

2020

ANNUAL REPORT



GREATER VICTORIA HOUSING SOCIETY

Since 1956

Dedicated to Providing Affordable Rental Housing



Capital Projects

Major repairs and building upgrade expenditures:
\$483,641



Our Supporters

- BC Housing
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Capital Regional District
- City of Colwood
- City of Victoria
- District of Central Saanich
- District of Saanich
- Graphic Office
- Individual Donors
- Vancity



Staff Engagement

We had a great result with 93% of the staff responding to our annual survey. 95% of the respondents feel that the mission and purpose of GVHS makes them feel their job is important. 81% feel that GVHS is a diverse and inclusive workplace and 85% feel that the GVHS management team effectively led through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Staff suggested that there be more clarity about job responsibilities and "who does what". Field staff in particular had many good suggestions about improving communication, consultation, recognition, training and support.



102 Units
Under Construction

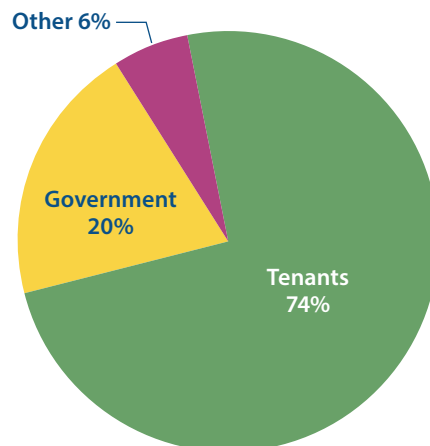
437 Units
in Planning Stages

Over **1,200** Tenants living in 830 homes at 16 properties

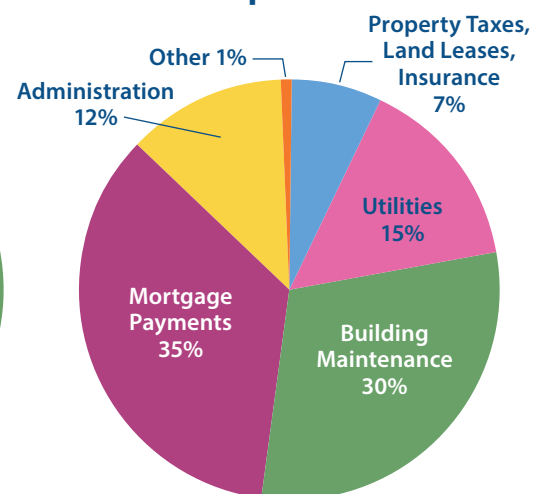
109 new households representing 167 people, moved into our buildings
1.49% Average Vacancy Rate

PROPERTY	# OF UNITS	STATUS IN 2020
Nigel Avenue Saanich	70	Applied for development & building permits
874 Fleming Street Esquimalt	137	Rezoning complete
2558 Quadra Street Victoria	40	Rezoning complete
85 Belmont/1901 Jerome Colwood	122	Rezoning complete
679 Goldstream Avenue Langford	68	Zoning application submitted

Revenues



Expenses

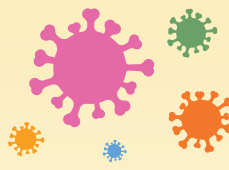




Service to the Community

Staff lent their experience and support to:

- BC Housing
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association
- Canada Lands Company
- Capital Regional Housing Advisory Committee
- Gorge View Housing Society
- Greater Victoria Rent Bank
- Housing Task Force to Share Resources for Tenant Relocation
- Tofino Housing Corporation
- Urban Development Institute Capital Region
- Women of the Urban Development Institute



The Impact of COVID-19

When COVID-19 became a part of our world in March 2020, staff banded together to sort out how to be safe, how to ensure we could keep meeting the needs of our tenants and how to keep moving forward with our strategic priorities. Like all organizations that were deemed “essential” we made a large number of operational changes. We all got used to TEAMS and Zoom. We spread our office space out and many took turns working at home. Our field staff had the biggest sea change: they had to set priorities every day as to what was critical and what could wait until they felt safe and could ensure the safety of our tenants. We were well supported by the BC Government with the provision of appropriate protective equipment and cleaning and sanitizing products.

It was not all bad. When asked about some of the unexpected and positive aspects of living through a pandemic, staff said:

- It has been great having more time with my immediate family.
- I am saving a lot more money.
- I am so appreciative to be able to work through the whole experience.
- It has been an opportunity to spend a lot more time outside.
- Now that we rely on Zoom I actually “see” more of my friends and family.
- I was only able to have the small wedding I really wanted.
- The use of a lot more technology at work.
- Slowing down & not living such a hectic pace.



Message from the Chair

2020 certainly started off normally enough. In February we honoured deceased Board member Peter Parsons with an event at our new building in Central Saanich. Peter’s family joined Board members and staff to celebrate the opening of the building we named The Parsons at Brentwood.

At the beginning of the year, staff undertook projects to enhance our ability to manage our human resources and social media. Then kaboom! The world changed on us. I was impressed with how our organization was able to keep operations running smoothly while ensuring that best practices for safety were followed. The early days of the pandemic required much adapting on the fly. The Board heard from staff about how so many in the community came together to provide essential equipment, advice and support. Phillips Brewery and Pigeonhole Home Store stepped up with much needed hand sanitizer when none could be found.

As a new Board Chair (elected at our virtual Board meeting in May), I’ve been inspired to see how, as best possible, it’s been business as usual for the Greater Victoria Housing Society. The Parsons at Brentwood opened in February and in spite of COVID challenges is fully occupied, new staff have joined us throughout the year and many capital repairs were done at our properties. The staff also implemented new emergency programs to support tenants who lost income and were struggling to pay their rent.

Eventually, we all settled into social distancing and virtual meetings. Our AGM was held via Zoom, as all our Board meetings have been since last March. Thankfully local governments adapted, and municipal approval processes continued. We achieved three rezonings for new affordable housing projects in 2020. At year end, in partnership with two other organizations, we submitted another rezoning application to Langford. Townley Place, our newest building, opened in December and provides much needed family and seniors housing in Saanich.

This year the Board said goodbye to David Fullbrook and welcomed new Board members Tony Payne and Luke Biles.

It was a year unlike any other, but full of successes! I am filled with appreciation for everything the staff and Board did, and continue to do, to keep our tenants safe and move GVHS forward.

Lisa Edwards, Chair of the Board



2018 to 2020 Strategic Priorities

Growth

To meet community needs and to achieve an efficient operating scale.

Operational Excellence

To provide the best housing and service for our clients.

Public Awareness

To attract funding, to be a society of choice for those wanting to transfer their assets to another society and to gain support for municipal approvals.

Organizational Sustainability

So that we continue to be financially viable and to achieve our goals, address community needs and meet our obligations.



Tenant Quotes

“You guys are the best landlords ever, almost brings me to tears saying that. Praying you all stay safe and thank you for your tender hearts and all that you do.”

– Tenant at Campbell Lodge

Board of Directors

Chair: Lisa Edwards

Vice-Chair: Kent Verge

Past-Chair: Scott Garman

Secretary: Melody Hermann

Treasurer: Fraser Stamp-Vincent

Directors:

Ralph Archibald, Luke Biles (part year),

David Fullbrook (part year), Greer Jacks,

Catherine McGregor, Tony Pane (part year),

My Phung, Lindsay Shojania, Michael Smyth



Registered Charitable Number: 10817 3238 RR0001

www.greatervichousing.org