



**Redwood Park
Communities**

Hope Through Housing.



IMPACT REPORT

2022-2023



FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

I recently walked into the main office of Redwood and happened upon a staff meeting that was in progress. I stood for a moment and listened to the laughter and conversation that was taking place around the rather large circle and couldn't help but think back to our humble beginnings.

In those early days, there were no paid staff and not nearly enough people to do everything we felt was needed to make a difference in our city.

We had big dreams and a lot of passion, but we weren't even sure if we would ever get to see our first units completed and welcome our first residents to their new homes, let alone imagine what Redwood would become.

Redwood has undoubtedly grown since those early days, and the impact we have had on Simcoe County is significant.

We have not only continued to open new units and welcome new residents into safe, affordable, hopeful housing, but we have been able to help furnish those units, find long-term housing for our friends, and even help and encourage other organizations in this work as well. It is exciting to see how we have grown, and to look forward to developing new ideas and opportunities.

Being a part of Redwood has been one of the most significant, enriching, and humbling experiences of my life, and I feel privileged to continue to serve my community in this way.

NATHAN BARNES
CHAIR OF THE BOARD



UNDERSTANDING THE NEED



Between February 2020 and February 2022, housing prices in Barrie **increased 86%**. (BDAR Report)



This puts **pressure on the rental market**, which is loosely regulated meaning housing can be precarious. The average 1-bdrm apartment in Barrie is \$1750.



This, along with other factors, has led to an **increase in homelessness**. Shelters are at or above capacity, and encampments have become commonplace.



The longer people experience homelessness, the more trauma they experience, and the more **supports** they will require to recover.



Many people aged into chronic (long-term) homelessness in shelter during the pandemic and now **require significant supports** to transition into housing in a sustainable way.



A recent audit of Simcoe County's Homelessness Service System noted that the **lack of supportive housing options** makes it very difficult for people to exit our homeless system once they are in it.



Safe, affordable, hopeful housing in supportive community is needed!





LOOKING FORWARD: OUR 2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

We create safe, affordable, hopeful housing where people thrive in supportive community.

VISION

A hope-filled community where everyone has a place to call home.

VALUES

Community

We believe that the opposite of homelessness is community. Fostering supportive community is the heart of our work.

Hope

We believe hope is life. We are committed to fostering hope and supporting people to live fulfilled lives.

Solidarity

We believe in walking alongside people to support them in meeting their immediate needs today while working toward the future they envision.

Innovative Leadership

We believe in championing innovative solutions that create housing and benefit community.

3 STRATEGIC PLAN PILLARS



Create Attainable & Sustainable Housing & Supportive Communities

1. Increase the number of affordable housing units across the spectrum.
2. Expand Redwood's geographic presence.
3. Strengthen the engagement and interconnectedness of our community.



Develop Dynamic Economic Opportunities

1. Maintain & expand job skills and employment opportunities.
2. Create more affordable housing.



Utilize Innovative Financial Tools to Ensure Sustainability

1. Diversify from a donor/fundraising paradigm to centre around a community "investment" focus.
2. Take action to invite others to join us.



REDWOOD PARK COMMUNITIES

**Creating safe, affordable, hopeful
housing where people thrive in
supportive community.**

2022-2023 HIGHLIGHTS

85 People Housed!

6 New Units Opened!

156 Homes Furnished!

24 People Employed!



Construction Kick-Off for the Family
Short-Term Supportive Housing Centre!



Expanded into Orillia and Midland!



First build using shipping containers!



LUCY'S PLACE

Open in 2019, Lucy's Place is owned by the County of Simcoe. Redwood Park Communities operates the property, and the Busby Centre provides 24/7 on-site support and case management.

One highlight this year was the opening of **6 new units created using shipping containers!** This brings the total capacity at Lucy's Place to twenty-four spaces that are offered to people who have been experiencing chronic homelessness in our community. This year, Lucy's Place was home to **32 individuals**.

Rent at Lucy's Place is deeply subsidized through government funding and through Redwood's community donors.

Another highlight this year was offering residents the opportunity to come to the Furniture Bank and volunteer in the Upcycling Workshop.

At Christmas, Busby staff prepared a wonderful Christmas dinner in the common space. This inspired a few residents to take on the project of refinishing a large dining table and bringing it back to Lucy's Place for community meals. After months and months of reduced community-building opportunities because of COVID precautions, it was beautiful to see residents find purpose and pride in this project.



UNITED HOUSE

This year, United House was home to **14 women and their 25 children** through a partnership with the Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie for referrals and ongoing support.

Redwood's Community Support Team supports our friends living at United House. This team includes a United House Team Lead, Housing Workers, a Counsellor, and Peer Support Workers, as well as a summer student Children's Program Coordinator.

In addition to the support the women receive from our staff and volunteers, we see the families connect and support one another, sharing meals, watching each other's children, and offering each other rides. It's a great reminder of the power of supportive community.

In 2022-23, we saw one mom get her citizenship, which means she now receives the child tax credit for her four kids and can work. This financial stability led to finding permanent market rent housing.

Two moms obtained their permanent residency. One is in the process of obtaining Canadian citizenship and building her resume, and the other graduated high school and is now pursuing post-secondary education. Moms were supported through difficult legal challenges, sobriety goals, furthering their education, starting new jobs, family reunification processes, and accessing dental care and speech therapy for their children. We were also able to connect our friends to cultural supports with groups in the community.



SECOND SUITES

Since 2014, Redwood Park Communities and Community Builders have partnered to provide safe and affordable housing for low-income individuals and families by installing second suites in the homes of proactive property owners.

Our Second Suites are legal, self-contained rental units within a single dwelling house. Second Suites provide tenants with affordable rental options in neighbourhood settings, while also generating rental income for homeowners. Redwood leases the apartment from the homeowner, selects the tenants, and supports them in their tenancy and in connecting to additional supports in the community as needed.

In the fall of 2022, we moved away from offering our Second Suites apartments to

women and children on social assistance. This reflects the steep increase in rental prices while social assistance rates have not kept up.

Some of our Second Suites were used in an agreement with The Salvation Army for the families they support. The rest are now for people in paid trades training and employment programs, to ensure they have stable housing to support them in completing their training. It also gives them a year of supportive property management and a chance to get a strong landlord reference.

We are excited to be able to pivot this program to help another group of people who need affordable rent and a bit of support in order to thrive.



JUBILEE HOUSE

Jubilee House is Redwood's newest property, but it has been providing supportive housing to women and their children in Orillia since 2000 under Couchiching Jubilee House, which joined Redwood in February of 2023.

This year, **4 women and their 9 children** lived at Jubilee House, and another **17 women and their 25 children** were supported through the Outreach Program. This included the distribution of 177 Good Food Boxes and 58 bus passes and the facilitation of 37 different life skill programs.

After a long stay at Jubilee House, one of our residents, along with her two children, found permanent safe housing. Our team has stayed in touch and she is sustaining her housing and has started a new job!

With a new Jubilee House Team Lead hired in January, Jubilee House offers a warm and welcoming space in the Common Room where women and children can gather to enjoy meals and special activities. Residents can drop in to grab a coffee, use a laptop, or when they just need a break.

Redwood's property management team has also been able to make some improvements at the house, making over an apartment between residents, sorting out waste removal, and completing some general repairs and upgrades.

We are so pleased to build on the good work and reputation of Couchiching Jubilee House as we establish a presence in Orillia to help meet the affordable housing needs of the community.



FAMILY SHORT-TERM SUPPORTED HOUSING CENTRE

We are partnering with The Salvation Army to build a Family Short-Term Supportive Housing Centre: a two-storey building with 12 fully furnished, two bedroom apartments for families in crisis.

This project has been a long time in the making, but in June 2022 we were finally able to celebrate the beginning of construction and a \$500,000 commitment from The Salvation Army of Ontario.

In October 2022, the Government of Canada announced their federal investment in this project, contributing nearly \$1.4 million through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF).

In addition, the City of Barrie is contributing just over \$420,000 in development fee grants.

Redwood is raising the remaining \$2.1 million needed through the generosity of the community.

Construction progressed throughout the year, and it is getting easier and easier to picture the first families moving in, hopefully by the end of 2023. Each week, we receive calls from families who are desperately looking for a safe place to live following eviction as the rental market becomes more and more volatile. This project will help meet a great need in our community.



FURNITURE BANK

Approximately 4500 Simcoe County residents enter housing with little or no furniture each year. This furniture poverty is an often overlooked barrier to social inclusion, a sense of security, and hope for tomorrow.

Redwood's Furniture Bank opened in 2019 as a collaboration with the Furniture Bank in Toronto, Furniture Link, and Jeff's Junk to meet this need.

Since then, our team and our reach have grown so much! Our combined growth in donations and clients is 70% annually. In 2022, we increased our reach to Midland in partnership with CLH Developmental Support Services.

We're grateful for grants and support from United Way, the Rotary Club, the County of Simcoe, and our monthly Furniture Bank patrons to help us provide this important service.

In 2022-23:



40 referring agencies
across the county



156 households served
(326 people)

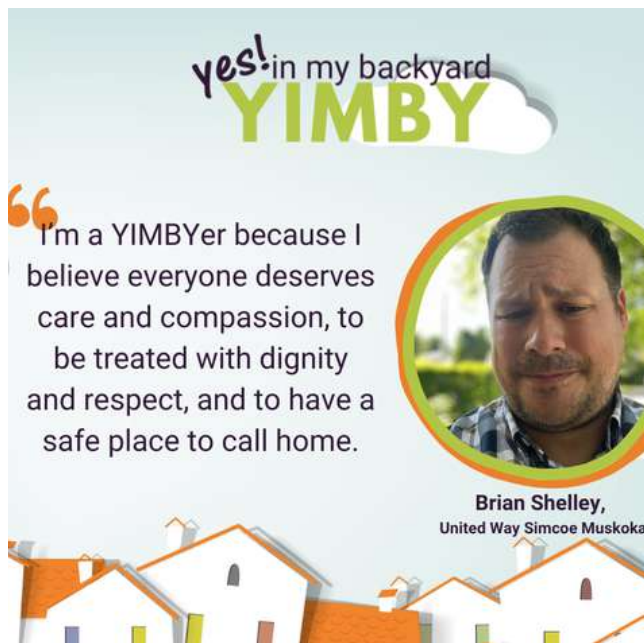


\$181,820 savings in
waste management
costs for the city by
diverting **40,663 cubic**
feet of furniture from
landfill



2721 items donated by
228 different donors

FURNITURE BANK
powered by  Redwood Park Communities



THE YIMBY PROJECT

YIMBY stands for "Yes In My Back Yard" and it is a movement that has risen up in cities all over the world to combat NIMBYism, or "Not In My Back Yard."

We're on a mission to create lots of affordable housing, and we want to help our neighbours know that when everyone in our city has a safe, affordable, hopeful place to call home, the entire community benefits.

In June 2022, we celebrated our 4th annual YIMBY Week, with flag-raising events in both Barrie and Orillia.

Our campaign also included lawn signs, social media, and an online YIMBY panel discussion in collaboration with YIMBY Guelph-Wellington.

In the lead-up to provincial and municipal elections, we chose a theme of "Housing For All" to share how we all benefit from intensification compared to sprawl: better housing affordability, healthier communities that are less car-dependent, and less tax burden on current residents, to name just a few!

Expanding the YIMBY project was identified as an opportunity in our strategic plan for 2023-2025, so we are working on what expanding both geographically and beyond YIMBY Week might look like. Stay tuned!

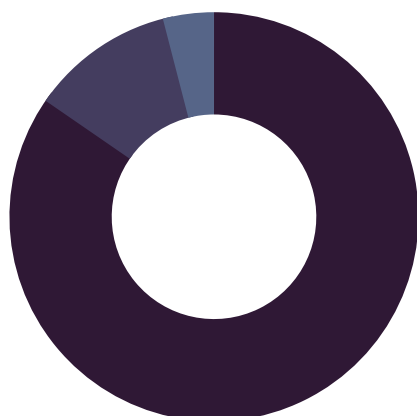
REVENUE SOURCES



Revenue:

Donations	315,835
Fundraising	145,102
Grants & Government Funding	585,058
Earned Income	730,649
Restricted Capital	1,645,113
Total	\$3,421,757

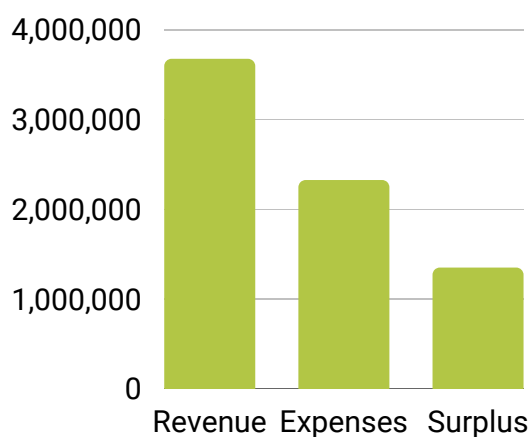
EXPENSE CATEGORIES



Expense:

Charitable Activities	1,560,465
Management & Admin	188,429
Fundraising Costs	51,736
Total	\$1,800,630

OPERATING REVENUE/EXPENSES



The \$1.6m difference between operating revenue and expenses is invested into capital projects and unit creation.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Construction in 2023-24:

3

three units under construction next door to United House, allowing us to expand our housing and supports for women and their children fleeing violence from 5 to 8. Planned completion: September 2023

6

six units under construction at Ayub's House, providing 2 3-bedroom apartments of shared affordable housing options for men in trades training programs. Opening in November 2023.

12

twelve units under construction at 153 Lillian Crescent for families in crisis in a partnership with The Salvation Army. Planned completion: December 2023.

Planning & Other Growth in 2024 and beyond:



Launching **Redwood Industries**, our Social Enterprise Department to fund our mission while creating new opportunities to connect, create, and contribute.



Expanding the **YIMBY Project** across Simcoe County and beyond!



Introducing our **Redwood Community Investment Bond** offering, providing a new way to invest in local affordable housing solutions.

We have a lot on the go and are thrilled with the ongoing support of our dedicated community - that includes donors, volunteers, and investors who are making a lasting, positive difference in their community.

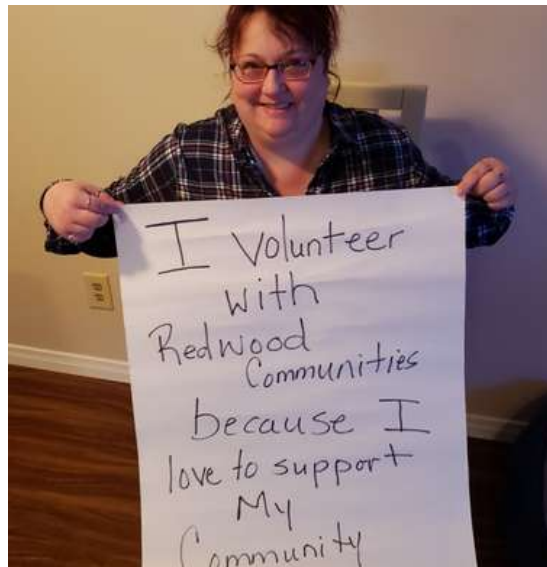
If you are interested in more information about Redwood Community Investment Bonds, please connect with us at invest@redwoodparkcommunities.com.

If you are interested in volunteering with us, please email volunteer@redwoodparkcommunities.com.

THANK YOU

Redwood runs on the support of our community - it is your giving, volunteering, and encouragement that makes all of this possible.

Thank you for recognizing that everyone deserves a safe, affordable, hopeful place to call home, and for trusting us to help you achieve this goal.





Board of Directors

Nathan Barnes - President & Board Chair

Amanda Smith - Treasurer

Jeff Long - Secretary

Mark Mulder - Board Member

Michael Ladouceur - Board Member

Tanya Taylor Ladd - Board Member

Leadership Team

Tim Kent - Co-Founder & CEO

Rhonda Kent - Co-Founder & Director, Housing & Supportive Community

Jennifer van Gennip - Director, Communications & Advocacy

Pieter Kiezebrink - Director, Tangible Assets & Risk Management

Anna Sedore - Managing Director, Furniture Bank



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