



EVERGREEN

# Bringing people together in our cities

Evergreen | 2022 Annual Report

*Photo courtesy of Andrea Davidova*



**Jennifer Angel**  
CEO

## A Message From the CEO

2022 was a landmark year for Evergreen. We emerged from the hardest part of COVID and started to see what collaborative, green and regenerative community building across the country can accomplish. We opened Canada's first Climate Ready School Ground, reimagining school grounds as places for learning, play, community gathering and climate adaptation. We advanced meaningful projects with Indigenous communities as we work on Right Relations to make Evergreen Brick Works a place where more people feel welcome. And we grew programs at the Brick Works – from education to markets to arts – for greater impact.

As many of you know, I became Evergreen's CEO in September 2022. I was drawn to Evergreen's tremendous potential to transform public spaces and the trailblazing vision of founder, Geoff Cape. This is an organization that excels at innovating. Evergreen believes change is possible, and acts – working on the ground, with our hands in the dirt, to reimagine what places in our cities can do for all of us.

Although this has been a year filled with milestone moments, life feels different. Climate change, growing inequality and eroding health and well-being, remain complex crises we urgently need to solve. And underpinning all of it, an erosion of social connection is playing out across the country. These past few years, we've experienced just how vital public spaces are for their potential to connect us with nature, be a safe place for people and community to gather and to help solve for many of the challenges before us. Evergreen is returning to its roots to focus on regenerative and inclusive public spaces.

The best public spaces are created in collaboration with the communities they serve and offer something for everyone. Across the country, Evergreen was in communities helping build networks for positive change. In this report, you'll read about the many ways we are investing in communities and public spaces that work harder for our communities and our planet.

As I find my feet at Evergreen, I am excited to build on the foundation established. I'm inspired by the leadership inside and outside of this organization and look forward to working alongside our very talented team, supporters, partners and communities to realize the possibility of places across Canada. While reading this report, I hope that you too are inspired by the ground-breaking work that people and partners like you make possible. This work has never been more urgent and has never had greater momentum. Together, let's reshape our public spaces to support our communities to thrive.



**Helen Burstyn**  
Board Chair

It's been an eventful and exciting year at Evergreen as the organization underwent a successful leadership transition and marked many impressive milestones in our continuing efforts to change public spaces for the better.

I want to thank Geoff Cape for his three decades of leadership and service to the remarkable organization he created. And I want to extend a warm welcome to our new CEO, Jen Angel, who is a seasoned and successful builder of community and places people love. Jen is passionate about creating and improving public spaces and we are excited to see how her leadership will further establish Evergreen as a world leader in placemaking and sustainability.

The achievements of 2022 have been supported by extraordinary partnerships and effort. Our success is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our staff, donors, volunteers and partners. With your help, we have been able to showcase the power of public spaces with more people than ever before.

Our work is far from done. It's more important than ever to invest in our community spaces for the benefit of current and future generations. I want my grandchildren and their children to grow up knowing and enjoying Evergreen Brick Works and the many other natural and built spaces in their communities.

Our shared challenges in preserving and expanding these special spaces may be daunting, but our opportunities for lasting change are enormous. The accomplishments of 2022 are a testament to that fact.

Thank you for working with us to lay the foundations for green, and prosperous communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen Burstyn". The signature is fluid and cursive.





Photo courtesy of AI Yoshiki

# 2022 IN NUMBERS

Your support makes a difference. Whether as a supporter, visitor, participant or volunteer, you are an integral part of creating dynamic, regenerative and inclusive places across the country. Here's a look back at what we did together in 2022:



**120,754** people enjoyed healthy, local food and vibrant cultural celebrations at the Brick Works through our Markets and Day of the Dead.



**8,400** children and families engaged in active, inclusive and hands-on activities in the Children's Garden during Weekend Nature Play.



**9** volunteer-supported programs and events ran for the first time since 2020, including PA Day Adventure Camps, Greenhouse Growers, and on-site photographers.



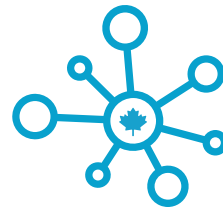
**6,748** students joined us through the Visiting Schools Program for curriculum linked outdoor education, with **3,647** of those students served by our bursary program.



**1,200** people of all ages got out on the ice during our public skating season.



**16,000 lbs** of waste were diverted from landfill by upcycling bicycles at the Gateway Bicycle Hub. **2,221** individuals were trained in basic bike repair and refurbishment.



**296** communities across Canada were served by the Community Solutions Portal, with **9,180** online visits, **263** free resources downloaded and **1,620** podcast listens.



**39** youth were inspired to become Future City Builders. They developed **9** dynamic solutions to challenges in their local communities.



**2** Housing forums were hosted by Evergreen this year, which engaged nearly **700** people on the latest solutions for resilient and affordable housing.



# PLACE AS A MULTI-SOLVING TOOL

*Photo courtesy of Nathan Zhu*

## Public places are powerful tools for bringing people together

Public places are powerful tools for bringing people together and helping to strengthen our social fabric. Expanding our role in placemaking and urban sustainability was a focal point for Evergreen this year. Under the direction of our new CEO, Jen Angel, Evergreen continued to invest in partnerships, new and longstanding, to create better public spaces for all in 2022.

### Partnerships are an important part of how we create meaningful change.

No single actor can solve the challenges we face in cities. This report showcases some of our successes from 2022. With the help of our partners, we have been able to use public places to shape the way we live, celebrate and connect with one another. Thank you for joining us in building a more sustainable, connected and resilient future.

## EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS A SHOWCASE OF INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY

This year was filled with many exciting events and family-friendly activities at Evergreen Brick Works. Across the site visitors got to participate in a wide range of experiences that showcased the multi-solving capacity of placemaking. From public markets to educational programming we inspired visitors of all ages to come together and be drivers for meaningful change.

*Photo courtesy of Arsalan Mahmood*



**“ Public spaces can open the opportunity to connect with neighbours and to see way that I can potentially invest in their lives. Public space offers those physical health benefits, but also encourages being around others.**

— Jonathan Massimi, Community Expert in Evergreen’s Future City Builders Program



**Discovering and spending time in nature has the potential to create shifts in society towards a greater respect for nature.**

— Hannah Miller, Evergreen Senior Program Officer

**The program helps connect students to the animals and plants right outside their door. The focus on local flora and fauna makes this program unique and essential in helping children build a genuine reciprocal connection to the land.**

— Participating Teacher

## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #1:**

### **Outdoor education promoting well-being, and increasing ecological literacy**

Our education programs take a playful, experienced-based approach to learning about the intersections between urban, natural and built worlds. Children and youth gain skills to address climate change, connection to place and Indigenous reconciliation.

#### **Visiting Schools Program — the kids are back on site!**

Based at the Brick Works, the Visiting Schools Program offers meaningful outdoor education tailored to children and youth of various ages and stages of development. We are thrilled to report that in 2022 we ran 244 programs with 6,748 students. Thanks to help of our partners, we were able to provide bursaries for more than 50% of participating students.

[Learn more about the program →](#)



*Photo courtesy of Min Yang*





Photo courtesy of Stan Shoolman

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #2

### Coming together to celebrate diverse cultures, support small local businesses and test sustainable solutions

2022 was a year filled with vibrant celebrations at Evergreen Brick Works. Since Evergreen Brick Works opened to the public in 2010, we have been committed to providing sustainable and accessible products, produce and food to visitors. In addition to mainstays like the Saturday Farmers Market, which had over 100,000 visitors this year, we had a number of special events and celebrations.

#### Day of the Dead:

On October 30th, 5,000 people came together at Evergreen Brick Works to celebrate Latin American culture with activities for children and adults alike. At Día de Muertos, people from different backgrounds took part in conversations about the importance of rituals, food, culture and diversity. This vibrant day was filled with live music, traditional dances, sugar skull face painting and play in the Children's Garden. Visitors also enjoyed a performance by The Mexicans Folk Ballet as part of Evergreen's Cultural Performing Arts Series supported by Bank of America. Thanks to Brickworks Cider, participants got to sample Ponche Mexicano (traditional Mexican fruit beverage), Lime Margarita cider and delicious apple juice.

[Watch a quick recap →](#)

#### Winter Market:

Evergreen Brick Works was a flurry of activity late this year during the Winter Market. On December 18th we had a fun-filled day of activities at the Brick Works, including an Artisan & Vintage Market, food court, winter hikes and trivia contest. Over 7,000 visitors participated in this year's market. Our friends at Brickworks Cider provided samples of mulled apple cider and hot chocolate to keep everyone warm. The Skating Rink was busy, and lots of families and friends got to enjoy free skating. Supported by Interac, skate rentals were available for free during the Winter Market and all winter long! During the evening visitors experienced a beautiful chamber concert by Tafelmusik artists Genevieve Gilardeau and Lucas Harris as part of Evergreen's Cultural Performing Arts Series made possible by Bank of America.

[Learn more about this event →](#)



Photo courtesy of Marc Crabtree





The connections between contemporary art and the environment become clearer as we experience the climate change in our day-to-day lives. Art has a responsibility to address these issues and look critically at its own environmental impact and how it can reduce harm to our ecosystems.

— Charlene K. Lau,  
Evergreen Curator

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #3

## Creating Inclusive and Sustainable Public Art for All

2022 saw the creation of the Institute for Public Art and Sustainability. The Institute builds on Evergreen's years of experience showcasing site-responsive art at Evergreen Brick Works and in the surrounding ravine system. It will support and sustain public art for future generations. By working together, the Institute will shape the future of public art and drive towards a more equitable and sustainable arts sector.

### Public Art Highlights from 2022:

***In Which We Draw a People's Map of the Don River...***: an artistic research project by Mare Liberum. By envisioning maps for the Don River's future, this project raised questions about land reclamation, ownership, and histories of extraction, industry, and colonial exploitation. The project featured a six-part interactive podcast series entitled Don River Radio and a boat-building workshop and launch into Lake Ontario in July of 2022.

[Learn more about the project →](#)

***Roots***: an outdoor photographic installation by Toronto-based artist Sandra Brewster, bringing together art, urban exploration, and Toronto's Black histories and diasporas. The project highlighted the necessity of establishing safe outdoor spaces for community building and gathering. Brewster's images chart movement and migration towards and across lands complicated by histories of unceded territories. As curator Charlene K. Lau explains, "Brewster's evocative imagery pushes us all to think about what the lands and waterways of the Don Valley have seen in their time and in particular what constitutes multitudinous Black experiences in the Canadian wilderness."

[Read more about this photographic installation →](#)



Photo courtesy of Carmen Chen



Photo courtesy of Ibrahim Abusitta



# NATIONAL IMPACT

## Evergreen invests in communities across Canada

We convene and engage partners, bringing the tools and resources to test and scale solutions to urban challenges.

Our work on a national scale aims to:

- Connect with municipalities and Indigenous communities
- Build community capacity for livable, green and prosperous neighbourhoods
- Help communities become more resilient in the face of climate change
- Connect municipalities to our growing library of community solutions

In this section, you can read about how, together with our partners, we tackled several pressing issues facing our cities. From digging into solutions for the affordable housing crisis to facilitating youth investment in local communities to opening climate-resilient school grounds, Evergreen made great strides towards creating accessible public spaces for communities across the country.

*Photo courtesy of Cam Collyer*



**The Climate Ready Schools program is the next step in our over 30-year legacy of transforming school grounds across the country, showcasing how schools and community spaces can play a pivotal role in adapting to climate change.** — Lois Lindsay, Chief Program Officer



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #1

### Realizing the potential of Climate Ready Schools to transform communities

After years of work, on October 6th, 2022, Canada's first Climate Ready School Ground opened to the public. The pilot project transformed the school ground at Irma Coulson Public School, northwest of Toronto in Milton, Ontario, into a vibrant community space that helps to nurture children through outdoor play and learning while adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

As Senior Program Manager, Heidi Campbell explains, "When you look at a school ground, you can reimagine it as a park where the whole community can flourish in this greenspace". This incredible change was made possible through collaboration and community consultation. From the outset, a participatory design process brought together teachers, students, parents, neighbours and school board administrators to build a vision for their school ground. This project is only the beginning. It is evident that now, more than ever before, we need resilient spaces that support flourishing local communities. Drawing together cutting-edge environmental design and vibrant landscapes that enhance child development and education, this project illustrates the many benefits of working across sectors to implement dynamic solutions. Spaces like this put accessibility, inclusion and diversity at the forefront of placemaking and allow public spaces to work harder for both people and our planet.

#### Highlights of the school ground:

- Landscaping and plantings mitigate heat, absorb water, and increase biodiversity; topography to add height and help to buffer strong winds
- Accessible pathways provide essential circulation and a sense of movement through the space
- Water and sand play ignite opportunities for imaginary play and build social skills, specifically sharing and cooperating
- A large parkour, accessible hill slide, and crawl tunnel provides a multi-use play environment inviting children to improve their physical strength, and gain confidence in their abilities to climb, jump, and manage risk
- An outdoor classroom to be used as a gathering space for students and the community
- Areas for various age groups that provide a variety of play-learning opportunities to meet children's developmental needs
- A Welcome Plaza for parents and families to meet, socialize, and linger before and after school

[Watch a video of children enjoying this space →](#)

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #2

### Solving the housing crisis together

Canada's affordable housing crisis is worse than ever and we need big ideas now. We need 5.8 million new homes by 2030 to tackle Canada's affordable housing crisis, which disproportionately affects youth, newcomers and older adults.

Housing should truly be a basic right as it is a building block for health, success and community vibrancy. Through the My Future Home Forum workshops, Evergreen brought together 130 youth, newcomers and older adults from across Canada to share their visions for their ideal future home in 2040. We learned that desired housing futures for most are modest — individuals want affordable housing, as well as accessibility to green spaces, amenities and community. In short, a better housing future is affordable, equitable, and supports accessibility and strong communities.

In October 2022, Evergreen's National Housing Forum "[Place+Space]: Powering Our Housing Future" brought together nearly 700 residents with companies, public sector innovators and government officials to engage on the latest solutions for resilient and affordable housing. Working across sectors, Evergreen hosted nine virtual sessions over three days to start partnerships and create opportunities from across the country and around the world. Sessions covered everything from funding options to construction breakthroughs, to policy transformation. The Forum provided an important meeting place that sparked partnerships and created opportunities to change the face of affordable housing in Canada.

2022 was also a busy year for the Housing Supply Challenge Support Program. Run by Evergreen, the Support Program assists applicants to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Housing Supply Challenge. The Support Program provides guidance, mentorship and resources to develop and improve applicant submissions. This year marked the conclusion of Challenge Round Two and the launch of Challenge Round Three, "Northern Access: Supply Chain Solutions for Northern and Remote Housing." This round aims to improve efficient and affordable access to materials and resources in northern and remote regions of Canada. The Support Program continues to focus on assisting under-represented groups and geographies. 20% of outreach and intake engagement was with Indigenous organizations or government bodies and 36% of our outreach was to individuals in the Territories. In addition to curating expert advisory services for applicants, this year we also offered innovative new methods of support for applicants support innovation and test proposed solutions.

**“ We know that housing is so much more than a building with four walls. The Forum is a critical moment to build on our shared ambition for the future of housing to create inclusive, regenerative communities where everyone can thrive. — Lois Lindsay, Chief Program Officer**





Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this program. Having this experience has added so much knowledge to my toolbox not only about problem-solving, but especially about how to approach problem-solving — while I already had some understanding of design-thinking and people-centered approaches, I learned more than I could have imagined.

— Hannah Ehler,  
Future City Builder

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #3

## Connecting Communities and Empowering tomorrow's leaders today

Cities and communities are important actors in the work to reduce growing climate change impacts and have the potential to build more inclusive, innovative and sustainable solutions.

The Community Solutions Network (CSN) believes that better connected communities can reach their goals faster and have free access to opportunities to learn from peers through network events, communities of practice and advisory services tailored for municipalities and their region.

In 2022, the CSN program produced several solutions-oriented podcast episodes, research briefs and a suite of toolkits that help Reimagine Public Spaces. Each toolkit focused on a particular area of municipal governance: Public transportation and new shared mobility options; Creating accessible public spaces for all; Technology solutions for climate resilience and Green energy solutions

CSN has actively worked with 147 communities and served a variety of sectors. Nearly 11% of CSN activity participants were Indigenous Peoples.

We can proudly report that 100% of CSN participants reported enhancing at least one municipal service area by applying knowledge and capacity of data and connected technologies.

### Future City Builders:

As of the end of 2022, Evergreen's Future City Builders program has worked with over 350 young people to pitch 74 projects across Canada and pilot 31 new solutions. Future City Builders helps to break the difficult workforce cycle experienced by many young people where lack of job experience keeps them from securing meaningful work. This year we connected with two new cohorts of youth in two new locations. The first cohort from Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph pitched their ideas in July, and planning got underway for the second cohort from Moncton, Sackville, Saint John and Fredericton to pitch their ideas in February 2023.





# LEADING THE WAY

## Diversity, equity and inclusion are essential to Evergreen's work

We understand that diverse perspectives require an inclusive culture to thrive – a culture that is respectful and welcoming to everyone. In 2022, Evergreen welcomed our first female CEO, Jen Angel. She joins our Board Chair, Helen Burstyn, in leading the organization, and we are now a significantly female-led charity.

We have also worked to ensure greater racial and ethnic diversity among our leadership. This year, Evergreen worked with a third-party search firm to help recruit Board members from traditionally under-represented groups. As a result, our board is now 50% comprised of racial and ethnic minorities, helping to provide a variety of perspectives to the organization.

Evergreen recognizes that creating inclusive and dynamic public spaces must prioritize the unique needs and cultures of Indigenous peoples. Turtle Island is home to diverse Indigenous peoples, and we create better and more equitable spaces by engaging Indigenous communities and knowledge. We are working to better collaborate with Indigenous organizations and communities and have engaged with external support to recruit Indigenous Board members.

***Evergreen strives to work for the incredibly diverse communities across Canada and we understand the importance of reflecting and listening to the peoples we serve.***

“ Leadership is not about taking or owning, it's about giving – in service of something bigger than yourself. I think the real leaders are the ones working to convene and nurture and inspire teams to solve the complex and urgent challenges before us. Leadership is service. — Jen Angel, Evergreen CEO



**It has been inspiring and motivating to see how Geoff has grown a small charity focused on community and school ground greening into a national organization ensuring cities thrive, now and in the future.**

— Helen Burstyn,  
Chair of Evergreen  
Board of Directors

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #1 Honouring the remarkable legacy of Geoff Cape

This year marks a significant milestone for Evergreen, as founder Geoff Cape stepped down as CEO after more than 30 years of leadership. Geoff guided Evergreen over three decades as it evolved from tree planting in Toronto into a national organization making meaningful on-the-ground change to create sustainable, thriving public spaces across the country.

Geoff led the creation of Evergreen Brick Works and his remarkable commitment to the site will be recognized in the beloved Children’s Garden. The Children’s Garden is at EBW’s heart and is an integral space for Evergreen’s outdoor education programs. Enjoyed by more than 10,000 children and caregivers each year, the Garden stands for the core of Evergreen – integrating nature into cities for the benefit of both. To honour Geoff’s legacy of impact in environmental action in cities and children’s education, planning is well underway for a massive revitalization of the Garden’s amphitheatre space. Thank you to all donors who supported this special tribute to Geoff.

We can’t think of a better way to celebrate Geoff’s legacy and can’t wait to welcome you to this new space!



“

It's clear what an important role the Bike Hub plays in the community. By fixing bicycles that would otherwise end up in landfills, the Hub helps the environment and empowers people by giving them bikes and the knowledge needed to maintain them.

— Evergreen Volunteer

I try to remember the gifts of time, thought and energy I'm capable of giving in exchange for learning new skills and maintaining a sense of vitality.

— Evergreen Volunteer

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT #2 Co-creating inclusive spaces with dedicated volunteers

Programming at Evergreen is enriched by the commitment of our dedicated volunteers. From our Garden Circle volunteers making gardens thrive, to Learn to Skate volunteers bringing skating lessons to life, to Bike Hub volunteers repairing bicycles, we are building inclusive and vibrant public spaces together.

- **Garden Circle volunteers** restored soil in the east side garden mound to prepare the site for pollinator-friendly plants. They spread seed mix containing dozens of native wildflower species around the Brick Works, and restored cattails and willows near the Wildwood ponds and Mud Creek.
- **Nature Play volunteer facilitators** supported Outdoor Educators in the Children's Garden, engaging kids of all ages in exciting and thoughtful play.
- **Farmers Market Friends** are the backbone of the market. They greet visitors, support vendors, assist with Community Fridges and run the Kids Activity Table.

### In 2022 we had:

- **500+** onsite volunteers at EBW
- **Nearly 7000 hours** of volunteer support committed
- **25 new species** of wildflowers planted
- **350** new volunteers in 2022



Photo courtesy of John Oyston



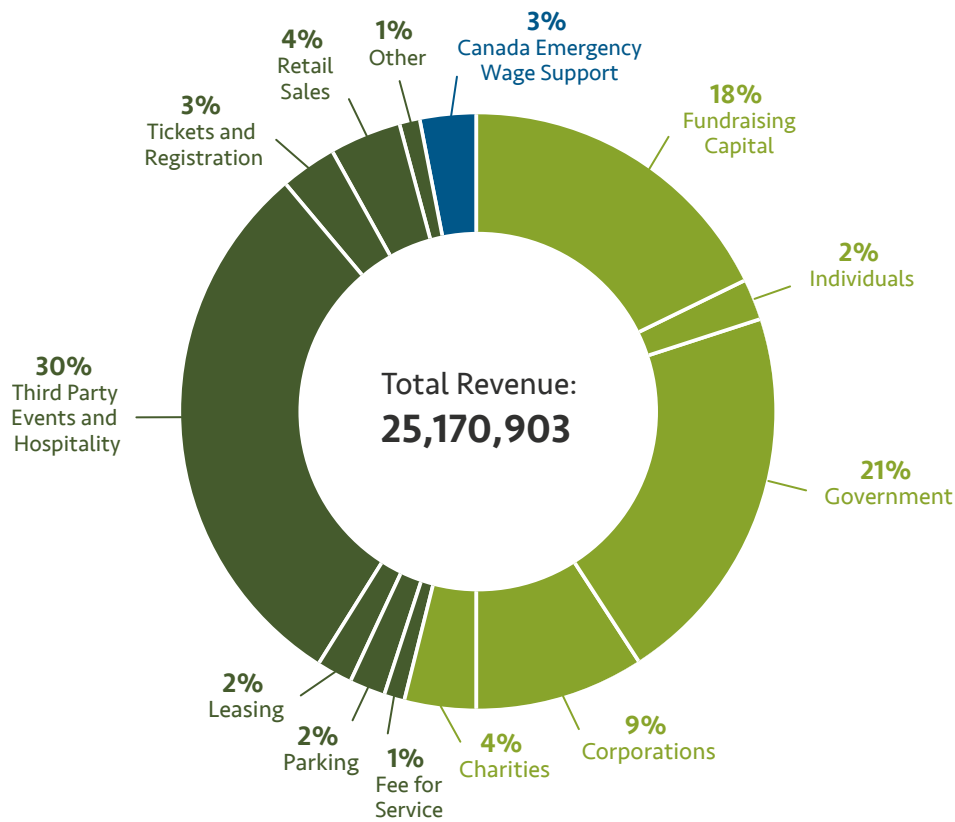
Photo courtesy of Mike Derblich



# FINANCIALS AND COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS

Photo courtesy of John McQuarrie

## REVENUE



● Social Enterprise Earned Revenue (43%)
 ● Fundraising (54%)

## EXPENSES

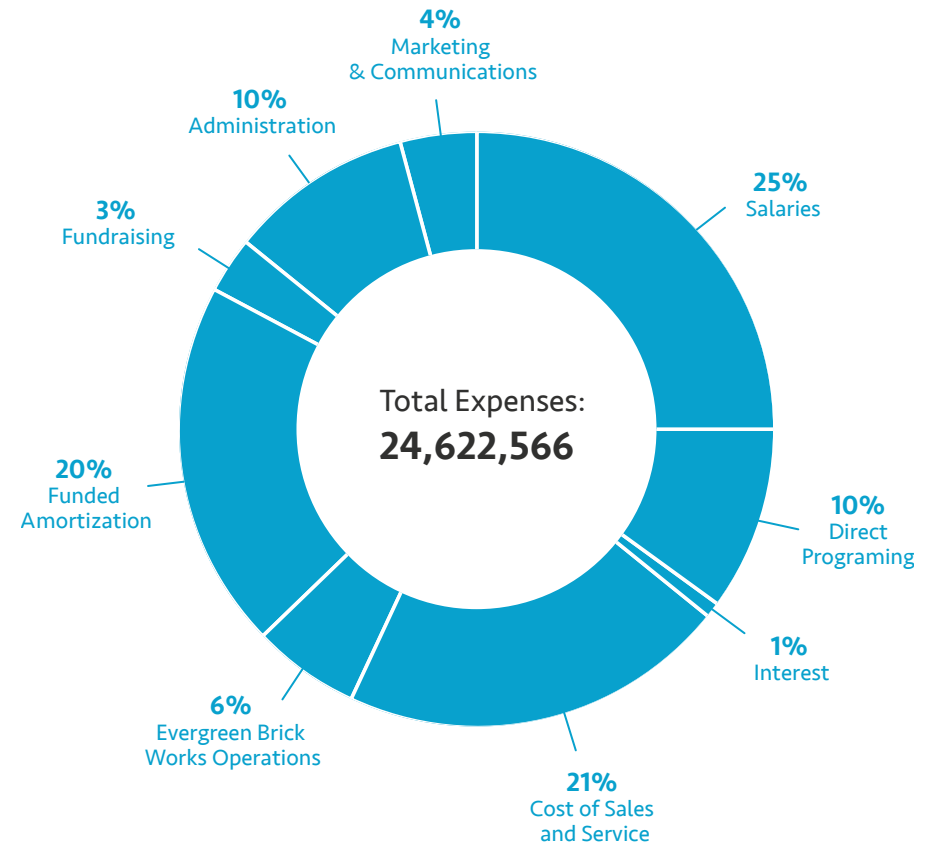




Photo courtesy of Stanley Shoolman

# Our Community of Supporters

## Thank you for a year of facilitating change through connection, innovation and sustainable action

It has been an incredible year of growth at Evergreen. Thanks to the help of our funders, volunteers, and partners, we have been able to extend our programs and increase participation.

Together we are inspiring the next generation of climate leaders and environmental stewards. We are investing in resilient school grounds to adapt to a rapidly changing climate. We are empowering our neighbours through bicycle giveaways and learn to bike programs that are accessible for everybody. And we couldn't do this and more without your support.

We have more work to do, and it is more urgent than ever before. We can shape our cities for the better and transform spaces into great places that are inclusive, sustainable and innovative, but only if we all work together.

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## Board of Directors

Thank you to our dedicated group of Chief Volunteer Officers — our Board of Directors.

We are excited to announce the arrival of three new board members, Upton Jeans, Hibaq Gelle and Tracey Sobers. We are also grateful for the years of service given by board members Julie Bowen, Anne Brace, John Coyne and Ken Tanenbaum, all of whose term ended in 2022.

### Helen Burstyn

Board Chair

### Andrea DelZotto

Vice Chair

### Jamison Steeve

Secretary and Chair,  
Program & Capital  
Development  
Committee

### Upton Jeans

Treasurer and Chair,  
Finance & Audit  
Committee

### Renée Gomes

Governance and  
Nominating Committee  
Chair

### Julie Bowen\*

### Anne Brace\*

former Vice Chair,  
Treasurer, and Finance and  
Audit Committee Chair

### Andy Chisholm

former Secretary

### Hibaq Gelle

### Carole-Ann Hamilton

### Tom Milroy

### Shabin Mohamed

### Abhijeet Rege

### Tracey Sobers

### Ken Tanenbaum\*

former Revenue  
Opportunities  
Committee Chair

\* Denotes Director whose term ended May 2022.

# Our Donors

Evergreen's work locally and nationally is generously supported by public and private donors and our leadership volunteers. We are proud to acknowledge the following individuals, organizations, foundations, and partners whose contributions of all kinds totaled \$250 or more from January 1 to December 31, 2022.

Abhijeet Rege

Airlie Foundation

Alain Agostini

Alan V. Dean & Kathy Kinnear

Alicia Thurston Photography

Alisa Posesorski

Amanda & John Sherrington

Andrea & Stuart Lombard

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Photo courtesy of Al Yoshiki



Photo courtesy of Al Yoshiki

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Society is facing challenging social issues, including climate change. Evergreen is a trailblazer in creating sustainable solutions to the future of city building. We know that these challenges will not be solved alone, and so through thoughtful partnership with organizations sharing the same goals, our impact will be greater.

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