



FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
the place to connect



ANNUAL REPORT

*AUGUST 1ST 2020
TO JULY 31ST 2021*

Annual General Meeting
October 18th, 2021

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TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association is on the unceded Coast Salish Territories, specifically of the Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ Peoples.

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FGCA VISION STATEMENT

Fairfield Gonzales is a connected, collaborative, inclusive, welcoming, and sustainable community.

*PEOPLE WHO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE:
DON MONSOUR*



Don Monsour

If you mention Don Monsour in Victoria's non-profit circles, most people will know his name. Don is a tireless volunteer who consistently serves on multiple boards of directors and advisory committees, including his current roles at C-Fax Santas Anonymous, Nature Trails Society, Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Society, the Wilkinson Prison Citizen Advisory Board, **the Canadian Culinary Chefs Association, BC Food Safe Board, BC Transit's Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee, and many more.** Don also currently chairs the Victoria Community Association Network, which advocates for community associations across Victoria. We have been lucky to have Don serve the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association as President for the past six years. Don has led the Board through many successes, challenges, and transitions during this time. He led the Board through the transition from our Executive Director of 19 years, Joan Kotarski, to current Executive Directors Kristina Wilcox and Vanya McDonell. During his time the Board updated its bylaws and constitution to comply with the new BC Societies Act and with our obligations as a charity. Under his leadership the Board has created new committees to tackle neighbourhood improvement and climate change, and several task forces to improve the governance of the FGCA and to connect better with our community.

Don always makes himself available to staff, directors, and the wider community to talk about their hopes, concerns, and issues that matter to them. As Don moves into his new role as Past President, we want to thank him for his leadership as President over these past six years, and his amazing service to Fairfield Gonzales!



EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Vanya McDonnell

Kristina Wilcox

The 2020-21 year continued to send us challenges and surprises. The ongoing global pandemic required patience and constant adaptation, but our work providing care, community, and connection to the neighbourhood was rewarding and enriching. We have framed our report with the four strategic priorities that the Board of Directors passed this year: People, Place, Process, and Programs.

People are the underlying force behind all of our work. People are why we do what we do, and they are how we get it done. In 2020-21 we supported people in Fairfield Gonzales in a myriad of ways: quality childcare for families, counselling for struggling children, food for those who need it, outreach for at-risk youth, and recreation for physical health. We connected community members with decision-makers through our land use meetings and town hall event. We even celebrated in the small way that we could in September 2020 with our Tiny Fall Fairfield event!

Place reflects the importance of our connection to the land and the unique character of Fairfield and Gonzales. We are all united in our gratitude for the places where we are privileged to live, work, and play, on these unceded traditional territories of the Lekwungen speaking peoples. The work of the Neighbourhood Improvement, Climate Action, Community Association Land Use, and Community Garden Committees helps to steward this land for current and future generations.

Process ensures that we do our work in a good way. This means reflecting our values of inclusion, integrity, equity, connection, collaboration, and diversity in everything we do. It also means practicing good governance. This year we updated our constitution and bylaws, an important part of making sure that we are staying on track and fulfilling our obligation to create public good.

Programs, services, and projects are the way we fulfil our mission. Despite the impacts of COVID-19, we were able to offer close to a full slate of services to our community throughout the year, with minimal disruption. We were even able to open a new program, Huckleberry Infant-Toddler Care, in the midst of it all, providing a vital and much-needed service for new families.

As we look ahead, we are filled with hope. The pandemic has taught us many lessons and enabled **some rapid and positive change. We've discovered that we can adapt very quickly to respond to collective challenges, and we've found new ways to organize and mobilize community action.** We want to thank our members, Board, staff, and clients for each of their contributions to our community this year!



Kristina Wilcox and Vanya McDonnell, Executive Directors

BOARD & COMMITTEES

*GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
FGCA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
VICTORIA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NETWORK
STREETLIFE COMMITTEE
COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE
NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE
PLACE COMMITTEE
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION LAND USE COMMITTEE*

BOARD MEMEBERS WHO SERVED IN 2020/2021

*JOANNA FOX
SCOTT DAVIS
QUINN FLETCHER
LINDSAY HERRIOT
MICHAEL HIRSCH
DAVID MOLINSKI
DON MONSOUR
ANNA PHELAN
CHRIS REED
BRYAN ROWLEY
DAVID THOMPSON
JENNIFER MATTHEWS
BRIAN VATNE
PATRICIA WARD
JULIA WARREN*

The Board of Directors consists of up to 14 members at any one time. Board members serve two year terms and are elected each year at the AGM by the membership. Board members bring a broad range of perspective and expertise to the FGCA, and provide governance and leadership to the organization. Board members also participate in community development through committee work.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its legal, ethical, and functional responsibilities by recommending Board policies and practices. This year the Governance Committee also took on Strategic Planning activities.

In 2020-21, the committee:

- Worked with executive directors to pass our strategic plan.
- Held a training session for board members on policy making in September 2020.
- Amended the bylaws to add Governance chair to the executive committee in April 2021.
- Amended the Constitution to make our purposes more specific in April 2021.
- Worked to establish a town hall committee; ran a successful first town hall meeting in May 2021.
- Added a financial priority that not only ensures responsible management of the **FGCA's finances, it also ensures FGCA board members will begin to spend some of the FGCA's reserved funding** - all to **fulfill the FGCA's strategic plans and goals.**
- Are redefining executive committee roles and role of past president (March 2021 - present).

FGCA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020-2025

People: Improve life for people in our community and our organization and empower them to contribute to their own and their respective **community's wellbeing.**

Place: Create and support vibrant, livable, beautiful, warm, safe spaces in the organization and in the broader community.

Process: Assess and improve our processes and practices, and ensure their ongoing alignment with our organizational values.

Programs, services, and projects: Deliver programs, services, and projects that are responsive to community needs, leverage community assets, and fulfil our vision, mission and purposes as a community association

VICTORIA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NETWORK (VCAN)

VCAN is a network of all of Victoria's Community Associations that meets regularly and does advocacy work on City issues. The VCAN is an important part of the neighbourhood associations in Victoria as it gives us a chance to discuss issues that affect all associations, have conversations with City staff and Council, and share best practices between our associations. The VCAN **appreciates and acknowledges the City's** past support and looks forward to continued cooperation.

STREETLIFE COMMITTEE

The Streetlife Committee fosters and supports the development and implementation of street, neighbourhood, and community-wide activities and initiatives **that reflect the Association's values and objectives.** This group of dedicated volunteers builds and strengthens community through participatory, collaborative, and inclusive practices to bring about safe, sustainable, lively and resilient neighbourhoods. The committee of eight members met monthly via zoom with occasional in person social gatherings.

Activities this year:

- Community Inspiration Map in December 2020
- Collaborated with a Treasure Hunt using our Community Inspiration Map in March 2021
- Discussed opportunities for using the **map with community in The City's** Community Engagement processes beginning in April 2021



The Food Forest during the snow fall in February

*COMMUNITY GARDEN
COMMITTEE
AND FAIRFIELD FOOD
FOREST*

The Fairfield Food Forest in Porter Park is a permaculture garden that grows perennial fruits, nuts, herbs and flowers. It is a commons- this means it is maintained by a group of dedicated volunteers and used by the community. The Food Forest is also a place of discovery for our Early Year programs, providing a space to encourage children and educators to explore and care for the forest.

In the fall of 2020, we planted garlic with some of the children attending the FGCA early years program. We seeded native flowers to support pollinator activity in the garden, and we continued to maintain pathways and mulch beds for the winter.

The Food Forest experienced a year of extreme weather from a record snowfall winter to scorching summer temperatures. These extremes show us the importance of healthy soil, leaf mulching, planting drought resistant plants, and supporting native plants to sustain our pollinators during harsh weather conditions.

COVID-19 Response:

At the Food Forest, we continue to find ways to support community connections, strengthen individual food security, and find creative ways to engage folks during the pandemic. This year we were able to support individuals through tours and private gardening sessions **as well as working with groups or “cohorts”** to maintain in the space while adhering to COVID protocols. One way we successfully achieved this was through more engagement with Sir James Douglas school, as the groups were large and able to do a lot of work but already identified as a cohort.

The Food Forest continues to support the city **wide food security program, “Get Growing, Victoria!”**. Our volunteers were able to participate in the program as growers, garden experts or volunteers distributing seedlings. This program continues to be an excellent way for folks to connect around their shared interest in growing food.

Although most of our work parties were cancelled, individuals continue to be welcomed at the Food Forest on their own or in their family bubble. New participants or interested community members are offered a physically distant orientation and communication via email.

- 100+ COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER HOURS
- 1,000 EARLY YEARS FOOD FOREST EXPLORATIONS
- 100+ NEWLY PLANTED NATIVE POLLINATOR PLANTS & SEEDS
- 20 VOLUNTEER HOURS

“My kids picked some goji berries to put on their french toast tomorrow. So appreciative for the Fairfield Food Forest!”

Andrea, Food Forest visitor

Garden Committee activities list:

- Fall Early Years Work Bees November 1 & 12, 2020
- Garden Tours ongoing
- Accessibility Audit February 1, 2021
- Winter Early Years Work Bees December 14, 2020
- Annual meeting Via Zoom February 23, 2021
- Spring pruning March 2021
- City of Victoria community leaf mulch & compost distribution April 17 2021
- David Suzuki Butterflyway Project May 2021
- Spring Early Years Work Bees April 15 & April 30, 2021
- Birdhouse installation April 2021
- Individual work sessions ongoing



Understory: A smorgasbord for birds, bees and curious observers! Calendula seeded by our Early Years program, Sea Blush and many flowers more to come. One of the best things about these prolific understory gardens is that they provide seed for neighbours to collect and sow in the fall. As we become stewards collecting and sowing native plant seeds in the community, we will create pollinator corridors.

NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Neighbourhood Improvement Committee addresses issues of social justice, environmental sustainability, the built environment, urban form, transportation, parks, and related matters so as to improve our neighbourhood. The committee met monthly on zoom, and addressed transportation, traffic calming, and built partnerships with community members working on improving their neighbourhood.

PLACE COMMITTEE

The Place and Programs Committee is an advisory committee that includes board members, staff, and members of the association to provide advice and guidance about FGCA programs, and the space we use for our programs. The Committee has provided advice to the FGCA Co-Executive Directors about ensuring that the organization has the space the organization needs to provide services and serve the community, in both the short and long-term. Ongoing efforts to examine possibilities are considered in relation to the organization's strategic goals. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the program updates relating to the pandemic were reported directly to the FGCA Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
LAND USE COMMITTEE (CALUC)

This report represents an approximation of the work the CALUC has done over the year.

The CALUC currently has seven members: Joanna Fox (Chair), David Molinski (Vice Chair), Dave Thompson, Owen Sieffert, Don Monsour and Kevin White. David Molinski stepped down from the CALUC and we thank him for his contributions and knowledge – he will be missed.

While CALUC preliminary/community meetings did pick up this past year, there were only five meetings (August, December, February, March, June) held due to less applicant activity.

Meetings were virtual via Zoom and included preliminary meetings to discuss the **applicant’s plans, and Community Meetings** that included site specific zoning, rezoning and variances.

Land use development applications spanned from new builds to garden suites, to modular classrooms at a local school. Community engagement was extensive for the multi-unit development on 902 Foul Bay and the addition of modular classrooms and a prefabricated **gymnasium tent at Glenlyon Norfolk School’s** Pemberton Woods campus. It should also be noted that most of the new developments continue to include appropriate bike storage, provisions for e-vehicle charging and heat pumps. Parking, traffic, tree-canopy preservation, and the development height continue to be main concerns for all developments.

The CALUC worked with the City, and other CALUCs, to ensure all notices of meetings included the provision of a virtual meeting, in addition to plans being posted on the development tracker and an opportunity for the community to provide feedback online for 30 days.

The CALUC continues to encourage applicants to engage with the community in order to get the best development possible for Fairfield Gonzales.

PROGRAMS

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE
CAMPS
HUCKLEBERRY INFANT &
TODDLER CENTRE
CAMAS EARLY YEARS
FAMILY PROGRAMS
MOSS ROCK PRESCHOOL
YOUTH
RECREATION

FAIRFIELD OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

Fairfield OSC offers 60 after school care spaces and 40 before school care spaces for Sir James Douglas School. Our three groups do weekly out trips in the local community, daily activities, crafts, and sports to meet the interests of the children in care. This past year, some highlights included football with our older group, a Harry Potter themed week with our middle **aged group, and frozen dinosaur “hatching eggs” with our youngest group.**

COVID-19 Response: This past year was much different from a typical year in OSC. We stayed close by the centre during our weekly out trips, our three groups did not engage or mingle with each other in their usual way, and we adapted our usual activities a better align with public health guidelines. Despite all this, we all pulled together to make it work!

99 CHILDREN REGISTERED
8 LEADERS

“What a great year it was despite all the challenges. Thank you to your team for showing up each day and making our kids afternoons memorable!”

Fairfield OSC Parent



Fairfield OSC participants crafting

MARGARET JENKINS OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

At MJ OSC we offer after school care spaces **for about 37 % of the school's population** and many families stay with us for multiple years. We strive to create a stimulating, warm, and engaging program that aims to meet each **kid's personal needs as much as possible**. The afternoons are filled with lots of outdoor play time, games, crafts, visits to nearby parks and beaches as well as group building activities. This year we had a very stable and fantastic team of leaders who made a difficult year into something incredibly fun to be a part of. Our oldest group developed and performed two plays, every group designed a group flag and we managed to hold our annual carnival. The children invented a new game called **"Laurenball", that still gets played every day!**

COVID-19 Response: Due to lower enrolment we closed one group and only had 104 spaces instead of the usual 119. For our day to day operation we had to change some of our routines in order to provide a safe environment. Children stayed in their cohorts and OSC groups did not mingle. Parents were not allowed in the buildings and picked up from the back doors. For our out trips, we stayed within walking distance to the school. Overall the children and leaders adapted very well to the new procedures and it was a successful year.

*111 CHILDREN REGISTERED
12 LEADERS*



Margaret Jenkins OSC participants

CAMPS

The FGCA hosts camp programs for Professional Development Days, Spring Break, as well as Summer Camp. While operating program during COVID, we elected to expand our Camps programs in order to support more children in a safe manner. Prior to this year, the FGCA supported 60 care spaces for Pro-D in which all students **from all programs gathered at 'The Place' and** were welcome to register. Within the context of an ongoing pandemic, we decided to offer Pro-D care at both locations, increasing our ability to offer care by 25% or 20 spaces. The decision to host on-site camps programs was extended to the Spring Break period where we again, offered care at two locations. This led to an increase of 100% registration as well as extended our capacity to offer much needed care to the community.

Once summer came around, we centralized the program and resumed hosting camps program at **'The Place'**. **Following the successes of the previous year's increase in capacity, we expanded the program by another 10 care spaces.** Continuing the trend of limiting our exposure to the community, we were very lucky to have many external activities come to us.

CAMAS EARLY YEARS CENTRE

Camas Early Years Centre offers full-time care to children aged 2.5-5 years. Predominantly focused on outdoor learning, we explore nature and the land. Camas is fortunate to be able to play and explore on the traditional lands of the Lekwungen & W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. Each day we pay gratitude to the opportunities we are presented with by being able to freely engage in this beautiful outdoor landscape. Camas has become a **deeply rooted program that fosters children's** experiences in nature, to allow experimentation, inquiry and collaborative learning, alongside the educators. Using the BC Early Learning Framework as our guide, educators offer responsive care. We re-imagine early childhood education together with children and remain open to the many ways of seeing our world. The FGCA had new custom-built cabinets in the Camas daycare mud room. Thank you Reeceworks Carpentry!

16 CHILDREN ENROLLED
3 STAFF
4 PRACTICUM STUDENTS

COVID 19 Response: The pandemic has presented a number of challenges in a number of ways, but what it has demonstrated to us all is that childcare is an absolute necessity. When Camas returned to normal operation in the summer of 2020, we provided the structure and security that families required to get through this uncertain year.



Camas participant

"We are grateful to Camas staff, and the broader FGCA community, for fostering a strong sense of community and connection with nature for our kids. Being part of Camas has made for smooth transitions to school for both our kids. Thank you!"

Camas Parent

HUCKLEBERRY INFANT-TODDLER CENTRE

Huckleberry Infant-Toddler Centre opened its doors in November 2020 as the youngest care ever offered by the FGCA, caring for children aged 10 months to 3 years. Not only does Huckleberry help to serve an underserved population, it provides another space for the families of our community to connect. As a feeder program, Huckleberry will be the beginning of a long community journey. Children will have the opportunity to attend care in the same community from the ages of 0 to 12 yrs. We believe strongly in a continuity of care as we have seen, first-hand, how it strengthens community. As they say- **"it takes a village to raise a child!"** The FGCA (in partnership with the City) was excited to complete the renovation of its multi-purpose family room into a new licensed daycare space complete with nap room and change room. An age appropriate playground was completed in the fall of 2020 to accommodate two daycares and a preschool. With the addition of a new daycare meant an increase in laundry needs which meant adding another washer and dryer to double our capacity. Thank you to the City for adapting the basement for the installation.

8 CHILDREN ENROLLED
3 STAFF
4 PRACTICUM STUDENTS



Huckleberry participants

“Finding Infant-Toddler care in Victoria is challenging and finding community driven, high-quality childcare with educators who demonstrate true passion and love is near impossible; however, we have found it! Being apart of a community of caring and nurturing individuals allows my son to flourish in these early development ages. We are forever grateful.”

Huckleberry Parent

FAMILY DROP INS

The primary goal of our Family programs is to support and engage primary caregivers and to foster a healthy family and community life. These affordable, often free, drop-in groups are perfect for making new connections for children, parents and caregivers and create opportunities for young families to learn together through social connection. Programs use a play-based learning practice using creative play and child-focused activities. In addition, time is provided for caregivers to connect in an uninterrupted environment.

COVID-19 Response: Given the nature of these programs, there was significant interruption for a large portion of the 2020-2021 year. While the programs started indoors in the fall, we quickly had to shift to outdoor and online programming. Drop-in outdoor based programming was offered to families as well as open, online interactive sessions.

OUTDOOR DROP IN

12 SESSIONS
67 PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
83 CHILDREN

“In addition to sharing stories and advice of common childcare struggles, it’s just nice to have an adult to talk to and relate with in a setting where my child is safe.”

Family Program Parent

MOSS ROCK PRESCHOOL

The Moss Rock Preschool is a licensed preschool that runs Monday to Friday from 9am until 1pm. The preschool offers 2-5-day registrations for children 2.5-5 years of age. Moss Rock strived to give its students and families an open, welcoming, safe space that respects individual values and nurtures exploration and learning.

Moss Rock is primarily an outdoor-focused emergent curriculum, which aims to foster a connection to the natural world, build confidence in the students own abilities, and **allow children's inherent inquisitive** nature to develop and grow, building the scaffolding for them to be successful in life and their future endeavours in school.

With the new challenges of running an early **year's** program during an ongoing pandemic the Moss Rock program focused on exploration in the natural space and in the community. Our many out trips in the community included locations such as our namesake Moss Rock, Gonzales Beach, Clover Point, and St. Ann's Academy. When the Moss **Rock program is in it's classroom they focus on** exploration through unstructured play and process art, where children can approach the space in more imaginative ways, as they cooperatively play together.

The Moss Rock Preschool supports learning through pedagogical narrations. Educators are committed to continued learning and mentoring the next generation of Early Childhood Educators in the field as the program hosts practicum students from Camosun Collage.

25 CHILDREN ENROLLED
2 STAFF
3 PRACTICUM STUDENTS



Moss Rock participants

RECREATION

The FGCA provides a number of children and adult recreation based registered and drop-in programs. Recreation programs change at times, to ensure the needs and wants from the community are being met. These recreation programs foster health, life learning and wellness close to home. This year we navigated changing COVID protocols and evolving program requirements to offer scaled back recreation offerings. Of note, the FGCA did not offer any classroom style programs or drop-in gym activities the past year.

Somatic Yoga
Iyengar Yoga – All Levels
Iyengar Yoga – Beginner Friendly
Iyengar Yoga – Support and Restore
Richardson Sport Soccer
Zumba
Zumba Toning

251 REGISTRATIONS
3 CONTRACTED INSTRUCTORS

YOUTH PROGRAMS

*YOUTH ZONE REGISTERED
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM*

CHILL ZONE DROP-IN

JUMP N' START *OUTREACH*

The primary goal of our Youth Zone and Chill Zone programs is to prepare children in their last year of elementary school to move on to middle school. These programs offer our participants new privileges to go along with elevated responsibility. Our offsite Jump N Start program serves youth who are facing barriers and a higher need with a free and enriching after school program.

Youth Zone had always gone on huge adventures on pro d camps in the past but without the use of the public transit system, staff had to stretch the walkable resources to their limits. The final adventure of the year involved using the harbor ferries to take the group across to West Bay, just a short walk to Flying Squirrel!

Although Chill Zone does not mandate group participation, staff do take the opportunity to foster organic and voluntary. Holly had great **success running theatre scripts with our 'Chill Zoners.'** kids would come in looking to pick up where they left off the previous week.

Jump N Start had to say goodbye to a close-knit group of grade eights who have since moved on to high school. There were many heavy conversations about the difficulties in their lives but many more fun outings like The VR Lounge, salon, Royal BC Museum and our final ceremonial trip to close program at Thetis Lake.

COVID-19 Response: The 2020-21 school year was the first during the ongoing pandemic. Many precautions and procedures were created to meet this challenge including a comprehensive COVID-19 Safety Plan. Pickups were done outside The Youth Space entirely, children washed their hands frequently and the public transit system was avoided to name a few of the significant policy changes.



Youth participants



Youth participants

747 CHILL ZONE DROP INS
27 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS IN YOUTH ZONE
AND JUMP N START
5 STAFF

EVENTS & PROJECTS

BOOK CLUB
GIFT OF GOOD FOOD
FOOD SECURITY
GET GROWING, VICTORIA
BC FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION COUPON PROGRAM
COMMUNITY DINNERS
TINY FALL FAIRFIELD
OBSERVER NEWSPAPER
CLIMATE ACTION GROUP
TOWN HALL
SUPPORT FOR THE UNHOUSED
COMMUNITY INSPIRATION PROJECT
PHOTO CONTREST

EVENTS & PROJECTS

COVID 19 RESPONSE:

The ongoing pandemic continued to present **many challenges for the FGCA's events and projects**. Several of our usual events were cancelled this year including Clothing Swap, Art at the Place, the Community Wide Yard Sale, and Repair Café due to government restrictions on events and activities. However, staff and volunteers were able to adapt many of our activities and continue providing valuable and needed services in a safe environment for our community.

BOOK CLUB

FGCA's book club meets once monthly on the last Monday of each month. The group selects books that focus on critical global issues that impact Canadians, contributes to **cultural understanding, or an author's lived experiences** written by Canadian authors. Two volunteer facilitators guide participants to deepen their understanding of the issues presented in each book through discussion, reflection, and consideration of how culture and diversity affect behaviour, opinions, thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs.

COVID 19 Response: The group transitioned from in-person meetings to Zoom meetings in response to the pandemic.

2 VOLUNTEERS
12 MEETINGS

"I am very grateful for the organization of the book club. I know how difficult it is to sustain a group, to keep the energy up, to bring the resources to a group, and I am really appreciative of the volunteers who do that. I am really grateful for the opportunity to interact with other people in the community and to be exposed to many books that I would not pick up on my own."

Book Club Participant

GIFT OF GOOD FOOD

The Gift of Good Food is an annual fundraiser hosted by the Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group. Together with 15 partner organizations, including the FGCA, a total of \$151, 870, far surpassing the goal of \$100,000, was raised to provide fresh produce every two weeks over the year to over 300 families throughout Greater Victoria.

303 FAMILIES SUPPORTED
14 FAMILIES IN FAIRFIELD
GONZALES
83,528 POUNDS OF
PRODUCE DISTRIBUTED
732 SUPPORTERS
1 VOLUNTEER
52 VOLUNTEER HOURS

"This program has brought relief, healthy nutrition, and a sense of community hope."

Gift of Good Food Participant



FOOD SECURITY

Visit the Garry Oak Room on a Tuesday **afternoon and you'll find Debbie**, our food pantry program volunteer, sorting through boxes of fresh produce, organizing tins of canned food, and arranging bread products. She is busy transforming the lobby of the building into the weekly food pantry, a mini grocery store, for the first shoppers who arrive at 3 pm. Unlike traditional charitable food programs, participants select their own groceries including fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, yogurt, eggs, non-perishable foods, and bread.

Along with providing access to healthy, nutritious food, the program aims to educate our community about household food waste. Leftover produce that will not **last until the next week's shop is** transformed in tasty meals and baked goods or chopped, blanched, and frozen in small batches for participants to cook into future meals. Recipes and techniques are shared with participants regularly and program volunteers create information sheets with food storage tips and alternative uses for common foods.

The majority of food distributed through the pantry program is donated from local grocery stores including Thrifty Foods and The Root Cellar through the **Mustard Seed's Food Rescue Project**. We also receive donations of non-perishable food from the Give Food, Get Food Program and fresh and frozen food monthly from ColdStar Solutions. In July 2021, we began receiving weekly donations of locally grown produce from Gatton House Farms in Saanichton.

The food pantry program has been in operation since the early days of the pandemic and continues to serve between 20 to 25 individuals, families, and seniors in our neighbourhood each week. We strive to provide a comfortable, non-judgemental experience for participants, many of whom have never felt comfortable accessing other food programs in the city. We do not require proof of income to participate.

Community Freezer

- Indoor, open Monday to Friday 9:30am-5pm
- Frozen, rescued foods, meals, and produce

Neighbourhood Pantry

- Outdoor, open 24/7
- Non-perishables and hygiene products

Tuesday Pantry

- Tuesdays from 3-4:45pm

1092	PANTRY VISITS
\$27,000	WORTH OF FOOD
540	VOLUNTEER HOURS
14,930	LBS OF FRESH PRODUCE
1,722	LBS OF NON-PERISHABLE GOODS

“The support I received from the program has been phenomenal and made a huge difference to me and my partner during this past challenging year. I lost my job and was so worried about feeding my family. My partner and I thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.”

Food Security Participant



FGCA's Neighbourhood Food Pantry



Volunteers working at Get Growing Victoria

GET GROWING VICTORIA! SEEDLING DISTRIBUTION

Get Growing, Victoria! Is a City of Victoria program that provides food seedlings and garden materials to residents in need, including people disproportionately impacted by the ongoing pandemic. The seedlings are **grown in the City's nursery in Beacon Hill Park** and distributed in partnership with community organizations. We applied for and received funding through a My Great Neighbourhood Grant to purchase additional supplies for those in-need including soil, seeds, and pots.

The FGCA hosted two events to distribute seedlings and gardening supplies on August 17, 2020 and May 30, 2021. Available seedlings included:

- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Zucchini
- Broccoli
- Lettuces
- Swiss Chard
- Kale
- Cabbage

350 HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED
2,800 SEEDLINGS
DISTRIBUTED
12 VOLUNTEERS
25 VOLUNTEER HOURS
15 YARDS OF LEAF MULCH
15 YARDS OF COMPOST

“Thank you so much for this great initiative. I was so happy to get the supplies and I am excited to start gardening and growing my own food.”

Get Growing Participant

BC FARMERS’ MARKET NUTRITION COUPON PROGRAM

The nutrition coupon program is a healthy eating initiative that supports **farmers’ markets and strengthens food security** across British Columbia. Community partner organizations provide coupons to lower-income families, pregnant people and seniors. Coupons can be spent at all **participating farmers’ markets** including Moss Street, James Bay, and Esquimalt and can be used to purchase fruits, vegetables, nuts, eggs, dairy, and meat. The FGCA was awarded funding to provide \$21 worth of coupons weekly for 16 weeks to 15 participants

15 HOUSEHOLDS
240 COUPONS
DISTRUTED

“This program allows me to provide quality, local produce for my family. I really appreciate that I can shop for my family’s favourite fruits and veggies at a market so close to home.”

Market Coupon Participant

COMMUNITY DINNER

Our creative chef, Safia, created delicious, nutritious meals once monthly on the last Friday of each month from February to June. We continued with a takeout format this year as we were unable to offer a sit-down meal program as in previous years due to the pandemic. This well-loved community program provides an affordable, reliable, healthy meal once a month, improving food security of attendees, many of whom attend our other food programs, in their own neighbourhood.

5 COMMUNITY DINNERS
276 MEALS PROVIDED



FGCA's Pippa Davis and Stefie Gray working at 'Tiny' Fall Fairfield

'TINY' FALL FAIRFIELD

Fall Fairfield is the FGCA's annual open house event celebrating the start of the harvest season. It is a family-orientated community festival located in the heart of Fairfield. This year, the event was **reimagined as "Tiny Fall Fairfield"**, a smaller, socially distanced version of our usual event held over two time slots. Smaller groups of community members and neighbours enjoyed food, live music, harvest hat making, silent auction, community art project, and sunshine. A highlight of Tiny Fall Fairfield was a collaborative art project led by Tanya Bub. Attendees helped the artist decorate three papier-mache creatures in fun and festive style!

70 ATTENDEES
 1 VOLUNTEER
 5 PERFORMERS

COVID-19 Response: Government restrictions on public events forced us to completely change the format of the event. As only 50 people were allowed in the event space, we opted to host a distributed event with small, pop-up activities happening throughout the neighbourhood.

OBSERVER NEWSPAPER

The Observer Newspaper is the place to **find information on all the FGCA's** programs and services, along with neighborhood news, local events, and businesses in Fairfield Gonzales. Shortly after the Community Association formed in 1975, the Observer was created as a way to build community through sharing stories, connecting neighbors, and celebrating where we live, a vision held true by the team that brings each issue of the Observer to print.

COVID-19 Response: With the pandemic continuing to limit our in-person offerings, we discovered the Observer newspaper, delivered directly to homes, was one of the ways we could connect with folks who live in the neighbourhood. The articles, services, resources, photos, programs and online offerings that we promoted in the Observer offered a way to engage in community when face to face gatherings proved challenging.

4 ISSUES
 19 600 COPIES MAILED
 400 COPIES PICKED UP

CLIMATE ACTION GROUP

The FGCA Climate Action Group was created in the Fall of 2019. It develops impactful and inclusive projects, participates in strategic policy advocacy, and supports individual and collective initiatives that address the climate crisis. This year the group researched, created and distributed two fact sheets; one on home energy efficiency and one on home retrofits. These fact sheets are available at fairfieldcommunity.ca/climate-action-group

TOWN HALL MEETING

On April 29 we hosted a virtual Town Hall meeting, open to everyone in Fairfield Gonzales and beyond. Our panelists were Mayor Lisa Helps, Councillors Ben Isitt and Geoff Young, and Police Chief Del Manak. Community members sent in questions in advance, which covered a wide range of topics from transportation to safety. We were not able to cover every question, so FGCA representatives selected questions from each topic for the panellists as well as chose a number of questions at random. The Town Hall recording is up on youtube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHzl-RX1_fw

100 ATTENDEES
4 PANELISTS
79 QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS

QUESTION TOPICS:

- Land Use
- Richardson Bike Lanes
- Homelessness
- Neighbourhood Boundaries
- Camping in Parks
- FGCA Governance
- Community Representation at City Council
- Community Safety
- Road Safety/ Traffic

“Thanks for all you do to develop and strengthen Fairfield Gonzales community”

Town Hall Meeting Participant

SUPPORT FOR THE UNHOUSED

The group now called Neighbourhood Solidarity with Unhoused Neighbours (NSUN) began as Fairfield Gonzales Support for the Unhoused (FGSU) in October 2020. A number of Fairfield Gonzales residents came together to assist unhoused people who were camping in local parks after being moved out of shelters due to reductions in occupancy due to COVID precautions. Although at times we assisted people in Gonzales and Hollywood parks, most of our efforts were in Beacon Hill Park (which we often called by its Indigenous name of Meegan).

Throughout the fall and winter we helped people with the necessities required to live outdoors; tarps and tents, sleeping pads and bags, batteries and flashlights, and pay-as-you-go credits for cellphones. Some of us regularly attended the Monday afternoon circles held near the petting zoo at Meegan and other members were frequently in the park at other times through the week forming relationships with individual campers. In January of 2021 we held an event at Meegan to ensure that any camper who wanted to be on the BC Housing list was on it.

We helped with the Community Care Tent that was an initiative of the campers themselves from January to the end of May 2021. During April and May most of the campers were moved into shelters or transitional housing. We have attempted to continue our relationship with individual campers but this has proven to be challenging as the operators of the various shelters do not welcome our involvement. In June 2021 we changed our name to be more inclusive as our group has grown to include people from other Victoria neighbourhoods (Fernwood, North Park, Quadra Village, and Saanich.)

COMMUNITY INSPIRATION PROJECT

In the summer 2019, the Streetlife Committee decided to develop an asset-mapping project. The larger goal was to engage and inspire the community around what is positive in the neighbourhood. Local residents and stakeholders could submit feedback about how to keep improving the quality of life in Fairfield Gonzales.

Each neighbourhood has its particular assets, whether they are natural, built, economic, social.... Bringing value to where we live!



Community Inspiration Map:
pick up a copy at the FGCA or check it out online: fairfieldcommunity.ca/inspiration-project

PHOTO CONTEST

As part of the Community Inspiration Project, we hosted a photo contest in April 2021. The contest invited local residents to contribute photos of the Fairfield and Gonzales neighbourhoods. Photos were displayed in the foyer of Fairfield Community Place and shared online for residents to vote for their favourite three photos. Winners received gift certificates to local businesses.

10 PARTICIPANTS
30 PHOTOS SUBMITTED



1st Place—**"Raccoons in Tree"** by Brandon Mollitwenk



2nd Place—**"Dog at the Beach"** by Shelley B



3rd Place— **" Dallas Road Beach Graffiti"** by Paul C

SERVICES

VOLUNTEERS
YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNSELLORS
FACILITY RENTALS

VOLUNTEERS

The FGCA relies on committed, passionate residents to support many of our programs, events, and services. Without the support of over 200 volunteers annually, we could not do our work to serve the community. Here are some of the ways folks volunteer with our organization:

- Fairfield Food Forest
- Food Rescue
- Climate Action Group
- Community Dinners
- Reconciliation Circle
- Book Club
- Observer Newspaper
- Photography
- Board of Directors
- Streetlife Committee
- Community Association Land Use Committee
- Neighbourhood Improvement Committee
- Victoria Together Against Graffiti
- Fall Fairfield
- Database Support
- Front garden
- Neighbourhood Solidarity with Unhoused Neighbours
- Community Inspiration Project
- Get Growing, Victoria! Seedling Distribution
- Good Food Box

COVID-19 Response: Many of our usual programs including the Repair Café, drop-in sports, clothing swap, toy cleaning, and needle felting were put on hold this year which reduced the number of volunteers and hours this year.

"Participating in FGCA's community food programs nourishes my body. To be able to obtain a nutritious variety of food in a safe, non-judgemental space in my neighbourhood is priceless. Being involved in the food hub program as a volunteer nourishes my spirit. To be able to give back to my community in this way is an honour and a privilege."

Volunteer

YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNSELLORS

The Fairfield Gonzales Community Association employs Youth and Family Counsellors (YFCs) who work onsite at schools in Greater **Victoria. YFCs support students' connections** to school, family, and peers. They work with students on mental health and social functioning, and provide support to the school community in times of crisis. YFCs also bring services into the school such as food programs, mindfulness groups, Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Peace Project, Go Girls, and many more. It was an especially demanding and challenging year with the impacts of COVID-19 being felt acutely by all of us. Student and family mental health needs have risen sharply, and many of the services provided in the community were modified, full with long waitlists, or not running at all. The incredible work of YFCs ensured that no student fell through the cracks and that our community was supported in this difficult time. Students also showed tremendous resilience and adaptability to the changes and **uncertainty that we've all faced. Students** who worked with YFCs showed improved school functioning, improved relationships with peers and adults, and improved healthy choices.

"I wanted to say thank you for all the support you have given to (child's name) and well me too. You have been such a great help to both of us"

Family

14 YFCS
10 SCHOOLS
1 FIRST NATION

- James Bay Elementary
- Vic West Elementary
- Macaulay Elementary
- Lansdowne Middle
- Central Middle
- Shoreline Middle
- Arbutus Middle
- Oak Bay High
- Lambrick Park High
- Mount Doug High
- Esquimalt High
- Songhees First Nation

Top concerns expressed by clients:

- Stress and anxiety
- Trauma
- Mental health concerns
- Grief and loss
- Poverty
- Family conflict
- Social skills challenges
- Parenting capacity

1,039 STUDENTS RECEIVED
SERVICE
544 FAMILIES

FACILITY RENTALS

Facility rentals were limited to ongoing renters such as the IWCC, Don Carlos Tamales, and the Moss St Market.

26 RENTERS
546 BOOKINGS

FGCA BY THE NUMBERS

AUGUST 1ST 2020
TO JULY 31ST 2021



Early Childhood Educators Josh and Alicia going bananas

STAFFING

Our staff have been the backbone of our support for the community during this challenging year. We have been inspired by their strength, resilience and care.

101
EMPLOYEES IN 2020

91%
STAFFING COSTS AS % OF
OVERALL EXPENSES

FUNDING

REVENUE
\$ 3,113,308 ACTUAL FOR YEAR

EXPENSES
\$ 3,237,512 ACTUAL FOR YEAR

6%
CITY FUNDING

17%
PROVINCIAL & GAMING
FUNDING

1%
FEDERAL FUNDING

43%
SCHOOL DISTRICT 61
CONTRACT

31%
FGCA PROGRAMS & RENTAL
REVENUE

2%
DONATIONS, FUNDRAISING &
FOUNDATION GRANTS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE FGCA

The FGCA is funded by a diverse range of grants, contracts, and fees-for-service. This year was unusual with the impacts of COVID-19 as some of our programs and funding shrank, and other COVID-specific financial support was available. We were thankful to be able to keep supporting our community with a high level of support.

SUCCESSFUL GRANTS/FUNDING

BC Gaming
Canada Summer Student Grant
City of Victoria My Great Neighbourhood Grants
City of Victoria Everyday Creativity Grant
City of Victoria Strategic Plan Grant
Victoria Foundation Community Recovery Program
BC Child Care Health and Safety Funding
Tegan and Sara Foundation—Gender Generations Project
Second Harvest Emergency Food Security Fund
United Way Bridging the Digital Divide
Capital Daily Neighbourhood House Initiative

IN-KIND SUPPORT

We also had the support of many generous in-kind donors this year. Their support makes our programs possible!

Thrifty Foods—gift cards and tents
Bell Canada—phones and phone plans
ColdStar—frozen food donation
FoodShare Network—rescued food
Mustard Seed—Give Food Get Food program
Save-On Foods—gift cards
BC Farmers Market—nutrition coupons
Gatton House Farms—fresh produce
Red Cross—personal protection equipment
Coeuraj consulting—furniture and equipment
Interactivity Board Game Café—reduced rates
Quazar's Arcade—reduced rates

DONATIONS

As a registered charity we accept donations for our general work or to fund specific program areas. Often people donate to the programs and services they are most passionate about, such as food security or family support programs. Much of the community-building work we do is not supported by any funders, so donations are an essential part of keeping this work alive.

This year, many of your donations were directed towards those in our community with the greatest needs: unhoused people in our neighbourhood. Your generosity meant the difference between warmth and cold, comfort and distress for many of the people it helped.

We thank each and every donor for their generous contribution to a connected, collaborative, inclusive, and sustainable community!

FUNDING FOR THE FGCA

FUNDING FOR THE FGCA
IS PROVIDED BY:

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

BC GAMING POLICY AND ENFORCEMENT BRANCH

ISLAND HEALTH

CITY OF VICTORIA

SCHOOL DISTRICT #61

VICTORIA FOUNDATION

UNITED WAY GREATER VICTORIA

TEGAN AND SARA FOUNDATION

SECOND HARVEST

