



 **Kiwassa**

 **Kiwassa**
neighbourhood house

Annual Report 2024-2025





Message from the Board President and Executive Director

Reflecting on the past year, it is remarkable to see the care and connections our partners, volunteers, and staff have made possible. From community markets to childcare picnics to neighbourhood small grants, there has been no shortage of leadership to celebrate.

And celebrate we should! These successes reflect the power of relationships – to the land and to one another – and are at the core of Kiwassa's work.

In 2024-2025 we leaned into strengthening those relationships as we updated our strategic plan and values. The world has rapidly changed in the seven years since our last plan. We placed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the core of the process and listened to staff, volunteers, and community members about what would help create a welcoming, inclusive space.

Themes of connection, accountability, and relationships also guided us through our recent CARF accreditation. We learned a lot and took steps to ensure our programs are responsive to community needs and flexible enough to support local innovations and leadership.

For every success, there have also been challenges. We appreciate the care and resiliency our staff and volunteers have shown as we work to navigate barriers to affordability, housing, food security, employment, and more. We are leaning into the leadership and creativity in our community to re-imagine programs and how we can care for one another.

Our Board plays an important role in connecting us to community and helping us navigate change with care. We are deeply grateful to Elfred Matining and Lule Abbay for their many years of service and leadership. Though we are sad to see them leave, we know they will remain close to Kiwassa and continue to give back in other ways.

We look forward to another year of connection, care, and transformation that will bring the Hastings-Sunrise and Grandview-Woodlands neighbourhoods together. Thank you for your continued support in building a vibrant and welcoming community with us!

Sincerely,

Alexandra Skinner, Board President

Darius Maze, Executive Director

About Kiwassa Neighbourhood House

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House grows community in the vibrant Hastings-Sunrise and Grandview-Woodland neighbourhoods of East Vancouver, on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílŵətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), and xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

For nearly 75 years, we have created a welcoming place where people can find a helping hand, a friendly face, services they need and opportunities to be connected and engaged in their community.



Vision

A thriving community where all people are valued, connected, and secure.

Mission

To cultivate opportunities with people and partners to build a socially just, resilient, and connected community.

Values

We are rooted in our community:

we value our relationships with each other and with the land within our commitment to building a better world.

We are accountable:

we follow through on our commitments, take responsibility for our actions, and make decisions that will sustain Kiwassa into the future.

We take care of each other:

our community, including our staff and our participants, and ourselves.





Our Programs

Early Years & Family
Childcare Programs
Youth Programs
Seniors Programs
Food Programs

Newcomer Settlement
Employment Support
Community Engagement
Housing

2024-2025 Highlights and Achievements

It was a year of connections

This year, we watched people come together in so many meaningful ways: Families shared meals and stories, children grew and thrived in programs rooted in care, newcomers found the confidence to take bold steps, and seniors discovered comfort in friendship.

These moments remind us that community is built not by programs alone, but by the connections we create with one another.



Where families meet, learn, and thrive

In 2024-25, our Family Drop-In Program continued to be a vital, welcoming space for families with young children — offering community, support, and learning in a low-barrier environment. Throughout the 129 sessions and 326 hours of programming, we served 2,095 hot meals, providing both practical support and shared moments of connection. Families took part in a wide range of activities, from healthy boundaries and pre-kindergarten preparation to understanding neurodiversity and participating in Indigenous cultural learning. Outings, visits from health professionals, and cultural celebrations further enriched the program, creating joy, support, and belonging in a space that honours diversity and connection.



Settlement support builds confidence and independence

Despite changes in Canada's immigration policies, our settlement team continued to walk alongside newcomers through complex immigration processes. Staff provided translation, interpretation, crisis counseling, and advocacy, helping families build skills to manage paperwork and navigate online systems.

These efforts led to life-changing outcomes, including permanent residency approvals and family reunifications. Each success was more than a service. It was a step toward independence, belonging, and confidence in a new home.



Newcomer women step into leadership

In January 2025, we hosted another round of Pathways to Leadership, welcoming 16 newcomer women to a five-week empowerment program. Together, they shared stories, learned about Canadian culture, and built the confidence to pursue independence and volunteer in the community.

One participant shared:

"This program helped me learn, share, and feel supported. I left stronger and ready to give back."

Pathways to Leadership shows the power of peer support and collective growth.



A place to grow and belong

We celebrated our 4th Annual Childcare Picnic and welcomed over 400 attendees! This free, annual event is held for our childcare families and has become a beloved tradition, bringing the community together for a fun and memorable day each school year.

Opening more doors to out-of-school care

This year, our NEST out-of-school care program expanded by licensing and opening 20 new no-cost spaces across four sites. This change means improved sustainability and quality, providing more staff support, better resources, and a smoother path for families moving from childcare into after-school care.

NEST by the numbers:

50-55 children supported with free care

242 days of programming

60 field trips and **4,124** snacks served

10 dedicated volunteers



Strengthening safety and leadership with our youth

We expanded our youth programs with support from the City of Vancouver's Building Safer Cities initiative, marking a significant milestone in growth and impact. Staff received training in trauma-informed practice, non-violent communication, and emotional regulation, equipping them to create safer, more supportive spaces for youth.

Through Bridges to Belonging, a youth engagement project, members of our Youth Advisory Council are leading the way in shaping programs that reflect the real needs of youth today. This initiative aims to build leadership skills and elevates youth voices in program and organizational decision-making, ultimately strengthening inclusion, equity, and accessibility in our programming.

When Sophia and Silvana arrived in Canada, they didn't speak English and everything felt new. They joined our youth summer program looking for a safe place to connect, build skills, and feel part of a community. With support from our Youth Settlement Worker and program staff, they explored new activities, practiced English, and made friends.

The team also empowered the youth participants, helping them gain confidence and try things they hadn't before. Meanwhile, their parents connected with other caregivers and accessed resources through our wraparound care approach, easing some of the stress of settling in a new country. In just three months, Sophia and Silvana are thriving, growing their skills, and feeling a sense of belonging in East Vancouver.



Breakfast Club fuels kids and community

At Tillicum Elementary, mornings begin with the Kiwassa Breakfast Club. This year, we served 4,410 hot breakfasts for students, their families, and staff. The breakfast program provides a shared experience that stimulates social connection and an appreciation for nourishing food.



EMPOW3R opens pathways to careers

Through the EMPOW3R program, participants gained Early Childhood Education Assistant certification, employment, and the confidence to pursue meaningful careers. This program not only builds skills but also fosters healing and resilience for adults who have experienced violence, abuse, and trauma.

When Madina arrived in Canada, she dreamed of becoming an Early Childhood Educator, but felt unsure where to start. Through the EMPOW3R program, she took charge of her journey, building the skills, confidence, and connections she needed to move forward.

"This program gave me more than skills. It gave me hope and the belief that I can succeed here. I felt part of a community that truly cared. We learned from one another and lifted each other up."

Madina practiced English in professional settings, explored the ECEA field, developed digital skills, and prepared to apply job-readiness tools. She networked with peers and mentors and took concrete steps toward her career. She now feels empowered, confident, and ready to pursue meaningful work in childcare.





Connecting seniors to resources and each other

In November, we partnered with Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House to host our annual NEVAAN Seniors Resource Fair, bringing together 130 seniors and over 30 community organizations. The fair offered information on health care, housing, transportation, and food access, alongside workshops, chair exercises, and a lounge space for conversation. The event not only increased awareness of vital supports but also fostered collaboration and friendships, leaving seniors feeling informed and connected.

Celebrating our Kiwassa Team

We celebrated staff who reached career milestones this year: Mara, Jake, Hong, Skye, MJ, Giovana, and Karin marked five years at Kiwassa. Angie celebrated 10 years at Hastings Park and Lily reached 20 years at Variety Club Daycare.

These milestones reflect the dedication, passion, and relationships that keep Kiwassa strong and connected.



Recognition for our work



We are proud to announce that Kiwassa has received its first 3-year accreditation from CARF International for its Promotion and Prevention programs. This is an important milestone for our organization and a recognition of the continual excellence and quality of our work in community. We are grateful to all of the amazing staff and participants who took part in the survey process and helped us to achieve the highest possible rating from CARF. We look forward to continuing to do amazing, grassroots work that is guided by our community!

Financials

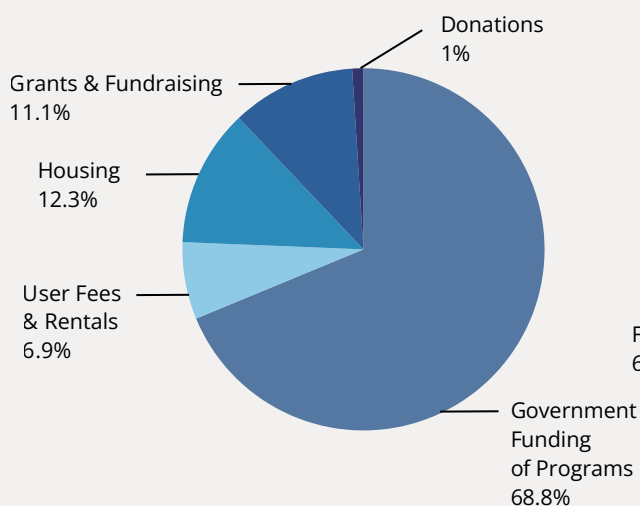
KIWASSA NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES ASSOCIATION

Summarized Consolidated Statement of Revenue and Expenses
Year ending March 31, 2025

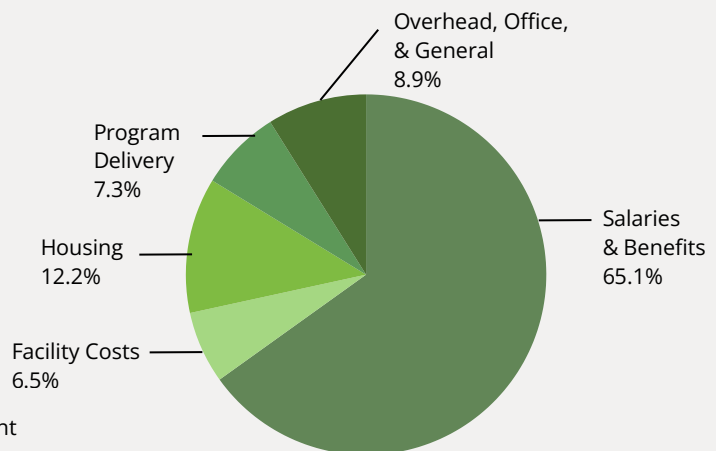
Operating Revenue	2025	2024
Government Funding of Programs	5,636,062	4,847,244
User Fees & Rentals	563,780	569,777
Housing	1,006,827	1,037,103
Grants & Fundraising	908,246	864,817
Donations	82,036	129,649
	8,196,951	7,448,590

Operating Expenses	2025	2024
Salaries & Benefits	5,722,013	4,915,034
Facility Costs	569,438	473,847
Housing	1,068,129	1,135,001
Program Delivery	644,976	598,534
Overhead, Office, & General	784,388	522,004
	8,788,944	7,644,420

Revenue



Expenses



Looking Ahead

We recently released our **3-year Strategic Plan for 2025–2028**, which focuses on strengthening our foundation, deepening connections, and aligning our work with equity, climate justice, and Decolonization priorities.



Stabilizing

We're strengthening our programs and internal systems so we can stay grounded and grow sustainably.

- Evaluating and improving the impact of all programs
- Strengthening our financial health with new fundraising plans
- Investing in the House's maintenance and future upgrades



Connecting

We're building stronger relationships with throughout the organization, including our community and the land we're on.

- Enhancing communications and storytelling
- Uplifting community voices and leadership
- Strengthening partnerships and community outreach



Rooting

We're focusing inward to support our staff and align our work with equity, climate justice, and Decolonization.

- Creating a roadmap for Decolonization and equity
- Supporting staff wellbeing, growth, and leadership
- Improving board governance and accountability practices

Read our full Strategic Plan [here](#)



Our Board Members

Alexandra Skinner
President

Carla Oberth
Director

Elfred Matining
Vice President

Chantal Parisien
Director

Lule Abbay
Secretary

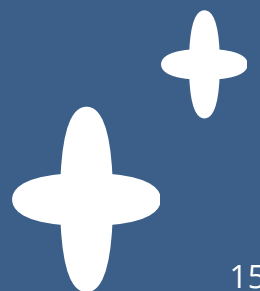
Lisa Zhu
Director

Michael Roy
Treasurer



Thank you to our 2024-2025 Funders

BC Gaming
BC Housing
BC Newcomer Services Program
Bosa Family Foundation
Breakfast Clubs of Canada
City of Vancouver
CLICK Community Action Program for Children
Community Food Centres Canada
Decoda Literacy Solutions
Employment and Social Development Canada
Food Banks BC
Government of Canada
Greater Vancouver Foodbank
Hastings Entertainment
Hastings Legacy Fund
Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Ministry of Children and Family Development
Ministry of Education and Child Care
Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills
Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
Province of BC
Supported Child Development – BC Centre for Ability
United Way British Columbia
Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society – Aboriginal Supported Child Development
Vancouver Coastal Health
Vancouver Coastal Health Healthy Seniors



Thank you to our 2024-2025 Partners

Aboriginal Mother Centre Society
AMSSA
Arts Umbrella
Battered Women Support Services
BC Association of Neighbourhood Houses
BC Centre for Ability
BC Council for Families
BC Domestic Violence Unit
Britannia Community Centre
Burnaby Community & Continuing Education
Burnaby Neighbourhood House
CAPC Families Branching Out
Capilano University
Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
City of Vancouver
CityReach
Collingwood Neighbourhood House
Community Food Centres Canada
Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House
Eastside Family Place
East Village BIA
EcoCooks
Fresh Direct
Fresh Prep
Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House
Gordon Neighbourhood House
Greater Vancouver Food Bank
Hastings Community Association
Hastings Community Centre
Hastings Sunrise Community Food Network
Immigrant Services Society of BC
Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
Langara College
Langara College Faculty of Nursing
Little Mountain Neighbourhood House
Marpole Neighbourhood House
Marpole Oakridge Family Place
MenTOR BC
MOSAIC
Mount Pleasant Family Centre
Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
Network of Inner City Community Services

Niki Sharma MLA
Nobody's Perfect Consortium
Pacific Immigrant Resources Society
People Plants and Homes
PNE
Quest Food Exchange
Reach Urgent and Primary Care Centre
Rise Women Legal Centre
Saige Community Food Bank
Science World Community Access Pass Program
Seniors First BC
South Vancouver Family Place
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
Strathcona Community Centre
S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
Templeton Secondary
Thunderbird Community Association
Tillicum Community Annex
UBC Faculty of Land and Food Systems
UBC School of Social Work
Uprising Bakery
Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family
Services Society
Vancity
Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship
Centre Society
Vancouver Eastside Educational
Enhancement Society (VEEES)
Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks
Vancouver Public Library
Vancouver School Board
Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation
VanWhole Produce
Vines Art Society
Warriors Against Violence
Westcoast Family Centres
Westside Family Place
Women in Need Gaining Strength
YMCA Crabtree Corner
YogaBuggy
YWCA



Want to get involved?

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Learn more about Kiwassa



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neighbourhood house

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Kiwassa
Tillicum
BREAKFAST
CLUB
8:45 AM - 9 AM