
MEMORANDUM

December 1, 2025

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief of External Relations, External Relations
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy & Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Margaret Wittgens, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Non-profit and Non-governmental Organizations Operating in the DTES

RTS: 17927

PURPOSE

This memo provides Mayor and Council with an update on the work undertaken in response to a Council motion ([RTS 17927](#)) directing staff to compile a list of non-profit and non-governmental organizations operating in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), including information on the services they provide in the DTES, and the funding allocated to them. The inventory is attached in Appendix A.

BACKGROUND

Directed Work

On February 25, 2025, Council approved a motion directing staff to undertake the following work: collaborate directly with Provincial government counterparts to compile a comprehensive list of non-profit and non-governmental organizations operating in the DTES and the total funding allocated from all sources (Provincial and City and other) with the goal of gaining a comprehensive understanding of service provision and service delivery outcomes, including those that align with the goals of enabling recovery and improving mental health, in order to best support and improve the lives of those in need.

DISCUSSION

Methodology

Staff explored options for how best to compile the list described in the motion within existing staffing and financial resources. Lack of accessible information and data sources presented challenges for creating a comprehensive representation of service provision and service delivery outcomes for organizations operating in the DTES. To address the intent of the motion, staff created an inventory of organizations operating in the DTES using data that is publicly available. A base list of over 400 non-profit organizations and their funding allocations was compiled using three primary data sources: the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), BC 2-1-1, and City of Vancouver (COV). This list was further refined to focus specifically on non-profit and non-governmental organizations that provide social services directly to “those in need” in the DTES. This includes those who are living on low incomes, such as income assistance or pensions, and who may experience additional challenges such as mental health and substance use disorders, disabilities, homelessness, and/or marginalization based on race, gender or sexual orientation. Organizations that did not meet this scope were removed from the base list; for example, organizations that engage solely in political advocacy or research, or organizations that serve only other organizations were not included.

Staff reviewed each organization’s website to collect data on service delivery and grouped the services into distinct categories that were developed in consultation with key provincial partner agencies. Categories include mental health services, healthcare services, substance use services, homelessness services, homeless prevention services, washroom access, shelters and related services, outreach teams, low-cost housing, connections to supports, and free or low-cost meals¹.

Further details on the methodology are provided in Appendix B.

Summary and limitations

The inventory lists non-profit organizations that offer social services directly to those in need in the DTES, providing an overview of the services provided as well as annual revenues and funding allocations based on the most recent available data. The organizations included in this inventory provide a range of services, from direct housing provision to drop-in programming, and serve a range of different populations in need.

The inventory includes a total of 197 organizations: 94 organizations that provide services in the DTES alone and an additional 103 organizations that have a citywide, regional, provincial, or national focus but may provide some services in the DTES. Across the organizations, the main services provided were homelessness prevention, housing, and free or low-cost meals.

Due to the methodological and data limitations outlined below (see appendix C for details), the inventory does not provide a comprehensive understanding of service delivery in the DTES or break down the funding allocations by specific geographic areas, services or demographics. The inventory should not be used for in-depth analysis of DTES service provision or to draw related conclusions.

¹ Data on the populations served by each organization was not collected due to the limited ability of staff to adequately interpret this information from organization websites.

- The inventory is not a definitive list of DTES service providers. Some organizations that do *not* provide services in the DTES may have been captured, while some organizations that *do* provide services in the DTES may have been excluded. This is because organizations were primarily identified based on having a head office located in the DTES.
- Service outcomes are not included in the inventory, as there is no public data source available that provides this information. Gathering this information would require engagement with each organization, which could not be achieved within the project timeframe and with existing resources.
- The inventory offers a general overview of services based on organization websites. Information may be incomplete or outdated, and subject to staff interpretation.
- For most organizations, the portion of funding spent exclusively on service provision in the DTES could not be determined, as the total funding amount may include activities outside the DTES and/or beyond direct service provision. Furthermore, many services provided in the DTES may also be accessed by people who live outside of the DTES if services are limited in their home communities/neighbourhoods.
- For all registered charities in the inventory (75% of all organizations), financial data - including revenue - is publicly available through the CRA website. For organizations that have received City grants, including non-registered charities, funding data related to City grant allocations is available.
- The most recently available funding data varies by organization, from 2022 to 2024. Funding levels fluctuate annually and are not consistent year to year.

Outliers

There are eight organizations in the inventory whose total listed annual revenue amount exceeds \$50 million. These outlier amounts are primarily attributed to their broad geographic scopes (some operating at the provincial or national level), involvement in large-scale capital projects with significant government funding, and/or extensive operations in the DTES, including the provision of housing, shelters, treatment and recovery programs, and wrap-around supports.

FINAL REMARKS

The inventory provides a helpful reference point to contribute to an understanding of service provision in the DTES and is publicly available for distribution to provincial partners and for broad public use.

If Council has questions, please feel free to contact me directly at margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca and we will provide a response through the weekly Council Q&A.



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Appendix A: Inventory of Non-profit and Non-governmental Organizations Operating in the DTES

<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/non-profit-and-non-governmental-organizations-operating-in-the-dtes-public.xlsx>

Appendix B: Detailed Methodology

The following methodology was used to create the inventory:

1. **Determination of scope:** Based on the direction in the motion, staff determined that the scope should include all non-profit and non-governmental organizations (regardless of charity status) that provide services directly to those in need. This includes those who are living on low incomes, such as income assistance or pensions, and may experience additional challenges such as mental health and substance use disorders, disabilities, homelessness, and/or marginalization based on race, gender or sexual orientation. Organizations that have head offices in the DTES but also provide social services outside of the DTES were included within this scope. Evelyn Saller Centre, Strathcona, Ray-Cam, Gathering Place and Carnegie Community Centres were excluded as they are City-owned and operated. Business Improvement Area (BIA) Organizations and Community Policing Centres were also excluded given the focus on populations served.

Identification of data sources: There is no comprehensive data source available that includes all non-profit organizations, services provided, service delivery outcomes, and funding allocations. As such, three complimentary data sources were identified to compile the inventory: Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), BC 2-1-1, and City of Vancouver grants data².

Used together, these data sources provide information on the names of organizations, their addresses, and their annual revenues, including the annual funding they received from each level of government, as detailed in Table 1. The data sources do not include information on “other” funding sources, service delivery or service delivery outcomes.

Table 1: Data sources compiled to create base list of organizations

| Data Source | Data type and source | Information Available | Organization identification |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| CRA (2022) | Dataset (2022) from Government of Canada open data portal . | Registered charities. Name, address, 2022 total annual revenue and annual funding (federal, provincial, municipal/regional). | Organizations were identified by having a DTES postal code (V6A, V6B). |
| BC 2-1-1 (2025) | Dataset provided by 2-1-1. | Organizations in 2-1-1's database. Name, address. | DTES postal code (V6A, V6B), and organizations with "DTES" in their 2-1-1 description. |
| COV Grant Funding Data (2024) | Data provided by COV staff. | 2024 grant recipient organizations. Municipal funding provided, both capital and operating. | Address in DTES, and organizations identified as providing services in DTES, based on web search. |

² A small proportion of organizations were identified via other sources, such as local service guides published by organizations or word-of-mouth.

2. **Compilation and refinement of base list:** Datasets from the CRA, BC 2-1-1, and COV were cross-referenced to produce a base list of over 400 organizations. Staff researched the websites of each organization to identify whether the services provided met the criteria for the determined scope. Organizations deemed “out-of-scope” were eliminated from the list³. Examples include organizations that engage solely in political advocacy or research, organizations that serve other organizations, and organizations providing services that are only accessible via phone or internet.
3. **Updating and filling in funding data gaps:** The dataset obtained from the CRA was relatively outdated (2022), and it did not provide funding data for registered charities identified through other sources. To address these limitations, staff used the *CRA’s basic search tool for registered charities*, which provides the most up-to-date publicly available funding information, to manually search for each organization’s most recent funding data (2023 or 2024), where available⁴.

For organizations that received grant funding from the City of Vancouver in 2024, including non-registered charities, information on grant allocations was also included.

4. **Services provided – research and categorization:** Service delivery information was collected manually using individual organization websites⁵. Staff met with Provincial government partners to determine broad service categories that align with the Council motion, such as healthcare and substance use services. Definitions were produced for each service category to aid categorization (see *Definitions* sheet in inventory). Staff also collected information on the geographic areas served by organizations and links to their annual reports, where available. Data on the populations served by each organization was not collected due to limited staff ability to interpret this information from organization websites.

³ Providence Healthcare was also excluded due to its unique relationship with the provincial government, through which it effectively serves as a provincial health authority. This relationship contributes to Providence’s exceptionally high total annual government funding (\$1.3 billion in 2024), which would also act to skew the funding data if included in the inventory.

⁴ It should be noted that organizations have varying tax years, which may or may not follow the calendar year.

⁵ Some organizations were contacted directly to determine what services they provide in the DTES, if the information from their websites was indeterminate. Service information from 2-1-1 and CRA was also drawn from, to a limited degree.

Appendix C: Limitations

Due to numerous data and methodology limitations, the inventory should not be used for detailed analysis or to draw definitive conclusions about DTES service provision, service outcomes or associated funding.

The following limitations should be considered when reviewing and analyzing the inventory:

List of organizations:

- **The inventory does not serve as a definitive list of organizations that provide direct social services in the DTES.** Organizations were determined to be in or out of scope based on information from organization's websites. Because of the limitations associated with website information, organizations that *do not* provide services in the DTES may have been retained in the inventory, and organizations that *do* provide services in the DTES may have been excluded. Furthermore, organizations were primarily identified based on having an address or postal code in the DTES⁶, therefore some organizations with head offices in a different postal code may have been excluded.

Data on service delivery:

- **The inventory does not include data on service delivery outcomes.** There is no publicly available data source that provides information on an organization's service delivery outcomes. Collection of this data would require in-depth consultation with organizations, which was not achievable under the project timeline.
- **This inventory does not capture the depth or frequency of services provided by organizations in the DTES.** Organizations range from those that provide occasional pop-up events in the DTES to those that deliver numerous comprehensive support programs across multiple sites in the DTES.
- **The inventory provides a general overview of the services currently provided by the listed organizations, but it does not serve as a precise audit.** Service provision information was primarily gathered from the organizations' websites, which have varying levels of detail and currentness, and were subject to staff interpretation. Furthermore, the project timeline did not allow for an in-depth review of each website.

Data on funding allocation:

- **For most organizations, the portion of funding that is spent exclusively in the DTES and on direct service provision could not be determined.** The available funding data for each organization includes the annual funding received in total, which in many cases includes activities beyond direct service provision as well as those carried out in areas outside of the DTES boundaries. Of the organizations listed, approximately 50% also operate in areas outside of the DTES.

⁶ A small proportion of organizations were identified via other sources, such as local service guides published by organizations or word-of-mouth. 2-1-1 also identified some organizations based on the presence of the word "DTES" in the organization's 2-1-1 description.

- **The inventory captures the most recent available funding data, which varies by organization.** Data from 2024 was available for some organizations, while for others, data was only available for 2022 or 2023. In comparing data across years, staff found that an organization's funding can vary significantly from year to year, and the funding an organization received one year is not representative of what it may have received another year.
- **For all registered charities in the inventory (75% of all organizations), financial data - including revenue - is publicly available through the CRA website.** For organizations that received grant funding from the City of Vancouver in 2024, including non-registered charities, information on grant allocations was also included. Most organizations do not publicly share annual reports or financial statements.