



LIFT
COMMUNITY
SERVICES

SERVING qathet REGION
SINCE
1984



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

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We respectfully acknowledge that Lift Community Services is located on the homelands and territories of the Tla'amin People. We honour the land and the Tla'amin People, and continually seek to strengthen our relationship and responsibilities to them as guests in the territory.

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A message from our Board of Directors

Dear members and friends of Lift,

As we come together to review our annual report, I want to address you as the President of our Board of Directors. This year, our organization has faced exciting opportunities and significant challenges in our mission to serve the qathet region's community, and I'm pleased to provide an overview of our accomplishments and the lessons we've learned.

In 2023, our society experienced impressive 40% growth, reflecting the trust and confidence our qathet community has in us. However, this rapid expansion also brought its set of challenges. The growing need for support services within our community meant that we had to adapt swiftly, learning how to partner even more effectively, mobilize resources rapidly, and communicate these changes more effectively to our community.

Our efforts to enhance communication were particularly crucial during this period. We recognized the importance of keeping our community informed about these changes and making sure our resources were allocated where they were needed most.

Collaborations with community partners have been instrumental in addressing the growing needs related to community health, employment, housing, and support programs. These partnerships have allowed us to broaden our impact and reach, even in the face of increased demand.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated volunteer board members and our hardworking staff for their commitment and resilience in navigating these challenges and seizing opportunities for growth. As we move forward we will continue to learn from our experiences, focus on effective governance, and strive for success and impact in our community. Thank you for your continued support and trust in our organization.

Sarah McClean

President, Board of Directors



A message from our Executive Director

The past year has been marked by many challenges, both on a global scale and within qathet Region. Throughout these tumultuous times, Lift Community Services has remained resolute in its mission to foster equity and hope in our community.

The word "gratitude" feels almost insufficient to express the depth of our appreciation to the individuals and community partners who make our work possible. Countless hours, thoughtful questions and the tireless commitment of our board members have been the guiding force that has steered us through the past year.

And to our invaluable staff and volunteers - your unwavering dedication to our mission, especially in the face of unexpected challenges, serves as a daily reminder of the power of human compassion and dedication.

Throughout this journey, our commitment to clear communication, responsiveness to community needs, and organizational transparency has kept us on track. As we look forward to the road ahead, adherence to our organizational values, open dialogue, and working together not only serve as our guiding principles but also as the building blocks of a better community for us all. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to every community member who is joining us on this journey.

It is with pride and humility that we reflect on the past year, knowing that it has made us stronger and more resilient. We have faced challenges head-on, learned valuable lessons, and developed new tools and skills to better serve our community and keep you informed.

Thank you for your support and partnership as we continue to work together to create a brighter future for the qathet Region.

Stuart Clark

Executive Director

Vision & Mission



Vision

A welcoming, inclusive, and diversity-affirming community that is free of poverty and full of heart.

Mission

Lift Community Services works with community partners and people facing barriers to create equity and hope in the qathet Region by establishing sustainable housing and employment and providing a range of inclusive, supportive services.

Values

Inclusive

We value and welcome people with different identities and we seek opportunities to engage the wisdom and experiences of all people

Growth

We value personal growth and provide a rich and nurturing environment for our staff and clients to reach their potential. We strive every day to increase our impacts on our clients and our community

Community-focused

We put the community first in all of our decisions and we take open and transparent collaborative approaches to create capacity and solve community challenges.

Our Services



Our programs are intended to meet basic needs and provide concrete resources for individuals facing barriers. Our services are available to any qathet community member who needs them.

Housing Services

Emergency Shelter

Temporary and immediate place to stay for anyone aged 19 and over, who is homeless or at risk of homelessness in the qathet Region.

Supportive Housing

Subsidized rental housing with 24-hour staff support for adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness

Community Health Services

Complex Care Housing

Wraparound medical and non-clinical supports for those most vulnerable to homelessness due to complex health needs. This program is a partnership with Tla'amin Nation and Vancouver Coastal Health.

Injectable Opioid Agonist Therapy (iOAT) Clinic

Prescription pharmaceutical treatment option for people who use opioids, dispensed by registered nurses in a clinical setting.

Employment Services

Bladerunners

Youth employment program for youth who face multiple barriers to employment, with a focus on job readiness and coaching, workplace communication skills, life skills training and job placements.

WorkBC

Free employment assistance and support for job seekers and employers.

Community Development

Toxic drug health emergency community response, advocacy and education, and organizational sponsorship for emerging non-profits.



Community Support Programs



Babies Open New Doors (BOND)

Prenatal nutrition program to support pregnant people and new parents to make positive nutritional and lifestyle choices for their new baby.

Community Resource Centre (CRC)

Free, drop-in space where adults in qathet Region can access food, community resources, and other services that support well-being.

Creating Opportunities for Real Employment (CORE)

Harm reduction program for youth centred on land-based learning, mentorship, and employment.

Family Place

Community hub and resource centre for parents with children up to the age 6, with playgroups, food resources, and educational workshops

Healthy Care Pregnancy Program

Safe and confidential support to individuals who are pregnant or up to seven months post-partum and have a history of or are currently using substances.

Immigrant Welcome Centre

Supports newcomers to Canada in studying English, settling in the community, accessing community resources.

Literacy Outreach

One-on-one and group tutoring and support, including digital, family, health, and systems literacy, offered in various community settings.

The Nook

Social enterprise café located in the Powell River Public Library, offering skills training for at-risk youth and highlighting local and seasonal food.

qathet Food Hub

Food security and food skills programming including food recovery and re-distribution, community gardens, and free meals for the community.



2022 - 2023 Impact

Some of our impact can be measured - for example, the numbers of job placements we've supported, or people we've housed - but some of it is harder to illustrate: how our support makes people feel; what it means to have hope again. In the following pages we share a snapshot of some of the work we've done over the past year.

13

community members gained housing through our supportive housing program

19

individuals celebrated 3 years of being housed at Supportive Housing

22

people supported through the Healthy Care Pregnancy & BOND programs

23

individuals clinically supported through our at the injectable opioid agonist treatment (iOAT) program

110

individuals were employed by Lift, up from 82 in 2021-2022.

123

one-on-one volunteer tutoring or mentorship connections made at the Immigrant Welcome Centre

137

individuals received a warm, dry place to sleep at our emergency shelter.

225

unique individuals supported at the Immigrant Welcome Centre

436

bags of free groceries distributed through the Family Place Resource Centre

600

drop-in visitors to Literacy Outreach

6,500

free hot lunches served at the Community Resource Centre

\$401,853

in employment supports distributed in community (Employment Services)



Healthy Care Pregnancy Program Impact Story

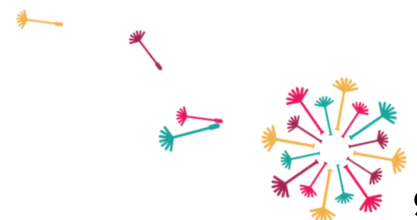
Nicole connected with the Healthy Care Pregnancy Program (HCPP) when she was 36 weeks pregnant. She had been referred to the program earlier in her pregnancy but it took some time for her to work up the courage to engage. She was receiving clinical opioid agonist treatment while trying to taper off her active substance use, and with three children in care of the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD), Nicole felt vulnerable and protective. When we connected she had not received any prenatal care.

When Nicole reached out to us, we were able to quickly mobilize supports for her and her baby. The qathet Midwives and other health professionals in our community offered immediate and flexible medical appointments for prenatal tests. Our HCPP In-reach Worker supported Nicole with referrals and transportation to services like getting identification and accessing income assistance, continued working with MCFD to advocate for Nicole to regain care of her children, and supported Nicole in preparing for her new baby with vitamins, diapers, formula, and luggage.

Just a few weeks later, our HCPP In-reach Worker located Nicole at her house in active labour, and transported her to the qathet General Hospital where her baby was born. Both Nicole and her baby were then transferred to the B.C. Children and Women's Hospital Families in Recovery Unit.

During Nicole and her baby's hospital stay, our HCPP In-reach Worker continued to advocate for them, helping to coordinate their discharge from the hospital and arranging transportation to a residential treatment program for new parents in the lower mainland. While in treatment our team continued to work to secure Nicole new housing that is supportive of her recovery - a new home for her and her kids.

HCPP is a provincial program that supports pregnant, postpartum and newly parenting people who use or have used substances. We work to improve health outcomes of parents and babies, help our participants navigate health and social services, and advocate for parent-baby togetherness regardless of custody status.



Community Resource Centre Impact Story

“No one thought I would graduate, but I graduated. They said I wasn’t going to get a house, I got a house. Now I have a cat. I have a job, I’m going to school...anybody can change, so give everybody a chance.”

Kailee’s first introduction to Lift was through the Community Resource Centre. She was 18 years old and had been homeless on and off for years, staying with friends, couch-surfing, or sleeping outside to cope with a volatile home life. She came to the Community Resource Centre looking for help to access housing. Our staff were able to connect her with a BC Housing rent subsidy and help her find stable housing.

It was through the staff at the Community Resource Centre that Kailee learned about the Bladerunners Youth Employment Program that Lift offers. She signed up for the Winter 2023 cohort. “That’s when I applied to go back to school,” she says. “They helped me with the application process and now I’m starting school in September for a Community Mental Health Worker certificate through VIU.”

It was also while in Bladerunners that Kailee heard about our new Creating Opportunities for Real Employment (CORE) program. Funded through a Health Canada Substance Use and Addictions Program grant, we were hiring at-risk youth to develop a market garden based out of the Community Resource Centre’s and qathet Regional Hospital Garden’s space.

Kailee applied to work in the CORE program and was hired on. She’s been working in the garden since April. “I actually started gardening at home, because I love it so much, which I never thought I would do. Every day I come to work and I’m so happy to come to work.” The program’s flexible hours will allow her to continue working while she studies.

Three years after first connecting with the Community Resource Centre, Kailee is amazed at her own accomplishments. “I don’t know how I did it all in so little time, and it was definitely because of Lift helping. They really helped me get back on my feet. And I see them helping so many other people.”

The Community Resource Centre is a drop-in community hub offering free food, laundry-services, Legal Aid supports, housing and employment resources, a free tax clinic and much more. Everyone is welcome.



iOAT Clinic Impact Stories



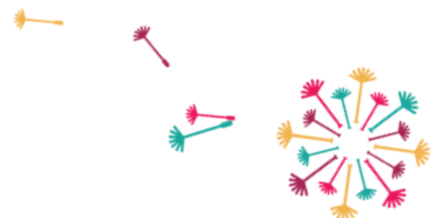
'The iOAT clinic has made me think more positively about my life and have more hope again. Having to come in three times a day, or at least once a day, makes me think about my kids and family. It reminds me of where I was, working with a schedule without this program. While on drugs, you kinda forget about all your responsibilities, and it takes days at times to go to town, and things get forgotten. The meds make it so I don't get sick and really help with recovery. The staff's positive influence and being there for us, so happy and on the ball, at the door every time. If we don't show up, they send reminders, and it really feels like someone cares.'

- iOAT participant

'iOAT clinic has provided a place for me to safely receive my medicine that helps me in my daily life. With things that affect my daily goals of getting back on track and having a life that is once again helpful and useful to the community. iOAT also allows me to feel more comfortable receiving these medications and discussing my future goals with others that are in the same position. iOAT helps people who use this facility to be more confident and helps them be happier, working through our current life issues in a manageable fashion.'

- iOAT participant

The qathet injectable opioid agonist treatment (iOAT) program is an evidence-based treatment program for people who use substances. Our program offers prescription pharmaceutical medication which is dispensed by registered nurses in a clinical setting. Entering its third year, we currently support 23 individuals, with a waitlist.



Welcome Centre Impact Story

One of our biggest highlights this year was witnessing Sasha and her family's Canadian Citizenship ceremony.

We first met Sasha five years ago, when the refugee sponsorship group that helped bring Sasha to qathet Region referred her to the Immigrant Welcome Centre shortly after her arrival in Canada.

All immigrants face a challenge when arriving in a new country, especially in a community as relatively small and isolated as qathet Region, and refugees often face additional barriers – fleeing homelands for safety; friends, family, and belongings left behind; years in camps; waiting for a future that is completely unknown.

When we first met Sasha, we were struck by her warmth and quiet confidence. She was undeterred by the challenge that lay ahead of her: learning a new language, finding employment, raising her children in a brand-new culture. Over the years we have worked with Sasha and her family providing language supports, English and French community connection opportunities, assisted access and referrals to community and social supports for Sasha and her family, step-by-step support for her employment path and training, application support for Family Sponsorship so other members of her family could join her in her new community and, finally, Citizenship classes and application and exam support!

After Sasha's Canadian Citizenship ceremony was held and celebrated at our Welcome Centre earlier this year, our team reflected on how well the whole family is doing. Sasha has worked her way into a skilled job that she enjoys. Her children have thrived under her care and guidance, including scholarships and community recognition. The family is engaged in the community and has active, healthy lives.

Sasha is a client we'll remember for a long time. Her courage and dedication in creating her new life here in qathet Region has been an inspiration to us. Her hard work, perseverance, and commitment have been beyond impressive. Given the circumstances of her arrival to Canada, we had expected to be helping a victim, but we helped a survivor – and Sasha helped us right back her with beautiful example of resiliency and community-mindedness.

The Immigrant Welcome Centre provides free supports for eligible immigrants to Canada. We offer settlement information, language tutoring, community connections and mentorships, and help with documents and applications. In 2022-2023 we supported 225 individuals in the qathet Region.



Housing Impact Story

Impact Story



John was three days away from being homeless when he moved into Supportive Housing in the fall of 2020.

“At first I guess I was judgmental myself, because I looked at who was living here,” John says. After his own history with substance use and legal issues, he was cautious about who he was spending time with and was worried that Supportive Housing would be a negative influence on him. “But when I moved here it wasn’t anything like I thought it was....it was people trying to better their lives. The people that (live here) are trying to change their lives.”

John’s lived in Powell River since he was 15. When the property he was living on was rezoned in 2020, he had to move out of the house he had been sharing with his brother and couldn’t find a place to rent. John moved into a friend’s house temporarily and when his friend had to move John had no where else to go.

“I don’t know what I would have done. I have a cat and [he] is the most important thing on this Earth to me. The thought of losing him or having to give him up for adoption put me in a huge depression and panic attacks. I was freaking out.”

John says he has felt “hugely supported” while living at supportive housing. Shortly after moving in, John had some health challenges arise which caused him debilitating back pain and mobility issues. Staff supported John to get a medical bracelet, so they’d know if he needed help, and with their support John was eventually able to get a MRI and a diagnosis for his pain which has really helped his pain management and quality of life.

“The staff here have been there for me the entire time, happily helping me do my laundry or helping me clean my room. They work hard, so, you know, if you want to change your life, they help in any way that they can with resources and anything that’s needed, right up to the bus tickets to get there.”

John worries that the public doesn’t realize the extent of the housing crisis in our community. “These places aren’t just for people who moved here from somewhere else,” he says, acknowledging the long-time connection to qathet Region that most of the building’s participants share. For now, he’s just grateful to have a home for him and his cat, Bung. “I want to give him the best life possible. I do spoil him. Give him every type of treat.”

Supportive housing provides low-barrier housing and 24-hour support services to single low-income adults, seniors and people with disabilities who live in qathet Region and are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Our program is designed to help people find and maintain stable housing.

Community Development In Action



Our Community Development Program brings community members together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. When there are gaps in services that prevent community members from feeling safe, welcomed or served in our community, we work with community members, local leaders and other groups to create supports where they are needed.

Over the past year we've:

- Obtained funding for and operationalized advanced Fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy drug checking for the qathet Region, as the administrative lead for the qathet Community Action Team
- Supported qathet Community Justice to incorporate as an independent BC non-profit society
- Secured 3 years of funding for SUSTAIN (Substance Users Society Teaching Advocacy Instead of Neglect) to support rural input on provincial drug policy
- Collaborated with the BC Centre of Substance Use, the University of Waterloo Region, and the University of British Columbia to conduct research on rural drug use, and published four peer-reviewed articles on substance use treatment options
- Helped secure a full compliment of funding for Trans qathet so they could hire their first full-time staff member, and supported their growing reach as provincial trans care experts.
- Successfully launched a regional contingency management project, which is the only evidence-based psychiatric treatment for people who use stimulants
- Supported operational growth at the Overdose Prevention Site, which has seen the number of visits grow to 1,500 each month
- With our Clinical Nurse Educator, provided 23 advanced overdose response trainings to local healthcare and non-profit organizations.
- Coordinated and provided harm reduction supports at Wet Grad, through the Youth Community Action Team



Looking Ahead

Demand for our services is growing, as is our organization. Looking ahead, this year we'll be prioritizing balancing sustainable organizational growth and maintaining our high standard of service delivery, while continuing to strengthen our community relationships and awareness.

2023 - 2024 Priorities

Community Impact

We're seeing more people in community struggle to meet basic needs like housing and food security. All of our programs stated a lack of accessible, affordable housing as one of their biggest challenges in being able to support the individuals we served this past year.

We're continuing to advocate for additional housing supports in our community at a local and provincial level, and are committed to re-launching the qathet Region Ending Poverty Coalition to improve the quality of life for people experiencing poverty, and for the safety and wellbeing of the whole community.

Communications

One of our biggest challenges over the past year has been a lack of community awareness of the full scope of our programs and supports. We are prioritizing more frequent and clear communication about our organization and programs, are committed to sharing more program-specific information including outcome metrics and impact stories; engaging the community and our partners on more dialogue on what we're doing and why; and creating more opportunities for feedback about our services.

People and Culture

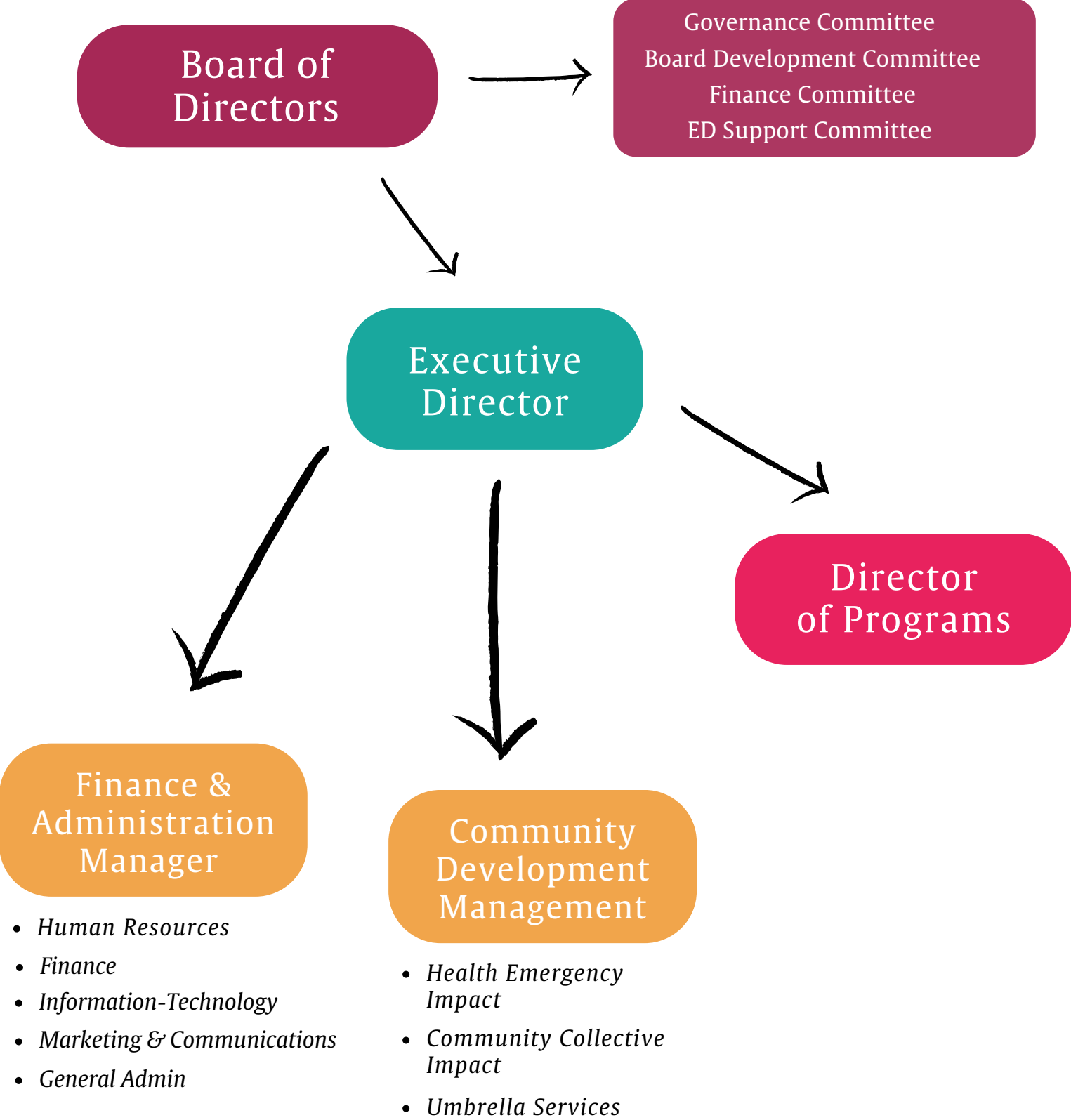
Our workforce has grown by 63% in the past 3 years, and 40% in the past year alone! We know we need to prioritize our internal culture and staff supports to keep the amazing talent we have now and support our staff to do their best work, and for future recruitment. This year we're focusing on improving our internal systems, and expanding our staff training options.

Strategic Planning

This year we'll be revising our formal strategic plan. The purpose of strategic planning is to set organizational long-term goals that will focus our work and energy over the next 3 - 5 years. We look forward to sharing the finished product with the community in early 2024.



Organizational Structure





Community Health Manager

- *Complex Care Housing*
- *iOAT Clinic*

Employment Services Manager

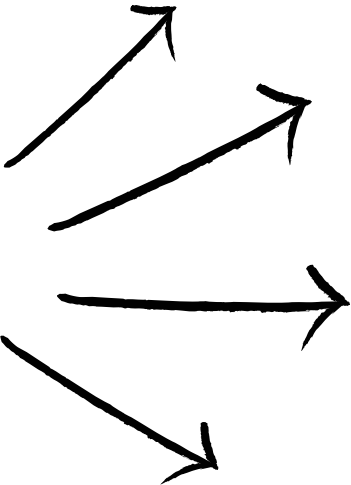
- *Work BC Employment Services*
- *Bladerunners*

Community Services Manager

- *Immigrant Services*
- *Family Place Resource Centre*
- *Healthy Care Pregnancy Program*
- *Babies Open New Doors (BOND)*
- *Community Resource Centre*
- *Community Opportunities for Real Employment (CORE)*
- *FoodHub/The Nook*
- *Literacy*

Housing Services Manager

- *Supportive Housing*
- *Emergency Shelter*





Our 2022 - 2023 Board of Directors

Sarah McClean, President

Lee Coulter, Treasurer

Karen Lines, Secretary

Hans Brennert, Director

Maggie Hathaway, Director

Tom Keenan, Director

Our 2022 - 2023 Senior Leadership Team

Stuart Clark, Executive Director

Kim Markel, Director of Programs

Jessica Colasanto, Community Support Manager

Kathryn Colby, Community Development Manager

Brodie D'Angio, Employment Services Manager

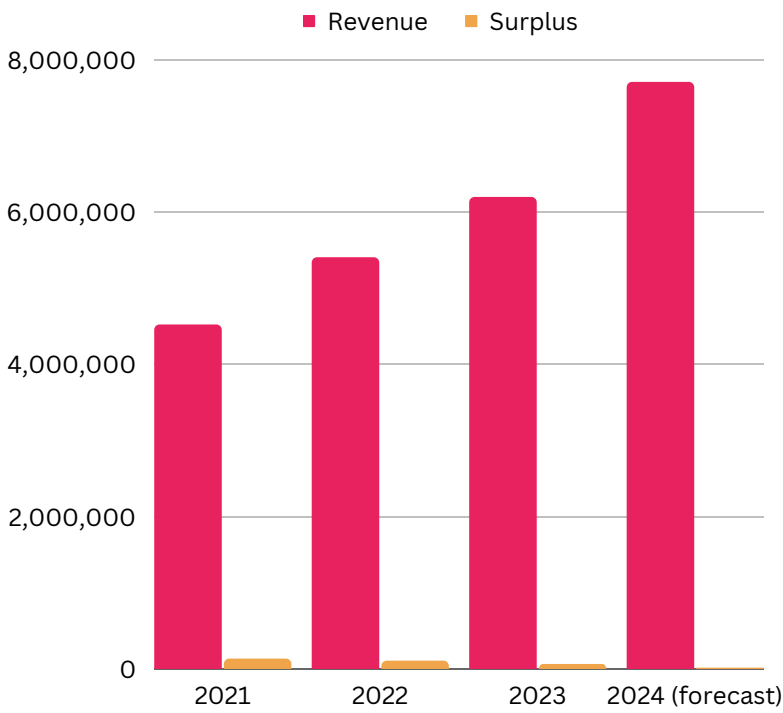
Stuart Holder, Finance and Administration Manager

Julie Jenkins, Housing Services Manager

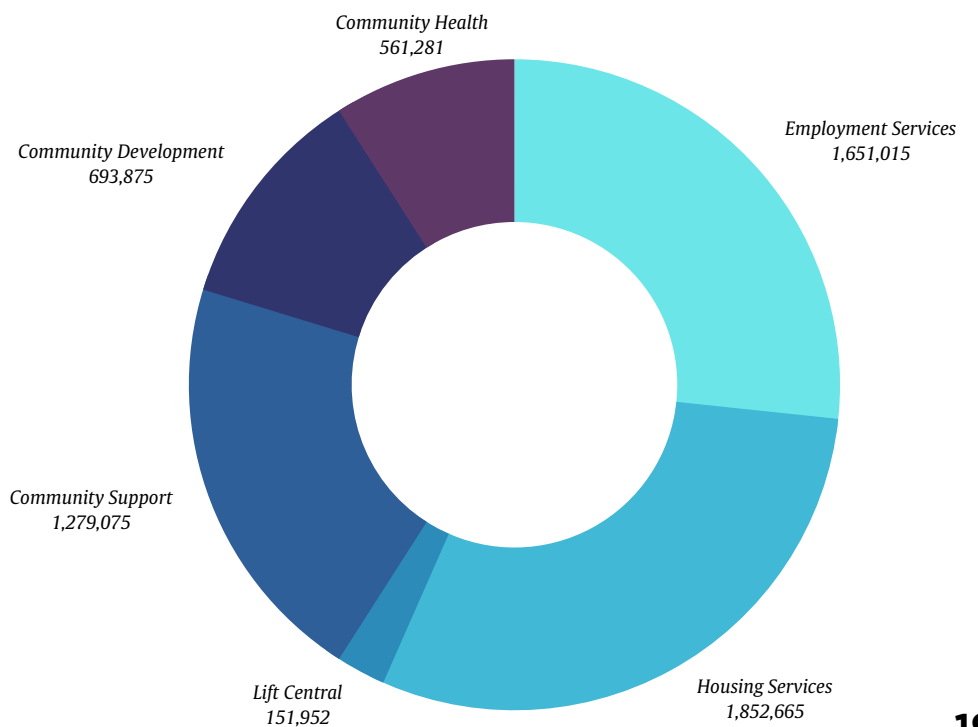
Financials

At a glance

2022 - 2023 Revenue vs Surplus

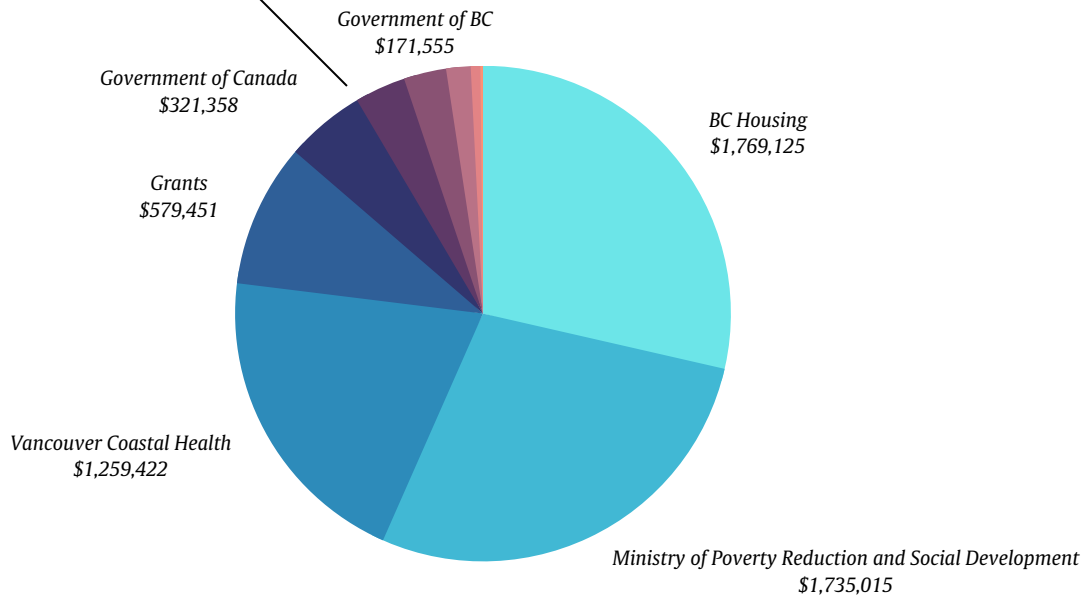


2022 - 2023 Revenue by Department

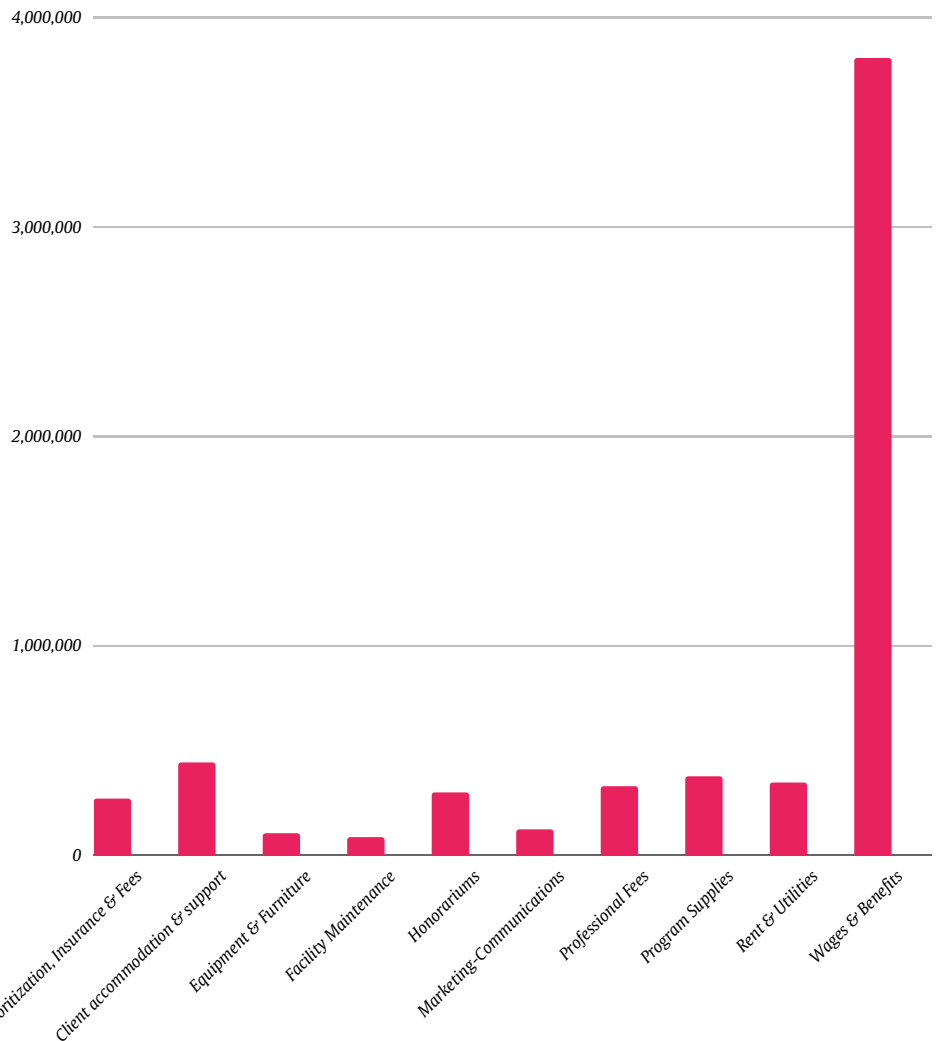


2022 - 2023 Funders

- Rental Income \$206,003
- Interest \$98,759
- The Nook sales \$38,682
- Donations \$10,493



2022 - 2023 Expenses by Type



Audited financial statements available on our website at www.liftcommunityservices.org/reports



Acknowledgements

We can't do this work alone. Thank you to the following individuals and community partners for their support and contributions over the past year.

Mel Mundell

Kathryn Hawrys

Doreen Point

Jeremy Hopper

Craig Mracek

Government of BC

Government of Canada

Vancouver Coastal Health

Provincial Health Services Association

BC Housing

Community Action Initiative

Provincial Peer Network

Canadian Mental Health Association of BC

BC Centre on Substance Use, UBC

Legal Services Society of BC

Options for Sexual Health BC

Westview Ratepayers Society

Homelessness Services Association of BC

Vancouver Island University (tiwšɛmawtx^w)

qathet Supportive Housing Community Advisory Committee

Tla'amin Nation

Tla'amin Health

City of Powell River

qathet Regional District

RCMP Powell River Detachment

BC Emergency Health Services

Fire Services, City of Powell River

Town Centre Mall

qathet Safe

Youth and Family Powell River

Four Tides Hospice Society

United Way BC

qathet School District

Decoda Literacy

Chamber of Commerce

Kiwanis Village

Powell River Public Library

Hive Business Solutions

Boldt Communications

Western Management Consultants

Bethink Solutions

BC Ambulance Service Station 229

Powell River Fire Rescue

Faith Lutheran Church

Powell River Food Bank

Zunga Bus


ACCESS



Stay in touch!



Stay in the loop with what we're up to!

 @liftcommunityservices

 @liftcommunityservices

www.liftcommunityservices.org

Questions? Concerns? Compliments? We want to hear from you!

Let us know via our online feedback form. We'll respond within 2 business days:

www.liftcommunityservices.org/contact

Join our newsletter list!

Coming Fall 2023. We'll send you occasional emails with updates on our programs and supports, upcoming events, and informational resources.

Sign up at:

www.liftcommunityservices.org/subscribe

SERVING qathet REGION
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