



# Vancouver's Non-Profit Sector Current State Analysis

Social Policy and Projects  
Research and Data Team

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in Vancouver, there has been an intense focus on the impact of COVID-19 and public health measures on the non-profit sector. However, it is difficult to measure this impact without understanding the scope or breadth of the sector. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the state of the non-profit sector in Vancouver by outlining the current landscape of non-profits in the city, reflecting on the impacts of the pandemic on non-profit organizations, and identifying needs and challenges across sub-sectors.

The non-profit sector is extremely diverse, as evidenced by the scope and breadth of organizations and their multiple mandates, and the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of the sector's role and impact. The non-profit sector contributes to a healthy, functioning City; it is not only a key economic driver as an employer, but also mobilizes and strengthens the human and social capital of communities. Its impact is reflected in employment numbers, volunteer rates, extensive service provision and community building.

Given the changing context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overdose crisis, and the movement for racial justice, the sector has been called on to support populations experiencing new and intense levels of vulnerability; as well as to strengthen the social and environmental fabric of Vancouver and its communities at a time when people staying apart is a fundamental public health measure.

The pandemic has exposed some of the underlying systemic vulnerabilities of the sector caused by a lack of sustainable operating funding sources, significant inequities and challenges in the workforce, and space affordability and access challenges. COVID-19 has significantly impacted the sector by:

- Depleting reserves and decreasing earned revenue while increasing COVID-19 related costs;
- Causing organizations to disrupt services, shift scope, change their delivery methods to virtual formats and causing infrastructure and capacity challenges; and
- Causing staff burnout, lay-offs and loss of volunteers.

Decades of unsustainable funding has resulted in a sector facing serious challenges to make it through the pandemic. Although community transmission has been reduced and policy has shifted to reopening and restarting, the pandemic is ongoing. COVID-19 continues to be an acute risk for many populations, and there is the risk that widespread transmission of the disease could require more stringent public health measures to be enacted again. Many organizations may not be able to reopen if they close a second time.

There are some differences in the specific needs, challenges and supports reported across sub-sectors within the non-profit sector, but across all sub-sectors there is consistent messaging from non-profits around the importance of trust-based core operational funding, clear information protocols, technology supports and increased access to existing public infrastructure to support shifts in operations. These messages were heard clearly across the breadth of the sector.

Five subsectors are included in more depth in this report, with the following specific findings:

- **Arts and Culture Non-Profits** promote cultural traditions through music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture, literature, and media. These are creative expressions that not only enrich people's lives but also shape the cultural identity and spirit of a place generating communal meaning. These organizations are facing important decisions for recovery with an emphasis on funding to equity-seeking groups,

addressing space affordability impacts and supporting artists and cultural workers living below the poverty line and those affected by lay-offs.

- **Sports and Recreation Non-Profits** promote amateur sports, training, fitness, and wellness services; organize sporting competitions and events; operate recreational facilities; and provide a variety of other services to communities. The COVID-19 pandemic and physical distancing measures have posed significant challenges to programming given cancellation of events, closures, reduced revenue and limited access to public facilities for services and programs.
- **Social Services and Community Development Non-Profits** play a key role in meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable—from addressing threats to food security and fears of increased domestic violence, to continuing to provide a social safety net to Vancouver residents amidst increased stress, mental health strain, isolation, and overall service demand. Social service organizations are faced with increased demand for services and the impacts of disruption in services due to a change in operating models and pressures in the workforce.
- **Religious and Faith-based Non-Profits** help people to explore and cultivate deeply held beliefs, foster vibrant social networks, spark local volunteerism, and foster community resiliency. These non-profits have had to adapt to new ways to provide services to comply with physical distancing measures and they too are facing financial challenges due to the inability to receive in-person donations.
- **Environmental Non-Profits** promote and provide services in environmental conservation, pollution control and prevention, environmental education and health and animal protection. As with other non-profits there are concerns for the long-term financial sustainability of organizations, as they adapt to virtual programming and engagement.

Despite multiple challenges non-profit organizations have found ways to collaborate and have demonstrated incredible adaptive capacity. This is shown through their ability to pivot and respond to immediate community needs, mobilize resources accordingly when needed, shift approaches to service delivery, their ability to support equity within the context of racial justice, and address isolation as well as promote community connectedness.

This report demonstrates the breadth and resilience of Vancouver’s non-profit sector, and its essential role in working toward an equitable, healthy, active, connected and expressive city. But the state of the sector is precarious, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated longstanding challenges while creating new ones. The health of the non-profit sector must be given a high priority if Vancouver is to plan a recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic toward a more sustainable community.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to gain a more in-depth understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 on non-profit organizations in the City of Vancouver by:

- Setting a baseline and mapping the current landscape of the non-profit sector in the City;
- Reflecting on the Vancouver-specific impacts of the pandemic in the context of both the immediate public health emergency and the broader racial justice movement that COVID-19 has added urgency to; and
- Identifying needs and challenges faced by specific non-profit sub-sectors in Vancouver.

Information presented in this report focuses on Vancouver-based data as much as possible. It includes a sector-wide inventory and mapping based on the International Classification of Non-profit organizations (ICNPO), as well as a specific focus on key sectors relevant to City of Vancouver planning and policy. This report incorporates quantitative and qualitative data from existing sector surveys that had been collected up until end of July 2020 through a sector-wide research inventory and literature review. In order to provide an analytical framework to allow for sub-sector comparisons, ICNPO categories are also used in key informant interviews and focus groups to understand the specific impacts on five key areas:

- Arts and culture;
- Sports and recreation;
- Social services and community development;
- Religion and faith-based organizations; and
- Environment.

This work is part of the broader business and community recovery program being undertaken by the City of Vancouver. The non-profit and social enterprise recovery work stream aims to implement short-and-medium-term recovery support strategies, including integrated approaches, measures, and tools to support the operational capacity and financial viability of the sector, as well as ensuring community partners can maintain critical services during the COVID-19 emergency and after it has passed.

This report is structured in three parts. The first section is an overview of conceptual considerations when defining the non-profit sector, a breakdown and spatial distribution of non-profits located in the city and a general discussion around the contributions and impact of the sector in Vancouver. The second section analyzes the overall financial, operational and workforce related impacts of COVID-19 on Vancouver's non-profit sector. Finally the third section more closely analyzes the impact of COVID-19 on specific non-profit subsectors.

## 1.1 Data Sources

Data about Vancouver's local non-profit sector is sparse. This report relies on several key sources of data but there is a lack of substantive baseline research on the sector, let alone more immediate analysis of the impacts of the pandemic. There are several pre-existing systemic issues with data on the sector:

- Data that is specific to the non-profit sector is outdated.
- There is not consensus and a consistent way to conceptually speak about the sector and capture its impact across different types of organizations.

- There is a lack of operational and administrative data sharing between regulating government agencies.
- Information on the sector relies heavily on community-based data, qualitative research and personal relationships.

This report tries to bridge these data gaps by relying on multiple sources of data, with a key focus on qualitative interviews with key informants and community surveys. Methods include:

A literature review, looking for research that quantifies the impact of COVID-19 on the non-profit sector. Key community surveys with local data included:

- The No Immunity survey conducted by Vantage Point, which surveyed 1,200 non-profit organizations across BC in early April of this year. This is the most significant local survey on this topic of COVID-19 recovery to-date. City staff followed up on the Vantage Point survey by holding three engagement sessions, or 'data parties', where non-profits were asked to engage further with high-level survey data.
- The Impact Survey led by Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance, which is currently in its fourth iteration tracking the impacts of COVID-19 on the arts and cultural sector in the province.
- The Impact of COVID-19 on Christian Charities study conducted by Way Base, a national study that provided a glimpse on the impacts on Religious and Faith-based organizations across Canada.
- The Imagine Canada Sector Monitor: Charities & the COVID-19 Pandemic which details the experiences of charities since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the impact of physical distancing, mandatory closure of non-essential businesses, and changes to the operating environment.

Interviews with representatives from organizations from different sub-sectors.

- Contribution from 40 key informants from the arts and culture, social services, sports and recreation, religious and environmental non-profits.

## 2. DEFINING THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in Vancouver, there has been an intense focus on the impact of COVID-19 and public health measures on the non-profit sector. However, it is difficult to measure this impact without understanding the scope or breadth of the sector. This section provides a high-level overview of the non-profit sector across the city of Vancouver. It reviews definitions of the sector, provides a breakdown of the different types of non-profit organizations that make up the sector in Vancouver, and outlines key high level points about the value and importance of the non-profit sector.

### 2.1 Conceptual Considerations

Legally, in British Columbia a non-profit organization must meet four distinct criteria:

- Non-governmental (institutionally separate from government);
- Non-profit distributing (do not return any profits generated to their owners or directors);
- Self-governing (are independent and able to regulate their own activities); and
- Voluntary (benefit to some degree from voluntary contributions of time or money).

Non-profits are not required to be incorporated, but some may need to do so in order to access government funding, grants or become a charity. Some, but not all, non-profits have charitable status, which is a federal designation through the Canadian Revenue Agency. There is no comprehensive administrative definition of non-profit organizations in Canada.

Different ways in which non-profit organizations can be classified include:

- Organizational service function (the focus of the organization's activities and their core mandate);
- Internal organizational resources (the size of their operating budget, the number of people they employ, the infrastructure they own or rent);
- The populations impacted by their work (the people who use their services); or
- Administrative and/or legal categories (i.e., categories imposed by the institutions that regulate or fund the non-profit sector).

The City of Vancouver interacts in different ways with segments of the non-profit sector, such as grants to arts or social service organizations or engagement of place-based service providers. But, there is limited interaction with the sector as a whole, and a gap in understanding the full scope of the non-profit sector.

Vancouver has a large not-for-profit sector which mobilizes and supports the community through the provision of direct services, advocacy, education, research, philanthropy and religion. The City is primarily connected to what are considered community-based non-profits. Under this administrative economic-based categorization set by the Federal government, community-based non-profits are differentiated from business or government non-profit institutions such as professional associations, hospitals or universities.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada (2019) <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190305/dq190305a-eng.htm>

The City of Vancouver’s relationship with NPOs, including its policies, partnerships and funding, focuses on NPOs that create community benefits. The organizations the City works with and supports:

- Operate for the public good, not private gain;
- Reinvest and retain assets in the public domain for the public good;
- Demonstrate the value of care and service to others as a core value of their work;
- Help drive the economic strength and stability of communities; and,
- Play an active role in public policy by channeling community voices, influencing policy, and ensuring accountability among decision-makers. This includes promoting equity of opportunities/outcomes through civic participation<sup>2</sup>.

## 2.2 Categorizing Vancouver’s Non-Profit Sector

For the purpose of this document, we are choosing to focus on the non-profit sector using the International Classification of Non-Profit Organizations (ICNPO), which is the most widely adopted classification standard to understand and access information about non-profits in Canada. This classification standard groups non-profit organizations based on unique service and expression-related functions across 12 different categories<sup>3</sup>.

Using these categories, a scan was carried out by the Social Policy Research and Data team, which identified about 1,660 active NPOs operating in the city, many of which are part of the over 3,400 CRA registered charities<sup>4</sup> in Vancouver. Data came from BC211’s organizational directory and an inventory of current NPO partners connected to the City. The following table<sup>5</sup> provides a breakdown of the 1,660 organizations identified through this scan that make up Vancouver’s non-profit sector.

Breakdown of Vancouver’s NPO Sector Using ICNPO Typology		
ICNPO Category	# of orgs	%
Arts and Culture*	392	24%
Religion*	358	22%
Social Services*	326	20%
Law, Advocacy and Politics	117	7%
Health	110	7%
Business and professional associations, unions	100	6%
Development and Housing	85	5%
Education and Research	59	4%
Environment*	38	2%
Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion	31	2%
Sport and Recreation*	26	2%
Other	17	1%
International	4	0%
Total organizations included	1,660	
*Note: For the purpose of the state of the non-profit sector research, this report includes a more in-depth analysis of these non-profit groups.		

The ICNPO typology tries to capture the essence of each non-profit sub-sector focusing on the role that non-profit organizations generally play in the communities. 60% of Vancouver’s NPOs focus on expressive

2 City of Vancouver: Employment Lands and Economic Review (2020) <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/other-sectors-non-profit.pdf>  
 3 Hall, Michael H., et al. (2005) The Canadian Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector in Comparative Perspective. Imagine Canada, Toronto, Ont, retrieved from [http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/jhu\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/jhu_report_en.pdf)  
 4 Canada Revenue Agency (2020) List of Charities in Vancouver. Retrieved July 15th 2020  
 5 Statistics Canada ICNPO adopted categorization groups Arts and Culture and sports and recreation into a single category. For the purpose of the scan and aligned with current research practice Culture and sports are two distinct categories.

functions, focusing primarily on activities that enable expression of cultural, political, professional or other interests or beliefs. Some of these organizations are also involved at the same time in the provision of social programs (e.g. religious organizations running housing programs, daycares etc.). The remaining 40% of Vancouver's NPOs are involved primarily in direct service delivery. This group also includes government NPOs (i.e., hospitals, universities, colleges). These organizations are considered to have a service function.

## 2.3 Scale of the Sector

Non-profit organizations play a vital role in the health of our communities, and are significant employers and contributors to the BC economy. There are an estimated 26,000 non-profit organizations in BC and the CRA notes over 3,400 registered charities in Vancouver<sup>6</sup> which is the largest concentration of non-profit activity in the province. The Vancouver region has the largest charitable workforce in BC, and generates significant income through this sector. While a Vancouver-specific number is not available, BC's overall non-profit sector generates \$6.4 billion in GDP<sup>7</sup>, which is larger than the combined GDP of agriculture, forestry and fishing in this province combined.

People are the sector's most valuable asset, and even before the COVID pandemic, non-profit organizations were facing significant workforce inequities and challenges. Women make up three-quarters (74%)<sup>8</sup> of the non-profit work force, and this number is even higher (81%) in the social service field. However men are over-represented in senior leadership roles, and a higher concentration of men can be found in unionized organizations, which typically have better pay and benefits and more stable working conditions. The sector's workforce is also considered very educated, and yet compensation is low, with racialized workers and those in traditional "caring roles" (for example, in childcare), typically earning the lowest wages. The sector is heavily reliant on precarious workers, with 32% of organizations reporting employing contract workers<sup>9</sup>.

The sector also heavily relies on volunteers, including peers with lived experience. 86% regularly use volunteers<sup>10</sup>, but recruiting and retaining qualified volunteers (including board members) is increasingly a challenge. Organizations report having difficulty safely engaging volunteers during the COVID crisis, placing additional stress and workload pressures onto an already stretched workforce.

The non-profit sector is very diverse and it varies in size, scope and impact from very small volunteer-run organizations to large-scale multipurpose agencies. The services and programs offered touch all aspects of society: education; business and the economy; social justice; safety; human rights; environment; health; sports; faith; arts; and culture<sup>11</sup>. Within this diversity, organizational capacity varies with very few non-profits in BC (less than 6%) sufficiently large to have staff focused specifically on strategic planning, social media, HR and IT<sup>12</sup>.

Looking at the spatial distribution of the non-profit sector, NPOs are more likely to be located along arterials or higher access transit corridors. Proximity to clients is an important locating factor for these organizations, and these organizations may choose to locate themselves in high-traffic areas. NPOs typically occupy small unit spaces, between 250 and 5,000 square feet. Most are renters or lease on short-term agreements. Organizations that rent or lease their space don't have the same security as those that own space<sup>13</sup>. The following maps outline the spatial distribution of non-profit organizations in the city using the ICNPO categories.

6 Canada Revenue Agency. (2020). List of Charities Accessed June 15, 2020

7 Statistics Canada. Table 36-10-0614-01 Gross domestic product (GDP) and income of non-profit institutions by activity (x 1,000,000)

8 Ference Weicker & Co. (2014). Characteristics of the labour market in British Columbia's nonprofit sector. Vancouver, BC: Ference Weicker & Co

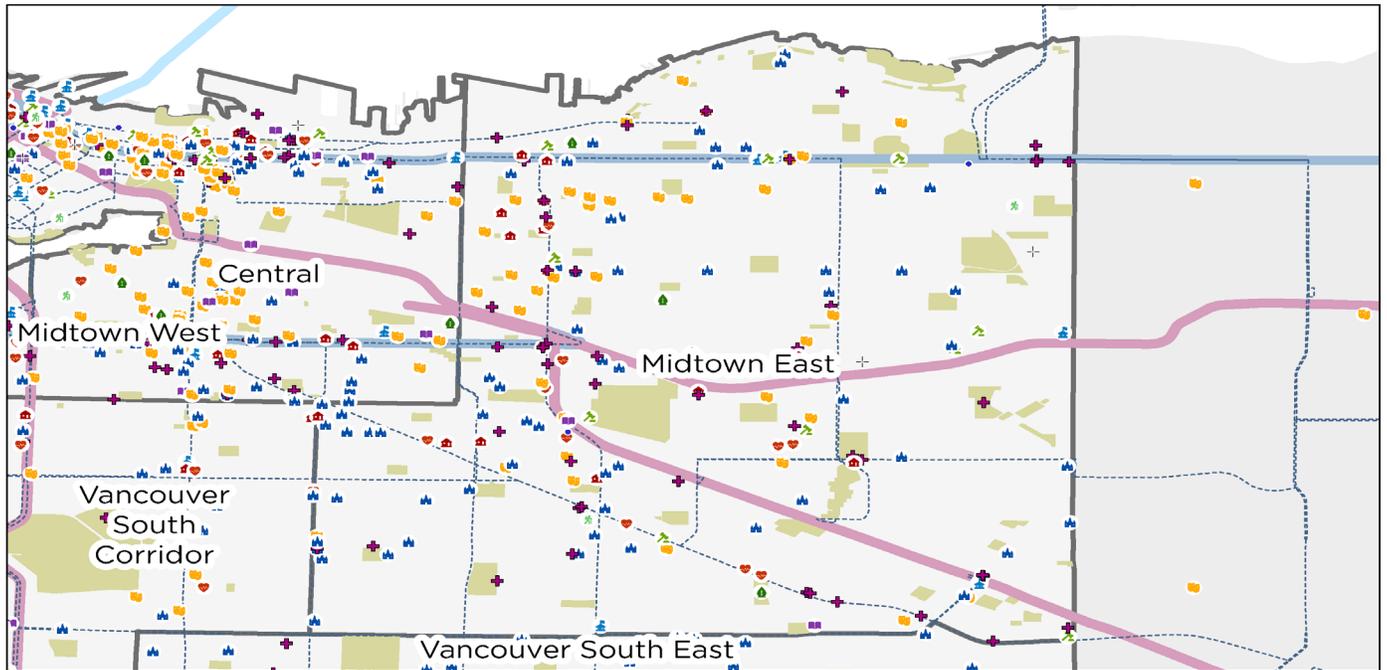
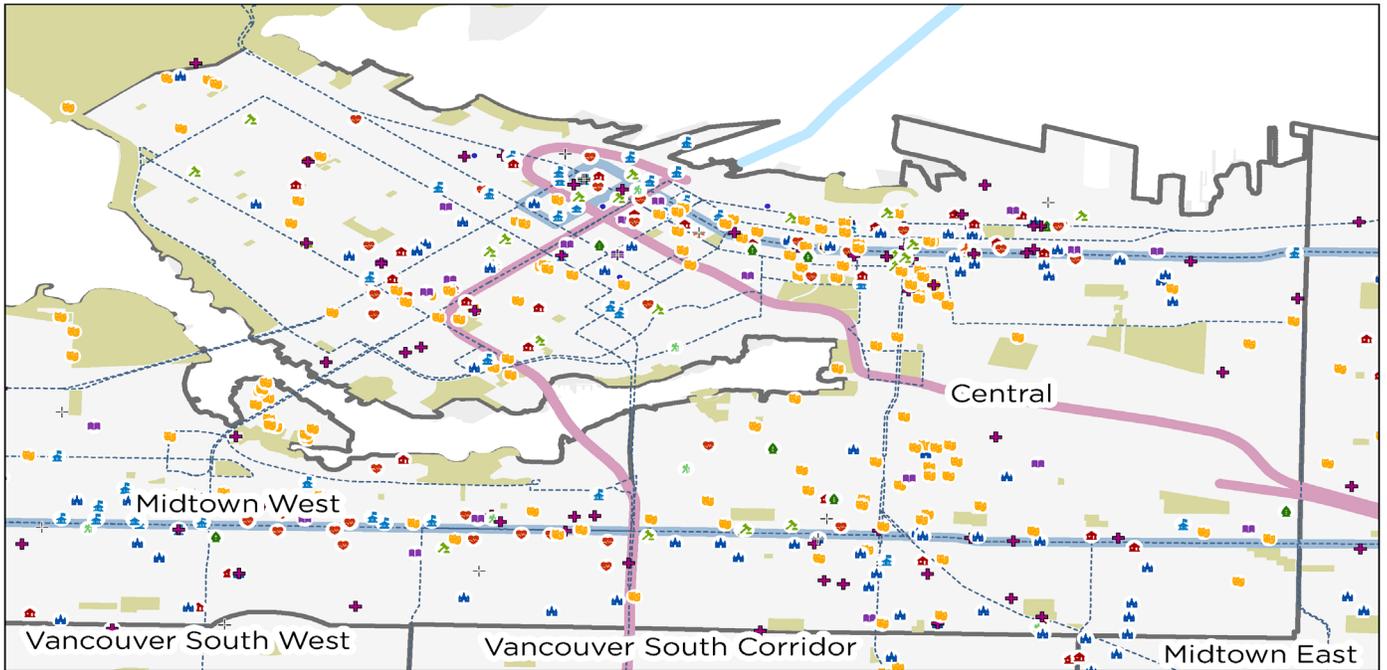
9 Ibid.

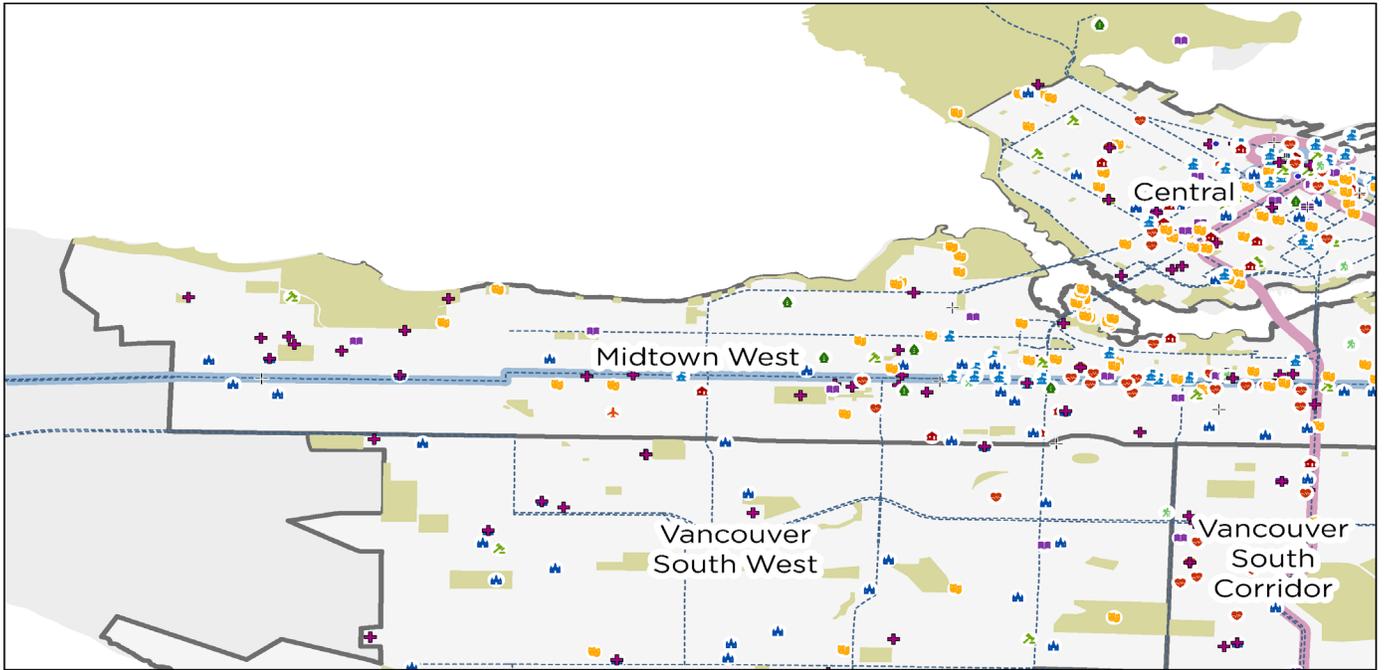
10 Ibid

11 Pan-Canadian Funding Practice in Communities: Challenges and Opportunities for the Government of Canada Final Report, Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) (2006) [http://www.ccsd.ca/images/research/FundingMatters/PDF/FM\\_PanCan\\_Funding\\_Report\\_June2006.pdf](http://www.ccsd.ca/images/research/FundingMatters/PDF/FM_PanCan_Funding_Report_June2006.pdf)

12 Ference Weicker & Co.

13 City Spaces/Social Purpose Real Estate, Rent-Lease-Own: Understanding the real estate challenges affecting the non-for profit, social purpose and cultural sectors in Metro Vancouver, 2013, and City of Vancouver, Draft Engagement Summary Report; City of Vancouver Social Infrastructure Plan, 2017





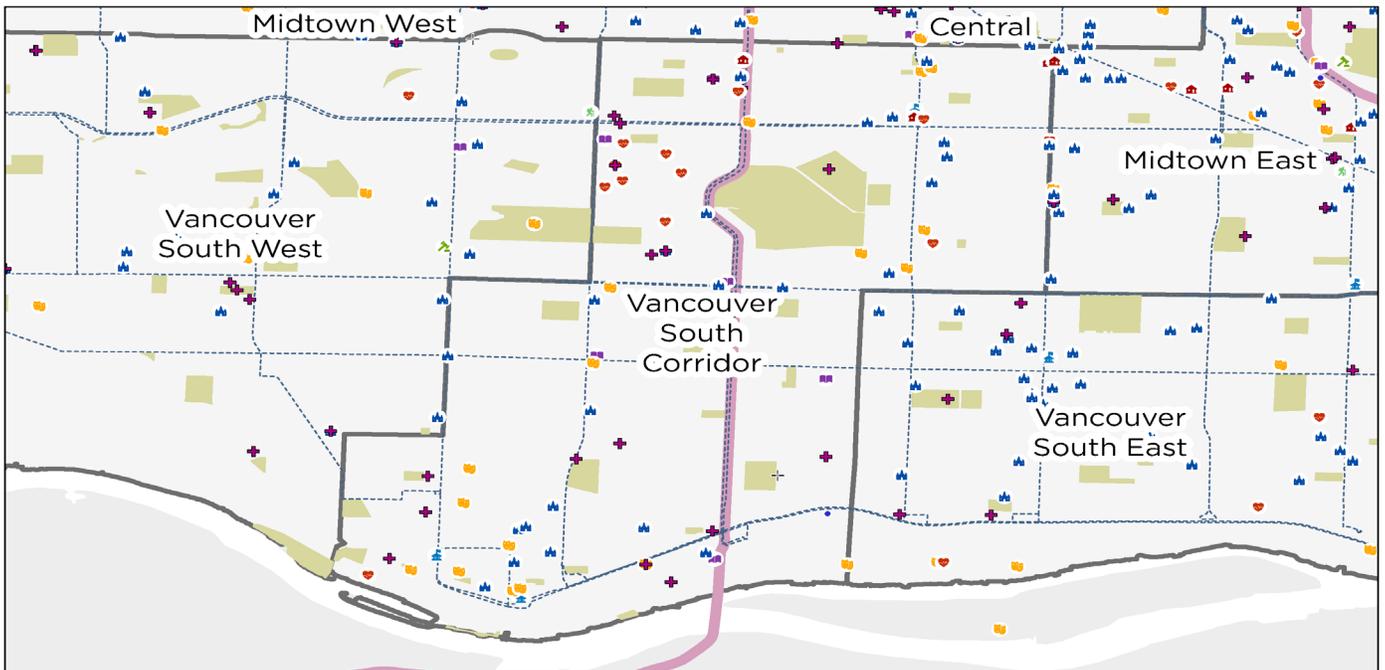
**ICNPO Category**

- Arts and Culture
- Business and professional associations, unions
- Development and Housing
- Education and Research
- Environment
- Health
- International
- Law, Advocacy, Politics
- Other

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- Law, Advocacy, Politics
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- Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion
- Religion
- Social Services
- Sport and Recreation
- other

**Frequent Transit Network Type**

- B-Line
- Frequent Passenger Ferry
- High Frequency Rail
- High Frequency Bus



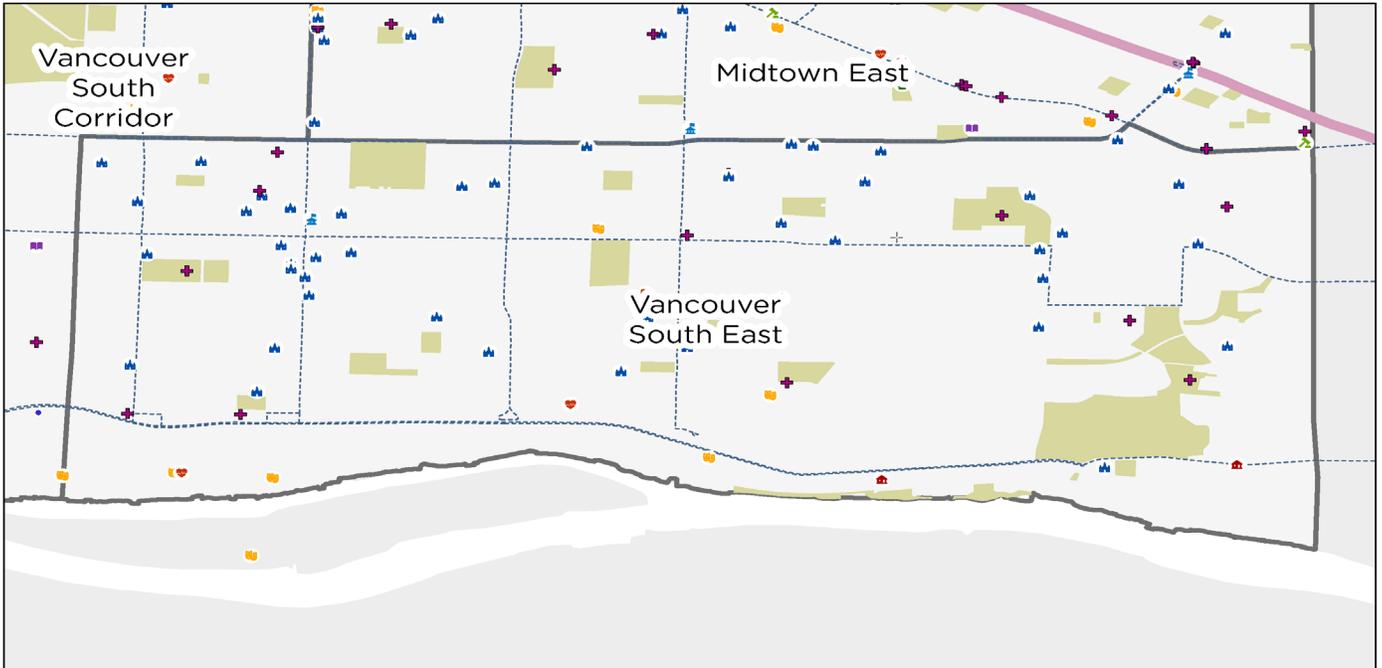
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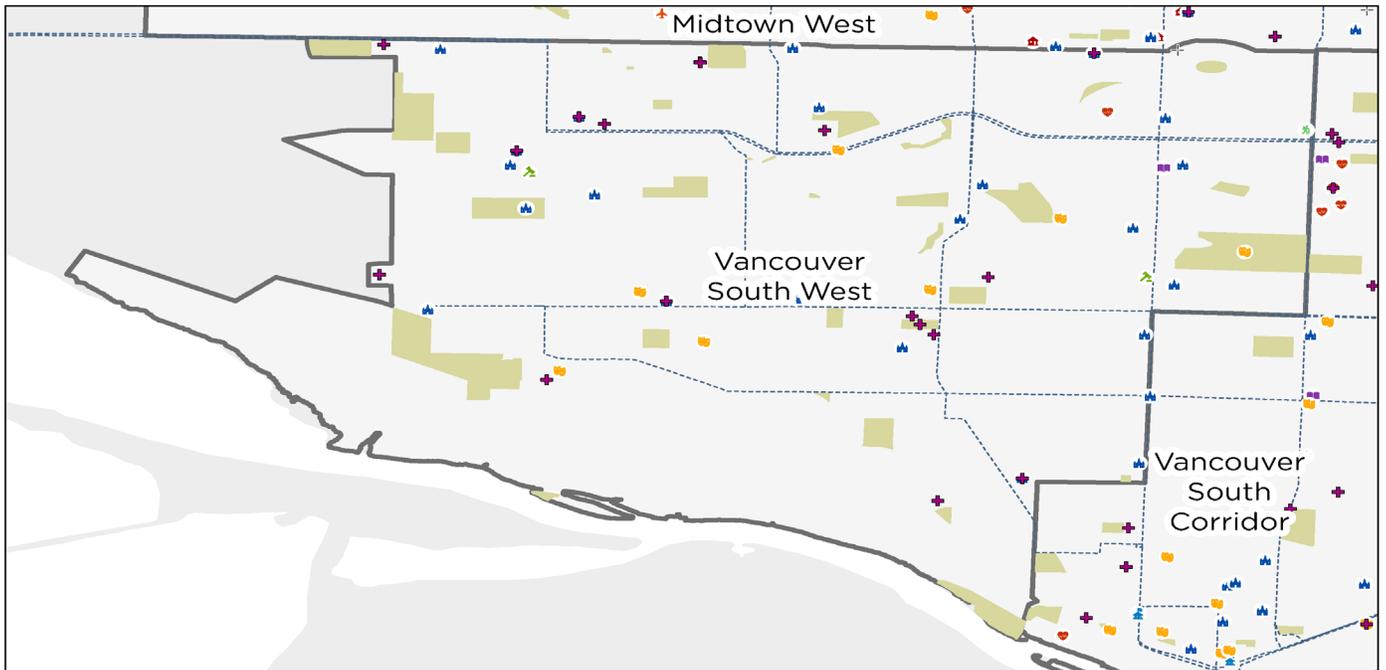
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## 2.4 Importance of the Sector

The non-profit sector contributes to a healthy functioning city. It is not only a key economic driver as an employer, but also mobilizes and strengthens the human and social capital of communities. Its impact is reflected in employment numbers, volunteering rates, extensive service provision and community building. The diversity, scope and impact of the sector can be seen through the contributions of the different types of non-profits:

- Cultural non-profit organizations promote cultural traditions through music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture, literature, and media. These are creative expressions that not only enrich people's lives but also shape the cultural identity and spirit of a place generating communal meaning.
- Social services play a key role in meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable - from addressing threats to food security and fears of increased domestic violence, to continuing to provide a social safety net to Vancouver residents amidst increased stress, mental health strain, isolation, and overall service demand.
- Sports and Recreation non-profit organizations promote amateur sports, training, fitness, and wellness services; organize sporting competitions and events; operate recreational facilities; and provide a variety of other services to communities.
- Environmental non-profits promote and provide services in environmental conservation, pollution control and prevention, environmental education and health and animal protection
- Religious and Faith-based organizations help people to explore and cultivate deeply held beliefs, foster vibrant social networks, spark local volunteerism, and foster community resiliency.

Currently given the changing context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overdose crisis, and the movement for racial justice, non-profit organizations are being called on to support Vancouver's residents impacted by these three major converging issues. As continuously supported by research non-profit organizations are essential for the provision of services, for empowering and encouraging expression and for being catalysts of innovation in society, making their contribution invaluable for the city.

- **NPOs with a service function:** These organizations are set-up to quickly meet the health, educational, personal and cultural needs of Vancouver residents who are impacted by the pandemic, with government and other granting organizations relying heavily on the adaptability of non-profits to carry out this work.<sup>14</sup> The non-profit sector is generally driven by a charitable mandate, as opposed to a for-profit business model. In the past three months non-profit organizations have rapidly shifted operations to meet the needs of the people they serve.
- **NPOs with an expressive function:** Non-profit groups give a voice to those who have been left marginalized. Advocacy is a key function of many non-profit organizations. In this way they act as a link between people and the broader political process, pushing government to change policy and consider the voices of people excluded from politics<sup>15</sup>. As an example, many of Vancouver's non-profit organizations play a key role in advisory committees, policy and planning working groups informing and shaping key policy directions of the City.
- **Innovation:** Non-profits are where innovation happens – these organizations interact with people every day and are solution providers in communities. Critical to the non-profit sector's collective success is working in partnership with government around funding reform, innovation, policy and recognizing the value of the non-profit sector.

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<sup>14</sup> Salamon, Hems, and Chinnock. The Nonprofit Sector: For What and for Whom. Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, retrieved from [https://thirdsectorimpact.eu/site/assets/uploads/page/documents-for-researchers/CNP\\_WP37\\_2000.pdf](https://thirdsectorimpact.eu/site/assets/uploads/page/documents-for-researchers/CNP_WP37_2000.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

## 3. OVERALL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON NON-PROFITS

The non-profit sector has long been impacted by precarious funding and staffing structures, which means that many organizations were not well positioned to come out of the pandemic unscathed. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Vancouver's non-profit sector was facing a number of challenges to the long-term sustainability of many organizations and sub-sectors. The pandemic has exacerbated these issues, and organizations are struggling to manage new challenges while at the same time meeting the increased needs of the clients they serve. In effect they are being asked to do more with fewer resources. Many organizations in the sector are being called upon to respond to two major public health emergencies (COVID-19 and the overdose crisis) and to continue to act as a voice and advocate for equity within the context of recent racial justice movement world-wide.

### 3.1 Timeline of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Vancouver

This section reviews the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and a timeline of events that most directly impacted Vancouver's non-profit sector.

The disease now known as COVID-19 was first identified in China in late 2019, with the first case outside China reported on January 13, 2020. On January 30, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Case counts increased in many countries through February and March, and the WHO declared a global pandemic on March 11<sup>16</sup>. As of late July, there have been nearly 15 million cases of COVID-19 worldwide reported to the WHO, with over 600 thousand deaths<sup>17</sup>. The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is primarily transmitted by respiratory droplets from an infected person, whether or not they are showing symptoms; symptoms may take up to two weeks to appear. The biggest risk factor for spreading the disease is close contact with someone who sneezes, coughs, speaks or sings, with a secondary risk from infected surfaces or objects<sup>18</sup>. Airborne transmission of the virus is possible in specific situations, notably medical respiratory interventions, but research continues to assess the risk of airborne transmission elsewhere<sup>19</sup>. The operating model for most of the non-profit sector depends on gathering people together in a shared space where there is risk of virus transmission.

There is currently no treatment, cure or vaccine for COVID-19. While research into the lasting impacts of the disease is ongoing, there are a number of populations that face disproportionate risk to serious complications, hospitalization or death from the disease. Seniors and older adults and persons with pre-existing health conditions are especially at risk<sup>20</sup>. Men have been more likely than women to need hospitalization and to die from the disease<sup>21</sup>. Inequities in the social determinants of health increase risk and exacerbate impacts of the disease; epidemiological data from the UK and the USA have shown disproportionate impacts on racialized populations<sup>22</sup>. Many people have employment (essential services, sex work, informal economies), housing (crowding, precariousness, homelessness) or family (caregiving) situations that may put them at greater risk of close contact and infection with the virus. And the pandemic

16 World Health Organization (2020). Rolling updates on coronavirus disease (COVID-19). <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen>

17 World Health Organization (2020). WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard. <https://covid19.who.int/>

18 World Health Organization (2020). Q&A: How is COVID-19 transmitted? <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-how-is-covid-19-transmitted>

19 World Health Organization (2020). Modes of transmission of virus causing COVID-19: implications for IPC precaution recommendations. <https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/modes-of-transmission-of-virus-causing-covid-19-implications-for-ipc-precaution-recommendations>

20 BC Centre for Disease Control (2020). Priority populations. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/priority-populations>

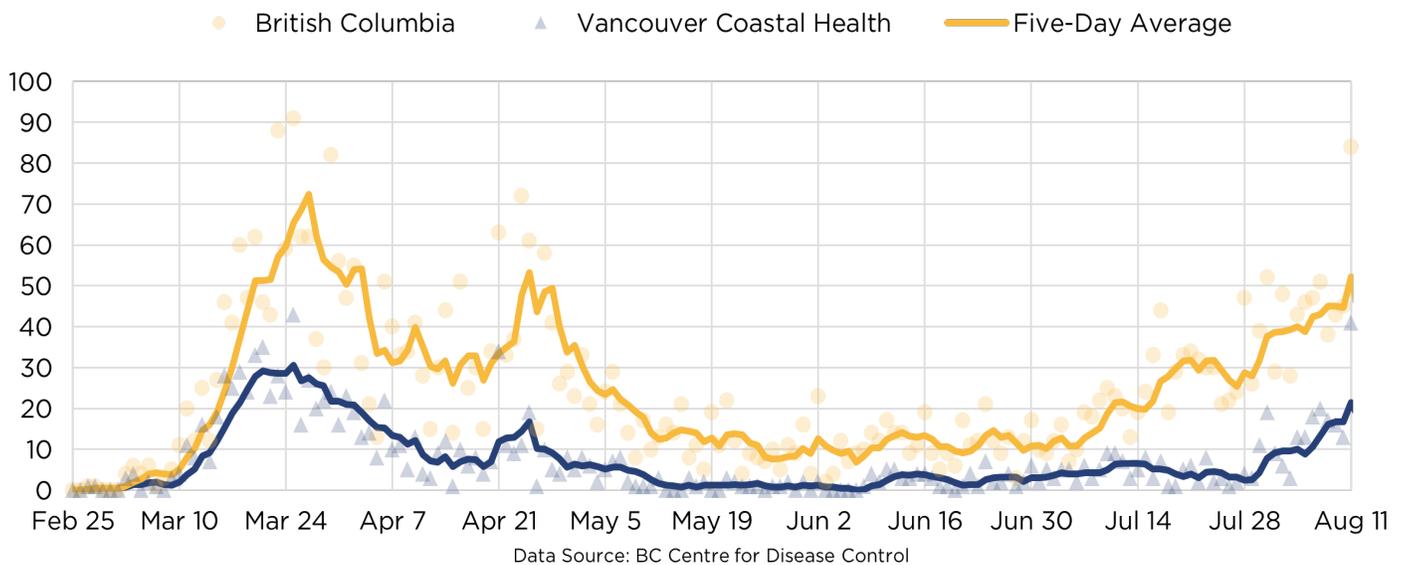
21 BC Centre for Disease Control (2020). British Columbia Weekly COVID-19 Surveillance Report July 10-16, 2020. [http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/BC\\_Surveillance\\_Summary\\_July\\_16\\_2020.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/BC_Surveillance_Summary_July_16_2020.pdf)

22 Partnership for Healthy Cities (2020). Webinar on COVID-19 Response. <https://vital.ent.box.com/s/63qcyn8mb3rq8dnqvm6e8h-p4lcjqlid>

has led to increased racism, stigmatization and violence. Many non-profit organizations, especially in the social service and community development sectors, work with populations that face disproportionate risk from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first case of COVID-19 in British Columbia was reported on January 26, 2020. Cases increased gradually through February and early March, at first from international travel and then from community transmission. Case counts increased more rapidly in mid-March, peaking on March 25 with 91 new cases reported in a single day. Since then, however, the number of new cases has generally declined, with increases in May due to community outbreaks in workplaces and institutions, and in July due to community spread from social events. On May 6, the provincial government published its restart plan and has continued to progress toward reopening businesses, services and in-province travel<sup>23</sup>, but the balance between resuming previous levels of activity and avoiding a resurgence of the virus remains precarious. Non-profit organizations face a great deal of uncertainty as the province navigates this balance.

## Daily New Reported COVID-19 Cases



BC's pandemic response ramped up very quickly in March, with key developments noted below:

### Overall public health response in BC

- **March 17** public health emergency declared
- **March 18** provincial state of emergency declared
- **May 6** provincial restart plan published
- **May 18** phase 2 of provincial response (reopening services and businesses) begins
- **June 24** phase 3 of provincial response (in-province travel, re-opening schools) begins

### Provincial orders and guidance impacting services and operations

- **March 12** recommendation to cancel gatherings of more than 250 people
- **March 16** provincial health order banning gatherings of more than 50 people
- **March 17** decision that in-person school classes will not resume following spring break
- **March 17** bars and nightclubs ordered closed
- **March 20** restaurants ordered to provide takeout service only
- **March 21** personal service businesses ordered to close
- **March 26** list of essential services published, including vulnerable population service providers

<sup>23</sup> Government of British Columbia (2020). BC's Restart Plan. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>

- **May 19** order that restaurants and personal services may re-open, with precautions
- **May 29** order prohibiting overnight camps for children and youth
- **June 1** option for part-time return to school for month of June
- **July 29** announcement that full-time school is planned to resume in September

#### Major economic supports relevant to the non-profit sector

- **March 23** province announces funding for non-profits will continue even if agencies closed
- **March 23** provincial emergency financial aid for workers announced
- **April 6** Canada Emergency Response Benefit enacted for workers who have been laid off
- **April 11** Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy enacted, with non-profit eligibility dependent on demonstrated loss of revenue excluding government grants
- **April 17** federal announcement of Emergency Support Fund for Culture, Heritage and Sport
- **May 16** federal announcement of Emergency Community Support Fund

#### City of Vancouver operations and investments

- **March 16** City closes libraries, community centres and theatres
- **March 19** City of Vancouver declares state of local emergency
- **March 19** City accelerates the disbursement of community services grants funds to support social non profits
- **March 20** City and Park Board close playgrounds
- **April 2** City launches “Give a Hand” platform to direct donations of materials and services
- **April 14** City staff report to council on City finances and opportunities to reduce spending
- **May 26** City Council approves public art grants and support to artists with loss of income
- **July 15** Partial re-opening of Carnegie, Evelyne Saller and Gathering Place community centres
- **July 21** Council approves grants to arts and culture, childcare and social non-profits
- **July 30** Announcement that limited community centre programming will resume in fall

Non-profit organizations have faced many challenges through the pandemic response. Most public health responses have been delivered through guidelines and recommendations rather than directives and orders. While this is seen as a positive step for engaging the community in taking personal action to reduce disease transmission, it has also resulted in inconsistencies and confusion about non-profit operations during the peak of the pandemic and in the province’s restart phases. Eligibility and process for accessing financial supports has been confusing to some organizations. In this unprecedented time, the non-profit sector has experienced precariousness and uncertainty about revenue, operations and sustainability.

### 3.2 Financial Impacts

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a measureable financial impact on Vancouver’s non-profit sector. Decades of unsustainable funding has placed the non-profit sector in a precarious position. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic there is a real concern that some organizations may not be able to reopen. At the time of the Vantage Point survey, over half of Vancouver respondents predicted their organizations would lose over \$100,000 in revenue. Survey data illustrates how different sectors are being impacted. Vancouver’s arts and culture sector has been most impacted by a loss of earned revenue, specifically from cancelled events, visits and ticket sales. Vancouver’s social services sector has been most affected by negative strains on the economy which have resulted in reduced organizational capacity to provide services. In an internal survey, one organization mentioned that they were at risk of “extinction” if facilities were not able to reopen soon.

At the same time, while some organizations may be able to rely on operating reserves to stay open for the next year or half year, there is a real risk that these reserves may eventually deplete and organizations will stay closed permanently. Given the possibility of a second wave, many organizations may be forced to close permanently. Organizations clearly state that decades of patchwork, project-based funding has led to the sector not being in a secure enough position to make it through times of economic hardship.

When asked to rank the forms of support they most need, respondents in the Vantage Point survey were

most likely to request support with grant writing and accessing grant funds. This suggests that many non-profits, particularly the smaller and more grassroots groups, do not have designated grant writers on staff and, therefore, have not been able to easily access emergency grant funds from senior levels of government.

Non-profits continuously bring up the need for long-term operating funding free from constraints or onerous reporting requirements. A lack of investment in non-profit administration has left organizations without sustainable staffing, and has made it more difficult to retain staff through the crisis. A majority of organizations the City spoke with mentioned that they have laid off staff, or expect to lay off staff if closures continue or during a second wave.

Organizations have been able to access the CEWS (federal wage subsidy program) and CEBA (interest free loans). However, not all organization are aware of these programs and some are not eligible. It is not always easy for organizations to prove that that they are eligible, and some have accessed other sources of emergency funding that has made them ineligible for these programs.

### **3.3 Operational Impacts**

Non-profit organizations in Vancouver are facing a simultaneous push-and-pull, being asked to meet the needs of community members while at the same time struggling to stay open and retain space. Many organizations have been forced outside their mandate, putting an excess burden on their staff and long-term sustainability.

A historic over-reliance of project-based funding has left organizations in a weak position to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. A second wave would put these organizations at an even greater risk. Funding not tied to short-term projects is needed to sustain core operations and build administrative capacity.

Organizations are being asked to do more with fewer resources. This is especially highlighted by Vancouver's social services sector: 92% of social services organizations had faced disruptions to services, while 75% had seen increased demand for their services. Organizations are also being asked to meet the increasingly more complicated needs of community members. Increasing inequity and poverty, as the pandemic has exacerbated social and economic disparities, have only complicated the demand for non-profit services.

Organizations have rapidly been forced to shift to virtual programming, which has created a digital capacity divide between large and small organizations. Small organizations lack the funding or infrastructure to seamlessly move towards virtual programming. This is especially challenging for organizations that need to train both their staff and clients on how to use virtual software, specifically in this case organizations that work with seniors and new immigrants.

Other programs just cannot be held in a digital setting. Organizations may have been forced to cancel some programs, or move from group to individual sessions. This can be time consuming and puts a further burden on staff members.

Organizations with more secure tenure (e.g., those who own their own space or who occupy City-owned spaces at nominal rent) express more confidence in being able to retain their space through the crisis. In the Vantage Point survey, 25% of organizations renting space were unsure if they can keep it, compared to only 4% who own space.

### **3.4 Workforce Impacts**

Vancouver organizations are struggling with staff absences, reduced staff hours and potential layoffs. Once again NPOs indicate that these issues are a symptom of decades of underinvestment in non-profit capacity.

Even before the pandemic, the non-profit sector was dealing with low staff wages and few opportunities for career advancement. This is despite being a generally more highly educated workforce. These pre-existing conditions left the sector in a weak position to make it through times of economic hardship. Staff

recruitment and retention challenges have historically been amplified by limited opportunities for succession planning and leadership development as well as high levels of stress, burnout and strain on staff members.

Many non-profit organizations rely heavily on volunteers, but the public health measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 have made it difficult to retain them. With physical distancing and the shift to virtual programming it is even more challenging for organizations that rely heavily on volunteers.

According to the Vantage Point survey, over half of Vancouver NPOs have laid off staff. On March 31, 2020, about 12,500 full time staff were employed by NPOs with a Vancouver connection. These organizations estimated that 21% of those full time positions would be laid off by June 1st. All organizations have noted issues with staffing. As a point of reference, this survey took place before the CEWS wage subsidy program, which has helped many, but not all, organizations retain staff.

Through the same survey organizations were asked to predict how long they could continue operating. Almost a third of Vancouver respondents—121 organizations—noted that they may need to close in less than six months.

As discussed in the previous section, shifting operations place a burden on staff members. Group sessions can no longer be held, forcing staff to spend more time meeting individually with clients.

There is some room for optimism. Organizations and their staff have found ways to support each other and work strategically. The pandemic has forced organizations to find new ways to communicate and collaborate, forging connections that may otherwise not have occurred.

### **3.5 Resilience: Innovative Responses and Positive Outcomes Impacts**

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic non-profit organizations have been on the front lines meeting the changing and complex needs of the people they serve. The crisis has illustrated the adaptive capacity of the non-profit sector and its ability to quickly shift approaches and adapt.

The non-profit sector is and was the first line of response during the pandemic, and played a vital role mobilizing volunteers and adapting services to meet clients' needs. Governments have relied on the knowledge and expertise of the non-profit sector, and organizations' flexibility to work outside their core mandate. The pandemic has also demonstrated the dedication that many non-profit staff bring to their work and their organization, even if the level of adaptability shown is not sustainable over the longer term.

The pandemic response has brought some organizations together, and new lines of communication have been established. Data sharing and sharing of best practices are both positive outcomes that have come out of the events of the last few months. Several organizations have started collaborating in new ways, sharing local-level solutions and collectively coordinating service delivery.

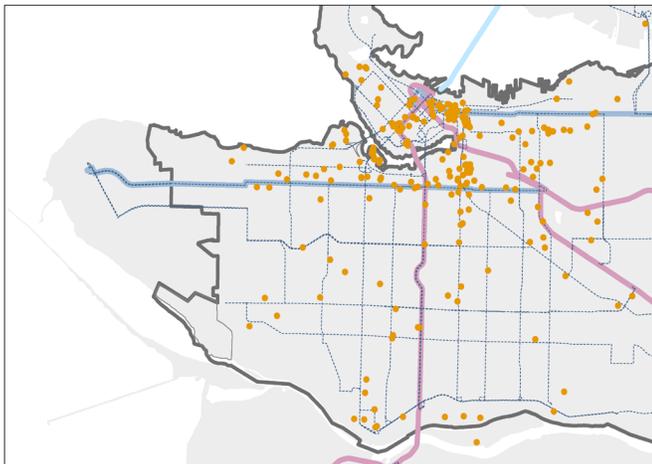
## **4. Sector Specific Analysis**

This following section summarizes the impact of COVID-19 on specific portions of Vancouver's non-profit sector, compiling information from surveys, reports and key informant interviews. Each section provides an overview of the sector across Vancouver; a brief description of its role and contribution; an outline of key issues, needs and barriers; and innovative and resilient responses that show promise moving forward.

This brief summarizes the impact of COVID-19 on Vancouver’s Arts and Culture non-profit sector. It is a compilation of key excerpts from several surveys, reports and key informant interviews. Highlights have been thematically arranged to provide: an overview of the sector across Vancouver; a brief description of the role and contribution of sports and recreation non-profits; an outline of key issues, needs and barriers; and innovative and resilient responses adopted by the sector that show promise moving forward.

## The Arts and Culture Non-Profit Sector in Vancouver: Overview

Arts and Culture Non-Profit Organizations  
Unceded territories of the x̱məlx̱əyám (Musqueam), Sḵwəw̱7mesh (Squamish), and səllwətəl (Tsleil-Waututh) nations



Locations of 394 Arts and Culture organizations in Vancouver  
Data Source: BC211 service directory list accessed April 2020 and ACCS community non-profit partners inventory. Note that locations may reflect an organization’s office location rather than where programs and services occur.

- The characteristics of the arts and culture sector vary but can be broadly categorized by discipline: performing arts (e.g., theatre, music, dance) or studio-arts (e.g. visual and media arts, literary). Groups often form as producers (developing their own material), or presenters (showing work that is developed by others, such as a festival or a series of performances), or service organizations (supporting artists and groups with information, professional development, advocacy efforts, promotion, shared access to equipment or space), or facility operators or cultural facilities (providing artists and groups with access to space such as studio, rehearsal, gallery, theatre, storage, office, multi-purpose etc.).
- Vancouver is home to world-renowned artists and a thriving artist-run centre scene, an epicenter of Indigenous cultural resurgence, as well as Black, Chinese, and South Asian cultural redress. It is known for a distinct community-engaged arts practice, a booming independent music

scene, home to hundreds of annual cultural celebrations and major festivals, well-loved theatres, and well established dance, heritage, and music institutions.

- The city has a dynamic cultural ecosystem including creators, artists, and cultural practitioners who move between disciplines (visual arts, media, theatre, dance, music, writing, storytelling, community arts, Indigenous arts and more) working with commercial and non-commercial organizations of varying mandates and scales.
- A strong cultural infrastructure consists of artist live/work studios, artist run centres, galleries, studios and theatres, multi-purpose space in community centres, shared production and administrative hubs, non-profit video and film spaces, outdoor space, large scale shared studio spaces, informal and DIY music and performance spaces, small and large theatres (including four city-owned and operated Civic Theatres), small and large museums, and major art galleries.
- British Columbia has the highest proportion of artists in Canada, and Vancouver specifically has the highest concentration of artists per-capita among major cities in Canada. An estimated 8,800 professional artists live in the city.

## Contribution of Arts and Culture Non-Profit organizations in Vancouver

- This cultural vitality is critical to the City’s identity, liveability, economic prosperity, social cohesion, and sense of environmental responsibility.
- Vancouver’s cultural diversity and cultural equity are correlated with higher rates of the kinds of openness, risk-taking, and unconventional thinking that drive innovation and respect rich cultural traditional knowledge.
- Culture is the force that cultivates Vancouver’s rich and distinctive sense of place, creating a sense of belonging and acting as an antidote to the homogenizing and polarizing effects of globalization.

- Cultural non-profit organizations promote cultural traditions through music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture, literature, and media. These are creative expressions that not only enrich people's lives but also shape the cultural identity and spirit of a place generating communal meaning.
- Between 2010 and 2019, the City's Cultural Infrastructure Grants have contributed over \$11 million in capital grants to 135 local arts and culture non-profit groups. This funding has supported over 279 projects, allowing them to plan, buy, build, or renovate both City-owned and community spaces. At the same time, City funding has allowed these organizations to leverage over \$66M in additional investment through co-developments, fundraising, Federal grants, and owner-financed or conventional loans. Approximately 30 projects are supported each year up to a maximum grant of \$250K per organization.
- In 2019, for every \$1 the City invested in core funding to arts and cultural groups another \$14.17 was raised through other revenue sources.
- This investment includes operating support, theatre rental and cultural infrastructure which amounts to \$9.9M which levers \$76.5M in earned revenue, \$34.9M in private sector revenue, \$17.6M in federal funding, \$14.6M in provincial funding, \$1.4M in net investment income, and \$358K in other grants and in-kind support.
- In 2018, the City's investment in core cultural activity generated over 31,000 public performances and activities attracting over 7.8 million attendees and offering approximately 20,000 artist opportunities and 22,000 volunteer opportunities.
- Research conducted by Hill Strategies on culture's economic impact in Canada and BC reveals that cultural economic production outperforms many traditional industries. They contribute 2.7% to the GDP (\$7.9B), outperforming agriculture, fishing and forestry (\$5.8B) and utilities (\$6.3B), and create 4% employment.
- The direct economic impact of the music industry alone is \$690M, creating 7,945 music jobs and 6,595 indirect jobs. Commercial and non-commercial arts and culture organizations both contribute to direct economic impact, and generate substantial jobs. The health of the commercial sector is inextricably linked with the strength and vitality of the broader cultural ecosystem of arts and culture non-profit organizations, DIY collectives, non-professional community arts groups, and individual practitioners.

### **Impacts of Covid-19 on Arts and Culture Non-Profit Organizations in Vancouver**

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has had a profound effect on Vancouver's cultural organizations and individuals working in the arts and culture sector. The pandemic has further

amplified existing challenges faced by the sector, many of which are linked to scarcity of funding and inequitable funding levels, precarious affordable and secure space, lack of secure employment and low income levels, and artists and cultural workers, who through systemic marginalization, are more vulnerable due to the pandemic. The City has recognized that its operations and legislation has excluded or ignored groups and communities who are historically underrepresented. It is increasingly acknowledged locally and globally that systemic racism and its contributing factors have compounding effects and during emergencies, these groups are disproportionately impacted.

- The occurrence of the pandemic disrupted the implementation of Culture|Shift priorities, namely the redistribution of grant funds to achieve more equity in grants investments. In order to avoid further negative impact to a sector already in crisis, recommended community-informed 2020 grant decreases were deferred which resulted in less of an increase in investment in equity-seeking cultural groups in 2020.
- Despite more equity-seeking organizations being supported through core funding in 2019 and 2020, and an increase in investment in equity-seeking groups in those same years, the number of groups is disproportionate to the level of investment: Equity-seeking organizations make up 44% of the number of core groups funded and receive 32% of the funding. Mainstream organizations make up 56% of the number of groups and receive 68% of the funding (with the majority of funding being invested in 5 large institutions).
- Further delays occurred when grants to support hundreds of diverse community-based celebrations and projects (including events such as National Indigenous People's day that moved to an online format for June 21st) were delayed while the City was reviewing the significant impacts on its own budget. Some of the city's most diverse artists and community groups that this program provides ongoing funding to welcomed the approval of these grants on July 21st.
- There is already a lack of affordable space for Vancouver's artists and cultural non-profits, which in some cases can lead to the displacement of cultural workers outside the City. With the closures of facilities and limited numbers of gatherings, facility-based organizations are disproportionately impacted by the loss of income from ticket sales and rentals (45%), compared to organizations without a facility (24%). They report more than twice the average loss in total (\$232K/org), compared to organizations without a facility (\$113K/org) and extended closures and capacity restrictions will disproportionately affect arts and culture facilities in Vancouver and across BC.
- The median income of an artist in Vancouver is \$22,116, below the national poverty line and 44% lower than all Vancouver workers at \$41,900. Local COVID impact data

reports that 43% of artists are concerned they will lose more than 75% of their projected income in 2020.

- Theatre, Music, and Festival groups report higher percentage of losses from ticket sales and reopening delays or restrictions on sales capacities and will disproportionately impact the sustainability of these organizations.

### ***Operational Challenges: Shifts in the sector and the effects on impacted communities***

- Despite the closures, many groups remained active and moved programs online. Earlier in the pandemic, 109 Vancouver-based arts and cultural nonprofits reported that 70% planned to remain open but with modified operations and 22% reported being closed. 1 in 5 (20%) groups reported changing in-person events to virtual events using video conferencing software (Vantage Point Survey conducted April 8 - 21, 2020).
- Most organizations and artists have since moved programming and services online but have reported increased competition for audiences with the vast increase in digital offerings coupled with online access to global content. They have also noted diminishing quality of the work as it was not developed with such a format in mind and they cannot generate as much revenue online compared to a live performance presented in a professional venue.
- Despite rehearsal venues being closed, artists have continued to train in order to maintain their practice (dancers in particular) through access to online workshops and programs from home. While not ideal, this has enabled them to train with people they might not have had access to in person locally.
- Some artists who rely on contract work, have timed the work they take on carefully allowing for two weeks in between to ensure they are not manifesting symptoms and are healthy before they enter into a new environment.
- Organizations operating facilities are disproportionately impacted by the extended closures and capacity restrictions put in place due to public health measures. Restricted revenue opportunities will continue to impact these organizations' ability to stay open as cultural organizations face extended facility closures or limited capacity due to physical distancing. Only 13% of organizations that operate a facility expect to be able to sustain a maintenance level of operation for more than 9 months, compared to 38% of organizations without a facility (GVPTA).
- Notably, the sustainability of Live Performing Arts organizations (which include theatre, music, dance and festival groups) is particularly threatened due to reopening delays, losses from ticket sales, increased expenses and the impact of physical distancing measures. The uncertainty

around the willingness of audiences to return to theatres and venues to experience live performing arts is also key factor in the sustainability of the sector.

- Individual artists primarily working in Live Performing Arts report that the precarity of contract work and lack of sick leave or health benefits has left them vulnerable, with some seeking training in fields outside of the arts and culture sector to ensure permanent, secure employment. There is concern that earning a livelihood as an artist is not feasible anymore for the long term. Adopting their craft to a digital format is counter to their identity as a live performance artist, and/or the quality of accessible digital platforms is not adequate to effectively share their work with an audience, resulting in diminished quality of the audience experience.
- Arts and Recreation based charities are more likely than other sub-sectors to report decreased demand, organizational capacity and revenues, leading to greater layoffs and work reductions. One study also argues that these charities are specifically having difficulty transitioning their programs online and developing new programs in the wake of the pandemic. In response many charitable organizations are choosing to cease or suspend operations, (Imagine Canada study on the impacts of COVID-19 on charities, Survey conducted between April 15-28, 2020).

### ***Financial Pressures***

- Vancouver's Arts and Cultural organizations are more likely than other types of organizations to depend on earned revenue. They are also experiencing greater financial vulnerability, with 86% of Arts and Cultural nonprofits reporting reduced revenue since the start of the pandemic (Vantage Point).
- BC Arts and Cultural non-profits anticipate financial losses over \$90M. The biggest impacts overall are lost revenue from ticket sales (\$26.5M); and pre-paid, committed expenses and COVID-19 costs (\$21.7M). Theatre, music and festival groups report a higher percentage of losses from ticket sales and closures (GVPTA).
- The Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) COVID-19 Economic Update indicates the extent of the revenue impact in the first quarter due to widespread closures and product cessation:

#### **Creative Sector**

- o Information and Cultural Industries revenues -22%
- o Performing Arts and Spectator Sports revenues - 42%

#### **Tourism and Retail sector**

- o Arts and Entertainment and Recreation revenues - 42%, greater than the retail sector (-33%) and comparable to Accommodation and Food services (-46%)

- Individual artists report more than \$7M in confirmed or

projected lost income - 69% of which was from artistic work (GVPTA).

- Less than half of Vancouver artists and arts organizations had applied or intended to apply for Federal emergency aid measures. 40% of respondents reported applying to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) which may cover up to 75% of employee wages, and only 12% planned to access Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) interest free loans of up to \$40K. Of those organizations who did not apply to CEWS, 41% responded their organization is ineligible because it will not have a decrease in revenues that meets the requirements. Of those who did not apply for CEBA, 24% responded their organization is not eligible because, for example, their total payroll was less than \$50,000 in 2019 (Canada Council for the Arts).
- Individual artists report ineligibility for CERB due to just exceeding the \$1,000 monthly income threshold, but due to drastic cuts in performance and teaching contracts, they are facing difficulty in closing the gap to earn a livable monthly income.

### **Workforce and Human Resources**

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the mental health of BC artists and arts workers. 96% of respondents reported higher stress and anxiety in their organization, with 86% saying it was having a negative impact on their wellbeing. Only 64% of respondents reported they were somewhat or very positive they had the tools to support their team or their own mental wellbeing (GVPTA).

- And as reported before, artists lost a significant amount of work: \$7M in confirmed or projected losses.
- Vancouver's arts and culture sector expects to be most heavily impacted by lay-offs. Respondents estimated a 27% reduction in full time staff employed between March 1 and June 1, 2020 (Vantage Point survey conducted prior to the implementation of CEWS). In early conversations with organizations that had to quickly lay off their staff to sustain operations, some fear they will lose these employees permanently due to the necessity to find other employment.
- The arts and culture sector, like many nonprofits, relies heavily on volunteers who may not feel safe to return to their positions and where many are retired and in an age bracket that many leave them more vulnerable.
- Many groups cannot afford full-time staff so hire contract workers which made them ineligible to collect the CEWS.
- Arts and Culture, Environmental and Religious and faith-based organizations were the least optimistic when asked about their organization's ability to recover from COVID-19 (Vantage Point).
- High poverty rates among most visible minority groups

prior the COVID-19 pandemic make them vulnerable to the financial impact of work disruptions. Among the crowdsourcing participants who were employed prior to work stoppages, Whites and most visible minority groups reported similar rates of job loss or reduced work hours, although the rate was higher among Filipinos and West Asians. However, the COVID-19 pandemic generally had a stronger impact on visible minority participants' ability to meet financial obligations or essential needs than for White participants, even after taking into account group differences in job loss, immigration status, pre-COVID employment status, education, and other demographic characteristics

### **High Level Supports Needed**

Cultural non-profits identified the following areas of support for recovery:

Financial Support:

- Sector specific assistance tailored to address the challenges faced by the arts sector over the long-term.
- Expanding the eligibility of the current emergency aid measures to include artists and cultural workers.
- Flexibility in funding including relaxing deadlines for grants and supporting a shift towards digital engagement.
- Directed funding to equity-seeking organizations to address pre-existing gaps that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Information:

- Access to mental health and wellbeing resources for artists and cultural workers.

Expertise:

- Expert advice on applying for government and other emergency programs, support fundraising and grant writing, as well as professional development and guidance oriented to post-pandemic recovery.
- Supporting conversations about re-envisioning what's possible at the organization and sector level, creating opportunities for creative discussion and collaboration about how to serve an organization's mission differently as physical distancing requirements change.
- Supporting conversations that address anti-oppression and decolonization at an organizational level to inform both recovery and rebuilding.

Other areas of support identified through key sectoral interviews:

- Extended public hours so they can allow for more attendees over long periods of time and conditions for safe physical distancing.

- Access to safe space for rehearsal and practice and presentation.
- Continuation of subsidies such as CERB.
- Build audience confidence to experience live performance again.
- Assistance with technology for higher production values.
- Momentum and hope for artists.
- Maintaining presence in community and ongoing promotion outside of the events they are no longer able to have.
- Timed and ticketing software.

### ***The City's role and requested support for the sector***

The following areas of support were identified through key informant interviews and other analysis:

- Highlighting how integral artists are to the economy and prioritize the need for guaranteed income and living wages.
- Increase financial resources to the sector to double the impact.
- Provide tools, resources, training for mainstream organizations to become more inclusive.
- Modernize funding policies to allow funding for artists to subsist (rather than only for creating new work) similar to funding that enables organizations to subsist (core funding).
- Stronger civic advocacy for the sector as a whole and awareness of the critical role arts and cultural groups play in the health and well-being of a city.
- Relaxation in sign bylaws to allow for groups to have digital advertising to generate additional revenue.

In addition to what we heard in the sector, there are key areas where the City can play a stronger role.

- Recognize that it was slow to respond to the arts and culture sector and focus on making structural changes internally for better response on an ongoing basis such as creating efficiencies in the concurrence and authority structure of routine grant approval and disbursement processes.
- Advance goals of Culture|Shift through the NPO and SE Recovery Program framework (Cultural Equity and Accessibility, Reconciliation and Decolonization, Artists at the Centre of City Building) to expedite the delays

in increasing investment in equity-seeking artists and groups.

- Build on and invest in sectoral systems change and initiatives for a more resilient sector (networks, information exchange, funds for BIPOC artists).
- Address pre-existing systemic issues including under-employment of people of colour, low income and lack of secure employment, toxic and unhealthy workplace environments.

### ***Resiliency in the Arts and Cultural Sector: Innovative responses to the crisis and positive outcomes***

- Despite these significant challenges the sector has shown the ability to adapt and meet the needs of community members.
- Performing arts groups were quick to continue to share content with the public through live streaming or pre-recorded concerts and productions.
- Some groups who were closed took the time to address inherent organizational development fractures through dedicated planning.
- More established artists and arts organizations shared their technology platforms (websites, equipment, production support), and reputation and marketing reach to promote the work of other artists.
- The GVPTA developed the BC Patron Insights Program which is a data strategy to better understand arts and culture patron sentiment in order to assist recovery efforts. Using an individualized survey and a series of core questions this tool provides survey management resources to non-profits and charities in BC with an arts culture or heritage mandate. For more information: [https://www.gvpta.ca/patron\\_insights](https://www.gvpta.ca/patron_insights)
- The Artist-run centre sector is leading a crowd-fundraising initiative (with a goal of \$500K) and structure to create a fund for BIPOC artists with support from nonprofit organizations, public sector funders, and corporate partners. (current goals is \$500K).
- Networks have strengthened and new ones have formed to support each other with discussion groups, information sharing, leveraging critical relationships to access key information, and other critical resources. Groups who normally operate in a climate of scarcity have been generous to share their resources
- The Vancouver Opera turned their costume shop into a mask-making endeavour early on when supplies were not as available.

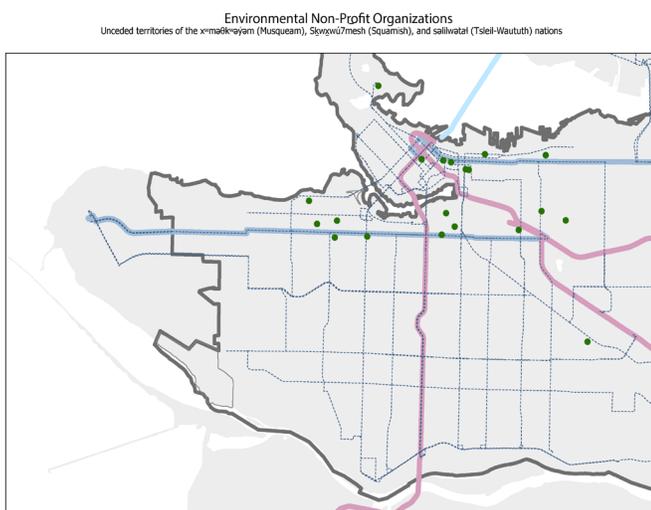
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This brief summarizes the impact of COVID-19 on Vancouver’s environmental non-profit sector. It is a compilation of key excerpts from several surveys, reports and key informant interviews. Highlights have been thematically arranged to provide: an overview of the sector across Vancouver; a brief description of the role and contribution of sports and recreation non-profits; an outline of key issues, needs and barriers; and innovative and resilient responses adopted by the sector that show promise moving forward.

## The Environmental Non-Profit Sector in Vancouver: Overview



Locations of 38 Environmental organizations in Vancouver  
Data Source: BC211 service directory list accessed April 2020 and ACCS community non-profit partners inventory.  
Note that locations may reflect an organization’s office location rather than where programs and services occur

- Multiple studies have highlighted a growing annual investment in environmental charities given increased awareness about climate change and environmental issues over the last few years.
  - Following the International Classification of Non Profit Organizations (ICNPO), Vancouver has five types of environmental organizations:
    - Pollution abatement and control. Organizations that promote clean air, clean water, reducing and preventing noise pollution, radiation control, treatment of hazardous wastes and toxic substances, solid waste management and recycling programs.
    - Natural resources conservation and protection. Conservation and preservation of natural resources, including land, water, energy and plant resources for the general use and enjoyment of the public.
    - Environmental beautification and open spaces. Botanical gardens, arboreta, horticultural programs and landscape services; organizations promoting anti-litter campaigns; programs to preserve the parks, green spaces and open spaces in urban or rural areas; and city and highway beautification programs.
    - Animal protection and welfare. Animal protection and welfare services; includes animal shelters and humane societies.
    - Wildlife preservation and protection; includes sanctuaries and refuges. Veterinary services. Animal hospitals and services providing care to farm and household animals and pets.
- ### Contribution of Environmental Non-Profit organizations in Vancouver
- Environmental organizations are active in international issues supporting efforts such as treaty negotiations and wildlife protection programs. These organizations also contribute to the process of innovating policy alternatives, bringing expertise in policy development and economic

analysis of environmental costs and benefits.

- A number of organizations either formally or informally promote environmental education and sustainable development:
  - Environmental education aims to increase peoples' knowledge and awareness about the environment; develop the necessary skills and expertise to address environmental issues; and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action.
  - Teaching sustainable development focuses on empowering people to change the way they think and work towards a sustainable future, while empowering people to change the way they think and work towards a sustainable future considering the environmental, social and cultural implications of our actions. (UNESCO, 2020)
- Through the Greenest City Grants, the City of Vancouver awards a maximum of \$250,000 annually towards non-profit organizations or registered charities to work towards establishing, testing or building on ideas and actions that support the Greenest City targets. Between 2012 and 2018, the City has dedicated approximately \$2.75 million to over 1,000 projects including 885 Greenest City Neighbourhood Small Grants (in partnership with the Vancouver Foundation) and 119 Greenest City Grants

### **Impacts of Covid-19 on Environmental Non-Profit Organizations in Vancouver**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created greater operational, financial and workforce challenges for the sector and the individuals who use and support environmental programs and services

#### ***Operational Challenges: Shifts in the sector and the effects on impacted communities***

- Moving online: Several organizations identified that they had to cancel programs or move them online. Reasons for this move include concern for the safety of staff and clients. Virtual platforms are not always suitable for the needs of clients, but are necessary given the staff and tools available. For organizations normally focused on providing hands on activities (environmental education, habitat restoration, hands on cycling education, waste reduction and repair services), making the switch to providing services online is not simple – nor is it always as an effective experience for participants. It may take several iterations to get it “right” and/ or new models of operation may need to be considered.
- Coordinating with online learning: Several environmental groups work with schools to hold in-classroom events or educational performances. These have been difficult to move to a virtual setting, and organizations have been forced to coordinate with teachers as they shifted to

online learning.

#### ***Financial Pressures***

- Funding concerns: Several organizations noted that funding is the number one concern in the sector, they noted that there is real concern that many organizations may close and not reopen. Organizations constantly reiterate that they need funding to help them grow their operations, as opposed to funding tied to a specific program or service.
- Cancelling grants and other programs: Several organizations mentioned that they were forced to cancel grant programs, with their focus shifting to their own financial survival.
- Concern with shift towards frontline funding: Several organizations noted concern that they may lose long-term funding if funders decide to focus on emergency grant streams instead of funding environmental engagement efforts. These granters have not yet made their decision, so it is yet to be seen whether funding will continue as expected.

#### ***Workforce and Human Resources***

- Concern for safety: Several organizations mentioned their concern for the safety of staff and volunteers. This has meant either cancelling in-person events or limiting the number of volunteers they employ.
- Loss of volunteers: Several organizations noted that volunteers have left and may not be able to return or may choose not to return.

#### ***High Level Supports Needed***

- Core operating funding free from onerous requirements.
- Additional staff in specific roles that have seen increased need post-COVID. Roles include support with online sales and skilled volunteer coordination.
- Flexible funding that leads to greater resiliency; specifically allowing grantees to put funds towards operating costs.
- Grants to support growing operations, rather than grants for new programs or innovations.

#### ***The City's role and requested support for the sector***

The City's support was requested in the following areas

- Advocate for a federal wage subsidy that doesn't exclude charities based on their funding models.
- Ask the BC government to hold steady or increase support given to non-profits through BC gaming grants. Either

offer a grant to non-profits directly, provide wage subsidy programs, or support with fundraising.

- Provide access City-owned buildings, which could be shared with like-minded organizations, that would inherently allow for increased innovation through cross sector pollination, and possibly relieve financial pressures on organizations.
- Core operating grants
- Centrally locate a food hamper project that other agencies could feed into, in order to scale up service reach in appropriate places of need.

### ***Resiliency in the Environmental Sector: Innovative responses to the crisis and positive outcomes***

Despite these challenges, the sector has found ways to innovate through the crisis. .

- Organizations have been forced to adapt and shift to online systems, this has encouraged these organizations to be innovative in how they deliver programs. More demand for online programming in schools will help these programs expand provincially.
- While the onset of the pandemic has starkly impacted financial and operational capacity, it has also pushed organizations to delve into internal efforts that are finally moving beyond conversations in order to activate organizational transformations.
- Some organizations noted strengthened partnerships with municipal funders.
- One agency developed and delivered a new “Home Edition” format of their program, achieving a similar collective experience as in-school programs, despite kids participating individually from home. The program has positive results for both children and their families.
- One organization noted an increase in demand for their Bike Friendly Business services, advising developers and municipalities about creating exemplary cycling facilities.
- Through the pandemic organizations noted better knowledge and relationships with local small business neighbours.
- A few organizations took the opportunity to acquire additional transportation, noting it was a good time to expand given the increased need for food and food distribution.

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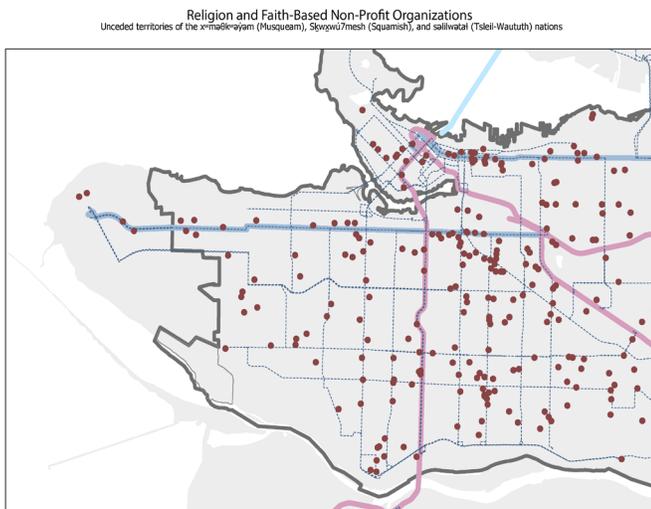
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# RELIGION AND FAITH BASED NON-PROFITS

JULY 2020

This brief summarizes the impact of COVID-19 on Vancouver's religious and faith-based non-profit sector. It is a compilation of key excerpts from several surveys, reports and key informant interviews. Highlights have been thematically arranged to provide: an overview of the sector across Vancouver; a brief description of the role and contribution of sports and recreation non-profits; an outline of key issues, needs and barriers; and innovative and resilient responses adopted by the sector that show promise moving forward.

## The Religion and Faith-Based Non-Profit Sector in Vancouver: Overview



Locations of 358 Religious or Faith-Based organizations in Vancouver Data Source: BC211 service directory list accessed April 2020 and ACCS community non-profit partners inventory. Note that locations may reflect an organization's office location rather than where programs and services occur.

- Religion and Faith-based organizations help people to explore and cultivate deeply held beliefs; to participate in rituals of meaning; to find comfort in times of pain and sorrow; and to foster relationship in community.
- Often at the heart of their communities, Religion and Faith-based organizations act as a point of initial contact for people new to a neighbourhood or community. They tend to serve the general public regardless of faith and they are less likely than other non-profits and voluntary organizations to have membership restrictions.
- Communities of faith, faith-based organizations and places of worship also offer community serving spaces which are an integral part of achieving healthy and complete communities.
- A Canada-wide study of religious non-profits in 2005 identified that religious-based charities are generally well established, over 51% of organizations had been in existence for over 40 years and approximately 94% had registered charitable status.
- Religious organizations receive more donations than any other type of organization because they have both a broad base of support and their supporters make large average donations. Rideau Hall Foundation and Imagine Canada estimate that over 40% of all donations go towards religious organizations.
- The key strengths of Religion and Faith-based organizations include their local community focus and the contributions drawn from dedicated donors, volunteers, and staff. Some of the challenges identified in the sector include a reliance on individual donations as a single source of revenue and the need to engage a broader cross-section of the population for donations and volunteer support.
- The needs, characteristics and social impact of Religion and Faith-based organizations vary according to the degree that faith and religion are integrated in an organization's structure and programming. This variation can be seen through each organization's: mission statement, founders, affiliations, selection of controlling board, senior management, staff/volunteers, source of financial/nonfinancial support, and religious practices of personnel. Community interventions coming out of Religion and Faith-based groups can be understood on a spectrum shifting from faith-permeated, to faith-centered, faith-affiliated, faith-background, faith-secular partnerships, to secular efforts on the other side (See Sider and Unruh 2004).

## Contribution of Religion and Faith-based Non-Profit organizations in Vancouver

- Religious charities and faith-based organizations foster vibrant social networks, spark local volunteerism, and foster community resiliency.

- Places of worship provide a place for gathering, particularly for their members. In addition, these spaces also provide affordable, accessible, and inclusive services and programs that meet community need through the delivery of social, cultural, and recreational initiatives. Community-based initiatives implemented by religion and faith-based non-profits are adaptive to changing communities. These non-profits provide benefit to individuals, particularly equity-seeking groups and people from diverse populations.
- A recent mapping of community serving spaces identified 266 places of worship in the city of Vancouver. This important social infrastructure has a long history of offering space and services to city resident by providing spaces for childcare, food programs, recreational and cultural programs, and meeting spaces for informal groups.
- Religion and Faith-based non-profits mobilize a large number of volunteers. Statistics Canada reports that formal volunteers dedicate on average 109 hours to Religion and Faith-based organizations, making them the second largest sector after hospitals, with the highest average of volunteer hours dedicated to a specific organization type.
- Research shows that the impact of religious-motivated action has significant benefit for communities. This is reflected in refugee sponsorship efforts, projects focused on the alleviation of poverty, care for individuals experiencing homelessness, and the provision of health care (such as long-term care for seniors and palliative care). As a sector, Religion and Faith-Based organizations are less likely than other non-profits to require membership to access their services with (69%) indicating that both members and non-members from communities directly benefit from their services (Brownlee et al, 2005).
- Statistics Canada also has shown that religiously affiliated people not only give generously to their religious congregations but are more prone to give to charities of any kind.
- Religious leaders, faith-based organizations, and communities of faith are among the most trusted sources of information, as well as both pastoral, health, and social care in local communities. They are key social assets and community mobilizers that contribute to healthy cities and communities.
- The World Health Organization highlighted that religious leaders of faith-based organizations and communities of faith play an important role in sharing health information to protect their own members and wider communities. This information may be more widely accepted when coming from these sources. These organizations can provide pastoral and spiritual support during public health emergencies and can advocate for the needs of vulnerable populations.
- A Canadian based study through the Halo project reported that every dollar a congregation or religious group spends can create up to \$4.77 worth of services a city does not have to provide. The Halo Project also has an online calculator that, estimates for Canadian cities the worth of common good services provided, using expenditure spending from data from the Canada Revenue Agency. The estimate of the value of services provided by congregations or religious groups in the city of Vancouver totals \$1.425 billion dollars in common good services

### **Impacts of Covid-19 on Religion and Faith based Non-Profit Organizations in Vancouver**

The Religion and Faith-based sector is facing significant operational challenges as a result of public health measures meant to stop the spread of COVID-19. Religious charities, faith-based organizations, and communities of faith are facing big shifts in the way they engage with individuals due to physical distancing and capacity restrictions, significant financial pressure from decreasing charitable donations and workforce and volunteer challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created greater operational, financial and workforce challenges for the sector and the individuals who use their religious and faith-based programs and services.

#### ***Operational Challenges: Shifts in the sector and the effects on impacted communities***

- Changing service levels: The Waybase study revealed that as of May 2020 11% of organizations maintained normal services, 69% of organizations reduced services, 9% had increased services, and 11% had temporarily closed. The Waybase study also showed that religious non-profits are nimble and are adapting operations to meet community need. 69% of faith-based organizations added or prioritized online services (notably, 81% of churches), 34% shifted to offer telephone services and 34% of organizations now offer new services to meet the practical needs caused by COVID-19.
- Technical challenges: Community input and the Waybase study both drew attention to the needs and technical operational challenges experienced by smaller organizations. These Religion and Faith-based non-profits are more likely to close or have reduced services than larger organizations and they indicate the need for technology upgrades in order to provide online services. In terms of specific responses and programs:
  - 86% of organizations are keeping the members of their communities connected;
  - 81% are encouraging their members to engage in social distancing;
  - 76% are providing pastoral/counseling support;
  - 62% are providing practical support to vulnerable members of the community;

- 43% are helping with distribution of food or supplies; and
- 23% are mobilizing volunteers to support healthcare or essential services.
- Food banks: Local Religion and Faith-based non-profits have reported that although children and youth programs have slowed down, food bank services have tripled. Organizations are keen to continue to have their offices open and continue to provide some visits and in-person programs following appropriate health and safety protocols.
- Virtual gatherings: Some organizations indicated that given the physical distancing restrictions and religious specific prohibitions, some faith-based gatherings, ceremonies and rituals can't take place virtually. This poses a significant challenge for ensuring meaningful community connection and spiritual practice. Additionally, certain populations may be experiencing higher levels of social isolation (seniors for example) and they may be unable to access these virtual gatherings or see other people due to their higher risk for COVID-19

### **Financial Pressures**

- Changing revenue levels: The Waybase study reported that faith-based organizations typically experience 2-5% changes in revenue on a month-month basis. However the pandemic has caused major decreases in revenue, closer to 10-50% for most organizations. Over half of respondents noted that the main cause of revenue losses was the inability to receive donations due to organizations not meeting physically, with 52% of respondents also noting that their donors had lost personal income, or even their jobs.
- Long-term concerns: Community input emphasized that should strict protocols return in the fall, the majority of religious and faith-based organizations will face very difficult financial situations with the consequences of a second shut down unknown. Organizations are being asked to provide increased services, with less staff and decreased revenue.

### **Workforce and Human Resources**

- Employment: The Waybase study found that 26% of BC Christian charities laid off staff. Most organizations have found increased demand for services and increased time required, effectively meaning that remaining staff have to deliver the same amount of programs with fewer resources.
- Changes in staff activities: The Waybase survey reports that the pandemic has shifted how staff spend their time, with a significant proportion of organizations reporting spending more time preparing for worship services (52%) (presumably to accommodate COVID-19/new technology requirements), meeting the needs of the people in their

ministry (47%), and dealing with staffing issues (44%).

- Growth in activities: Although some local Religion and Faith-based non-profits have reported staff layoffs, services and offerings carried out on volunteer basis continue with greater uptake. Some organizations are seeing a growth in activities as people in the community have reached out, wanting to connect on a spiritual level as a result of the pandemic.

### **High-level supports needed**

The following high-level supports have been identified by environmental non-profit operators through interviews and reviews of the existing research:

- Core operating funding free from onerous requirements.
- Additional staff in specific roles that have seen increased need post-COVID. Roles include support with online sales and skilled volunteer coordination.
- Flexible funding that leads to greater resiliency; specifically allowing grantees to put funds towards operating costs.
- Grants to support growing operations, rather than grants for new programs or innovations.

### **The City's role and requested support for the sector**

The City's support was requested in the following areas

- Regular check-ins with city staff or elected officials to help build relationships, especially with smaller religious communities in the city but also with other levels of government.
- Help to make technology and tech upgrades accessible for religious and faith-based organizations.
- Advocate with the Federal government to make changes to CRA regulations governing the charitable sector to remove barriers to fundraising and charitable tax receipts.
- Raise the profile of the non-profit sector, including the needs and contributions of all non-profits including religion and faith-based organizations in the wider community.
- Allowing religious groups to book space or advertise programs in City-owned community centres.
- Highlighting local charities and non-profits and provide incentives to encourage donations and support to local organizations

### **Resiliency in the religious and faith-based Sector: Innovative responses to the crisis and positive outcomes**

Despite these significant challenges the sector has shown the ability to adapt and meet the needs of community members. The following areas of resilience and strength were identified through conversations with Religion and Faith based non-profits:

- Greater collaboration, more information sharing and partnerships and potential for new and innovative programming.
- Increased engagement of members of the wider community with religious and faith-based non-profits out of an interest to connect with community on a spiritual level and support those affected by the pandemic.
- Weekly food delivery programming has been a positive experience for some organizations that plan to continue with similar program post-pandemic.

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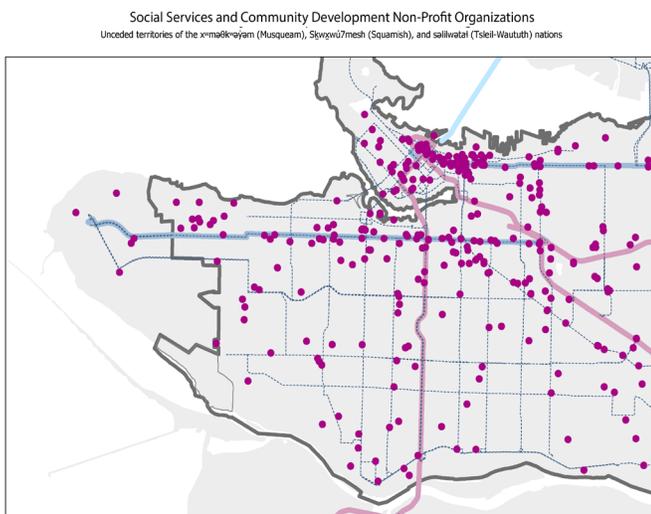
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This brief summarizes the impact of COVID-19 on Vancouver’s Social Services and Community Development non-profit sector. It is a compilation of key excerpts from several surveys, reports and key informant interviews. Highlights have been thematically arranged to provide: an overview of the sector across Vancouver; a brief description of the role and contribution of sports and recreation non-profits; an outline of key issues, needs and barriers; and innovative and resilient responses adopted by the sector that show promise moving forward.

## The Social Services and Community Development Non-Profit Sector in Vancouver: Overview



Locations of 326 Social Service and 86 Community Development organizations in Vancouver Data Source: BC211 service directory list accessed April 2020 and ACCS community non-profit partners inventory. Note that locations may reflect an organization’s office location rather than where programs and services occur.

- Vancouver has a large social service sector. Thousands of Vancouverites, particularly members of groups experiencing marginalization, rely on the programs and services provided by the city’s network of non-profit organizations to access basic needs, receive support, build skills and connect and engage with the community
- Social services are generally organized around the populations they serve and the conditions of vulnerability that they are trying to address. As such, social service non-profits include agencies which offer a wide range of supports, including childcare, newcomer settlement services, senior support groups, women, Indigenous people and persons with disabilities serving groups and community-based food programs among many others.
- In British Columbia, the larger non-profit agencies are primarily responsible for delivering social services under service agreements with provincial ministries and authorities. Local governments and the private sector also provide project funding to community-based organizations to support the delivery of additional social programs. The City of Vancouver provides approximately \$10M in grants annually which are primarily designed to support programs whose focus is reducing conditions that create vulnerability for residents.
- A recent inventory of non-profit organizations in the city mapped over 1,600 non-profits and charities in Vancouver. Following the International Classification of Non Profit Organizations (ICNPO) there are approximately 326 social service agencies in the city and 86 community development agencies that provide social services in Vancouver and for the purposes of this report, we will consider the two as one sector.

## Contribution of Social Services and Community Development Non-Profit organizations in Vancouver

- Community social services have played a key role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting thousands of residents. Interventions and programs run by social services have contributed to meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable - from addressing threats to food security and fears of increased domestic violence, to continuing to provide a social safety net to Vancouver residents amidst increased stress, mental health strain, isolation, and overall service demand.
- Social services account for a large percentage of employment within the non-profit sector. According to a Step Up BC study in 2014, social services account for 29% of employment within the sector across the province, followed by religious (18%) and arts and culture (15%) organizations. The study reported an estimated 1,570 social service organizations in BC with approximately 24,000 people working in social services in the Province.
- The City of Vancouver currently funds over 250 programs through Social Policy Grants, providing approximately \$10 million annually. Activities supported by the grants

include (but are not limited to):

- Supporting City of Reconciliation objectives, including access to culture, healing and wellness;
  - Reducing poverty;
  - Actions to address systemic inequity;
  - Reducing social isolation and increasing safety;
  - The provision of high quality, licensed childcare and supports to families;
  - Homelessness prevention initiatives; and,
  - Building sustainable food systems.
- In a national review of social service non-profits, key strengths of the sector identified included their local community focus, their attention to specific populations, and the dedication of their staff and volunteers. Furthermore, more likely than other types of organizations, social service non-profits serve children and young people; parents and families; and people facing multiple barriers.

### **Impacts of Covid-19 on Social Services and Community Development Non-Profit Organizations in Vancouver**

The Social Services and Community Development sector is facing significant operational challenges as a result of public health measures meant to stop the spread of COVID-19. Organizations are facing increased demand for service, the need for major program shifts and capacity restrictions, long term financial uncertainty and daunting workforce challenges. These pressures will have a compounding effect on issues that existed well before the pandemic including:

- Funding shortfalls and off-loading of services as a result of inadequate, unstable, short-term and patchwork funding practices by funders;
- Overreliance on program funding without stable and adequate resources to support core operations;
- Despite having a highly educated workforce, unstable working conditions due to high turnover rate generated by low wages and benefits and limited opportunities for career advancement;
- Staff recruitment and retention challenges amplified by limited opportunities for succession planning and leadership development as well as high levels of stress, burn out and strain on services; and,
- Increasingly complex service needs as people face multiple barriers worsened by increasing inequity and poverty levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created greater operational, financial and workforce challenges for social services and community development non-profits and the individuals who use their programs and services. Key informant interviews and surveys have identified the following specific impacts of the pandemic on the sector.

#### ***Operational Challenges: Shifts in the sector and the effects on impacted communities***

- Disruptions to services: 121 Vancouver-based social service non-profits participated in the Vantage Point Non-Profit Survey in April 2020. Findings highlighted that social services are most likely to report disruption in services (92%) and increased demand for services and supports from clients (75%). Increased demand has been reported by those organizations primarily serving families (72%) and people experiencing poverty (75%). Survey results indicate that 20% of social service organizations don't know how long they can keep operating.
- Move to online services: With regards to shifts to virtual programming, organizations serving women (92%) and people with disabilities (72%) are more likely to be impacted by the shift from in-person to online services. The digital divide between organizations and among program participants has had significant impacts on many organizations' ability to effectively deliver programs. Social service non-profits are building digital literacy and capacity not only for clients but also for staff providing programs and services.
- Shifting programming: Furthermore, organizations are reporting significant shifts in the types of programs/ services they must offer, as they pivot to meet demand for basic needs such as meals/groceries. This shift has created challenges for some organizations as they navigate the pressures of mandate drift.

#### ***Financial Pressures***

- Budget challenges and accessing reserves: 63% of social services in Vancouver indicated that, with increased demand for services, they will be facing budget challenges related to strains on the economy (Vantage Point, 2020). 20% of social service organizations had already accessed some of their operating reserve only a few weeks into the pandemic. Organizations serving people most impacted by the pandemic—including those living in poverty, Indigenous populations, and seniors—are the organizations most likely to have limited or no reserves to help cushion them (Vantage Point, 2020).
- Sustainability of long-term emergency funding: The sector has serious fears for the longer-term sustainability of organizations once emergency funding programs from the Provincial and Federal governments expire. The sector continues to lose multiple sources of revenue, including rental income, donations and proceeds from fundraising events such as galas, golf tournaments, etc.
- Increased expenses: Public health and safety measures aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19 have resulted in increased expenses for agencies to meet public health protocols, including increased costs for personnel, personal protective equipment, enhanced sanitation measures, etc.
- Challenges accessing the CEWS: The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) has been a valuable support for

the sector. However, some organizations report difficulty meeting eligibility requirements, given increases in emergency funding during early stages of pandemic to address the urgent need for COVID-19 related program changes.

### **Workforce and Human Resources**

- **Shifting to remote work:** The Vantage Point survey reported that respondents serving women (100%) and youth (84%) in particular are the most impacted by challenges related to staff and volunteers shifting to remote work (vs 68% for all organizations). Among subsectors, arts and culture organizations (79%), followed by social services (77%), are struggling the most with this challenge.
- **Staff retention:** Organizations shared concerns about staff and volunteer retention as people may not be coming back to the organizations following the initial round of lay-offs and program closures. There is pressure on organizations to do major re-structuring and human resource planning related to staffing and working from home, while at the same time meeting service goals and increased demands for service.
- **Staff mental health:** Community-based workers report high levels of anxiety, exhaustion and stress resulting from a sense of helplessness when faced with the scale of needs of vulnerable clients. Organizations lack the capacity to address and support the mental health needs of staff and volunteers.

### **High Level Supports Needed**

Sector informants identified several areas of support for recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Planning support, including consulting services, navigation of financial support programs offered by government and foundations, financial analysis and planning.
- Access to publicly-owned facilities such as schools and community centres to run programs. Agencies could collectively share the responsibility for developing, implementing and monitoring safety plans, purchase/sourcing of equipment and supplies, etc.
- Clear guidance about health and safety plans for re-opening social programs, engaging with volunteers, or supporting food and meal services
- Organizational capacity to support mental health of staff and volunteers that continue to support the community
- Operational funding to support collaborations and partnerships
- Training, expertise and supplies for safety protocols

### **The City's role and requested support for the sector**

- Stable (multi-year), core operational funding;
- Support and advocate for a shift away from project funding towards organizational funding, debunking the "overhead myth" for non-profit operations;
- Reduce reporting requirements and move towards trust-based funding;
- Facilitate access to City facilities to deliver community-based programs by non-profit partners.

### **Resiliency in the Social Services and Community Development Sector: Innovative responses to the crisis and positive outcomes**

Despite these significant challenges the sector has shown the ability to adapt and meet the needs of community members.

- The pandemic has raised the profile of social services and has increased appreciation for the role, value and contribution that the sector provides.
- Social services have been able to show adaptive capacity through their ability to pivot and support clients and participants with emerging needs such as food security, isolation and challenges with digital literacy.
- There has been a new sense of collaboration among agencies and a push towards community-led solutions.
- Vantage Point has been recognized by community agencies for their work on collecting and prioritizing resources and support non-profits with research, information sharing and webinars on re-opening the sector and understanding government funding and supports.
- "Safe Seniors, Strong Communities" is a partnership between the United Way's Better at Home Program, BC 211 and the BC Government Ministry of Health. The program matches seniors who need support with non-medical essentials to volunteers in local communities that are willing to help. In BC, more than 8,850 volunteers have donated their time to make almost 11,000 grocery deliveries to over 10,000 seniors since late March.

### **Specific Impacts on Social Services for Disproportionately Impacted Populations**

Many population groups served by Vancouver's community and social services sector have been and continue to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, and the organizations that serve them face unique recovery challenges. This section examines unique operational, financial and workforce impacts faced by these specific service providers, and explores how the City can support these organizations through the recovery process. Information in this section has largely been collected by focus groups between City staff and organizational contacts.

## IMPACT ON SEX WORK ORGANIZATIONS

OPERATIONAL	FINANCIAL	WORKFORCE
<p>Virtual/online outreach has been inaccessible to most clients due to a lack of technology and access to internet</p>	<p>Sex work/sex workers are not eligible for CERB or other pandemic-related emergency income support programs. Organization supporting sex workers were forced to address their clients' nearly complete loss of income.</p> <p>Sex work organizations may be even more likely than the sector as a whole to lack stable, core operating funding.</p> <p>Some funders (such as the Law Foundation) have postponed expected grants indefinitely.</p> <p>Sex work organizations have suffered as most funders have not taken the flexible or supportive approach the City's social grants programs adopted in releasing 2020 grant funds.</p>	<p>Grassroots peer groups that organized most quickly to respond to the pandemic are the least likely to be able to access any funding – grant processes are huge barriers for small organizations.</p>

### What the City can do

- Adapt application processes to include grassroots peer organizations.
- Advocate with other funders (including the Federal and Provincial governments) to take a more flexible and supportive approach to grant funds.
- Advocate strongly with the Federal and Provincial governments to provide core funding for organizations supporting sex workers.
- Advocate with Vancouver Coastal Health to establish better communication and support with organizations with whom it does not already have a relationship (e.g., through service contracts). This could extend to include provision of PPE as well as advice and support with safety plans.
- Increase financial support for the grassroots peer-led groups who reacted immediately and proactively in the earliest days of the pandemic. These groups have been consistently left out not only of funding but of consultation and planning processes aimed at supporting them and their peer workers.

## IMPACT ON IMMIGRANT SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

OPERATIONAL	FINANCIAL	WORKFORCE
<p>Digital and language literacy have had a compounding effect limiting access to online programs.</p> <p>Immigrant Serving Agencies have shifted programming to focus on basic needs, particularly food security.</p> <p>A multi-faceted approach is required to provide effective support for clients with multiple distinct needs.</p>	<p>Contract renewal and negotiations with Federal funders have been paused. This affects deliverables that are tied to Federal funding</p> <p>Immediate term emergency crisis response grants have been made available.</p>	<p>Lack of childcare is a significant barrier to accessing services and gaining employment for both participants and staff.</p> <p>Staff burnout has been a particular concern. Contributing factors include changing working conditions and ongoing uncertainty.</p>

### What the City can do

- Increase access to internet. Clients lack access to affordable internet services, which leaves them excluded from virtual programming.
- Private businesses are open, but public community centres are still closed. Open access to spaces where people can focus on wellness

## IMPACTS ON ORGANIZATIONS SERVING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

OPERATIONAL	FINANCIAL	WORKFORCE
<p>Many programs have shifted online, but technology limitations prevent people from accessing these programs.</p> <p>Some organizations have shifted to doing outreach and providing support virtually; much support has been triage to those in immediate need.</p> <p>Organizations have become primary sources for information that is accessible (ASL, simple language, etc.).</p> <p>Due to the high medical risk from COVID faced by PWD, many non-profits will not re-open for in-person services or programs until there is a vaccine.</p>	<p>Revenues have decreased precipitously. Organizations are impacted by the loss of earned and special event revenue, while at the same time fundraising has also decreased. Organizations are concerned this may lead to a financial crisis this fall.</p>	<p>A reduction in volunteers has led staff to take on additional roles. Some staff have been furloughed. The extreme medical risk people with disabilities face from the virus has led to significant levels of physical and social isolation which, in turn, has increased pressure on already stretched organizations to provide basic necessities (food, PPEs) and mental health supports. Staff see emotional and physical decline in some clients, due to social and physical isolation.</p>

**What the City can do**

- Identify City or park board programs or resources that will be available to counteract impacts of depression/isolation as seasons change.
- Support technical device access (and training) for PWD to help with online access - internet access to use them - expand public WiFi spots to increase access by PWD - provide ASL and simple language information.
- Advocate with senior levels of government and with telecommunications providers, for lower-cost home internet access. Cost is currently a huge barrier to access for many.
- Support organizations to shift programs online - renewal of hardware and software.
- Update City website to provide ASL translation and simple language version of COVID information.
- Advocate for an increase in funding for BC211 to better meet current service requests and expand to be more inclusive of PWD.
- Advocate with senior levels of government for improved financial support for PWD.
- Assist with the coordination of PPEs which is an on-going issue, and will only worsen if there is a second wave.
- Assist with the procurement of food - food security issues persist.

## IMPACTS ON SENIOR ORGANIZATIONS

OPERATIONAL	FINANCIAL	WORKFORCE
<p>Both language and digital literacy challenges are proving to be big barriers to seniors accessing online programs and services.</p>	<p>High cost of home internet excludes many low-income seniors from online service/connection leaving organizations struggling to resume 'safe' in-person operations.</p> <p>Not all organizations have been able to access funding opportunities (for example the Federal Canada Wage Subsidy Benefit) leading to fears of a financial crisis this fall.</p>	<p>Concern from at-risk older adults with underlying health issues has led to significant levels of physical and social isolation, which has increased pressure on organizations to coordinate basic necessities such as food.</p> <p>Seniors organizations rely heavily on volunteers who are themselves seniors to deliver programs and services. Most of these volunteers have now withdrawn due to fear of COVID-19.</p> <p>There is pressure on already small staff teams that are trying to ensure seniors on existing caseloads are being adequately supported in this time of increased need.</p> <p>Senior-serving organizations have noted increased instances of physical and emotional deterioration in their clients as pandemic measures stretch on.</p>

**What the City can do**

- Identify City or Park Board programs and resources that will be available for seniors to counteract impacts of depression and isolation as the seasons change. This includes use of community centre space (e.g., gymnasiums) that will lend itself most readily to 'safe' in person service.
- Support technical device access (and training) for seniors to help with online access, and provide internet access to use these services. Expand public Wi-Fi spots to increase access for low-income seniors and others.
- Advocate with senior levels of government and with telecommunications providers for lower-cost home internet access. Cost is currently a huge barrier to access for many seniors and other low-income people.

## IMPACTS ON CHARITABLE FOOD PROVIDERS

OPERATIONAL	FINANCIAL	WORKFORCE
<p>Organizations that provided free or low cost food programming (such as meal programs, community kitchens, hampers/food banking) faced challenges to rapidly redesign these programs to be “COVID safe”. Also struggled with a lack of clarity regarding safe procedures and issues accessing PPE.</p> <p>Organizations creating or scaling up food programs experienced strains as they worked to fill a huge gap, many lacked adequate staff, funding, space, delivery capacity, and supplies to scale up to meet community needs.</p> <p>Programming that is not focused on emergency food provision has not resumed.</p> <p>Many organizations that stepped up to fill emergency food needs do not have the capacity to continue in this role</p>	<p>Challenges to annual fundraising goals.</p> <p>Lower donations of supplies and food because of supply chain shortages and lack of surplus.</p> <p>Grant streams are focused on emergency programs, concern about how and when to transition back to “regular” work. Concerns regarding the longevity of emergency funding programs.</p>	<p>Reduction of volunteer availability.</p> <p>Staff, volunteer, and board burnout and fatigue from the pandemic response effort.</p>

**What the City can do**

- Sustained and reciprocal relationships between the City and NPOs, rather than the dropping in and out when we need their input. NPOs would appreciate more regular contact.
- Need for space to pack groceries, which will become an increasing concern when mixed-use space is no longer available when other programming re-opens. Other space is no longer available due to social distancing concerns.
- Support in navigating back to fulfilling their original mandate and normal operations/programs, and planning for how to stay this course in a second wave.
- Organizations would be less burdened with responsibility of providing food security response if more government support was provided in the form of income support (providing meal vouchers, grocery vouchers, and guaranteed income) rather than charitable food support.
- Commitment to food justice, food sovereignty, and dignity in food access. Commitment to creating opportunities to support community members receiving services to be part of the solution and part of the leadership.
- Longer term grants, consistency of availability, reduced reporting and application procedures
- Advocacy for universal basic income and other income supports such as increases to disability and welfare rates.
- Greater integration of food policy into departments outside of Social Policy to ensure a food lens is applied to community planning.

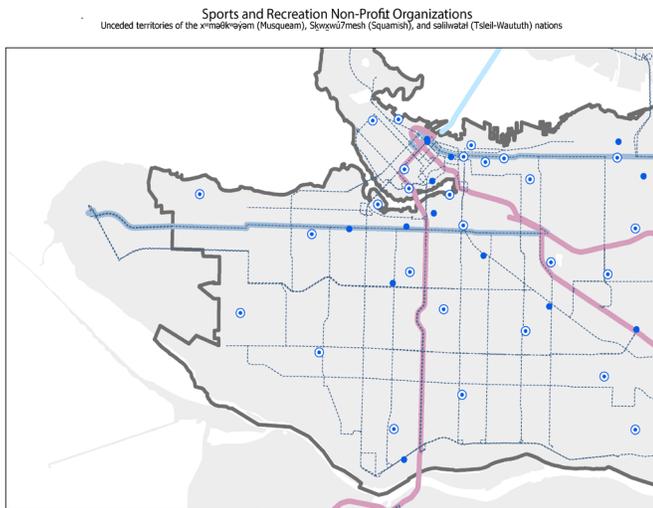
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This brief summarizes the impact of COVID-19 on Vancouver’s sports and recreation non-profit sector. It is a compilation of key excerpts from several surveys, reports and key informant interviews. Highlights have been thematically arranged to provide: an overview of the sector across Vancouver; a brief description of the role and contribution of sports and recreation non-profits; an outline of key issues, needs and barriers; and innovative and resilient responses adopted by the sector that show promise moving forward.

## The Sports and Recreation Non-Profit Sector in Vancouver: Overview



Locations of Community Centres and 26 Sports and Recreation organizations in Vancouver Data Source: BC211 service directory list accessed April 2020 and ACCS community non-profit partners inventory. Note that locations may reflect an organization’s office location rather than where programs and services occur.

- Recreation and social clubs or organizations that provide recreational facilities and services including playground associations, country clubs, and leisure clubs; and
- Service clubs that provide services to members and local communities through sports and recreation activities
- Vancouver has a large and diverse sports community. Government agencies, sport organizations, leagues, clubs and individual athletes promote physical literacy, sport performance and participation in the city. The sports sector is differentiated by each organization’s specific area of focus, which may include field sports, gymnasias, arena, linear, aquatic, special sports and on-water sports.
- The Vancouver Park Board plays a key role in the provision of recreational services through community centres, pools, rinks, fitness centres, golf courses, streets trees, marinas and playing fields. Community centres provide access to quality programming and services to encourage healthy lifestyles. This occurs through participation in physical, recreational, cultural, educational, social and capacity-building programs for residents of the community, which are responsive to the community’s unique needs. Community Centre Associations (CCA) are non-profit registered societies that work together with the Vancouver Park Board to support the operations and delivery of neighbourhood based programming in community centres.
- The Sport Hosting Vancouver office works to strategically attract, support and grow a diverse portfolio of international sport events that generate incremental business, create jobs and boost the economy whilst delivering impacts and legacy that benefit all of Vancouver and enhance our city’s international profile. Through the legacy of these international sport events, the City leverages community impacts to support the local sport and recreation infrastructure through programming, resources, opportunities for participation, volunteer capacity and economic impacts.
- Sports, recreation and physical activities contribute to development, sustainability, health and wellness within the city. These activities are administered and delivered by multiple agencies such as governmental and non-governmental organizations, not-for-profit sport groups and commercial interest groups.
- Compared to non-profit and voluntary organizations, Sports and Recreation non-profit organizations are smaller, financially self-sufficient, and dependent on volunteers. Based on the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations, Sports and Recreation non-profits may include:
  - Sports organizations that promote amateur sports, training, fitness, wellness, and sporting competitions and events;

## Contribution of Sports and Recreation Non-Profit organizations in Vancouver

- Sport plays a vital role in many Vancouver residents' lives. Sport fields, arenas and court are where people of all ages engage in play, achieve 'personal bests', give back to their communities and create meaningful connections with others.
- Sports and Recreation non-profit organizations promote amateur sports, training, fitness, and wellness services; organize sporting competitions and events; operate recreational facilities; and provide a variety of other services to communities. Sports and recreation organizations are central in keeping all residents healthy and active, with opportunities to gather with peers and families and through events such as tournaments, showcase and celebrate accomplishments and talents, build hosting capacity, develop volunteers and have the potential to bring direct or indirect economic benefits to Vancouver.
- In a national review of the Sports and Recreation sector, key strengths of these organizations include the dedication of their volunteers, their local community focus, and the priority they place on serving their members.
- Through the Vancouver Community Sport Hosting Grants, the City contributes \$200,000 annually to supporting events in the community. These non-profit events have been integral to sport development and to Vancouver residents' quality of life, fostering community engagement and sport participation. The Vancouver Sport Hosting grant provides financial support for sporting events that have the potential to bring direct or indirect economic, social, health, and community development benefits to Vancouver.
- The Community Sport Champions Recognition Program is a Vancouver Community Sport Hosting Grant that recognizes and celebrates citizens who are making sport accessible in our community. This program offers grants to advance the efforts and accomplishments of residents and organizations who deliver sport and physical activity to make a positive impact in our community, while aligning with City Council's key priority areas, including but not limited to, gender equity, reconciliation, and affordability.
- The parks and recreation system provides life-sustaining services, including preservation of the city's remaining natural areas, health benefits from play and connection to nature and community for mental health benefits.
- Volunteers play a major role in the Sports and Recreation sector with each formal volunteer dedicating an average of 106 hours per year to sports and recreation organizations nationally (Statistics Canada, 2018).

## Impacts of Covid-19 on Sports and Recreation Non-Profit Organizations in Vancouver

The Sports and Recreation sector is facing significant operational challenges as a result of the public health measures meant to stop the spread of COVID-19. Organizations have faced program cancellations, extended closures and capacity restrictions due to physical distancing, financial pressure due to reduced revenue, and major workforce challenges (such as staff and volunteer retention for community programs). These current challenges to the sector have had a compounding effect, exacerbating issues that existed well before COVID-19. These include:

- Limited interaction and coordination between sports organizations.
- Lack of consistent and systemic program delivery for sports and recreation programs across all age-groups.
- Aging infrastructure and limited municipal resources to support facility renewal.
- Access barriers to participation in sports at all levels due to the lack of administrative coordination between service providers.
- Spatial inequity in access to (and quality of) parks.
- The Sport and Recreation sector has been facing increased uncertainty around event hosting. Without clear direction from public health officials, and permitting offices at the City, event organizers do not know where to begin. Many Sport and Recreation NPOs must host events to fund the rest of their annual programming. Events are a main source of revenue for many organisations and the restrictions of COVID-19 have put major financial strain on the budgets.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has created further operational, financial and workforce challenges for these Sports and Recreation non-profits and the members that use their programs and services. Key informant interviews and surveys have identified the following specific impacts of the pandemic on the sector:

### ***Operational Challenges: Shifts in the sector and the effects on impacted communities***

- Changing demand and work reductions: A study on the impacts of COVID-19 on charities by Imagine Canada highlighted that Recreation (and Art) based charities are more likely than those in other sub-sectors to report decreased demand, organizational capacity and revenues. These impacts have led to significant layoffs and work reductions for these impacted charities. The study also argues that these specific charities are having difficulty transitioning their programs online and developing new programs in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response many organizations are choosing to cease or suspend operations.
- Shutting down: A Vantage Point study on the impacts of COVID-19 on the non-profit sector found that 15% of respondents were no longer operating as of April 2020.

Organizations most likely to report ceasing operations included sports and recreation (39%), arts and culture (32%), and religious organizations (29%). Similarly, this study highlighted that Sports and Recreation organizations were most likely to report being concerned with sustaining their organization longer than six months. With regards to space retention when leasing or renting, the survey identified that sports and recreation and religious non-profits were the least likely to predict retaining space through the pandemic.

- **Cancellations:** Through key informant interviews several Vancouver-based organizations have reported that grass field leagues and tournaments have been cancelled for the summer. Similarly, programs and services that require access to municipal facilities such as rinks and pools are not taking place, which is significantly impacted the delivery of seasonal training and recreational programs.
- **Physical distancing:** Some recreation outdoor programs are operating with limited capacity given physical distancing guidelines, impacting the long-term financial sustainability of these organizations. In June 2020, Via Sport released The Return to Sport Guidelines for BC. The plan includes guidelines for how to resume sport safely with a focus on community participation and training rather than games and or Provincial competition.
- **Changes for families:** The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) identified that parents who rely on sports and recreation community programs (including playground activities, outdoor pools and organized sports) will be forced to make other supervisory arrangements with additional costs for families. This is particularly a concern for families that are already experiencing greater conditions of vulnerability.
- **Permit approvals:** Sport hosting organizations report that there is a lack of clarity regarding event policies and approval processes as well as delays in approving current permits. Non-profit organizations need guidance around future event permits and hosting health protocols as they make contingency plans for the fall and beginning of 2021.
- **Insurance:** Sport hosting organizations are also struggling with the liability insurance of hosting events or programming in the current climate. Most organizations cannot bear the liability risk without proper coverage. Currently, a Ministerial Order from the Provincial Government's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture protects these NPOs but only while the Provincial State of Emergency remains in effect.

### **Financial Pressures**

- **Loss of revenue:** Vancouver's Sports and Recreation organizations are reporting decreasing revenue from membership and event hosting initiatives that acts as

fundraisers for the organizations. A financial analysis by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) showed that the national financial impact of COVID-19 on the recreation sector is \$2.7 billion annually (or \$221 million monthly). Much of the recreation sector operates fixed-cost community recreation facilities that, when closed, do not generate financial recovery or social benefit. Fixed costs (such as utilities, security, mandatory staff) to operate Canadian recreation facilities are still being incurred by municipal operators even as the facilities sit idle due to COVID-19

- **Long-term sustainability:** Some non-profits reported accessing emergency funding (such as the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), business loans and funding from Foundations), which have helped them continue operations. However there is increased uncertainty about non-profit organizations' ability to weather financial pressures in the long-term.

### **Workforce and Human Resources**

- **Job losses and retaining staff:** The Vantage Point study notes that two subsectors were most likely to expect significant job losses: sports and recreation, and arts and culture. This is also true of non-profits organizations serving children and families. Community input indicates out that without the ability to offer programming, sports and recreation organizations are facing challenges retaining experienced coaches, volunteers, staff and players.
- **Wage subsidy:** The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) noted that municipalities do not qualify for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), which has led to a substantial number of parks and recreation employees being laid off and summer student positions not being posted. Countless summer jobs will be lost, which will cause financial hardship to the specifically vulnerable youth and student employment sector.

### **High-level supports needed**

Through key informant interviews Sports and Recreation non-profits identified the following high-level areas of support for recovery. Different organizations touched on their unique key needs, but universally these organizations brought up the need for unrestricted core operational funding.

- **Additional Federal and Provincial or Territorial government stimulus to provide emergency and stabilization funding.** This funding could come in the form of grants or interest-free loans to community non-profits to ensure their long-term sustainability.
- **Clear communication channels regarding facility access and facility planning during the recovery period and through the future.**
- **Recognition of the contribution of grass-roots non-profit**

sports and recreation organizations and their involvement in decision making at local and provincial tables.

- Adapt funding programs to support building on COVID-19 safety protocols among staff and volunteers involved in the delivery of sports and recreation services so that health and safety measures can be monitored and implemented collectively.
- Clear event hosting policies and support navigating approval processes between jurisdictions and permitting departments.
- Clear understanding of timelines required for event hosting applications to be reviewed and approved to manage planning expectations.

### ***The City's role and requested support for the sector***

- Provide prompt access to municipal facilities including arenas, ice rinks and pools – and clear timelines publicly on whether these facilities will open or be available for groups to book.
- Allow flexibility to accommodate additional programming with fewer participants at any given time, to comply with public health measures.
- Reduce rental rates for sports and recreational programming.
- Provide spaces and opportunities to work directly with sports and recreation non-profits on matters of common interest and engage these organizations in decision making processes.
- Support with minimizing event expenses in recovery or help with incremental costs associated with COVID-19 event safety.
- Support exchange of best practices and learning opportunities in the sector
- Clear and consistent guidelines, support and direction by the City's Special Event Office and Park Board for organizations to navigate return to play plans and event hosting goals.
- Allow for permitting offices to remain flexible in the shifting landscape as organizations try to plan for the future (holding back-up dates, recognizing timelines for confirmation and support in working with local health officials to receive relevant approvals required)

### ***Resiliency in the Sports and Recreation Sector: Innovative responses to the crisis and positive outcomes***

- Despite these significant challenges the sector has shown

the ability to adapt and meet the needs of community members.

- Sports and recreation non-profits report that staff have demonstrated resiliency throughout the pandemic, adapting to new ways to provide services and increasing communication between groups. This has led to an increased sense of belonging and collaboration in the sector.
- Relations with stakeholders have deepened as agencies are finding ways to learn from each other and develop new way to support the sector and families that access services, events and programs.

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