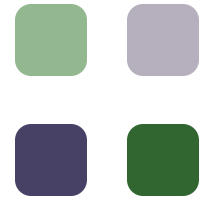


2023-24

ANNUAL REPORT



McLaren Housing
Society of British Columbia



mclarenhousing.org

McLaren Housing Society is privileged to work on the unceded ancestral territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxú7mesh (Squamish) and sə́lilwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) people and honoured that our work extends to surrounding lands of diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

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Mike Hoche,
Board President
McLaren Housing Society



Ilm Kassam,
Executive Director
McLaren Housing Society

Greetings from the leadership team at McLaren Housing Society

As we start another transformative year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our generous donors, tireless volunteers, and dedicated staff. Your unwavering support in our mission to support and empower individuals living with HIV/AIDS is invaluable. Together, we are creating a significant impact in the lives of our community members.

We are excited to share our latest annual report detailing

McLaren Housing Society's achievements and challenges in 2023-2024. Looking back over the past year, we have witnessed remarkable growth and resilience within our organization, remaining unwavering in our dedication to improving the quality of life for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS.

Highlights and Accomplishments:

Completion of New Strategic Plan: We are thrilled to announce that, with the support of our staff, our Board of Directors has completed a new strategic plan. This comprehensive roadmap will guide our organization's growth

and development, ensuring we continue to effectively meet the evolving needs of our community.

Housing Initiatives: Stable housing is crucial for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Our goal is to provide safe, appropriate and affordable housing options, fostering a sense of belonging and security for our residents. With the support of community partners and fundraising efforts, we continue to provide housing for over 300 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. We know that stable housing is one of the most important social determinants of health.

Enhanced Care and Support Services: We have strengthened our care and support services to better meet the evolving needs of our residents. By recruiting qualified staff and forming strategic partnerships, we improved the quality and accessibility of these services, positively impacting the well-being and satisfaction of our residents.

Advocacy and Policy Development: Our commitment to advocating for the rights and well-being of individuals living with HIV/AIDS remains strong. We engaged with policymakers, community leaders, and other stakeholders to influence positive change, reduce stigma, and promote policies that prioritize comprehensive healthcare and social support for our community.

Community Engagement: We believe in the power of a connected community. Throughout the year, we organized events, support groups, and social activities to foster a sense of belonging and empowerment, encouraging interaction, shared experiences, and personal growth for both our residents and the community.

Increased Funding for Administration and IT: We secured increased funding for necessary infrastructure improvements,

specifically targeting administration and IT costs. This has enabled us to enhance our operational efficiency and improve the overall experience for our staff and residents

Increased Wages for Staff: In recognition of the hard work and dedication of our staff, we implemented wage increases, ensuring that our employees are fairly compensated and motivated to continue delivering high-quality services to our residents and clients.

Challenges Faced:

Funding Constraints: Once again despite our fundraising successes, we face challenges in securing sustainable funding sources. The uncertain economic climate and changing funding priorities create obstacles in maintaining and expanding our services. We must explore new financial support avenues, diversify our funding streams, and engage in strategic partnerships for long-term viability.

Increasing Demand: The demand for our services continues to grow, reflecting the ongoing need for comprehensive support for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. We need to expand our housing capacity and support services as the number of individuals seeking assistance exceeds our available resources. We are exploring strategies such as collaborating with other organizations, advocating for increased government funding, and implementing cost-effective service delivery models.

Stigma and Discrimination: Despite progress, stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS persist. Combating these societal attitudes remains an ongoing struggle. We are committed to addressing stigma through targeted advocacy efforts, community education, and awareness campaigns, requiring sustained collective action from all stakeholders.

Aging with HIV/AIDS: As individuals living with HIV/AIDS age, they face unique challenges related to housing

stability and support. Ensuring appropriate housing options for this population remains a complex issue. There is a growing need for long-term care options and aging-in-place services.

Inflation Costs: We are facing increasing costs for food and maintenance supplies due to inflation. This has put additional strain on our budget, making it more challenging to provide the same level of service and support to our residents.

Looking Ahead:

In 2024-2025, we will continue to focus on expanding services to meet evolving resident needs. Our new strategic plan centers on fostering a healthy, inclusive community for people living with HIV/AIDS by providing diverse housing options and comprehensive support services. We aim to enhance wellness by addressing the unique health impacts of HIV/AIDS and emphasizing the importance of housing as a determinant of health. By offering tailored, dignified solutions and combating stigma, we hope to support individual and community well-being. We will prioritize meaningful community engagement, innovative partnerships, and evolving our services to meet the needs of our residents, ensuring their safety, independence, and stability. Our commitment to excellence, integrity, accountability, diversity, and creativity guides our efforts to create a supportive environment where individuals can thrive.

In closing, the successes we have achieved and the challenges we encounter underscore the vital importance of our work. With your ongoing support and guidance, we are confident in our ability to navigate the future and make a lasting impact on the lives of those we serve.

Thank you for your dedication and tireless commitment to our organization and its mission.

Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2028

Preamble

The Strategic Plan update sets out a clear vision for McLaren Housing Society and identifies actions needed to turn the vision into reality. The Strategic Plan will be both a map and compass for our organization, guiding our priorities and allocation of resources. It is a “living document;” the Board of Directors will revisit the plan annually and make any adjustments required because of changing circumstances.

Vision

A healthy, evolving, and inclusive community for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Mission

We provide housing options and associated services to support the wellness and dignity of those living with HIV/AIDS in a community that is tailored to their specific needs.



Definitions:

Support

We provide housing options, facilities and services directly, and host or implement services directly through a variety of partnerships, and by giving assistance in connecting or referring residents to external services, including:

- Government subsidized housing;
- Portable subsidies;
- Supportive housing;
- Community partnerships;
- Living facilities where respect, safety and a sense of community are encouraged;
- Support services and referrals to health and community resources;

Developing partnerships with community organizations, health providers, and AIDS Service Organizations to deliver services and programs

Wellness

We take a perspective that addresses the specific health impacts of HIV/AIDS on wellness relating to mental, physical, sexual, and social health. We consider wellness to be dependent on the Determinants of Health and recognize the primacy of housing: “Housing is Health.” This approach incorporates better health outcomes at the individual, family and community level. We concentrate our efforts and measures on the impact of housing and associated services on those health and wellness outcomes.

Dignity

We recognize that wellness is best achieved when individuals and communities have real choice and have effective involvement that is meaningful in both community and individual areas. We strive to provide tailored and responsive solutions and a range of options that reflect this approach. Stigma and its relationship to the Determinants of Health for our community also informs our decisions, interactions and partnerships.

People living with HIV/AIDS

We house a population of people living with HIV/AIDS, but we recognize that many people also live with the associated impacts, from families of our residents to the community they live in and their various vulnerabilities. While we are clear on who we house, we are also clear on the greater community we can affect positively. Our waitlist contains people who are living in BC, with low/limited incomes, often inadequately housed, and who possibly have been at risk of becoming homeless.

Housing Options

We develop and provide a range of housing options, some as defined in our funding contracts, others that are more customized or blended options. Housing options include government-subsidized housing, portable subsidies, supportive housing, and community partnerships. We recognize the need for our housing options to evolve to meet the cultural, economic and demographic challenges faced by our community.

Associated Services

McLaren believes in providing the necessary support to ensure people can remain in housing



which is suitable for their dignity and well-being. They may require additional resources to maintain suitable housing or shelter based on individual needs. This also incorporates a strategy to extend our continuum of housing to address the spectrum of needs and allow for movement along this continuum.

Community

We recognize that our residents and potential residents live in a community that encompasses a broad range of identities and members. We recognize the benefits of community and support for it as key to achieving our mission. We understand and engage specifically and collectively however we do so after meaningful and respectful involvement.

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Tailored

We recognize that while our residents may have commonalities, their lives are particularly their own and therefore we respond to their needs, over and above our organization’s or our funder’s. This allows us to more effectively meet our mission, the imperatives of our funders, and the requirements of our contracts. We work tirelessly in a creative manner to meet the sometimes-extraordinary needs of our residents. However, this orientation toward accommodation of our residents is key to our success.

Needs

We are experienced professionals and are able to assess both housing and wellness needs through evidence-based practices, intentional engagement, monitoring, and planning.

We see the following needs as primary for our residents:



- The provision of comfortable, safe, and affordable housing
- An opportunity to create a home – a safe and welcome living space
- Greater personal wellness, independence, and stability
- Opportunities to make informed, healthy choices and live full lives
- Increased community engagement and the creation of a personal social network
- An individual’s inherent right to have a place to call home

Values

We hold these values in common and express them in our daily work. These values tell others how we accomplish our mission and what to expect in our dealings with them.

Excellence

We strive for excellence in all we do for our people, our programs, and our community.



Our team is committed to improving upon and building current leading best practices in all areas of our housing and service delivery. We are actively involved in creating better solutions for our residents. Non-adversarial, inclusive, and respectful, we foster beneficial relationships that are effective, inclusive, and respectful as a result.

Commitment

We are passionate about our work and care deeply about the people we serve.

We model and inspire giving freely of ourselves in our work and our lives. Our caring and compassion extends to our residents, our colleagues, our families and our communities.

Integrity

We take action based on the needs of both individuals and our community; the moral

and ethical implications impacting the community; and the consideration of the greater good.

Accountability

We build strong, supportive and respectful relationships among all members of our community.

We are accountable at a personal, professional, and organizational level for measuring and knowing our impact and meeting the standards set. We recognize that we operate in a complex world that demands we consider the practical implications of our decisions.

Diversity and Creativity

We value the differences among us and draw upon our differences to generate creative, collaborative solutions. We do this intentionally to strengthen our ability to achieve our goals.

Priorities

Define our programs and services.

- Address the diverse and evolving populations we serve currently and in the future.
- Create a plan to address our residents’ needs as they age within our housing.
- Develop and enhance our relationships with funders, partners and community.
- Maintain, enhance, diversify, and increase our key assets: our facilities and business model.
- Evolve with the community of care.





319
people housed



OUR IMPACT

Between April 1 2023 and March 31, 2024
McLaren Housing Society provided or assisted with:

In March 2024 our waitlist had

1258
applicants



Harm Reduction

756
smoking kits

4090
injection kits

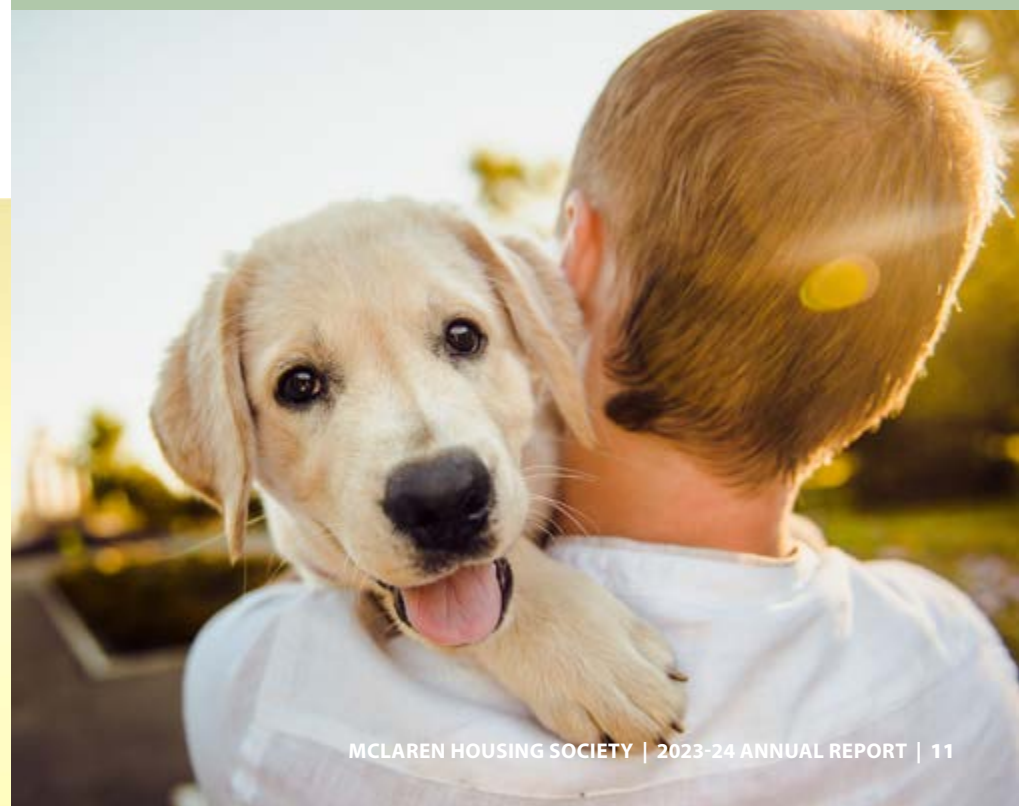
20,450
syringes

216
naloxone kits

354
grab and go
grocery shops



2580
community
kitchen meals





Thank you to our **2023-24 Board of Directors**

Michael Hoche , President

Dale Buote, Vice-President

Rob O'Dea, Secretary

Lindsay Wyant, Treasurer

Graeme Boyd, Member at Large

Willow King, Member at Large

Susan Levang, Member at Large

Marissa Marr, Member at Large

Flavia Mpagi, Member at Large

Barbe Pickering, Member at Large

We would also like to thank the following board members for their service and commitment to MHS:

Jody Jollimore, Member at Large, 2020 - 2023

Kristy Kerr, Member at Large, 2013 - 2023

Shelly Reinhardt, Member at Large, 2022- 2023

Darren Lawrence Kopetsky **January 4, 1965 – November 17, 2023**



McLaren Housing Society is deeply saddened by the loss of Darren Kopetsky, our board's dedicated member and president from 1998 to 2011. His tenure was marked by his instrumental role in negotiating with BC

Housing and the City of Vancouver, leading to the construction of our 110-unit supportive housing building on Howe Street. His leadership and vision have left an indelible mark on our society.

Darren lived a full and vibrant life from beginning to end and touched many people's lives.

Darren was born on January 4, 1965, and grew up in Inglis, Manitoba, where his lifelong love of the prairies, blue skies, sunsets and northern lights was formed. Growing up on a farm and the chores that came with that life led to Darren's understanding of the importance of responsibility and commitment to one's work. From a young age, Darren demonstrated the ability to organize and manage tasks with precision and attention to detail. Those qualities and his interest in people helped him build a successful career and create a strong community around him.

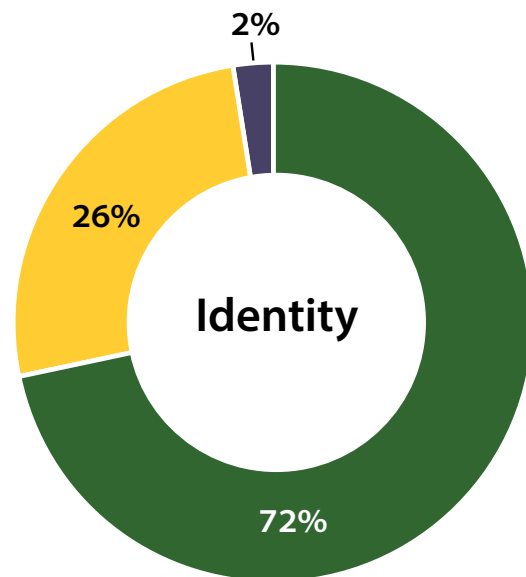
After graduating from Russell Major Pratt High School, he completed his Bachelor of Sciences

at the University of Manitoba. He attained his Master of Health Services Administration at the University of Alberta. Darren worked in Health Services Administration for 31 years at the following organizations: Juan de Fuca Hospitals in Victoria, BC; British Columbia Health Association, Vancouver Coastal Health; and. Following his cancer diagnosis, ended his career as Executive Director: Risk Management and Patient Care Quality with the Provincial Health Services Authority in Vancouver, BC. His work over the years included collaboration with government, community individuals and advocacy groups with a focus on clinical risk management, health policy development, and system improvement initiatives. His career also included time as an Instructor at the University (College) of the Fraser Valley and as a Tutor and Health Policy course designer for the Burnaby, BC-based Open University. He enjoyed his work and the many friends he made in those organizations.

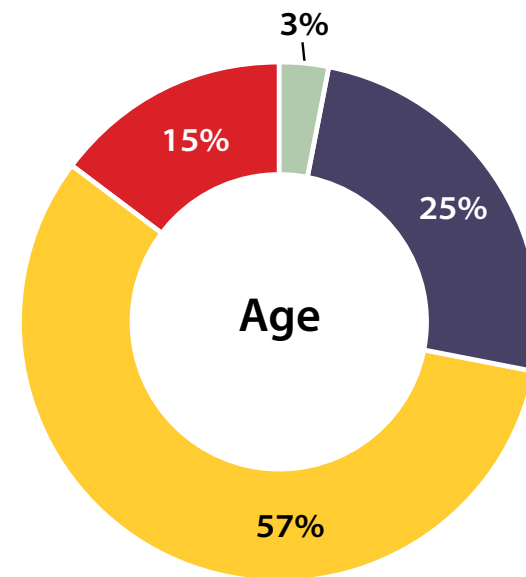
Darren's commitment to community involvement was a testament to his character. He found joy in volunteering with various organizations, including the Fillmore Family Foundation, Planned Parenthood, and McLaren Housing Society of BC. His contributions to these organizations and the community at large were invaluable, and his absence will be deeply felt.



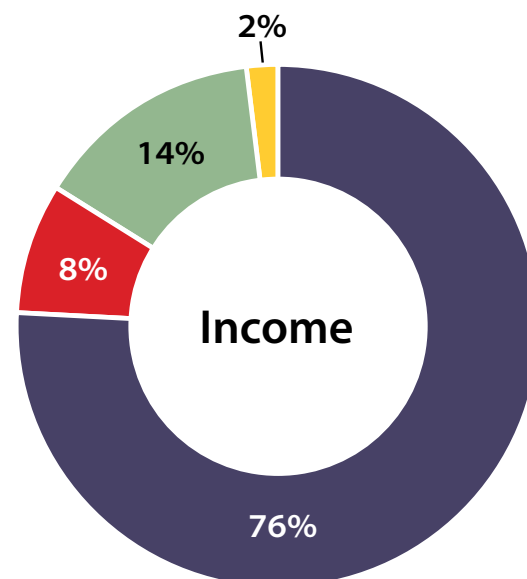
Demographics



- Male
- Female
- Gender Non-Conforming



- 25yrs - 34yrs
- 35yrs - 49yrs
- 50yrs - 64yrs
- 65yrs - 79yrs



- PWD*
- PWD* / CPP-D*
- CPP / OAS / GIS
- Employed

*PWD = Disability Assistance
*CPP-D = CPP Disability



Staff Spotlight: Ben Cohnstaedt



My name is Ben. My current role is Building Caretaker. I have been a Building Attendant, Life Skills Worker, and Lead Building Attendant. I have been working with McLaren Housing for over ten years.

I have a large family throughout Canada, including three brothers and two sisters. I grew up as an only child in Saskatchewan for half my childhood. In 1999, I moved to Vancouver and became an older brother to two brothers and a sister.

After graduating high school in 2007, I immediately started working in the Downtown Eastside with First United Church. I had a few roles with them and First United Church Social Housing Society.

After leaving First United in 2012, I took some time off to figure out what I wanted to do. What I missed from working in the DTES was helping to create a sense of community and developing relationships with the community members.

In 2013, a lot of wonderful things happened. On May 27th, I started with McLaren Housing Society, and on June 16th, I welcomed my daughter Logan. That summer, McLaren began to welcome the first tenants at Howe Street.

I had the opportunity to work at MHS when the Howe Street Supportive Housing Program first opened. It was an exciting time being a part of such a large program; however, it faced many challenges. One thing I enjoy is problem-solving, and there was plenty of that. I have had the opportunity to witness the many changes that have happened throughout the years, and I feel I've been able to lend my expertise as I have a good understanding and knowledge of the building.

In 2021, I moved into the townhouse attached to Howe Street to support Howe and Helmcken House staff.

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I recently moved into a new role at MHS as a Building Caretaker, which reflects what I have been doing for the past three years.

I enjoy watching comedies, science fiction, and historical documentaries while relaxing at home. I also play online computer games with high school friends. Nonfiction and science fiction are my go-to genres for reading.

I appreciate the opportunity McLaren has given me. I am grateful to be part

of the community McLaren has created. Providing safe, affordable housing is something everyone in the McLaren family can be proud of.

I am excited to see what the future holds for McLaren Housing Society and happy to be a part of it.

Resident Spotlight: Benjamin M.

In 2001, Ben moved back to Vancouver after spending several years in San Francisco. During his time there, he managed an apartment building and worked as a caregiver for people with HIV/AIDS. When he returned to Vancouver, finding affordable housing was a challenge.

He visited the Positive Living Society, and they recommended he apply at McLaren Housing. That's when he met Ian MacEwan, the former Executive Director at Helmcken House. Amazingly, a one-bedroom apartment was available.

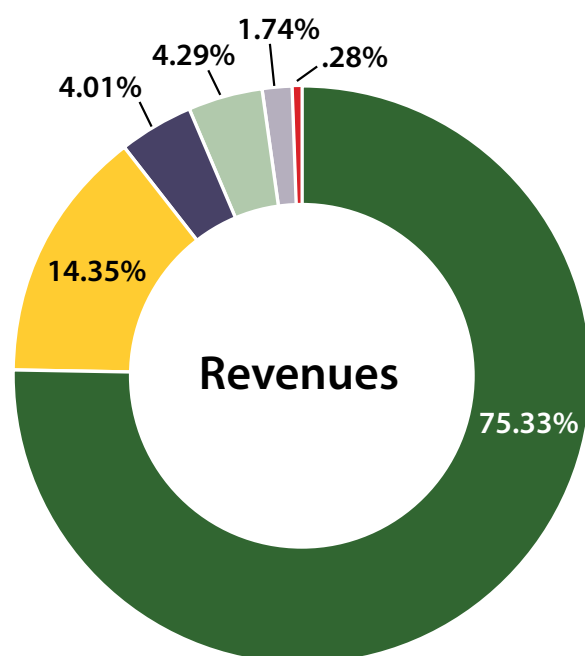
Moving into his new place was an emotional moment for Ben—he was so happy he cried. He threw himself into decorating, filling his home with eclectic antiques. Over the years, he hosted many parties for residents and board members, making lifelong friends along the way.



After nineteen years at Helmcken House, at the age of 72, Ben needed more support. In August 2020, he moved to an apartment at our supportive housing on Howe Street. He loves the food programs and the support staff.

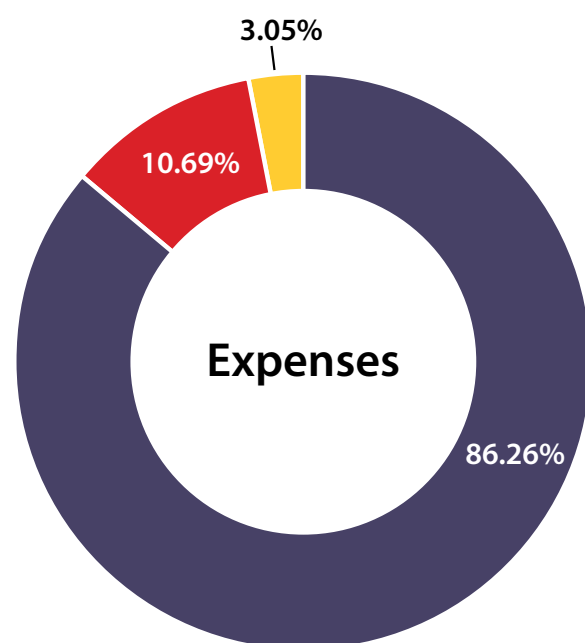
Ben is very happy. The staff are tolerant, kind, understanding, and respectful. Ben often says, "I honestly don't know what many of us would do without McLaren Housing."

Financial Snapshot 2023-2024



Revenues: \$5,072,619

- BC Housing
- Tenant Rent
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Grants:
 - Vancouver Foundation
 - BC Gaming
 - ViiV Healthcare
 - New Horizons for Seniors Program
 - MAC Foundation
 - The Greater Vancouver Food Bank
 - Community Foundations of Canada
 - MAZON Canada
 - The Stollery Foundation
- Other / Interest
- Donations



Expenses: \$4,996,191*

- Housing Operations
- Society Operations
- Support

*Includes \$102,240 reserve fund expense

Thank you to our funders:

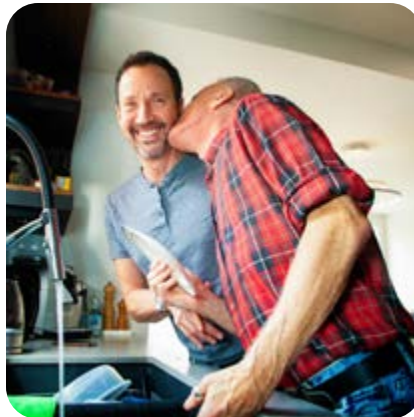


Thank you to our donors:





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Other ways to reach us:



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