

 sparc bc

Annual Report

2023/2024





Annual Report

2023/2024

Land Acknowledgement

SPARC BC gratefully acknowledges that our offices are located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the Coast Salish People including the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh). SPARC BC's work spans the entire Province of British Columbia that is on 203 First Nations territories and across 39 Chartered Métis communities. We also want to acknowledge the Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous people and their contributions to Indigenous ways of being and knowing in Canada.

Mission & Values

“SPARC BC works with communities to build a just and healthy society for all.”

OUR DEFINITION OF “JUST AND HEALTHY” IS BASED ON FIVE KEY PRINCIPLES:

Equity:	The recognition that some individuals or groups require more or less than others to flourish, and that some individuals or groups are capable of contributing more to address deficiencies and promote fairness of distribution.
Social Inclusion:	The recognition that both the rights and the opportunity to participate in and enjoy all aspects of human life enables individuals and communities to celebrate their diversity, and recognize and act on their responsibilities.
Security:	The recognition that individuals and communities flourish when they have confidence in their surroundings as safe, supportive and stable environments.
Adaptability:	The recognition that sustainability requires resilience for both individuals and communities, and the ability to respond creatively to change.
Equality:	The recognition that increasing equality within society builds social cohesion, improves health, increases safety and security, and contributes to sustainable and vibrant communities.

OUR WORK IS FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

Social Justice:	We strive for a just and healthy society in which social, economic, and environmental well-being are interdependent, through advocating for equality, fairness and dignity for all.
Inclusion:	We are committed to achieving access and the full participation and engagement of all in our diverse society by fostering communication, leadership, partnership, and collaboration.
Integrity:	We are independent, accountable, transparent and non-partisan.
Learning:	We seek, develop and share knowledge and understanding which encourages citizen participation and informs innovative, effective planning and decision-making.

Highlights



28,517

Donors stepped forward



3,000+

Welcome Home
kits distributed



Responded to
37,000+
phone calls



Issued
more
than
60,774
Parking
Permits



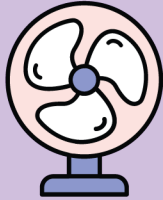
funded **268**
projects
through
Homelessness
Community
Action Grants



1,119
Donors supported
our Accessibility
and Inclusion
initiative



1,392
Donors supported our
Seniors' Harvest
Basket Initiative



1,055

Donated to our
Fans for Extreme Heat
initiative



1,475

Members supported
our projects



15,500+

Smartphones
distributed
across 91
communities
to deserving &
underserved
populations



40

Community-
based research
project and
initiatives



365

supported our
'smartphone initiative'
for vulnerable seniors
and people with
disabilities



20 Community
partners and
disability
organizations
celebrated our
26th annual Access
Awareness Day

Message from the President

When I reflect on SPARC BC's history and our work with communities across British Columbia, I am struck by the strength of our mission and the depth of our partnerships. It is these different connections and relationships that hold us together and that allow us to move forward in real and meaningful ways. Whether it is the delivery of the Parking Permit Program for People with Disabilities or working together on issues of accessibility and inclusion, we know that we are making a difference in the lives of the people we serve. Through the Parking Permit Program, SPARC BC helped almost 61,000 seniors and people with disabilities access their communities. Our staff team also responded to more than 37,000 phone calls about the program and the different types of assistance we can provide.

The success of the Parking Permit Program also means that we can invest in accessibility-related initiatives in the broader community. This includes our work in leading Access Awareness Day, Accessible Parking Awareness Month as well as on-going work with local Accessibility Committees and School Districts. I would like to take a moment to recognize Louise O'Shea for her leadership in this area and to recognize the dedication and commitment of the members of her team (some of whom have been with SPARC BC for more than 20 years).

We have also continued to have tremendous success in our work in the delivery of the Provincial Homelessness Community Action Grant program. To date, almost 270 projects have been funded through this program. In working with our community partners, we are reminded that we all have an inherent dignity and the need to feel connected and a sense of belonging. To this end, we have distributed more than 15,500 basic smartphones to vulnerable and isolated individuals as well as more than 3,000 Welcome Home Kits to individuals making the transition from homelessness to housing. It is through these types of partnerships and initiatives that we are reminded of our common humanity and of the important role that each of us plays in our communities in working to end homelessness.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize the leadership of Dr. Alex Price and the work of the members of our Research, Planning and Consulting team. Not only is the team helping to build SPARC BC's reputation in providing leading-edge, evidence-based social policy research, but they are helping to respond to some of the most pressing social policy challenges of our time—the climate crisis, the housing crisis, the homelessness crisis as well as the growing inequality crisis that we are seeing in our communities as people struggle to meet their most basic needs in a post-pandemic economy.

While the work itself is challenging, I am always encouraged when I think about the tremendous support that we continue to receive from our members and donors and the difference they make in helping us to move closer to our vision of a more just and healthy society for everyone! To our members and donors, I want to take this moment to express my deep appreciation and gratitude for your generosity and support. I also want to thank the Board and staff who are present today and to recognize the more than 28,500 donors and supporters who have contributed to our programs and initiatives over this past year. I am looking forward to the promise and potential for the coming year- together, I know that we can make a difference!

Wes Hewitt

Wes Hewitt

President, SPARC BC

Message from the Executive Director

For almost 60 years, SPARC BC worked with people and communities in advancing positive social policy change. Much of our work occurs in the spaces between broader social policy domains, including health, education, housing, and income supports where gaps in these systems have resulted in unequal access to opportunities.

Over this past year, we have continued to see a growing number of families and individuals facing difficulties in meeting even their most basic needs. In working together with others, we seek to create spaces where everyone has the chance to realize their hopes and dreams. Through the provision of our Homeless Comfort Kits, our Seniors Harvest Basket initiative as well as our 'smartphone' initiative, we also seen to reach out to those who are struggling to let them know that they are not alone.

The highlights set out in this section provide information on the different projects and initiatives that we have worked on over this past year and the results we were able to achieve. This includes some of our different projects and initiatives related to the Board's mission-driven priorities in accessibility and inclusion, income security and poverty reduction as well as community development, education and outreach.

This past year, we had the opportunity to work in partnership with others on a range of social policy initiatives. This includes partnerships with the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR), the Provincial Accessibility Secretariat as well as Community Living BC.

Within the context of these different partnerships, our key strategic partnerships and initiatives include the production of knowledge and tools designed to support community-level action in response to the growing homelessness crisis as well as the development of resources and materials to support community-based strategies to respond to emerging climate risks. Over this past year, we have also been working closely with CLBC and Inclusion BC and their partners to reimagine community inclusion. This includes working in partnership with Inclusion BC on the development of an inclusive housing initiative designed to provide an expanded range of housing choices for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Addressing on-going issues of food insecurity has also been an important area of focus for our work. Key initiatives in this area includes on-going support for the Lush Valley Food Hub in the Comox Valley as well as the Land-to-Table Network in the Okanagan. It also includes working to ensure that low-income families, seniors as well as people with disabilities have dignified access to healthy food through our Seniors' Harvest Basket Initiative.

The growth in our Research, Planning and Consulting team has also allowed us to be successful in expanding our reach and partnerships in terms of on-going engagement with smaller, rural and northern communities as well as our partnerships with Indigenous people and communities. This year we were successful in continuing to build our partnerships and relationships with the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, the Aboriginal Housing Management Association, Metis Nation BC as well as Lu'ma Native BC Housing Society.

Each of these different relationships has played an integral role in helping us to build bridges and deepen our understanding of the harmful and enduring effect that racism and discrimination has played in shaping the experience of Indigenous people in Canada. This has included a legacy of assimilation as well as a separation from their culture and their families arising from the history of the residential school system in Canada. Working to broaden and deepen our knowledge and understanding as well as continuing to work to build and deepen our relationships will remain an important focus for our work for this coming year.

I would like to close by thanking our members and donors, for your willingness to step forward and support our calls to action as well as our work in community. It is your on-going generosity and kindness that has helped to keep our programs strong and that has allowed us to make a difference. I would also like to express gratitude to members of the Board and to staff for your commitment to our values of social justice, integrity, inclusion and learning and your unwavering belief that by working together we can create a more just, healthy and inclusive society for all.

Lorraine Copas

Lorraine Copas
Executive Director, SPARC BC



Our Programs and Initiatives

The following provides an overview of some of our key programs and initiatives for 2023/2024

The Parking Permit Program for People with Disabilities

Demand for designated accessible parking remains strong. In 2023/2024, SPARC BC received and processed almost 61,000 applications under the Parking Permit Program and responded to 37,000 phone calls for assistance. Demand for accessible parking comes from two sources: individuals who have a medical condition or permanent disability that limits their mobility; and individuals who may require accessible parking because of an injury or temporary mobility limitation. Our work in the delivery of the Parking Permit Program for People with Disabilities has also helped us to keep connected to communities and to build a deeper understanding of the types of challenges that people with disabilities face in getting around and in staying connected to their communities. To this end, working to create place-based strategies for addressing issues of accessibility and inclusion is an important area of focus for our work.

Implementation Support for Local Accessibility Plans

As part of the Accessible BC Regulation, local governments must develop an Accessibility Committee as well as a local Accessibility Plan. With funding provided through the Provincial Accessibility Secretariat, over this past year, SPARC BC has continued to provide implementation support to local governments to support the implementation of their local accessibility plans. This could include funding for education and awareness, physical design changes to improve the accessibility of the built environment as well as the development and implementation of inclusive policies, programs or practices.

Inclusion BC—Inclusive Housing Partnership

Working in partnership with Inclusion BC, we have continued to focus on the development of research and data to support their inclusive housing initiative which is designed to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can live in homes where they feel part of their communities. The principles of choice, control, independence, dignity, and diversity have continued to influence this work.

Inclusive housing means....

Choice	Making decisions important to you
Control	Knowing that your decisions and choices matter
Independence	Living your best life possible
Dignity	Being valued and respected for who you are
Diversity	Being able to share your gifts and unique talents



Access Awareness Day

For more than 25 years, SPARC BC has led Access Awareness Day activities across British Columbia. Celebrated annually, Access Awareness Day is always held on the first Saturday in June, and is designed to bring communities together to explore ways to remove barriers and to ensure that our communities are truly welcoming and inclusive. In 2023/2024, more than 20 local governments and community partners came together to celebrate Access Awareness Day with the focus of the campaign being **inclusion starts here...**

November is Accessible Parking Awareness Month

2023/2024 was our fourth annual Accessible Parking Awareness Month. Accessible Parking Awareness Month is designed to engage local governments and community partners to build increased public awareness and support around the role that accessible parking plays in promoting dignity, independence, safety and comfort as well as a sense of belonging and connection among people with for persons with disabilities. Through Accessible Parking Awareness Month, our goal is to raise awareness about the need for well-planned and well-designed designated accessible parking spaces throughout the community as a way of helping to promote and support the meaningful engagement and inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life—economic, social, cultural, and recreational.

Social Policy Research & Advocacy

SPARC BC's work in social policy research and advocacy continues to focus on provide leading edge, evidence-based research to advance positive social policy change. Key areas of focus include housing affordability and homelessness as well as issues related to income security and poverty reduction. Our work has also continued to focus on issues related to food insecurity and dignified access to healthy food. We have also continued to focus our energies on the development of place-based strategies designed to better understand existing and emerging needs across communities including the specific needs of low-income seniors, people with disabilities, as well as children and youth living in poverty.

2023 Social Needs Survey

In 2023, with funding provided through the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, SPARC BC developed a Social Needs Survey that was designed to support communities in building a deeper understanding of existing and emerging social development needs in BC across a number of different measures related to individual health and well-being including the use of different types of community social services as well as different measures related to volunteering and engagement, housing and employment as well as financial well-being. To date, responses have been received from more than 8,800 British Columbians with the findings showing that almost half of all British Columbians reported experiencing some level of financial stress with 1 in 10 British Columbians reporting that they are finding it very difficult to meet their basic needs.



2023 BC Child Poverty Report Card

Every year SPARC BC assists First Call in the production of their annual Child Poverty Report Card. This includes the development of factsheets and maps designed to draw attention to the needs of families and children living in poverty. Based on the most recent report card, released in January 2023, 1 in 7 children and youth between the ages of 0 and 17 years old were living in poverty in 2021. In absolute numbers, this represents 126,120 children and youth. Similarly, the research shows that across BC there are more than 754,000 people living in poverty, which translates into 15.2% of the total population.

Responding to on-going issues of food insecurity

Responding to on-going issues of food insecurity remains an important area of focus with food insecurity being recognized as a growing challenge across many BC communities. Based on the findings to our Social Needs Survey, more than half of all British Columbians (55%) reported that they had run out of food at some point during the past year and did not have the resources to get more. Over the years, SPARC BC has worked in partnership with different organizations including Farm to Cafeteria Canada, the Land to Table Network in the Okanagan as well as the Lush Valley Food Action initiative in the Comox Valley. In addition, through our Seniors Harvest Basket Initiative we have been actively engaged in working to promote and support dignified access to healthy food for low income and vulnerable seniors across BC.

Community Development, Education, Outreach and Capacity Building

SPARC BC is known for our work in community development and capacity building. This includes the development of place-based strategies and initiatives designed to build capacity at the community level to identify and respond to existing and emerging needs. For 2023/2024, SPARC BC's Board of Directors has continued to emphasize the importance of working to build and strengthen relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities. As well, the Board has identified a need to continue to play a leadership role in promoting the health, well-being, connection of under-served populations including those with lived/living experience of homelessness. On-going engagement with smaller communities including rural and northern communities also represents an important area of focus. The following provides some highlights of key projects and initiatives that help to shape our work in community development, education and outreach.



On-going leadership in the Community Data Program

SPARC BC continues to play a leadership role in the Community Data Program. This program was first developed by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) and was designed to allow non-profit organizations and others working in social policy to pool their purchasing power to access custom social, demographic, and economic data. Not only does SPARC BC continue to be one of the lead data users in this program but we have been actively engaged in working to support others in the use of this information to support the development of targeted place-based strategies designed to respond to existing and emerging social development needs. Over this past year, we partnered with Tamarack to allow local governments and community leaders engaged in working on issues of poverty reduction to access this data with no membership fee. This helped to remove any barriers to participation in the program for smaller communities while at the same time helping to build a deeper awareness and understanding of the program. This year, it is our goal to continue to grow and expand the membership base in this program.

Peer-led research and partnerships

We know that every person experiencing homelessness has a unique story. We also know that by understanding these stories, and the experiences behind the stories, it is possible to build a deeper sense of understanding of the different pathways into, and out of homelessness. To this end, over the past few years, SPARC BC has made significant investments in peer-based research designed to listen and learn from those with lived/living experience of homelessness. This year, we have continued to build on this work including working with Loud Voice Society and others to engage those who have a history of addictions and to learn more about their experiences in the homelessness serving system and the barriers and challenges that they are experiencing in accessing the services and supports they need to help to break their cycle of addictions and homelessness. This research is designed to build a deeper understanding of the community-level determinants of homelessness as well as draw attention to the diversity of strengths, needs, resiliencies and experience of those who are living without a place to call home. This initiative builds on previous work that has been done in the area of anti-stigma and inclusion including a recent project on the hidden nature of women's homelessness.



Research, Planning and Community Development

SPARC BC provides research, planning and consulting services on a fee-for-service basis to all levels of government (federal, provincial, regional, local and First Nations). SPARC BC also works with community-based agencies and service providers to provide education and outreach to meet the social development needs of people and communities across British Columbia. All the work undertaken by members of SPARC BC's Research, Planning and Consulting team is aligned to SPARC BC's mission with any revenue generated through this social enterprise being reinvested back into the communities we serve.



SPARC BC

Annual General Meeting

AGENDA

SPARC BC

Annual General Meeting 2024/2025 Hybrid Virtual and In Person Meeting

SPARC BC Boardroom

4445 Norfolk Street, Burnaby, BC

June 28, 2024

6:00 PM

1. Call the Meeting to Order
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Minutes from the Annual General Meeting—June 23, 2023
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Presentation of the Financial Statements for April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024
7. Appointment of the Auditors for 2024/2025
8. Report from the Nominations Committee
9. Proposed Bylaw Changes
10. Message from the Executive Director
11. Adjournment

MINUTES

SPARC BC

Hybrid In-Person and Over Zoom

Annual General Meeting 2022/2023

Delta Hotel, Executive Boardroom, Burnaby BC

June 23, 2023

6:00 PM

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

The President called the meeting to order and noted that SPARC BC gratefully acknowledges that our offices are located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the Coast Salish People including the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh). Theresa also observed that SPARC BC carries out its work in many different locations across the province on the traditional territories of many First Nations people.

Minutes from the Annual General Meeting – June 23, 2023

The President referred members to the appropriate page in the Annual Report and called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the previous Annual General Meeting which was a hybrid of in-person and zoom with the meeting taking place in the Executive Boardroom at the Delta Hotel in Burnaby with the meeting taking place on June 23, 2023.

MOTION:

That the minutes from the Annual General Meeting held on June 23, 2023, be approved.

MOVED: Fraser Holland, SECONDED Jim O'Dea, All in Favour: CARRIED.

President's Report

The President shared his reflections on the year and directed members to the President's Report which is included as part of the Annual Report. The President observed that SPARC BC has had a successful year both financially and operationally and that he would like to thank both the Board and staff for their dedication and commitment to working with people and communities to building a more just and healthy society for all. The President made a motion to receive his report as presented.

MOTION:

That the President's Report be adopted as presented

MOVED: *Wes Hewitt, SECONDED Bev Onischak, All in Favour: CARRIED.*

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer was unable to attend the meeting and asked that one of the members of the Finance and Audit Committee step forward to present the report. Dr. Shelley Cook, agreed to speak to the work of the Finance and Audit Committee and presented an overview of the financial results for 2022/2023. Dr. Cook noted that there is a detailed written summary of the Treasurer's Report and that this has been included in the Annual Report package that was shared with members. Dr. Cook made a motion for the members to receive and approve the Treasurer's Report.

MOTION:

That the Treasurer's Report be approved as presented.

MOVED: *Dr. Shelley Cook, SECONDED Sheila Lewis, All in Favour: CARRIED.*

Presentation of the Audited Financial Statements for 2022/2023

Shelley referred the members to the Financial Statements for the period from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. Shelley noted that the Finance and Audit Committee met with the external auditors (KPMG). Shelley noted that the results of the Audit were positive. Shelley noted that on behalf of the Finance and Audit Committee, she is recommending the adoption of the 2022/2023 Financial Statements as presented.

MOTION:

That the Financial Statements for 2022/2023 be adopted as presented.

MOVED: *Dr. Shelley Cook SECONDED Sheila Lewis, All in Favour: CARRIED.*

Appointment of the Auditors for 2023/2024

Shelley also noted that the membership is asked to approve the appointment of the external auditors for the coming year. Shelley noted that KPMG was the external auditor for SPARC BC for 2023/2024 and that the Finance and Audit Committee is recommending that KPMG be appointed to serve as SPARC BC's external auditor for 2023/2024.

MOTION:

That KPMG be appointed as SPARC BC's external auditors for 2023/2024.

MOVED: Dr. Shelley Cook SECONDED Fraser Holland, All in Favour: CARRIED.

Shelley noted that this concludes the presentation from the Finance and Audit Committee and that she would like to ask the Chair of the Nominations Committee to provide a report from the Nominations Committee on the Election of Directors:

Report from the Nominations Committee on the Election of Directors

The Nominations Committee, as a Committee of SPARC BC's Board of Directors, is responsible for administering the Board's nominations and recruitment process. The Chair of the Nominations Committee noted that

On April 14th, the Chair of the Nominations Committee (**Theresa Harding**) reached out to all Directors to ask if they were able to continue to serve on the Board. **Linden** and **Theresa** are both reaching the end of their three (3) year term and advised they will not be continuing. The Committee then reached out to identify potential Directors to fill the two (2) vacant positions that have been created by the departure of **Theresa** and **Linden**. Two potential candidates, **Mia Burgess** and **Jessica Li** were identified.

The Chair will note that there are three Directors who will be leaving the Board following the Annual General meeting (**Tarita Davenock, Theresa Harding** and **Linden Collette**). The Chair wanted to thank the Directors who are leaving for their service to SPARC BC and wanted to introduce the new Directors who will be joining the Board. They include **Mia Burgess** and **Jessica Li**. In presenting the report from the Nominations Committee, Theresa made the following motions:

1. **Mia Burgess** and **Jessica Li** be nominated to serve on SPARC BC's Board of Directors for a three (3) year term ending in June 2026.
2. That **Tarita Davenock, Theresa Harding** and **Linden Collette** be thanked for their years of service on the SPARC BC Board of Directors
3. That the Board fill the vacancy created by the departure of **Tarita Davenock** at a later date.

MOTION:

Wes Hewitt and **Bev Onischak** whose terms are ending in June 2022 serve for an additional three

(3) year term ending in June 2025.

Dr. Shelley Cook, Fraser Holland and **Sheila Lewis** be nominated to serve on the Board for a three (3) year term ending in June 2025.

The one (1) remaining vacant position be filled at a future date.

MOVED: Theresa Harding, SECONDED Jim O'Dea, All in Favour: CARRIED.

Report from the Nominations Committee—2022/2023 Deryck Thomson Award

The Nominations Committee also reported on the Board's decision around the 2022/2023 Deryck Thomson Award nominees which included the following nominees:

- Moms Stop the Harm
- Power for All Adventure Therapy
- Shawn Decarie, Kwesa Place Warming Centre and Shelter Manager (Indigenous)
- Cory Cliff, 7 Generation Steward Society (Indigenous)
- The Campbell River Art Galley (Non-Traditional Partner)
- Linda Locke (Indigenous/Northern) Upper Skeena Counselling & Legal Assistance Society)
- Judy Graves, street outreach worker/innovator (Individual)

Message from the Executive Director

The Chair asked the Executive Director to share a few highlights for the year.

The Executive Director noted that it has been a successful year and expressed her appreciation to both the Board and staff.

The Executive Director noted that the Annual Report includes a highlights section that provides information on our various projects and the results achieved in 2022/2023.

The Executive Director expressed her appreciation to our members and donors and thanked them for their generosity and their essential role in helping to keep our programs and initiatives strong.

The Executive Director noted that the Annual Report includes the key goals and strategic priorities identified by the Board at their annual Board Strategic Planning meeting in December 2024. The Executive Director noted that these goals and strategic priorities will help to set the foundation for SPARC BC's efforts over the next three years.

The Executive Director concluded her presentation by thanking everyone present for the role that they play and the difference they make.

Adjournment

The Chair concluded the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION:

That the 2022/2023 Annual General Meeting be adjourned.

Report from the Treasurer

I would like to present the Treasurer's Report for 2023/2024. SPARC BC operates through a social enterprise model where any income generated through the delivery of the Parking Permit Program and our Research, Planning and Consulting work is reinvested in advancing SPARC BC's mission-driven work in the areas of accessibility and inclusion, income security and poverty reduction and community development, education, and outreach.

In presenting the Financial Statements it is important to note that central to SPARC BC's operational and financial success is the significant support we receive from our members and donors. Not only does the generosity of our members and donors help to keep our programs and services strong but their generosity also plays a central role in advancing our mission-driven work. In 2023/2024 SPARC BC had an operating surplus of \$104,884 with revenues of \$4,691,563.

SPARC BC's revenue includes income generated from the delivery of the Parking Permit Program for People with Disabilities, funding from Membership and Donations, and revenue generated through providing Research, Planning and Consulting services to all levels of government as well as community-based partners. Each of the different sources of revenue and their overall contribution to SPARC BC's mission-driven activities are discussed below.

The Parking Permit Program represents 38% of SPARC BC's overall revenue. In 2023/2024, SPARC BC realized \$1,768,205 in revenue from the delivery of the Parking Permit Program and issued more than 60,774 permits. The revenue generated through the processing fee of \$31 not only enables SPARC BC to administer the program for people who depend on having access to accessible parking in their community, but it also supports our Accessibility and Enforcement phone line and our work with communities across British Columbia to advance broader accessibility-related goals.

In 2023/2024, contributions from members and donors totaled \$809,406 including funding for our various "calls to action". As a non-profit society and federally registered charity, SPARC BC relies on the generosity and support of our members and donors to support our mission-driven work. In 2023/2024 we continued to expand our different partnerships and initiatives to address issues of food insecurity among low income and vulnerable seniors through our Seniors' Harvest Basket initiative, as well as issues of digital equity and climate action through our Stay Connected Smart Phone Initiative and Extreme Heat Fans Project.

Revenue generated through SPARC BC's Research, Planning and Consulting Services has also remained strong. In 2023/2024, \$1,110,720 in revenue was generated through contracted research. This represents 24% of SPARC BC's revenue. Key projects and initiatives included working with the Provincial government to engage communities and local partners in addressing issues around affordable housing and homelessness, dignified access to healthy food as well as issues around food security and local food systems. We also worked with local government and community partners on the development of local housing action plans, as well as strategies and initiatives designed to prevent and reduce homelessness. A major research initiative that we started this year was the implementation of a "sector strengthening" research program designed to provide research and data support to the community social services sector in B.C.

We have continued to work with community partners and organizations across the Province to deliver the provincial Community Homelessness Action Grant program. This program was designed to support local efforts and community-based solutions for addressing homelessness. Over the life of the program, 275 grants have been approved with \$2,043,173 in funding being allocated in 2023/2024. Included in this disbursement, there was \$23k invested in 2023/2024 to support access to basic communication for individuals experiencing homelessness through the distribution of basic smartphones. The provision of

these phones helps to ensure that low-income and underserved populations can stay connected to the people and services they need.

SPARC BC's annual operating expenditures for 2023/2024 were \$4,586,680. Re-investment into key areas of focus for the year have included support for local strategies and initiatives designed to respond to issues around housing and homelessness, food insecurity as well as sector strengthening and capacity building totaled \$1,455,709. We continue to have the privilege of working with the Provincial Government to provide Welcome Home Kits. This initiative is designed to provide basic household items to support individuals with a history of homelessness as they make a start in a new home. In 2023/2024 we provided more than 1,600 Welcome Home Kits to families and individuals across BC through partnerships with more than 76 different community-based agencies and service providers across 33 different communities.

In closing, I would like to thank the Finance and Audit Committee members for their ongoing efforts to ensure that SPARC BC's program and services are delivered in a responsive and accountable way. As a volunteer Board, I know that this can take considerable effort. I would also like to thank our members, donors, partners, and staff for a successful year and wish SPARC BC every future success in 2024/2025.

Sincerely,

Marla Reed

Marla Reed, Treasurer

Financial Statements of

Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia

Year ended March 31, 2024

Financial Statements of

**SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH
COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY**

And Independent Auditor's Report thereon

Year ended March 31, 2024



KPMG LLP

PO Box 10426 777 Dunsmuir Street
Vancouver BC V7Y 1K3
Canada
Telephone (604) 691-3000
Fax (604) 691-3031

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia Society

Report on the Audit of Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia Society (the "Entity"), which comprise:

- the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024
- the statement of operations for the year then ended
- the statement of changes in net assets for the year then ended
- the statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies

(hereinafter referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at March 31, 2024, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***" section of our auditor's report.

We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.



Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.



- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by the Societies Act (British Columbia), we report that, in our opinion, the accounting policies applied in preparing and presenting financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'KPMG LLP' with a horizontal line underneath.

Chartered Professional Accountants

Vancouver, Canada
June 27, 2024

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 7,359,762	\$ 12,890,085
Restricted cash (note 3)	4,901,830	-
Short-term investments (note 4)	362,411	587,401
Accounts receivable	103,401	2,764,394
Prepaid expenses	155,769	121,844
Inventory	51,957	84,370
	12,935,130	16,448,094
Long-term investments (note 4)	251,225	-
Capital assets (note 5)	328,622	380,265
	\$ 13,514,977	\$ 16,828,359
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 6)	\$ 328,981	\$ 196,385
Deferred revenue	1,452,701	2,842,878
Deferred contributions (note 7)	8,741,418	10,878,757
Current portion of deferred lease inducement (note 8)	23,346	23,346
	10,546,446	13,941,366
Deferred lease inducement (note 8)	81,710	105,056
	10,628,156	14,046,422
Net assets:		
Internally restricted (note 9)	1,761,984	1,769,729
Invested in capital assets (note 10)	223,566	251,863
Unrestricted	901,271	760,345
	2,886,821	2,781,937
Commitment (note 11)		
	\$ 13,514,977	\$ 16,828,359

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

Approved on behalf of the Board:

Director

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Revenue:		
Grants (note 7)	\$ 3,241,787	\$ 3,161,841
Contracted research	2,052,647	1,301,776
Permits	1,768,205	1,592,374
Memberships and donations	809,406	1,002,613
Interest	456,667	138,902
Rental	200,695	127,368
Other	33,469	13,469
	8,562,876	7,338,343
Expenses:		
Audit and legal fees	48,885	36,000
Amortization of capital assets	95,920	105,922
Board and executive meetings	80,425	34,967
Computer and website maintenance	91,487	112,813
Direct mail fundraising	110,760	84,891
Disbursements - contracted research and projects	924,427	710,279
Disbursements - grants	2,946,886	2,829,841
Insurance	9,462	8,978
Marketing, publicity and promotion	69,630	101,039
Office supplies	38,402	34,963
Other expenditures	35,625	39,487
Photocopying	31,379	34,157
Partnership	129	-
Postage and courier	163,224	165,352
Printing	79,011	86,679
Professional and consulting services	11,222	31,501
Programs and projects	1,455,709	952,096
Rental	265,576	248,488
Repairs and maintenance	9,979	6,095
Salaries, wages and benefits	1,958,827	1,652,826
Staff training and development	16,706	30,704
Telephone	14,321	13,839
	8,457,992	7,320,917
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 104,884	\$ 17,426

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	Internally restricted	Invested in capital assets (note 10)	Unrestricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 1,769,729	\$ 251,863	\$ 760,345	\$ 2,781,937	\$ 2,764,511
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	-	(72,574)	177,458	104,884	17,426
Change in invested in capital assets	-	44,277	(44,277)	-	-
Interfund transfer (note 9)	(7,745)	-	7,745	-	-
Balance, end of year	\$ 1,761,984	\$ 223,566	\$ 901,271	\$ 2,886,821	\$ 2,781,937

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Cash provided by (used in):		
Operating:		
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 104,884	\$ 17,426
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization of capital assets	95,920	105,922
Amortization of deferred lease inducement	(23,346)	(23,346)
	177,458	100,002
Changes in non-cash operating working capital:		
Accounts receivable	2,660,993	4,672,114
Prepaid expenses	(33,925)	22,839
Inventory	32,413	(221)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	132,596	(452,296)
Deferred revenue	(1,390,177)	(360,069)
Deferred contributions	(2,137,339)	4,327,817
	(557,981)	8,310,186
Investments:		
Change in restricted cash	(4,901,830)	-
Acquisition of capital assets	(44,277)	(16,827)
Purchase of investments	(599,605)	(343,408)
Proceeds from maturity of investments	573,370	331,627
	(4,972,342)	(28,608)
Increase (decrease) in cash	(5,530,323)	8,281,578
Cash, beginning of year	12,890,085	4,608,507
Cash, end of year	\$ 7,359,762	\$ 12,890,085

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

1. Nature of operations:

Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia Society (the "Society") is incorporated under the Societies Act (British Columbia). The Society's mission is to work with communities in building a just and healthy society for all persons in British Columbia. The Society is a registered charity under the Income Tax Act and accordingly is exempt from income taxes, provided certain requirements of the Income Tax Act are met.

2. Significant accounting policies:

These financial statements were prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations in Part III of the CPA Canada Handbook - Accounting. The significant accounting policies are as follows:

(a) Cash and cash equivalents:

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and short-term deposits which are highly liquid with original maturities of less than three months at the date of acquisition. There were no cash equivalents as at March 31, 2024 and 2023.

(b) Restricted cash:

Restricted cash represents cash designated for use towards certain restricted contributions.

(c) Investments:

Short-term investments are comprised of term deposits and guaranteed investment certificates that have a maturity period of less than one year from the date of the statement of financial position.

Long-term investments are comprised of guaranteed investment certificates that have a maturity period of greater than one year from the date of the statement of financial position.

(d) Capital assets:

Purchased capital assets are initially recorded at cost. Repairs and maintenance costs are charged to expense. Betterments which extend the estimated life of an asset are capitalized.

Capital assets are amortized on a straight-line basis over the asset's estimated useful lives as follows:

Asset	Rate
Computer equipment	3 years
Furniture and fixtures	3 years
Leasehold improvements	over the term of the lease

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

2. Significant accounting policies (continued):

(d) Capital assets (continued):

Capital assets acquired during the year but not placed into use are not amortized until they are placed into use.

The Society reviews for impairment the carrying value of capital assets to be held and used whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that associated future economic benefits or service potential have been reduced. If such conditions exist, an impairment loss is measured at the amount by which the carrying amount of the asset exceeds its fair value or replacement cost.

(e) Revenue recognition:

The Society follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions, which include grants and donations. Under this method, contributions with specific external restrictions are recorded as deferred contributions and recognized in the period the related expenses are incurred or the restrictions are met. Unrestricted contributions, which include memberships and donations, are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount can be reasonably estimated and collection is assured.

Revenue from the sale of parking permits is recognized when the permit is provided and collection is reasonably assured.

Revenue from contracted research is recognized on the percentage of completion basis as the contracted research project is performed. The percentage of completion is typically determined using an output method based on management's estimate of the progress on the project. Disbursement that are recoverable or reimbursable under the terms of the project contract are recognized as the related eligible disbursements are incurred. A provision is made for the total anticipated loss when the estimates of total costs on a project contract indicate a loss.

Deferred revenue relates to amounts received for contracted research projects but not yet recognized.

Rental revenue is recognized on an accrual basis over the lease term as earned.

Interest income from cash, short-term investments and long-term investments is recognized as earned.

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

2. Significant accounting policies (continued):

(f) Financial instruments:

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value on initial recognition. Freestanding derivative instruments that are not in a qualifying hedging relationship and equity instruments that are quoted in an active market are subsequently measured at fair value. All other financial instruments are subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost, unless management has elected to carry the instruments at fair value. The Society has not elected to carry any such financial instruments at fair value.

Transaction costs incurred on the acquisition of the financial instruments measured subsequently at fair value are expensed as incurred. All other financial instruments are adjusted by transaction costs incurred on acquisition and financing costs. These costs are amortized using the effective interest rate method.

Financial assets are assessed for impairment on an annual basis at the end of the fiscal year if there are indications of impairment. If there is an indicator of impairment, the Society determines if there is significant adverse change in the expected amount or timing of future cash flows, the carrying value of the financial asset is reduced to the highest of the present value of the expected cash flows, the amount that could be realized from selling the financial asset or the amount the Society expects to realize by exercising its right to any collateral. If events and circumstances reverse in a future year, an impairment loss will be reversed to the extent of the improvement, not exceeding the initial impairment charge.

(g) Deferred lease inducement:

The deferred lease inducement consists of a construction allowance provided by the landlord which is being amortized to offset rent expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

(h) Contributed materials and services:

Volunteers contribute their time each year to the Society. Because of the difficulty of determining the fair value of these services, the value of contributed services are not recognized in these financial statements.

Contributed materials and supplies are not recognized in these financial statements.

(i) Use of estimates:

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the year.

Items subject to such estimates and assumptions include percentage of completion on contracted research projects. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

3. Restricted cash:

Restricted cash relates to a provincial grant where the grant agreement specifies that the related funds, including earned interest, are restricted for use, and held in a separate bank account.

4. Investments:

As at March 31, 2024, short-term investments consist of term deposits and guaranteed investment certificates maturing on varying dates from May 2024 to August 2024 (2023 - May 2023 to March 2024) at interest rates ranging from 4.85% to 5.10% per annum (2023 - 2.10% to 4.25%).

As at March 31, 2024, long-term investments consisted of a guaranteed investment certificate maturing in May 2026 to March 2027 at interest rates ranging from 4.53% to 4.70% per annum.

5. Capital assets:

			2024	2023
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Net book value	Net book value
Computer equipment	\$ 156,041	\$ 121,581	\$ 34,460	\$ 23,784
Furniture and fixtures	119,050	112,284	6,766	5,219
Leasehold improvements	898,132	610,736	287,396	351,262
	\$ 1,173,223	\$ 844,601	\$ 328,622	\$ 380,265

6. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities:

Included in accounts payable and accrued liabilities are government remittances payable of \$32,634 (2023 - \$2,711) for payroll related taxes.

7. Deferred contributions:

Deferred contributions represent unspent externally restricted amounts received by the Society for specific purposes. Changes in deferred contributions are as follows:

	2024	2023
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 10,878,757	\$ 6,550,940
Amounts received or receivable	1,160,753	7,273,248
Accrued interest earned	147,948	-
Amounts recognized as revenue	(3,446,040)	(2,945,431)
Balance, end of year	\$ 8,741,418	\$ 10,878,757

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

8. Deferred lease inducement:

	2024	2023
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 128,402	\$ 151,748
Amortization to rental expense	(23,346)	(23,346)
Balance, end of year	105,056	128,402
Less current portion	23,346	23,346
	\$ 81,710	\$ 105,056

9. Internally restricted net assets:

The Board of Directors has approved a reserve fund of at least one-half of the annual operating budget or \$500,000 whichever is more, to provide for the ongoing financial stability of the Society. The reserve fund will be set aside to be used to maintain operations during difficult financial circumstances; or to cover contingent liabilities. The reserve fund is not available for other purposes without approval of the Board of Directors.

As at March 31, 2024, \$1,791,984 (2023 - \$1,769,729) is recorded in the reserve fund. During the year ended March 31, 2024, \$7,745 (2023 - \$126,734) was transferred from the reserve fund to unrestricted net assets.

10. Net assets invested in capital assets:

(a) Net assets invested in capital assets are comprised of the following:

	2024	2023
Capital assets	\$ 328,622	\$ 380,265
Deferred lease inducement	(105,056)	(128,402)
	\$ 223,566	\$ 251,863

(b) Change in net assets invested in capital assets is comprised of the following:

	2024	2023
Excess of revenue over expenses:		
Amortization of capital assets	\$ (95,920)	\$ (105,922)
Amortization of deferred lease inducement	23,346	23,346
	\$ (72,574)	\$ (82,576)
Change in invested in capital assets:		
Acquisition of capital assets	\$ 44,277	\$ 16,827

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

11. Commitment:

The Society entered into a ten-year lease agreement for its premises which expires September 30, 2028. Basic rental payments excluding goods and services tax, operating expenses and property taxes for the next 5 fiscal years are as follows:

2025	\$	130,455
2026		130,455
2027		130,455
2028		130,455
2029		65,228
		<hr/>
		\$ 587,048

12. Employee and contractor remuneration:

For the year ended March 31, 2024, the Society paid total remuneration of \$1,756,837 (2023 - \$476,313) to nine (2023 - five) employees and contractors for services, each of whom received total remuneration of more than \$75,000.

The Society's Board of Directors do not receive remuneration.

13. Financial risks:

(a) Credit risk:

Credit risk refers to the risk that a counterparty may default on its contractual obligations resulting in a financial loss. The Society is exposed to credit risk with respect to its cash and accounts receivable. The Society holds all of its cash with a British Columbia authorized credit union. The Society deals with creditworthy counterparties to mitigate the risk of financial loss from defaults on its accounts receivable. The Society assesses, on a continuous basis, accounts receivable and provides for any amounts that are not collectible in the allowance for doubtful accounts. As at March 31, 2024 and 2023, there was nil allowance for doubtful accounts.

(b) Liquidity risk:

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Society will be unable to fulfill its obligations on a timely basis or at a reasonable cost. The Society manages its liquidity risk by monitoring its operating requirements. The Society prepares budget and cash forecasts to ensure it has sufficient funds to fulfill its obligations.

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

13. Financial risks (continued):

(c) Interest rate risk:

Interest rate risk arises from the possibility that changes in interest rates will affect the value of fixed income investments held by the Society. The Society manages this risk by investing in highly rated term deposits and guaranteed investment certificates with varying maturity dates.

There has been no significant change to the financial risk exposures outlined above from 2023.

The Society believes that it is not exposed to significant currency or market risks arising from its financial instruments.