

STUDY AND ASSESSMENT REPORT ON CHARITY BUILDINGS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many charity buildings are in poor condition, diminishing their ability to deliver important social services. However, no study has ever been completed on the condition of these buildings.

HeroWork embarked on a three-phase study that investigated the state of charity buildings, the specific challenges faced by charity organizations in relation to their infrastructure, and the system of societal stakeholders in which non-profit buildings exist.

This executive summary provides:

- About HeroWork
- Study background
- Summary of results



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ABOUT HEROWORK

We are a charity that renovates other charities. Many charity buildings are run down and in need of repairs or upgrades. HeroWork is on a mission to make this better. Here's how:

- ## 1 Worthy Charities

We work with worthy charities that want bigger impact but need improved infrastructure.
- ## 2 Amazing Partners

We partner with many businesses to help with a full array of construction services, supply, hospitality & more.
- ## 3 Radical Renovations

We put on huge community events in which we complete comprehensive renovations in a fraction of normal time.

To date we have completed over \$4 million worth of non-profit renovations in the CRD. A typical year will see HeroWork engage over 100 companies, more than 50 coordinators, and in excess of 500 volunteers, who all provide either goods and/or labour in kind. We also receive seed money from our partner charities and funding from other community agencies.

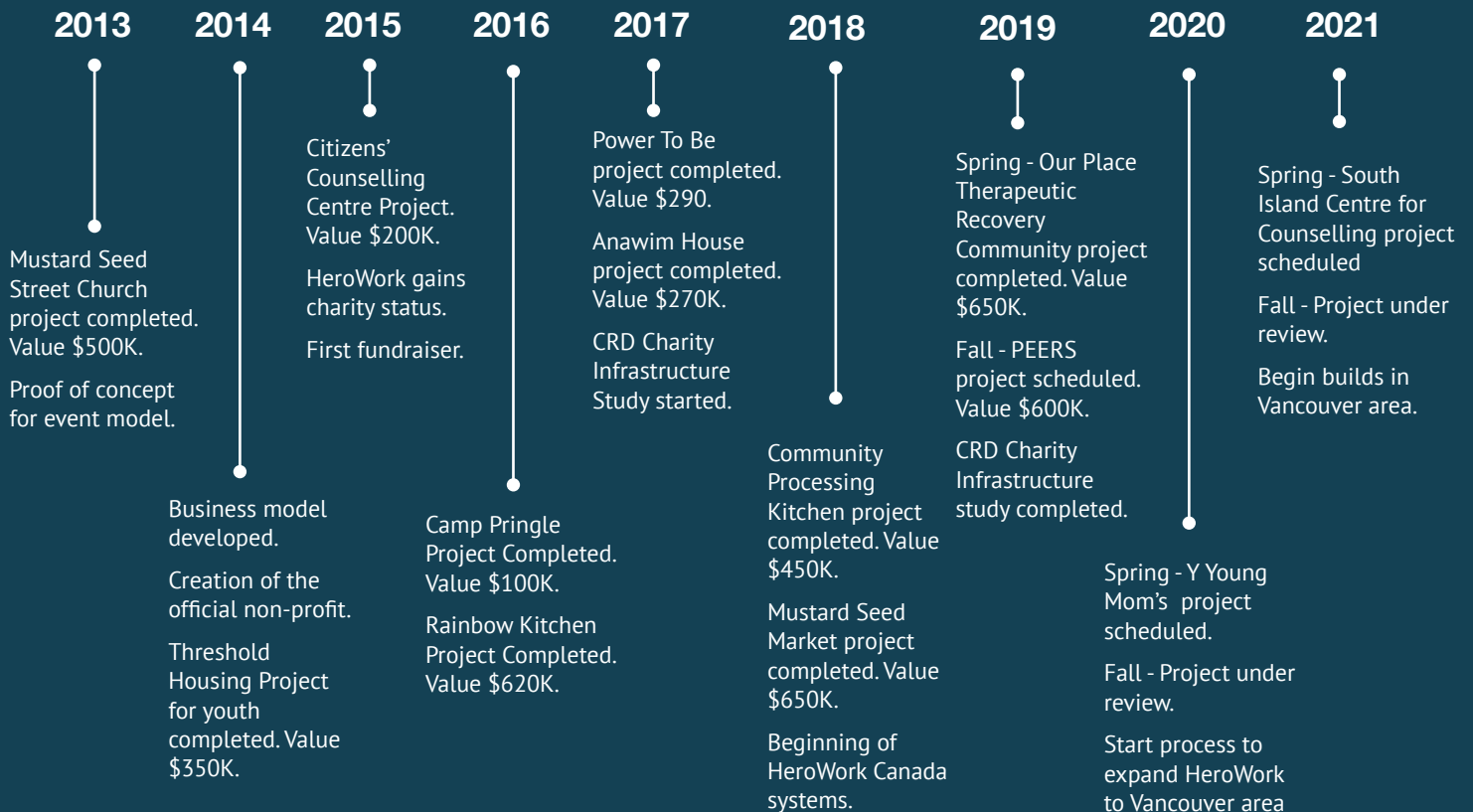
We are also developing a replicable model that can help HeroWork expand across the country, empowering communities to renew and/or expand charity infrastructure. Our vision is to enable charities in many cities so they can make bigger social change, become more sustainable, better serve vulnerable populations, and lift up the neighbourhoods where their important services are provided.

As a unique charity that focuses solely on charity infrastructure, HeroWork is strategically positioned to study the issue and make recommendation for change in this area of need.





HeroWork Timeline



CHARITY STUDY BACKGROUND

HeroWork's experience has shown us that many charity buildings are in need of repairs or upgrades. We've seen the evidence across the non-profit sector in the Victoria region. It is our mission to make this better—to improve community infrastructure so that charities can have a bigger impact.

However, before this study was done our evidence was anecdotal. No data existed on the state of non-profit buildings—not in the

Greater Victoria area nor anywhere else in Canada. In order to serve other charities better, we wanted to deeply understand the infrastructure needs.

This was why we embarked on a study of physical charitable infrastructure in the Greater Victoria area.

Three Phases of HeroWork's Study of Charity Buildings



Phase 1 - Nov 2017

Needs assessment survey of charity buildings in the CRD.



Phase 2 - May 2018

Non-profit education and feedback forum on infrastructure.



Phase 3 - Feb 2019

System's approach forum on charitable infrastructure



“There are benefits to be gained from having non-profits participate in public infrastructure—for governments, the private sector and communities. All levels of government can benefit from non-profits’ ability to leverage resources to meet increasing demand to fund infrastructure developments.”

VAN CITY REPORT - NON-PROFITS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Good charity buildings ripple out positive effect in our community. A well designed and built building increases operational efficiencies, lifts up volunteers and staff, revitalizes neighbourhoods, improves relations, engenders innovation, and, most importantly, empowers better services for vulnerable populations in our community.

However, for decades the importance of charity buildings has been largely ignored, even though these places are where many of our most important social services are provided. They are our food banks, our community halls, our shelters, our counselling centres, our soup kitchens...

Since the creation of HeroWork, our organization has been working with charities, understanding their visions, developing renewal concepts and plans, and delivering millions of dollars' worth of high-quality renovations that transform both buildings and the way in which charities operate within those buildings.

Through the years, HeroWork repeatedly saw the same challenges. The condition of charity buildings was diminishing non-profits' ability to be innovative, create deep social change, and respond to changing community needs.

In response we widened our mandate and embarked on this study to answer three basic questions:

1. What is the condition of charity buildings?
2. What are the infrastructure challenges faced by charities?
3. How can we help?

1. The Condition of Charity Buildings

The data from Phase 1 of the HeroWork study, which included a survey completed by 87 non-profit organizations in the BC's Capital Regional District (CRD), confirms that a high proportion of charity buildings need renewal.

For organizations that own, have shared ownership, or long-term leases, the data shows that:

- 46% of non-profit have buildings that were built in 1950 or earlier
- 36% of charities responded that they require renovations either urgently or very urgently.
- 32% of charities have never had major renovations or repairs
- 55% of organizations believe that a renovation would increase their ability to deliver services more effectively.

Many charity buildings are not only a blight on neighbourhoods, they actually diminish the ability of charities to do their important work, negatively affecting programs, work efficiencies, staff and volunteer moral, maintenance costs, neighbourhood support, the psychological state of clients and more. As well, the state and design of a building often inhibits an organization's ability to innovate.

Infrastructure Innovation Case Studies

Food Bank Model

The Mustard Seed is a well-loved and long-term charity of Victoria, which runs the largest food bank on Vancouver Island. But they had been operating a typical food hamper program for years, where clients would come in, be interviewed, and a volunteer would pick, pack, and provide a box of food for a family. To reduce waste and provide a more dignified experience, the Mustard Seed developed a vision of a “grocery store-style market” in which clients could choose their own food for their families. The problem was that their warehouse was ugly, ill-equipped, and not at all designed to become a type of social grocery store. Plus, they didn’t have the fiscal resources required for an upgrade.

HeroWork partnered with them and developed concepts, plans, and drawings that brought their vision to life. Then HeroWork mobilized over 100 companies and 500 volunteers, contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of in-kind labour and goods.

Today the Mustard Seed operates one of the most innovative programs in the province, serving the food insecure of Victoria in a more efficient and humane way.

Recovery Program

The Our Place Society has been helping the impoverished, mentally and physically challenged, addicted and homeless for decades. Through their years of experience, they discerned that homelessness, addiction, and incarceration represent a repeating, complex, and interconnected pattern that kept people entrenched on the streets.

Our Place researched an innovative solution, modelled from an Italian community called San Patrignano that reports a 72% full-recovery rate for thousands of residents who complete their program. Through several deep partnerships they were able to get a long-term lease of an old youth detention facility to operate a Therapeutic Recovery Community. The problem was that the facility needed extensive and expensive renovations to make it look, feel, and operate like a home, not a jail.

They partnered with HeroWork to save hundreds of thousands of dollars on a complex and wide-ranging renovation that now enables them to operate an innovative Therapeutic Recovery Community that, we believe, will become a new model of treatment in Canada.



“Over 50% of charities believe that a renovation will help them make a bigger difference.”

– HeroWork Needs Assessment Survey 2017

2. Infrastructure Challenges Faced by Charities

With the exception of housing, charitable social infrastructure isn't even included in the definition of Canada's Core Public Infrastructure*. For this and other reasons, many organizations are left to fend for themselves without proper knowledge and expertise to manage or renew their buildings.

In Phase 2 of our study, we brought many charities together to discuss their infrastructure and learn first-hand about their challenges.

During this forum all of the 23 organizations who attended recognized the importance of infrastructure renewal and its power to propel forward their missions and visions. However, most lacked the experience and/or capacity to engage in the process of renewal.

More often than not, the best they could manage were band-aid solutions.

What these charities told us confirmed our on-the-ground experience of working with many charities to renew their buildings. In a nutshell here's the challenges we heard:

- A lack of capacity regarding internal preparedness for infrastructure renewal.
- A lack of fiscal capacity to undergo renewal.
- A lack of capacity and knowledge regarding best practices on how to engage elements of the "system" connected to infrastructure. Industry elements of this system include funders, construction professionals, financial sector, governments, etc.
- A need for professional development and increased capacity so that charities can embark on a renewal journey, which could involve a range of renewal options, not just renovations.

3. How HeroWork Can Help

We listened deeply to these challenges faced not only by those charities in need of a comprehensive renovation (HeroWork's mandate), but also by charities looking at other options: selling their current building and purchasing a different one; re-developing their current property by building a purpose-designed structure on the existing land; or purchasing/leasing a building for the first time.

To assist this wide array of conditions, we organized a Phase 3 "system's approach" forum.

We gathered 40 leaders from 6 industries (charities, real estate, funders, construction, government, and financial) who lent us their voices and experience. We then combined this plethora of information with HeroWork's knowledge and research to develop a **Guide for Charity Infrastructure Renewal**.

Freely available to any charity, this guide is meant to be a road map for the journey, helping to develop internal and external capacity to manage infrastructure change.

In addition, HeroWork is working to scale out our program from Victoria BC and into many towns and cities across Canada. From 2020 to 2025 we will test our program by replicating our program in two new cities in the lower mainland of BC, learning and iterating our systems and approaches.

After this testing phase, we are planning to scale much more quickly, empowering groups to come to us, providing the training and the systems for leveraged replication.

* Source: Canada's Core Public Infrastructure Survey. <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/ccpi-ipec-eng.html>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **GOVERNMENT SHOULD RECOGNIZE CHARITABLE INFRASTRUCTURE** as part of Canada's Core Public Infrastructure to be included in future study and funding.
2. The industries that work with charitable infrastructure should **BECOME MORE ENGAGED AND SUPPORTIVE**
3. **MORE STUDY SHOULD BE DONE** in other towns and cities, determining the depth of the challenges both quantitatively and qualitatively.
4. **CHARITIES SHOULD STRATEGICALLY INVEST** the resources internally and externally so that they are well prepared for infrastructure renewal.
5. HeroWork **SHOULD WORK DILIGENTLY TO SCALE ITS OPERATIONS** so as to assist many more communities across Canada.

RESOURCES

1

Full Report

Read the full report on the assessment on charitable buildings at

herowork.com/study

2

Charity Guide

Download the Guide for Charity Infrastructure Renewal at

herowork.com/study

3

Strategic Plan

Download the HeroWork Program's Strategic Plan at

herowork.com/strategic-plan





HEROWORK

RADICAL RENOVATIONS

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