

PACIFICA HOUSING

IMPACT REPORT 2020



Pacifica Housing Advisory Association acknowledges, honours, and respects the Lekwungen speaking peoples of the Songhees Nation and Esquimalt Nation on whose territory Pacifica Housing operates, as well as the WSANEC peoples and Snyneymuxw First Nation and Nanoose First Nation. We are thankful to be able to carry out our good work, live, and learn on these lands.



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SETTING A NEW COURSE DURING TURBULENT TIMES

When I took over the role as CEO of Pacifica Housing in early 2020, I knew that a number of challenges lay ahead. Pacifica is an organization rich with experienced and caring staff, a history of supporting those in need, and deep-rooted values that drive the organization. While the future looked bright, it was time to assess what Pacifica needed to further strengthen its foundation following a period of significant rapid growth, as it faced the deepening housing and overdose crises.

Needless to say, the global pandemic was like a one-in-fifty-year storm event that took us all by surprise. It didn't matter where you lived or how fortunate you had been in life, COVID-19 impacted all of our lives. Still, there is simply no denying that its impacts were and continue to be borne most heavily by people already at risk.

I am incredibly proud of the way our organization has responded to the challenges and the way we continue to meet the needs of our residents and the communities where we serve. I am further impressed that our team moved forward with much of the foundational work we had set out to undertake prior to the pandemic, to ensure long term strength and resiliency. We are also thankful to the partners and funders that supported us all along.

While 2020 is a year many were happy to see be over, there were, undoubtedly, bright spots that are worth celebrating. The Pacifica team delivered remarkable results. Our team is resilient, and I look forward to working with them into 2021 and beyond.

This Impact Report features four success stories, including one of our outreach employees, a partner in our incredibly successful Streets to Homes program, and a resident whose knitting is giving back to her community. While these four stories demonstrate the impact of the Pacifica community, there are so many more that are equally worth celebrating.

I hope you will keep in touch with us over the year ahead. Visit our website and follow us on social media to learn more about the inspiring things taking place throughout our wonderful communities.

Sincerely,



Carolina Ibarra
CEO, Pacifica Housing



WE ARE PACIFICA HOUSING

Who We Are

Pacifica Housing is a non-profit provider of homes and supportive services for seniors, low-income families, and people facing homelessness.



1274 Homes



31 Independent-living buildings

Our Vision

Equitable housing in pursuit of thriving communities.



6 Supportive housing buildings



3 Developments in progress

Our Mission

To advance independence of individuals and families through equitable housing and supportive services.



148 staff members



1 Outreach building

Camas Gardens



YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 was filled with difficult, unexpected challenges for people everywhere. Pacifica's focus remained on helping those in need of affordable housing and other supportive services that advance the independence of individuals and families. We know that is where we can have the greatest impact in communities from Greater Victoria to Nanaimo.

All the while, we've kept our eye on our long-term goals, and made great strides towards significant renewal. Here are some highlights:

- **Fresh Faces:**

In January, we welcomed our new CEO, Carolina Ibarra. Carolina has brought fresh ideas and new focus to Pacifica, while navigating the issues brought about by the global pandemic. Along with other additions to the executive team including Marsha Guthrie, Frank Bassett, and Laurel Houniet, Pacifica is working hard to build and implement a long-term vision for the future.

- **Renewed Direction:**

Critical to our vision for the future, Pacifica is refreshing our Strategic Plan, charting a course for the next 5–10 years. This process has been designed to include input from our leadership team, as well as our staff members and community stakeholders.

- **Investing in People:**

A key priority over the last year has been supporting our dedicated staff. Pacifica is proud to be a Living Wage Employer, and we're building on that strong foundation by implementing a comprehensive training and professional development strategy that will build capacity within our various teams.

- **Opening New Doors:**

We continued to progress three significant new developments in Greater Victoria:

- Oak Park 2
- Johnson St. Firehall
- Burnside School Affordable Housing Project

- **Covering New Territory:**

Within our Oak Park 2 and Burnside projects, we have secured important provincial funding for 95 new child care spaces. We know how critical child care is for families, and we look forward to being a part of the solution.

We made outstanding progress in 2020, and we're ready to take on the challenges of 2021 with renewed purpose.



Last day at the Fairfield Hotel

COVID-19 RESPONSE

2020 will be defined by the COVID-19 pandemic, including how organizations like Pacifica responded.

Pacifica Housing responded to meet the increased needs of the most vulnerable people in our communities with evolving COVID-19 health guidelines.

We know that many of our residents and clients continue to be disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. On top of that, disruptions to the community services they rely on has made it increasingly difficult to self-isolate in an effort to protect their health and safety.



Access to Necessary Items

Our team worked hard to help those most at risk access critical items like food and basic hygiene products to avoid unnecessary exposure.



Housing with Heart

We relocated at-risk people who were living in precarious situations to homes where they had access to hygiene facilities and set up their new households from scratch.



Food Security

We delivered over 4000 prepared meals and grocery gift cards to the doors of our residents and outreach clients struggling with food security due to the pandemic.



Tents to Motels

In the spring of 2020, the Pacifica outreach team helped BC Housing and other community organizations to move more than 200 people living in encampments into motels.



Keeping Clean

Pacifica supplied households in need with hygiene and cleaning kits with hand soap and cleaning supplies to help them fight the virus.

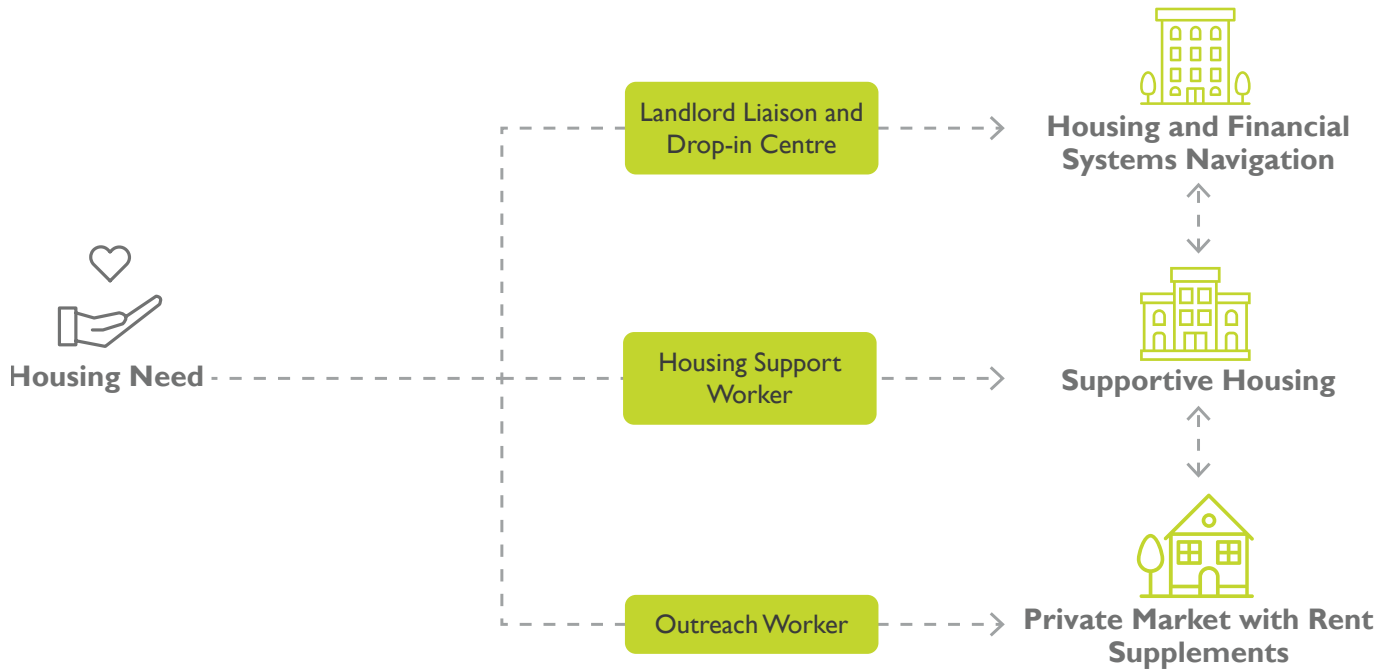


New Homes for Fairfield Residents

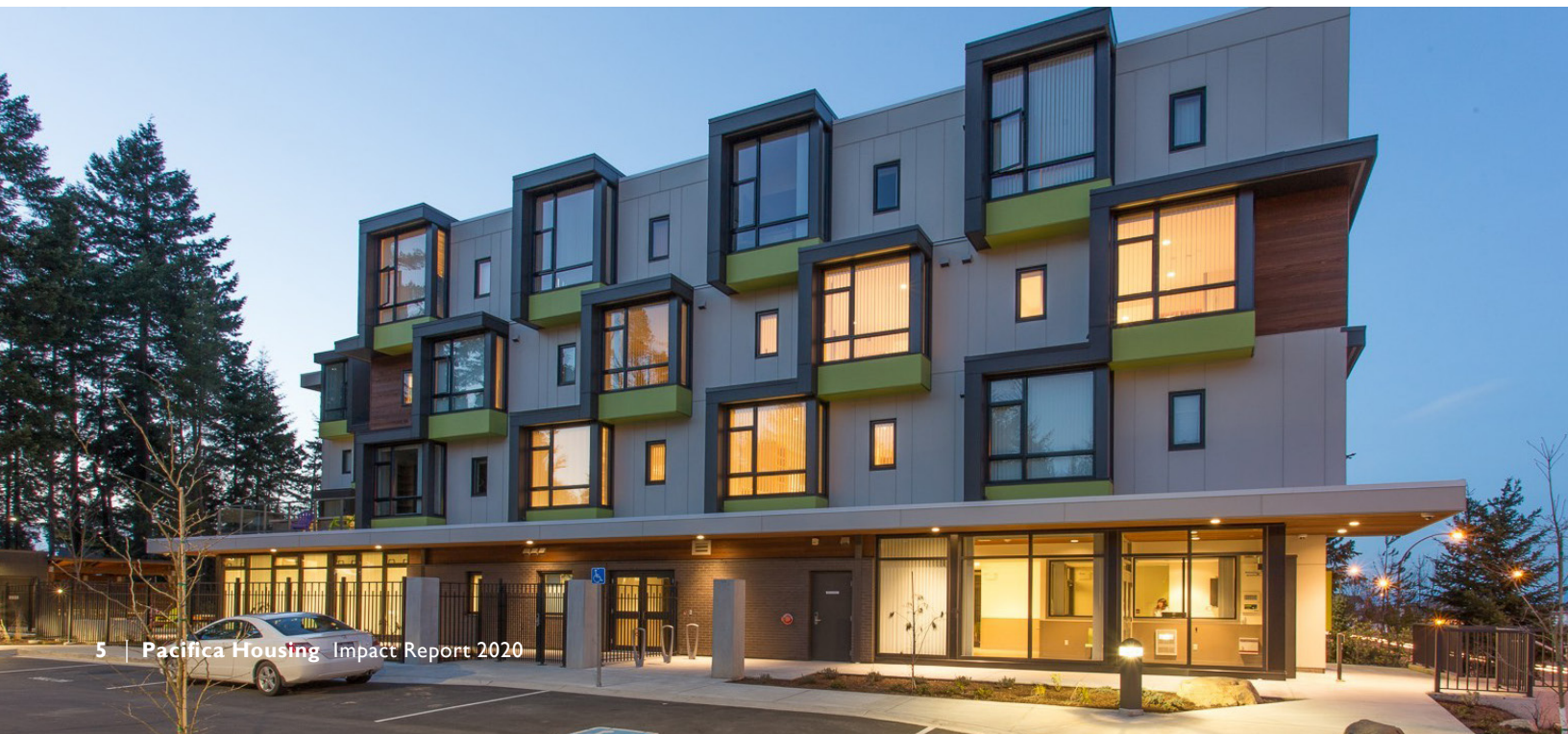
Finally, we accelerated efforts to move people living at the Fairfield Hotel into more suitable homes. Without the basic amenities like in-suite showers and kitchens that allow for physical distancing, Pacifica made it an urgent priority to ensure our residents had more appropriate, long-term places to live.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

Pathways to Independence



Pacifica offers a framework of Supportive Services that creates opportunities for individuals and families to build life skills, live independently, and successfully maintain housing. Our model is built to support individuals as they move through the housing continuum towards independence. We work with people to help them wherever they are on that continuum, with the recognition that while many can and will be able to live fully independently, others may require supportive services to lead a fulfilling life.



Outreach Services

One of Pacifica's most successful programs is The Greater Victoria Streets to Homes Program (S2H), a community collaboration that moves adults with a history of homelessness directly into private market housing while providing customized support.

Impact Highlights:



Approximately 120 clients



100% clients stably housed for at least 2–3 years



56% clients stably housed for 7–10 years



100% landlord retention rate



25 landlord partners in 2020



A big thank you for outreach staff

DOHRS – Downtown Outreach Housing Resource Services

DOHRS is a drop-in centre that provides advocacy, housing and financial navigation services to individuals who are currently homeless, or who are at risk of becoming homeless. Even though it has been operating remotely since the pandemic began, it achieved the following impact:

Impact:



Successfully assisted 30 clients find new homes in 2020.



Housing and financial systems navigation for 650+ clients over the year.



Responded to a total of 3805 calls in 2020.

Landlord Liaison

Another component of Pacifica’s outreach success is our landlord liaison service. This service helps clients find homes, as well as create and maintain relationships with private-market landlords. We do this by supporting every phase of the tenancy, from viewings, to helping clients build skills to successfully maintain their housing and prevent disputes. We also create housing opportunities by recruiting private-market landlord partners.

““

Your help was invaluable to me. I would have been homeless without your help and support, Candice. I will forever be grateful to you for fighting for me and having my back.” – DOHRS Client



Candice, “The angel at the front desk.”

Indigenous Outreach

In 2020 Pacifica was pleased to create a role for an Indigenous Outreach Worker to focus on providing culturally supportive services to Indigenous clients experiencing homelessness. The most recent Point-in-Time count in Greater Victoria found that 33% of individuals without shelter identified as Indigenous, demonstrating the critical demand for these supports. The work of Pacifica's Cyril Siaminhit from Songhees Nation has increased our capacity to meet this unmet need by:

- Delivering outreach support through the context of cultural safety and advocacy.
- Practicing decolonized harm reduction and Indigenous Housing First.
- Liaising with First Nations agencies and Indigenous staff from other community organizations supporting Indigenous clients.
- Organizing traditional events with the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness and local Elders that allow clients to reconnect with their culture (such as the pit cook pictured).

“

This is an important role for me as it is near and dear to my heart – being fortunate to serve those in my local territory by providing culturally safe supports and work in partnership with Indigenous agencies and allies to people who are someone's brother, sister, mother, father, child, or grandparent or relative.”





Tenant Survey

Between Nanaimo and Victoria:

325 households responded to our June 2020 Tenant Survey. The survey was designed to help us understand how COVID-19 was impacting our residents.

47% of respondents signaled that their employment had been affected by COVID-19.

27% of those having lost their jobs entirely.

Nearly **1/3** of those surveyed stated some of the supports they normally received had been closed or cut.

Impact:

- Outreach Team followed up with every individual that expressed an unmet need and helped connect them to resources.
- Leveraging Supportive Services team to help independent-living tenants remain securely housed.
- Embedded Outreach team member to respond with crisis intervention to keep people housed when experiencing a crisis.

Tenant Support Program

Formerly known as Housing Crisis Prevention, the Tenant Support Program serves residents living independently in Pacifica Housing buildings who are facing circumstances that threaten their housing security. When the Tenant Services team identifies a resident whose tenancy could be at risk, the program helps develop an individualized support plan.

Tenant Support Program team members offer regular follow-ups and referrals to a wide variety of community services and education programs to help residents remain housed. This can include resources designed to help with anything from budget management, to parenting support, to Ready to Rent training. This program, partially funded by the United Way of Greater Victoria, has a nearly 100% success rate.



Nikao, Nanaimo

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

From Crisis Intervention to Case Planning

This year, increased capacity at Pacifica’s Supportive Housing sites in Victoria has allowed the department to shift focus from crisis management, overdose response, and resident emergencies, to providing in-depth case planning.

Adequate staffing levels will allow the team to offer more of the services needed for Supportive Housing residents to thrive in all aspects of their social determinants of health. This includes supporting residents in building connections to community services and creating a network of strength-based supports. This kind of client support focuses on meeting people where they are at on the housing continuum, while assisting and guiding them towards independence.

In addition, the Supportive Housing teams in both Nanaimo and Victoria moved swiftly to adapt resident programming to comply with COVID-19 health and safety guidelines in order to continue offering programs that are crucial to the well-being of tenants.

In Nanaimo, the Clean Team program at Nikao has continued nearly without a hitch. It provides the opportunity for residents to assist with light cleaning duties in return for grocery store vouchers. Contributing to keeping the building and grounds clean has become a source

of pride for many residents, and the activities have become part of their daily routines, while also increasing their food security. Other programming at Supportive Housing sites includes arts and crafts, virtual bingo, and socially-distanced coffee and conversation groups.



Supportive Housing staff



IMPACT STORIES

Jason's Story – Streets to Homes Outreach Worker

A critical part of the Streets to Homes outreach team, Jason understands exactly how tough it is to find yourself without a home. Today, Jason works with Streets to Homes clients to help them access the support they need to live independently. Reflecting on his work with an individual who has been living independently for more than two years, Jason has a huge smile on his face. “He is slowly gaining independence and a sense of purpose,” says Jason.

Jason knows how much of an accomplishment this is, having been through it himself. “I was in and out of homelessness for more than eight years,” he recounts. Jason believes his experience gives him a special capacity to connect and build rapport with clients, many of whom share similar experiences to his.

Jason was already living in his car when an accident occurred that changed his life. Immobilized in a hospital room, Jason was finally able to access the help he desperately needed to escape the cycle of homelessness he found himself in.

Today, Jason works in the Streets to Homes program because it gives him the flexibility to meet people with different needs and address their situations individually, instead of leading someone through a prescriptive program. “There’s not just one path to stability and structure,” he says. He believes a major strength of Pacifica Housing’s outreach team is their capacity to be innovative, providing unique solutions that consider each individual’s situation.

“

The work is gratifying and it fills my heart.”

The team works together to go above and beyond for their clients. From finding furniture, to hunting down community resources, and sourcing food, Pacifica’s outreach workers provide a wide variety of supports that are critical to

helping people gain their independence. At the heart of it, their work is designed to help people learn how to live successfully on their own, with full independence. “The work is gratifying and fills my heart,” adds Jason.

Jason’s journey has included many achievements. Some of the most important to him have been attending post-secondary education, regaining contact with lost family members, becoming successfully employed in a profession he loves, and now, raising a family of his own.





Blaine's Story – DOHRS Client and Volunteer

Blaine had been moving between shelters and the street for almost a year before he chanced upon Pacifica Housing's downtown drop-in centre one snowy day. He believes it was fate. "I don't know where I'd be without Pacifica," Blaine says.

Pacifica's Downtown Housing Outreach Resource Services (DOHRS) is where Blaine first connected with Pacifica. DOHRS provides housing support and navigation services for people who are homeless or in danger of losing their homes.

Blaine's journey with Pacifica Housing has come a long way. From living in a shelter, to temporary accommodation in a hotel room, to a supportive housing unit, and finally, to his very own bachelor suite in the private market, Blaine's story shows the success of DOHRS.

When asked about the best part about his place, Blaine couldn't hold back a big smile. "It's mine, all mine," he says. Blaine lives downtown with his impressive collection of over 500 vinyl records.

Blaine is undoubtedly a success story, having maintained his sobriety for more than five years, and lived independently for almost ten. Despite his successful turnaround, life hasn't been easy on him. Blaine has struggled with a visual impairment since birth, and deep depression after his mother passed away.

Despite his difficulties, Blaine is enthusiastic and cheerful, with an infectious laugh. He has remained a consistent friendly face at DOHRS over the past few years by participating in the Community Volunteer Program. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Blaine was there on a daily basis to assist with light cleaning duties in return for grocery store vouchers.

Things have been tough for Blaine since DOHRS began operating remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He misses the "structure or routine," and the friendships he built there.

He feels a real sense of community at DOHRS. Candice and other outreach workers are always there to chat when things get tough, and he's made a few close friends with other participants in the program.

Blaine's work at DOHRS is very important to him. He says it has helped give him a sense of purpose and self-worth. "Pacifica shows me trust and respect, and I respect them. That feels good."

Peter's Story – Streets to Homes Partner

In ten+ years working alongside Pacifica, Peter has rented out suites to more than 150 Streets to Homes clients, all people with a history of chronic homelessness. He's been a big part of the success of the program, and even won the Pacifica Housing award for best landlord in 2014.

Over the years as one of the most valued private market partners in the Streets to Homes program, Peter has rented out motel studio units, two-duplexes, and a rooming house.

A key challenge faced by many individuals who have experienced homelessness is finding a landlord who recognizes the challenges they face and is willing to help. Peter knows how important it is for people to have a roof over their heads. "He is compassionate when it comes to the need to help house people in our community," says outreach worker, Kym.

"We're a little more than landlords," Peter says about his efforts. "We pay attention to patterns and check in on people." Peter knows that if he sees a Pacifica tenant in trouble, he can count on the outreach team to provide supportive services.

Peter counts on Pacifica to do more than provide supportive services. He has his own bills to pay, so he needs tenants that he can rely on. He says time and time again Pacifica has shown that they are accountable, and that the supports they provide help his residents live happy, independent lives as stable renters.

That dependability is what has kept Peter working with Pacifica for so long. It's a relationship Pacifica hopes continues for many more years.



Inge's Story – Pacifica Seniors Lodge Resident

Pacifica prides itself on cultivating communities that are a step above. True to form, Pacifica Seniors Lodge (PSL) in Nanaimo is home to one particularly inspiring resident.

Despite the challenges presented by necessary isolation due to COVID-19, crochet and classical music have kept 91-year-old Inge going strong.

For the past few months, Inge has been selling her beautifully-made toques, scarves, and potholders at a little table in the lobby of the PSL. She has managed to raise more than \$700 for local charities, including recently donating the proceeds of her sales to a local food bank called Loaves and Fishes.

It's a way of giving back that she hopes others might emulate. "Many others have these skills," she recounts. "But they haven't realized how calming it can be with music."

Starting in March, residents of PSL were asked to stay in their units with meal trays brought to their doors, to help stop the spread of COVID-19. As seniors are among the most vulnerable to the virus, their normal activities have been interrupted more than most, often leading to depression and loneliness.

"That's when I started crocheting in earnest," Inge adds. Now that the dining room has opened again at half-capacity,

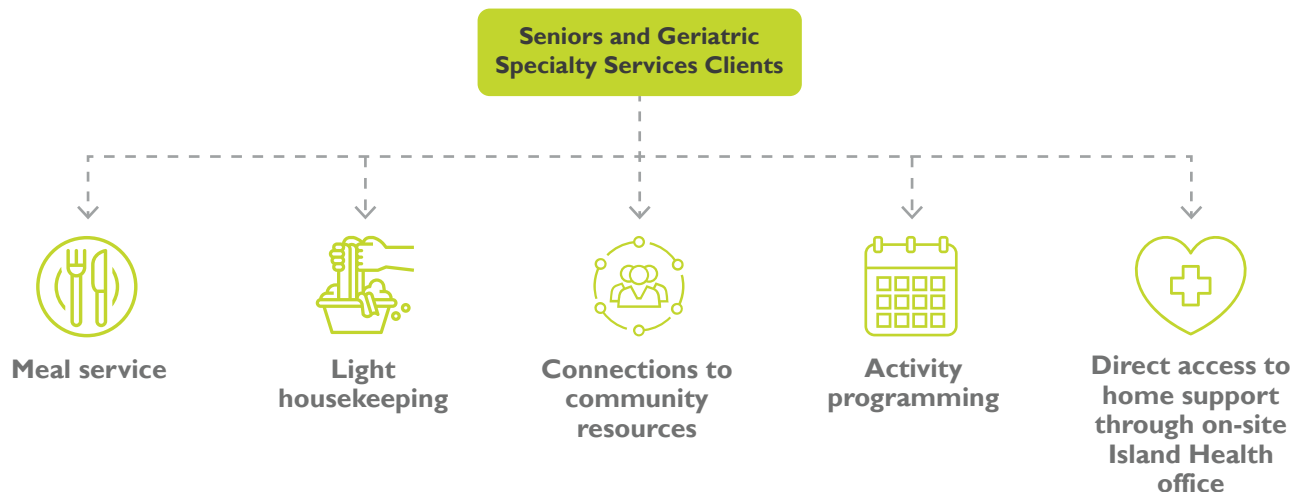
Inge says she is much more content. "Food just didn't taste the same [eaten in her room]. You've got to move to keep yourself going."

No one will be surprised that when asked about her plan to weather a second wave of COVID-19, Inge was resolute. "I'm not giving up. I've got a lot of yarn left." In fact, she is already busy crocheting to raise money for her next charity donation.



"I'm not giving up. I've got a lot of yarn left."

Pacifica Seniors Lodge Services



PROPERTY SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

Pacifica’s Property Services team had a number of accomplishments to boast about in 2020, not the least of which is managing three major development projects that together will bring almost 300 units of affordable, independent-living housing to the Greater Victoria area.

Development Projects

- **Oak Park 2**

Now open, Oak Park brings 80 units of affordable housing to the West Shore.



- **Johnson St. Firehall**

After breaking ground in early 2020, the Johnson St. Firehall project at 1025 Johnson Street made swift progress. When complete, Pacifica will have 130 new affordable rental units above a new Victoria Firehall No.1. The project is a partnership with Jawl Residential and BC Housing funded through the HomesBC program, and is on track to be complete in late 2022.

- **Burnside School Affordable Housing Project**

88 units of affordable housing at the site of the former Burnside School continue to move ahead in partnership with The City of Victoria, BC Housing, The Burnside Gorge Community Association (BGCA), and the Greater Victoria School District. The unique partnership will also result in 59 new childcare spaces, and is expected to go through a public hearing in early 2021.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

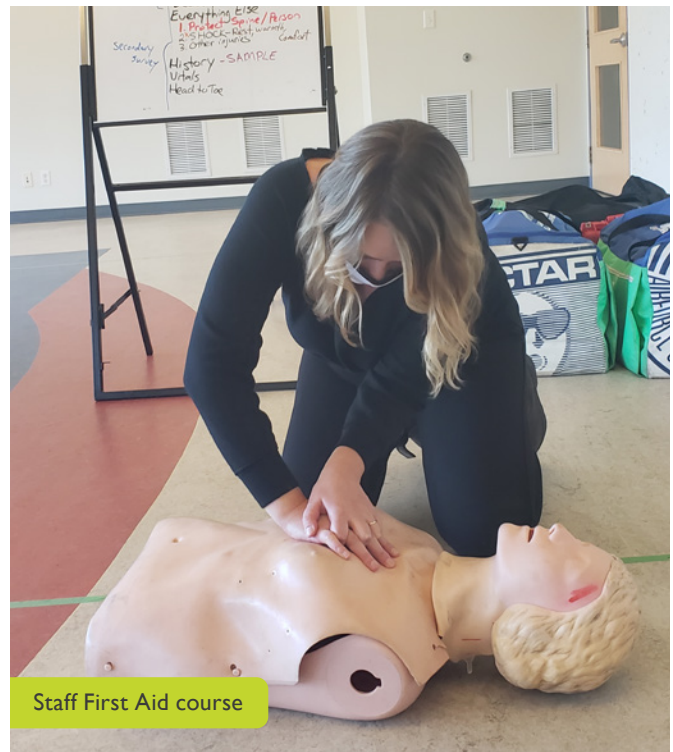
Significant progress was made in the Finance and Administration departments toward ensuring long-term foundational resiliency. Some highlights include:

HR

- We were certified as a Living Wage Employer.
- We launched a six-month leadership training course for all managers and directors.
- As a first step toward building out a comprehensive training plan, we expanded access to a host of training sessions to staff from various departments to facilitate cross-training. Such training includes First Aid, use of fire safety equipment, overdose response, and understanding the *Residential Tenancy Act.*, among other technical training. We also doubled the number of staff attending sector conferences and educational sessions.

Fund Development:

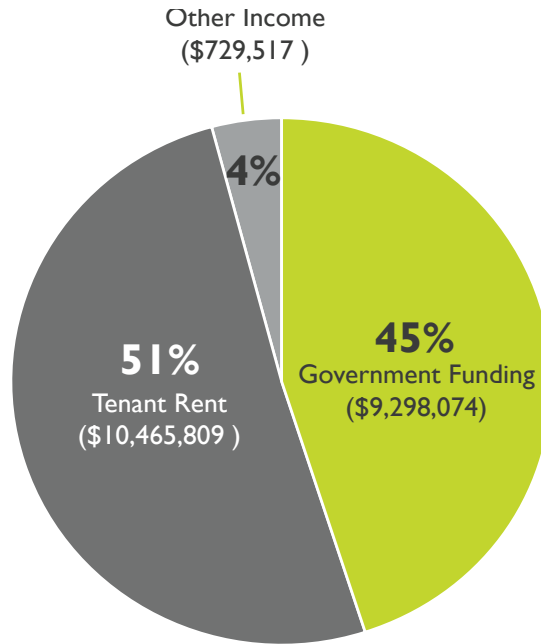
- In the last fiscal year, Pacifica received \$310,000 in grants and donations. Thank you to all the organizations and individuals that contributed to our impact in the community.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

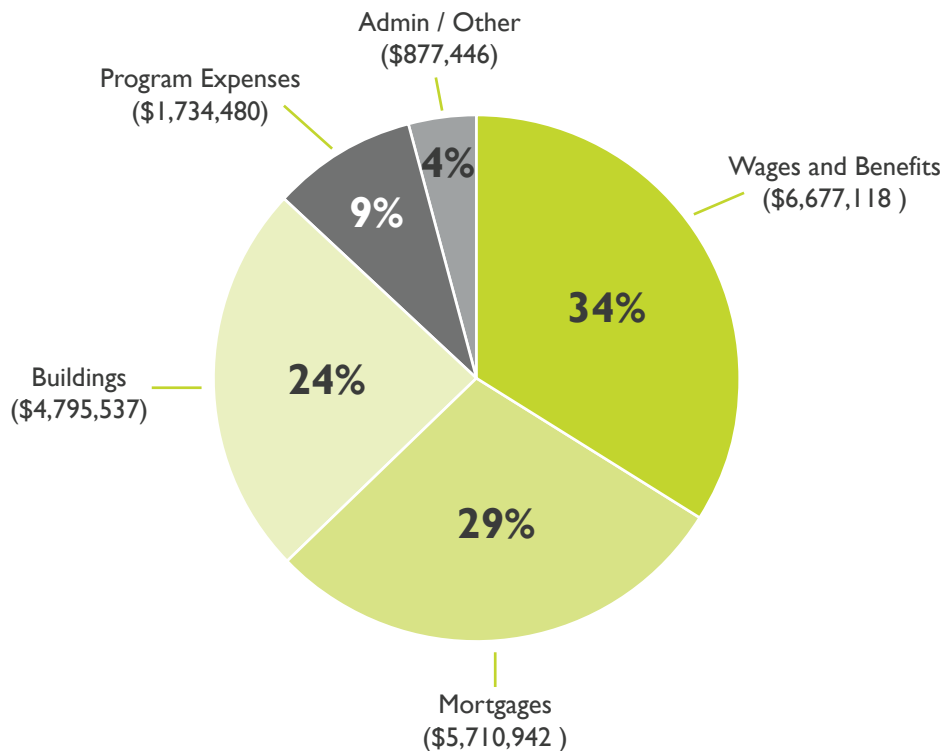
Operating Revenue

Total \$20,493,400



Operating Expenses

Total \$19,795,523



*2019–20 Fiscal Year

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE TEAM

Board of Directors



Marnie Hill
Board Chair



Jaime Hall
Past Chair



James Gustafson
Vice Chair, Treasurer



Rajinder Sahota
Secretary



Deborah George
Director



Terry Farmer
Director



Sang Kiet-Ly
Director

Executive Team



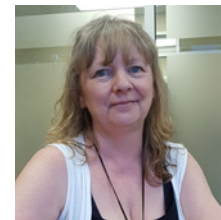
Carolina Ibarra
Chief Executive Officer



Laurel Houniet
Director of Finance



Marsha Guthrie
Director of Administrative
Services



Sharon MacDonald
Director of Supportive
Services



Frank Bassett
Director of Community
Real Estate



OUR PARTNERS

We are grateful for the organizations and businesses whose generosity makes our work possible.







PACIFICA HOUSING

*Affordable homes.
Better lives.*

827 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R9

250.385.2131
pacificahousing.ca