as the many ways to give, please contact: give@vancity.com or call 604.877.7647.

2021/2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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