

# 45 Years of Community

IN THE HEART OF PARKDALE SINCE 1980



**PARKDALE ACTIVITY-RECREATION CENTRE**  
ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2024-2025





## OUR MISSION

***A community where  
people rebuild their lives.***



## Our Vision

Everyone living with dignity and safety, with enough resources to explore and achieve their potential.

## Our Values

Respect | Dignity | Inclusion | Compassion  
Caring | Kindness | Trust

IN 2024-2025, THERE WERE...

85,238

MEALS SERVED

76,238

INTERACTIONS IN THE DROP-IN

189

INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED  
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

1500+

INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN DROP-IN

109

HOUSING UNITS

87

INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED  
WITH FINANCIAL  
TRUSTEESHIP

59

MONTHLY DONORS

30

INDIVIDUALS HOUSED  
VIA HOUSING ACCESS

20

INDIVIDUALS  
FOUND EMPLOYMENT

## LETTER FROM THE OUTGOING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year marks 45 years since the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre first opened its doors in 1980, created as a place where psychiatric survivors could find connection and dignity. Lovingly called “Parkdale’s living room,” PARC has grown into an organization that now provides meals, housing, employment, advocacy, and community for thousands of people each year.

Over the years, my messages in the Annual Report have often carried the same themes: an unrelenting housing crisis, rising mental health needs, deepening poverty, and now the toll of the overdose emergency. These systemic challenges are lived every day by our members, staff, and neighbours. Despite it all, PARC remains a place of stability and hope. Together, we have extended drop-in hours through the winter, expanded peer leadership in shelters, created new pathways to housing and employment, and deepened our commitment to equity and reconciliation. Each meal shared, each housing unit secured, each relationship built reflects the strength of this community.

Twenty-five years ago, in my first message as Executive Director, I spoke about the retrofit and renovation of 1499 Queen Street West, our only building at the time. I wrote: “Looking around today, it is almost impossible to remember the dark, smoky, stained place that was once called PARC. Every now and then, someone says that they liked it better before — and why not? Like a favourite pair of jeans, worn through and permanently stained, PARC fit. It wasn’t pretty but it was home to many, and it never had to worry about its appearance.”

Today, we can reflect once again on how far we’ve come: PARC now operates seven buildings with supports for tenants, owns five of them, and partners with the Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust and the City of Toronto to operate the remaining two. This is no small feat, and one I am proud to have been part of. Looking ahead, PARC continues to grow. The housing development at 11 Brock Avenue, with 42 new supportive housing units, is a sign of hope in a time of great need and continues our vision to build a community where everyone can live with dignity, safety, and belonging.

This is also a moment of transition. After many years, I am stepping down as Executive Director. It has been the privilege of my life to serve this community and witness the courage of our members, the dedication of our staff, and the generosity of our partners. PARC is more than an organization; it is a movement. I leave with deep gratitude and confidence in its future.

We are very pleased to welcome Barbara Domenech as PARC’s next Executive Director. She brings compassion, vision, and a strong belief in community-led solutions. With her leadership, and the strength of our members, staff, and Board, I know that PARC will move forward with renewed energy and purpose.

**Victor Willis**



## LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am honoured to join PARC as the new Executive Director and to be part of this extraordinary organization. What started as a volunteer-run safe space for people with mental health challenges has grown into a trusted multi-service organization that has grown to meet the needs of our members.

PARC has come a long way, overcoming systemic challenges throughout the years, and I'm deeply aware that I am stepping into this role at a time when our community is facing immense pressures. The housing crisis is worsening, mental health supports are stretched thin, and the impact of the ongoing overdose crisis is felt every day. Yet what strikes me most about PARC is the way we respond, with compassion, creativity, and a sincere respect for our members. Since joining PARC, I've seen firsthand the care and community between staff, members, and community partners, all working side by side to build solutions and support one another through these difficult times.

Looking ahead, I am excited about PARC's next significant milestone: the opening of 11 Brock Avenue, which will provide 42 supportive homes and strengthen our vision of a community where everyone can live with dignity and safety. I am grateful for the opportunity to build on the work that Victor and so many others have led, and to deepen PARC's commitment to equity, inclusion, and creating genuine opportunities for members to lead and shape our future.

Thank you for the warm welcome, and for all you do to make PARC a place where people can rebuild their lives. I look forward to building this next chapter together.

With gratitude,

**Barbara Domenech**



Uniquely made up of 50% member directors and 50% community directors, PARC's board brings together lived experience and community expertise. We sincerely thank all board members for the dedication, guidance, and invaluable perspective they bring to our organization.

### BOARD MEMBERS

**Andrea Hatala**  
**Annalisa Rasmussen**  
**Beryl-Ann Jacinta Mark**  
**Bettina Harrison**  
**Chris Smith**  
**Daniel Oyaro Omwamba**  
**Erin Leigh Stevens**  
**Hazel Jean Jackson**  
**Jeanette Finlay**  
**Richard Kieth Edwards**  
**Shannon Hirsch**  
**Silvia Samsa**  
**Sojie Tate**

# PARC's Strategic Plan Pillars

## REIMAGINE THE WAY WE WORK: LISTEN, COLLABORATE, CO-DESIGN

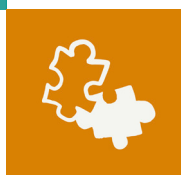
This year we continued building a culture where members and staff learn, lead, and celebrate together.

Teams embedded shared leadership into their work plans and created space to reflect on successes and collective growth.

## BUILDING OUR MEMBER COMMUNITY: OUTREACH, DELIVERY, ADVOCACY

PARC deepened engagement and trust with members by expanding access to supports, housing, and peer leadership including over 11,000 support interactions through Community Access, Case Management, and Housing teams, as well as expanded peer leadership in six shelters.

Drop-In initiatives like extended winter hours, dinner service, and meal cards strengthened inclusion and food security for members.



## STRENGTHENING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: QUALITY, SAFETY, COMMUNITY

This year saw a 25% increase in service interactions across our 109 units of supportive housing, the launch of the Tenant Advisory Committee, standardized leases, and evaluations through the Ontario Perception of Care survey.

Infrastructure upgrades like fire safety, outdoor furniture, and air conditioning supported tenant comfort and safety.

## EMBEDDING EQUITY AND RECONCILIATION: DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, HARM REDUCTION

Anti-Black racism and Indigenous history training for staff and board

Black History/Black Futures Month with speakers, performances, and shared meals

Pride parade participation with members and staff

Partnership with Niiwin Wendaanimak (Four Winds), bringing Indigenous-led programming to our new supportive housing site at 11 Brock.



# Celebrating 45 Years

## PARC THROUGH THE YEARS



1977

Community members establish PARC in response to deinstitutionalization.



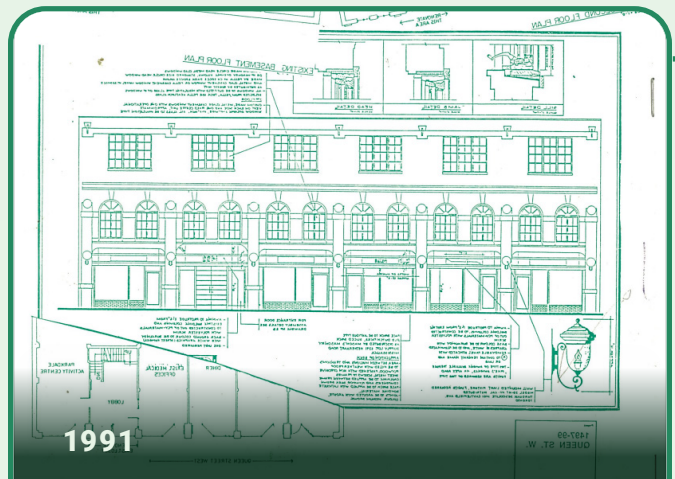
1980

PARC officially opens at 1499 Queen Street West as a pilot mental health program.



1983

Pat Capponi helps shift PARC to a member-led model; today, 50% of the Board are members.



1991

PARC purchases its building, securing a permanent home for its growing programs.



1996–1998

PARC advocates for housing after the death of Edmond Yu and a fatal fire at 1495 Queen Street West.



2007–2011

Edmond Place opens with 29 supportive housing units, honoring Edmond Yu's legacy.



2000

10 supportive housing units open at PARC; commercial space offered to nonprofits.



2024

PARC selected to operate 11 Brock Avenue, adding 42 new supportive homes.





# Programs Overview



## Drop-in Program

1,500 INDIVIDUALS SERVED  
76,238 INTERACTIONS  
85,238 MEALS IN SHARED SETTING

Our Drop-In Centre supports people experiencing mental health and substance use challenges, homelessness, poverty, and food insecurity. Last year, PARC welcomed hundreds of members for two daily meals and offered essential services like showers, emergency survival supplies and primary care support through our partnership with Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre. Our recreational activities continue to be an important touch point, with hundreds of members participating in music, writing, art, and physical activities, building connection and community.



***“To me, PARC is like a sanctuary. It’s a place for everyone to socialize, be together, and seek help—whoever needs it.***

It’s a fun space where you can feel comfortable with our ‘state of the heart’ staff, meet new friends, enjoy great meals, and be entertained. The live music makes the centre feel joyful and lively.”

– Himae, PARC member

## WINTER DROP-IN EXTENDED HOURS

With funding support from the City of Toronto, PARC extended its Drop-In hours through the winter months, staying open until 8 p.m. on weekdays from December to April. This expansion meant people without shelter had access to a safe and warm place during the coldest time of year.

Despite ongoing shelter shortages across Toronto, the extended hours offered our unhoused members a place to rest, recharge, and connect. Evening programming was also adapted to meet the unique needs of those visiting later in the day, creating more opportunities for support and community.

## COMMUNITY MEAL PROGRAM

PARC's Community Meal Program provides free, nutritious meals in a community setting to support both health and connection. Last year, we served 85,238 meals, helping reduce the effects of poverty and isolation. Our coffee bar offers warm drinks daily and connects volunteer members with peer employment opportunities. The kitchen also supports special events like PARCabana and our seasonal Solstice celebrations, bringing the community together around good food.

***"When someone sits down to eat something I've made, I want them to feel like they matter, because they do."***

- Tessa White, Kitchen Coordinator



## HARM REDUCTION

PARC's harm reduction program supports members who use substances through compassionate, non-judgmental care by providing counselling, referrals to recovery resources, and general support to help members navigate challenges safely. Members and staff can access naloxone training, and safer use kits, assembled by peers in our Kit Making Group, are available during Drop-In hours or by request at the front door of the Drop-In Centre to help reduce harm and save lives every day.



***"I connect with our community as both a professional and as someone who has lived experience with homelessness and addiction."***

That shared understanding helps me build real bonds and friendships that inspire people to take the next step toward a better life. This work is deeply personal to me. I love this job, and I want our members to have the same opportunities I've had."

- Patrick Brennan  
Harm Reduction Restorative Justice Worker



## Social and Recreational Activities

PARC's social and recreational activities run year-round, creating opportunities for members to connect, learn, and build community. From arts and culture to team sports, these programs provide meaningful ways for members to express themselves and build community.



- Art Group offers access to art supplies and a skilled instructor, where members can create their own artworks.
- Mindfulness Group provides weekly calming sessions for members to connect with themselves and reduce stress.



- PARC has been running seasonal team sports for decades, running a winter hockey program at McCormick Arena and a weekly soccer group from May to October at Sorauren Park.

- Writing Group meets weekly to explore storytelling, poetry, and self-expression.
- Knitting Group, run by one of our dedicated volunteers continues to meet every Saturday to work on knitting projects.



- Parkdale's Got Talent is a weekly Friday program where members can join each other in singing, playing instruments and dancing all afternoon.

*If you would like to donate supplies or equipment to any of our social and recreational programs, please reach out to [donations@parc.on.ca](mailto:donations@parc.on.ca)*



## Camp Cedar Ridge

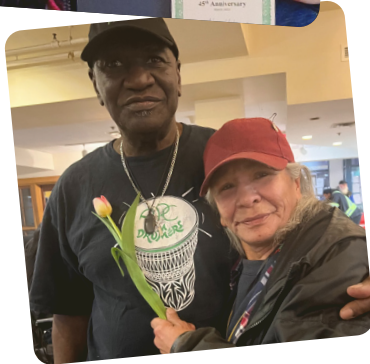
October 7–11, 2024, McArthur's Mills, ON

In October, 33 PARC members, along with 6 staff, attended our annual camping retreat with our first visit to Camp Cedar Ridge. This new location offered a more accessible and scenic setting, with a tranquil lakefront, cozy accommodations, and exclusive use of the entire camp. The longer stay meant more time to connect and rest and have a much-needed break from the city.

Throughout the five days, participants enjoyed a balance of structured activities, social connection, and restorative time in nature. Highlights included archery, kayaking, rock climbing, nature hikes, polar bear swims, and a breathtaking display of the Northern Lights. Members also participated in PARC-led programming like writing group, fishing, sunset walks, jam sessions, and a Talent Show & Camp Awards Banquet on the final night.







## Special Events and Activities

### 45TH ANNIVERSARY

This year marked 45 years since PARC opened its doors in Parkdale. What began in 1980 as “Parkdale’s living room” - a gathering place for psychiatric survivors experiencing isolation - has grown into a thriving community. On March 17, we celebrated this milestone with a full day of activities in our Drop-In with staff, members, and volunteers coming together to share memories, connect, and perform music and poetry. We were also honoured to receive a commemorative certificate from MPP Alexa Gilmour, recognizing PARC’s long-standing contribution to the community.

### OPEN HOUSE JANUARY 2025

As part of our commitment to community engagement, PARC hosted an Open House to highlight the work PARC, and its’ partners do to support individuals facing mental health and substance use challenges, poverty and homelessness. Supporters and community members were able to learn more about the great work from West Neighbourhood House, Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre, Parkdale Community Food Bank, and Working for Change, take some fun photos at the photo booth generously donated by The Memory Maker and enjoy refreshments from PARC’s incredible kitchen.



# Member Support Programs

## CASE MANAGEMENT

110 INDIVIDUALS SERVED  
7,800 INTERACTIONS

Intensive Case Management is for people with complex mental health challenges, providing counselling as well as connection to health services, stable housing, and benefits acquisition. In 2024–2025, the dedicated Intensive Case Management team supported members in many tangible ways, including securing a hospital stay for an elderly client living in a bus shelter, helping another avoid eviction through legal advocacy, and supporting a client turned away from many other services by arranging practical cleaning help.

## COLLABORATIVE CARE TEAM

79 INDIVIDUALS SERVED  
(65% INCREASE)

Collaborative Care provides flexible, trauma-informed support for people at risk of homelessness, focusing on housing stability and wellness. Last year, the team helped clients in a variety of ways from supporting with filing taxes more quickly by connecting with the 519 tax team, addressing hoarding concerns, and providing Russian language supports. Through trust they fostered with landlords, the team was able to slow down several eviction processes, giving tenants needed stability.



***“PARC has been there for me when no one else was.***

I first came here many years ago during a really hard point in my life. And PARC helped me then, and still does now, especially from the case management. Ally and Max have both been there for me and helped me through some really rough times.”

- Debbie, PARC member and volunteer

## MONEY MATTERS FINANCIAL TRUSTEE PROGRAM

87 INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Money Matters supports financial stability and housing retention for people at risk of homelessness. Through voluntary trustee banking, members get help managing money, paying bills, and avoiding eviction while working toward independent banking. Money Matters also offers financial literacy workshops on budgeting, debt management, and planning, available for both PARC members and through Streets to Homes referrals. This past year, we deepened our partnership with the Ontario Public Guardian and Trustee, strengthening support for members with complex needs.



## COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM (CAP)

296 INDIVIDUALS SERVED

3,636 SERVICE INTERACTIONS

The Community Access Program (CAP) is a partnership between PARC, Sistering, and West Neighbourhood House that helps people navigate healthcare, housing, mental health, and legal systems with compassion and advocacy. Funded by the Ministry of Health, CAP focuses on people experiencing homelessness, particularly those in shelters, by making care easier to access and reducing reliance on emergency services by providing one-on-one support for appointments, advocacy, and cross-agency coordination, with growing collaboration with Indigenous-focused services like Anishnawbe Health Centre.

## PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

1,078 INDIVIDUALS SERVED

707 BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT

435 UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS

ATTENDED PEER LED GROUP PROGRAMMING

Delivered by peer workers with lived experience, the program helps shelter residents build connections, gain stability, and access essential services. The program has expanded to six shelter sites, embedding peer-led support directly within the shelter system and providing consistent, on-site guidance. Programming this year included gardening, cultural nights, cooking programs, writing groups, and skill development workshops.





## EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

51 INDIVIDUALS SERVED  
20 FOUND EMPLOYMENT

PARC's Employment Support Program helps members facing barriers to work through job coaching, skills training, and supported placements in PARC's kitchen and maintenance teams. Members gain practical experience and take part in workshops on health and safety, resumes, interview skills, goal setting, vision boards, and more. The program also addresses challenges like digital literacy and transportation, providing the support members need to succeed.

One participant shared, "I learned a lot of new skills. The PARC facilitator was very involved, has heart, and has the best interest of everyone attending the workshop. I was able to sharpen my interview skills, and a better version of myself came out of the workshop."



*"Seeing people believe in themselves again is the greatest reward."*

- Donna Lee,  
Employment Facilitator

## MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

26 REGISTERED VOLUNTEERS  
PROVIDING 40+ VOLUNTEER  
HOURS A WEEK

Each day, member volunteers help create a welcoming environment by greeting members at our reception, serving meals, providing hot cups of coffee, leading activities, or just checking in with other members. Member volunteers receive on-the-job training, goal-setting support, and mentorship that helps them build skills and paths to employment. In December, we hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Event to honour our dedicated member volunteers for their contributions throughout the year and show our appreciation for the commitment, hard work, and positive impact our volunteers bring to the community every day.



# Housing Access & Supportive Housing

## Housing Access

174 INDIVIDUALS SERVED, 27 HOUSED,  
ASSISTED 51 PEOPLE WITH HOME SET UP

PARC's Housing Access Program provides hands-on, low-barrier support to help members navigate the housing system, connect to needed resources, and secure safe, affordable homes. This dedicated team help members with finding housing, waitlist applications, landlord mediation, and move-in support as well as connecting them to other essential services. Last year, the program successfully housed 30 individuals and supported others to stabilize in their new homes. New partnerships, including with Furniture Bank, strengthened move-in supports and despite ongoing challenges like landlord discrimination, limited housing benefits, and Rent Bank eligibility restrictions, Housing Access continues to help members find stability and safety.

## Supportive Housing

109 UNITS, 6 NEW TENANTS,  
8 TENANT MEETINGS,  
15 TENANT COMMUNITY EVENTS,  
10,464 SERVICE INTERACTIONS  
WITH TENANTS

PARC's supportive housing program provides 109 deeply affordable units across multiple sites for people living with mental health and substance use challenges. Guided by a Housing First approach, the program offers permanent housing and individualized support from Housing Support Workers including move-in assistance, orientations, navigating income support, health care, crisis response, and community services. This year, to increase transparency, we relaunched a streamlined lease agreement across all units, making lease terms clear, fair, and centred on tenant stability.

Tenants can now participate in the Tenant Advisory Committee to share concerns, provide input, and collaborate on solutions.

## Parkdale Property Management

Parkdale Property Management, a social enterprise at PARC, manages and maintains all 109 supportive and affordable housing units across PARC's seven buildings. In 2024–2025, PPM welcomed three new staff into stable employment, creating pathways for individuals facing barriers to work. As PPM expands to manage new properties like 11 Brock Avenue, it will continue ensuring safe, affordable homes in Parkdale.



STAFF PROFILE  
**Karl Brown**

**Karl Brown** joined Parkdale Property Management (PPM) as a cleaner in 2024, supporting PARC's buildings by maintaining washrooms, kitchens, and common areas. He brings a thoughtful perspective to his work and in addition to his cleaning role, he volunteers twice a week at the Drop-In reception, helping connect members to services. He sees the challenges people face every day and feels proud to be part of the ecosystem that helps meet those needs.

***"I value my job at PARC knowing I contribute to helping change people's lives."***

- Karl Brown, PPM Cleaner





## Housing Developments

In 2024, PARC was chosen by the City of Toronto as the community housing partner to lease and operate the new development at 11 Brock Avenue. This project will create 42 rent-geared-to-income and supportive homes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. In December 2024, we marked a major milestone with the official groundbreaking, joined by Mayor Olivia Chow, City Councillor Gord Perks, and award-winning architects SVN, signaling the start of construction using the City's Public Developer Delivery model, which speeds up the creation of affordable housing on City-owned land. The building will offer private apartments alongside shared spaces for services to support residents and build community. We're proud to keep advancing this important work and excited to welcome more people into safe, supportive housing as the housing crisis continues to grow.







# PARC in the Community

## United Way Engagement Tours

As a United Way anchor agency, PARC has proudly led regular walking tours for United Way staff and donors to give them a first-hand look at how community-based responses are addressing poverty, housing instability, and mental health in Parkdale. In 2024–25, we hosted four tours with CIBC, BMO, National Bank Financial, and Interac, each guided by Executive Director Victor Willis. For some participants, it was their first time seeing the realities of poverty, housing precarity, and community care in Parkdale up close. These tours offer a meaningful opportunity to connect across sectors, build stronger relationships, and reinforce PARC's role as a trusted leader in the sector.

## Delta Bingo with Rotary Club of Parkdale-High Park-Humber

In 2024, we re-established a valued partnership with the Rotary Club of Parkdale-High Park-Humber to generate revenue for PARC through Delta Bingo Downsview, part of a broader partnership with the Ontario Charitable Gaming Association (OCGA) and Delta Bingo to support local not-for-profits across Ontario. Since the relaunch, we've grown and supported our volunteer team, helping secure reliable program revenue. We are especially grateful to William Leblanc, one of our most dedicated volunteers, whose consistency and enthusiasm make a real difference.

Thank you to the Rotary Club of Parkdale-High Park-Humber for this opportunity and your support.





**INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

Aadila Valiallah  
 Adrian Butler  
 Alan Ott  
 Alan Trumble  
 Alex Engel  
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 Andrea Merrick  
 Andrew Rosen  
 Angelo Colussi  
 Anna La  
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 Thomas Canning  
 Travis Perraton  
 Trevor Harren  
 Tristram Pym

Victor Galleguillos  
 Victor Willis  
 Vivian Pelkonen  
 Wai Ming Fong  
 Yuly Cardona

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 DTAH  
 Grocery Coffee  
 Homeless Connect  
 Toronto  
 Larry's Place  
 Letterbox Doughnuts  
 Mary Jacqueline  
 Rosevear Fund  
 Roncesvalles  
 Macdonell Residents'  
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 Parkdale-High Park-  
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 The Rhino  
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 United Food &  
 Commercial Workers  
 United Way Waterloo  
 Region Communities  
 Vancity Community  
 Foundation  
 Y&Y Contracting

**DONATIONS IN KIND**

Mabel's  
 Parkdale Home  
 Hardware  
 A&W  
 Subway  
 Full Worth  
 Al's Fruit Market  
 Longo's

# Thank You to Our Funders

## MAX AND SARAH FINE

For Max and Sarah, supporting PARC is about investing in the neighbourhood they call home. “We’ve always believed in supporting the community you live in,” they share. “It quickly became clear that PARC was one of the organizations doing positive grassroots work.” Giving back is not new to Max, whose family started a foundation when he was younger. “What really stuck with us about PARC is the focus on housing and the welcoming environment they create. It felt personal and aligned with what we care about.”

Their giving philosophy is rooted in their local community. “Once we learned about the needs here in Parkdale, it was clear PARC was responding in a thoughtful and effective way. That made it an easy decision to get involved.”

Housing work especially resonates with them. “We see housing as more than just safety. It’s the base you build a life from. We hope our support helps strengthen the sense of safety and stability PARC offers. At the end of the day, we just want our neighbours to feel secure and supported in their community.”



## GOVERNMENT FUNDERS



## FOUNDATION FUNDERS

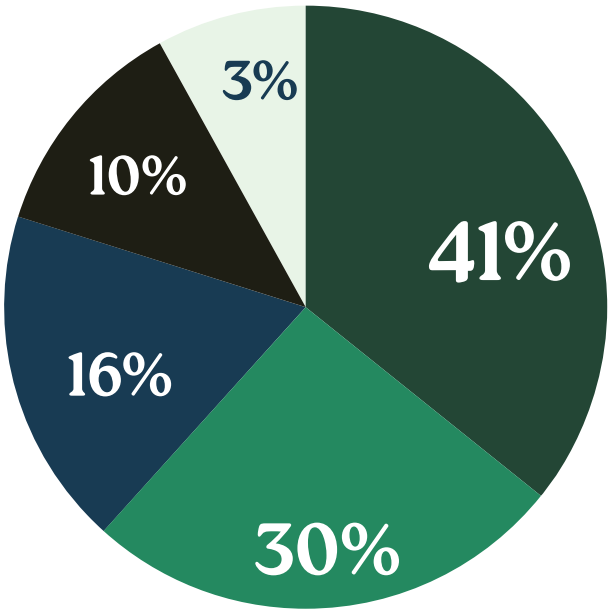


An agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

# Financial Report

The graphs represent the combined statements of operations for all PARC programs and services excluding capital activity and depreciation.

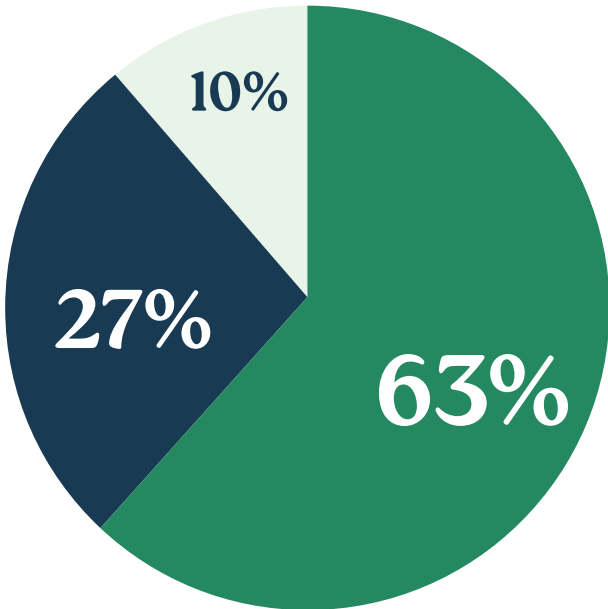
**OPERATING REVENUES**  
\$7,824,201



**REVENUES**

- 41% City of Toronto
- 30% Ontario Health (OH) / Ministry of Health (MOHLTC)
- 16% Rents, Subsidies (additional 10.4% in subsidies included with MOH & City)
- 10% Foundations, Grants, Donations
- 3% Small Grants, Sales, and Other

**OPERATING EXPENSES**  
\$7,823,344



**EXPENSES**

- 63% Direct Programming
- 27% Residential, Program and Commercial Facilities
- 10% Program Support, Resource Development, Admin





@parctoronto  
www.parc.on.ca



SCAN HERE  
TO DONATE

## In Remembrance

We honour the members we have lost this year. Their presence, their stories, and the connections they shared with others have left a lasting mark on our community and they will not be forgotten. Their loss is a painful reminder of the

disproportionate challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness and mental health crises. Homeless women in Toronto now face a median age of death of just 36, and homeless men often pass in their 50s or early 60s, far below the general population. We mourn these premature losses and remain dedicated to our vision of everyone living with dignity and safety.