

BINNERS' PROJECT

Annual Report
2018



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| A Message from Our Director | 1 |
| Our Impacts: A Snapshot | 2 |
| About Our Members | 3 |
| Our Internal Employment Continuum | 4 |
| About Our Leadership Team | 5 |
| Education & Awareness-Raising | 6 |
| Multi-Sectoral Engagement | 6 |
| Coffee Cup Revolution | 7 |
| Our First-Ever Fundraiser | 7 |
| Community Economic Development Programs | 8 |
| 1.1 Public Waste Education | 8 |
| 1.2 Back-of-House Waste Sorting | 10 |
| 2.0 Financial Overview | 12 |
| Infrastructure Projects | 13 |
| Binnars Hook | 13 |
| Universal Cart Initiative | 14 |
| Binnars' Project Financial Overview | 16 |
| The Team | 18 |
| Our Steering Committee | 19 |
| Our Ad Hoc Advisors | 19 |
| Our Partners & Funders | 19 |
| Tides Canada, Our Shared Platform | 20 |

A Message from Our Director

THIS YEAR, Kelowna and Vernon made headlines when they proposed to ban waste-pickers' access to public spaces like depots, and shopping carts from the streets – a move that would undermine their livelihoods and the value they provide to their communities. Legislation like this is just one example of the difficulties binners face to binning safely, efficiently, and with dignity.

Since 2014, we have been working to improve binners' opportunities to generate income, raise awareness of the value of their work, and uplift their perspectives on city spaces, waste management, and the local economy. Though our operations are centred in Vancouver, we are working hard to develop and share our plans and practices with neighbouring communities so that binners beyond Vancouver can enjoy fair compensation and respect for their work.

It's thanks to our members and supporters that we have achieved so much, but there is still a long way to go before binners are compensated and respected for the work they do for our communities and the environment.

The prejudice behind the proposed Vernon and Kelowna by-laws confronts waste-pickers around the world. Though we have made progress in Vancouver, there is still a great deal of work to do here at home, and more to support binners' efforts elsewhere. I hope the pages that follow inspire you to join us as we continue this work into 2019.

Sincerely,

Anna Godefroy

Director, Binners' Project



Our Impacts: A Snapshot

Economic

\$174,017.66 went directly to the bidders, in honoraria and paycheques, and that doesn't include refunds from bottles and cans they collected on site.

Page 8 has more on the impact of our Community Economic Development Programs.

Environmental

Waste to landfills has reduced in volume by more than 90%.

Landfill charges have significantly decreased, while recycling has gone up.

Community Support

We now have 2800+ supporters across our email and social media accounts.



↑ **PAT, BERTHA, and DAWNA** have fun at the 2018 Mural Festival. As we grow, our demographics are changing, and we are seeing more people who identify as women and more people who identify with having indigenous ancestry in our programming.

About Our Members

BINNERS' PROJECT is a member-based initiative, with 80 active individuals. In 2018, we had 216 attendees in our meetings. Approximately 40% of them identify as women and 60% have Indigenous backgrounds. All members identify as low-income and face obstacles to mainstream employment. Most report living with mental illness, addiction, physical disabilities, and/or are currently or formerly homeless.

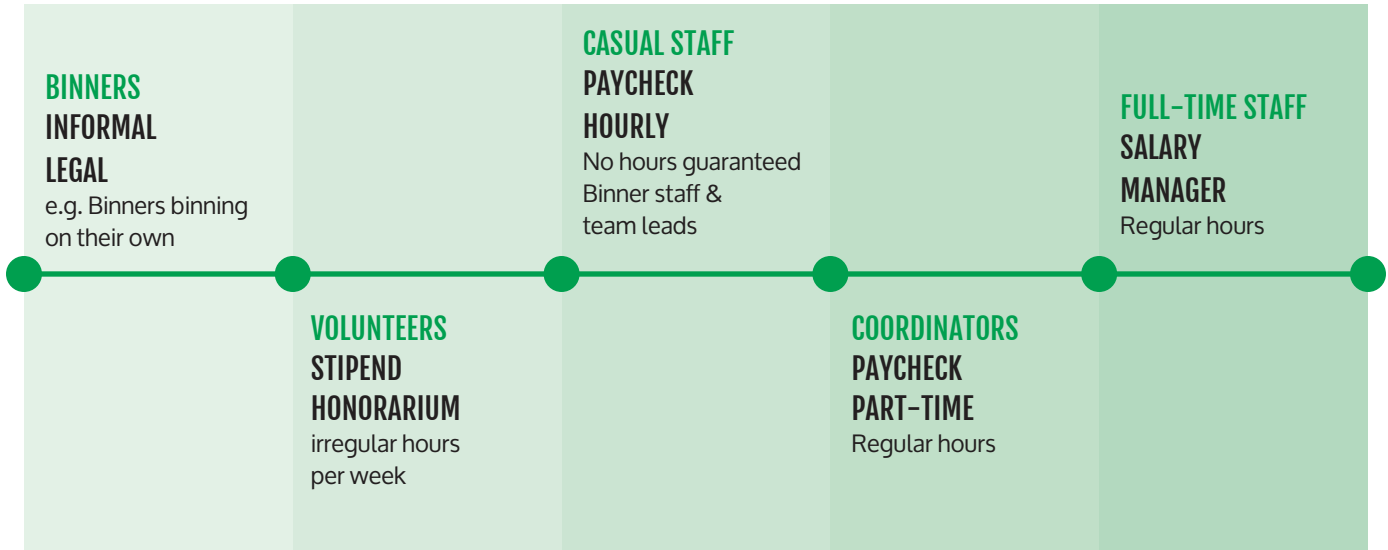
Members attend our weekly binners meetings where they have the chance to receive income opportunities, give feedback on programs we're developing and delivering, influence positions we take on matters related to binning, and participate in education and training opportunities.

Our membership policy is simple: if you bin, you're in. Even if people are actively using drugs or alcohol, struggling with a disability, illness, or homelessness, our support staff and lead binners ensure there is a place for them on our team.

Compensation is an important part of making our opportunities accessible. Without bus fare, honoraria, and a companion, most binners could not afford to take the day off binning to attend city council meetings or to give feedback on zero-waste policies.

Our Internal Employment Continuum

ESSENTIALLY, everyone who generates income falls somewhere on the continuum spectrum:



WE SEEK OPPORTUNITIES to engage binners in all aspects of the work beyond binning. True to our grassroots nature, we aim towards a steadier paycheck and a say in the decision-making that guides our work. In 2017, the launch of the sorting program blew doors open in this regard.

We now have five levels of engagement for our members:

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 80 Volunteers | VOLUNTEERS are binners who have attended three or more meetings and who are eligible to claim assignments. They receive honoraria for their time and contribution. |
| 19 Binner Staff | BINNERS who are staff receive similar opportunities as volunteers but are paid with an hourly wage and receive a paycheck. |
| 10 Team Leads | TEAM LEADS coordinate binner teams to deliver our Community Economic Development programs. The work hours are flexible and offer an introduction to leadership work. |
| 2 Coordinators | COORDINATORS work an average of 10 hours per week on a flexible basis. They work on-site with their Team Leads and at the office for some administrative tasks. They answer directly to the Manager. |
| 1 Manager | Also a former binner himself, the MANAGER OF PROGRAMS & OUTREACH recruits, trains, and supervises all members: coordinators, team leads, binner staff, and volunteers. |



↑ Our leadership team is continuing to grow. We meet monthly with our Team Leads to discuss successes and challenges, which offers an opportunity for professional development.

About Our Leadership Team

The leadership team consists of Team Leads, Coordinators, the Manager, and the Director. The group meets weekly to address member needs and service optimization, and to discuss overarching issues and opportunities related to business development and fundraising.

Education & Awareness-Raising



OUR EFFORTS strive to improve binner involvement and credibility in civic governance and, over time, influence policy, city planning, and the construction of inclusive systems. This outreach work also aims to grow public recognition of binners' contributions.

← **MICHAEL** is shown speaking about the PhotoVoice project he participated in to some students. We are growing our public representation program to increase the voices of binners in community and policy discussions.

Multi-Sectoral Engagement

Binners' Project routinely receives invitations to participate in policy discussions, consult with private agencies, and present to the public on a range of issues affecting binners.

Our membership presented **31 TIMES** across the Lower Mainland. These included discussions on homelessness, zero-waste policies, alley design, and social innovation. Binners' Project core staff and members sit on a range of committees dedicated to community economic development and social hiring, such as Exchange Inner City and Urban Core.

In Victoria, we are working with Mayor Helps and local waste-pickers in an effort to determine what, if any, aspirations exist around forming a Binners' Project chapter. The consultation will take the form of a needs assessment, targeting local binners and determining their most pressing needs and whether or not the solutions tested in Vancouver could be adapted to the Victoria landscape.

"I'm doing everything I can to help bring an initiative like **Binners' Project** here in Victoria. It's waste reduction, economic inclusion, and empowerment – all in one."

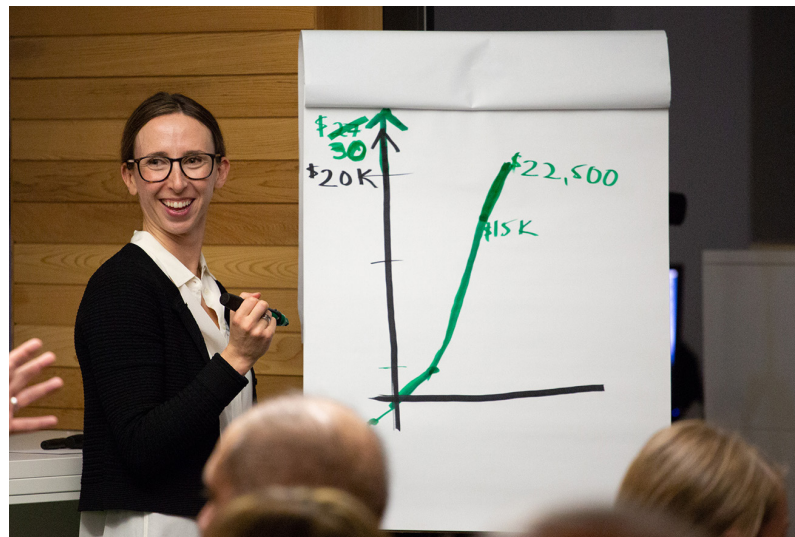
Mayor of Victoria, **Lisa Helps**

Coffee Cup Revolution

Every year, Binners' Project hosts the Coffee Cup Revolution to demonstrate what a coffee cup refund system could achieve, as well as to open a dialogue on how binning can support green communities, and vice versa. This year, we collected **86,732 CUPS!**

The depot is 100% binner-run and operated. This year, binner and coordinator Andrew Jack managed a team of 17 members who expertly ran the depot. Once it was underway, 40+ guests joined us for discussion and demonstrations of our waste sorting program.

Thanks to our sponsors!



Our First-Ever Fundraiser

We were humbled when on November 22, 100+ people from across the city, including city councillors, funders, supporters, and other NGOs got together to help make our first-ever fundraising night a success at the HCMA Architecture + Design office. We raised \$40,000! This money will go towards supporting the Universal Cart Initiative, specifically assisting us as we complete design and testing of the stations in 2019.

Community Economic Development Programs

BINNERS' PROJECT delivers Community Economic Development programs to provide job skills and income opportunities for marginalized people in the Downtown Eastside. Through trial and error, the programs are iteratively improved.

They are made up of **public waste education at events** and **back-of-house sorting**. Their financial sustainability is improving year on year.



← Binners interact with event goers to help sort their waste through our Waste Education Program. **SHIRLEY** is at the 2018 Mural Festival on Main Street. She became staff after that and is now team lead at Convention Center.

1.1 Public Waste Education

Event organizers are increasingly expected to manage the environmental impact of their events and to engage local communities. Recognizing the social shift in waste management, Binners' Project launched the public waste education program in 2015.

Today, event organizers across the Lower Mainland contract Binners' Project to provide waste education at their events. Binners take on the role of assisting

members of the public to sort out their waste. Our members' interactions with guests have the triple benefit of: 1) teaching guests about recycling, 2) helping the event hit its waste diversion targets, and 3) publicly demonstrating binners' expertise and work ethic.

Event assignments are a favourite among members who report that it "builds their skills" and "gets them out of the Downtown Eastside".

Measures of Success

Working with Binners' Project helps our partners get closer to their social inclusion and waste diversion targets.

Pacific National Exhibition (PNE)'s targets in 2017 were to increase their diversion rate from 55% to 60%. Thanks to the partnership with Binners' Project, PNE exceeded expectations and reached a record-breaking 64% diversion, a 9% increase. The PNE was recognized by 2018 RCBC Environmental Award in the Non-Profit category for their zero-waste initiatives during the annual Fair and other events.

Car Free Day has partnered with Binners' Project from 2016 to 2018, and we are in negotiations for renewal in 2019. Our programs fulfill their social inclusion goals in addition to maintaining their zero-waste mandate.

Our partnerships in 2018 were the following:

- City of Vancouver Carnegie
- Community Centre
- 4/20 Vancouver
- BC Cider Fest
- Central City Foundation
- Union Gospel Mission
- Car Free Day Society
- Vancouver Convention Centre
- City of Vancouver
- BC Sport
- Donnelly Events: Khatsahlano 4th Avenue Street Party
- Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association
- Vancouver Mural Festival Society
- Pacific National Exhibition
- HUB Cycling
- Simon Fraser University
- Luxury Supercar
- Asian-Canadian Special Events Association
- Brandlive
- John Howard Society
- Open Door Group
- Diner en Blanc
- Portland Hotel Society

But it is thanks to the binners that the Public Waste Education program really made a difference in 2018, as the numbers show below:

- **85** binners were involved in this program
- **3,086** hours of economic opportunities
- **\$41,225** went directly into their pockets

1.2 Back-of-House Waste Sorting

The sorting program is an answer to the seasonal nature of binning. Our members report struggling financially in the winter as they are not able to collect and resell enough beverage containers when binning on their own.

The waste sorting program applies binners' expertise to a new waste stream: garbage rooms. Building managers are routinely confronted with large quantities of waste in messy garbage rooms, overflowing recycling bins, and fees from haulers when waste streams are not properly sorted.

In response to these challenges, we offer a waste sorting program where binners conduct weekly, or daily site visits and use their skills. In each visit, they:

- sort items into the correct streams, thereby reducing the amount of waste sent to the landfill
- compact waste and create space in the waste area (e.g., collapsing cardboard boxes)
- remove refundable containers for extra revenues for the binners
- earn a predictable and fair income

We started the service with three pilot sites in 2017, and today it is operational in 11, including daily service at Capilano Suspension Bridge Park, 312 Main, and weekly service at multiple social housing sites operated by BC Housing and Atira Property Management.

Work is currently underway to secure partnerships with hotels, residential buildings, event venues, and other large-scale operations. In fact, we are piloting daily sorting at the Convention Centre until March 31st, 2019.



Measures of Success

"I am able to communicate better to others and feel like I have support when doing a job, which makes me happy."

Binner Team Lead

In addition to these benefits, our early estimates indicate that contracting Binners' Project for daily sorting reduced our partners' landfill waste by 90%+, and garbage pick ups (and therefore truck volume) are significantly decreased. Combined with the lower labour cost associated with managing the waste, some of our partners indicate breaking even on their waste activities even after the cost of Binners' Project.

This matters because it means that the service provided by the binners is valuable to our partners, and that we are in a position to get new contracts as the binners gain experience sorting, with the goal of the program financially breaking even in a few years.

Back-of-house sorting is a win-win situation because of its value to the binners, the environment, and to our partners. In 2018, our members benefited from this program greatly:

● **51** binners enrolled in this program

● **3,190** hours of economic opportunities

● **\$41,461.85** in the pockets of binners



↑ Our sorting program helps partnering sites increase their waste diversion targets while providing flexible, ongoing income opportunities to our members.

Our partnerships in 2018 were the following:

- Simon Fraser University
- 312 Main
- Lookout Society
- Atira Women's Resource Society (4 buildings)
- BC Housing (1 building)
- Capilano Suspension Bridge Park
- Vancouver Convention Centre
- Pacific National Exhibition

"Binners' Project has helped us take our stewardship program efforts to the next level. With 1.2 million annual visitors to our park, we needed help reaching our waste diversion goals.

Team members of **Binners' Project** make daily visits to our park grounds and sort all waste and recyclables.

Our landfill waste is a fraction of what it used to be, and we are now at an estimated 90% diversion rate."

Ulrich Laue

Operations General Manager at
Capilano Suspension Bridge Park



2.0 Financial Overview

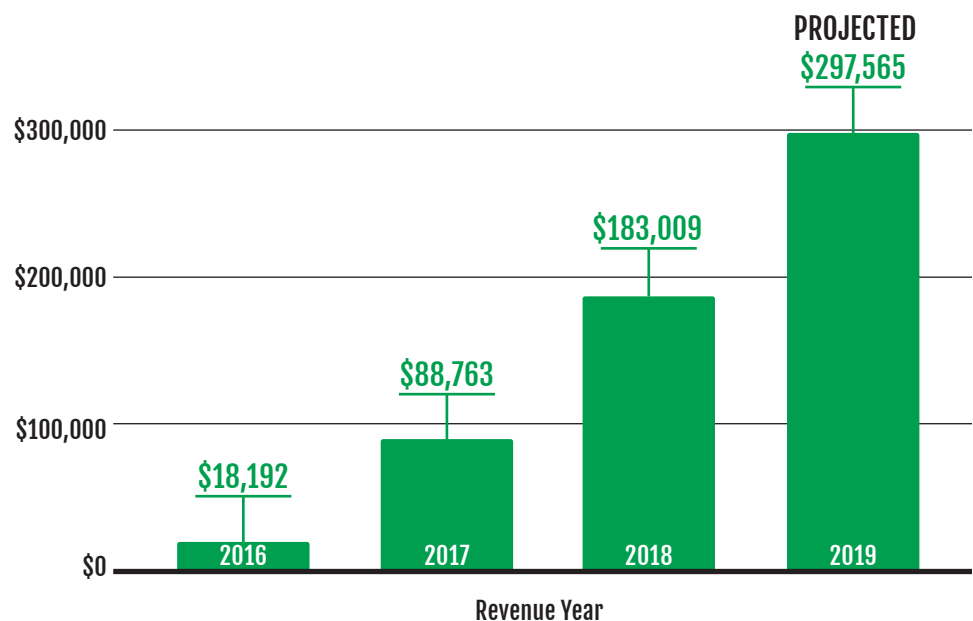
Our Community Economic Development programs are funded partly through program fees from our partners and partly through grants and private support.

As in 2017, this year they continued to make decisive strides towards financial sustainability. Total funds generated accounted for \$183,009, which represents 31% of our total revenue.

Our projections for 2019 are that they can reach an all-time record: \$295,065 or 37% of our total revenue, but for this we need financial support to handle the operations that will also increase.

At this time, our Community Economic Development programs do not generate enough revenue to cover their hard costs and management & administration costs. We are currently partnering with Vancity Community Foundation to understand the market better and assess how long it would take for these contracts to break even, including all management and administration costs. In the meantime, we continue to seek grant funding, donations, and sponsorship to bridge the gap.

Fee-for-Service Revenues 2016-2018, 2019 Projected





Infrastructure Projects

Binners Hook

The Binners Hook ensures safer, quicker access to bottles, cans, and objects of value. Installed outside residences and businesses next to dumpsters, it holds a bag of refundable containers that binners would otherwise have to root around for. It also reduces the noise and litter associated with binners' work of digging through waste and recycling bins for recyclables.

As of December 2018, 154 hooks have been installed throughout Vancouver. Building on the success of the Vancouver program, the hook was adopted in Montreal last year as a City-sponsored initiative. In Calgary, the program is looking to expand further in 2019 after an initial test pilot in 2018.



Universal Cart Initiative

For years, our members have expressed a need for purpose-built carts as an alternative to the discarded shopping carts. These reclaimed carts improve binners' efficiency and reduce the risk of injury—but they aren't optimized for the hard, messy work of binning.

In 2017, with seed funding from the City of Vancouver, Central City Foundation, and Encorp Pacific, we began developing a cart-sharing system.

We also spent the latter half of 2018 researching and developing the docking stations that will bring the Project to life. Together with our partner, HCMA, we convened a working group of over 40 people from across the tech, design, and engineering communities to help us develop a low-tech, secure bike-share-inspired docking system binners can use with little-to-no money or tech literacy.

SHANE FREI (top right corner) is leading the consultations, design, conception, and manufacturing work for both the carts and docking stations. We are especially proud of a CBC Vancouver in-depth piece featuring DAVIN BOUTANG demo'ing the prototype cart.

You can watch the demo at <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/binner-project-carts-1.4878988>



THIS YEAR, led by volunteer designer Shane Frei, our members and staff spent considerable time testing and optimizing the cart. The results of this work will be published in 2019 in the first of two reports we are co-authoring with Encorp Pacific.

With input of more than 100 Vancouver binners, the prototype cart was designed and released on January 31, 2018 in a public and media event celebrating everyone who helped make it happen. There were spotlights on the cart from CBC and Global news, and you can find those by heading to binnersproject.org/contactus.

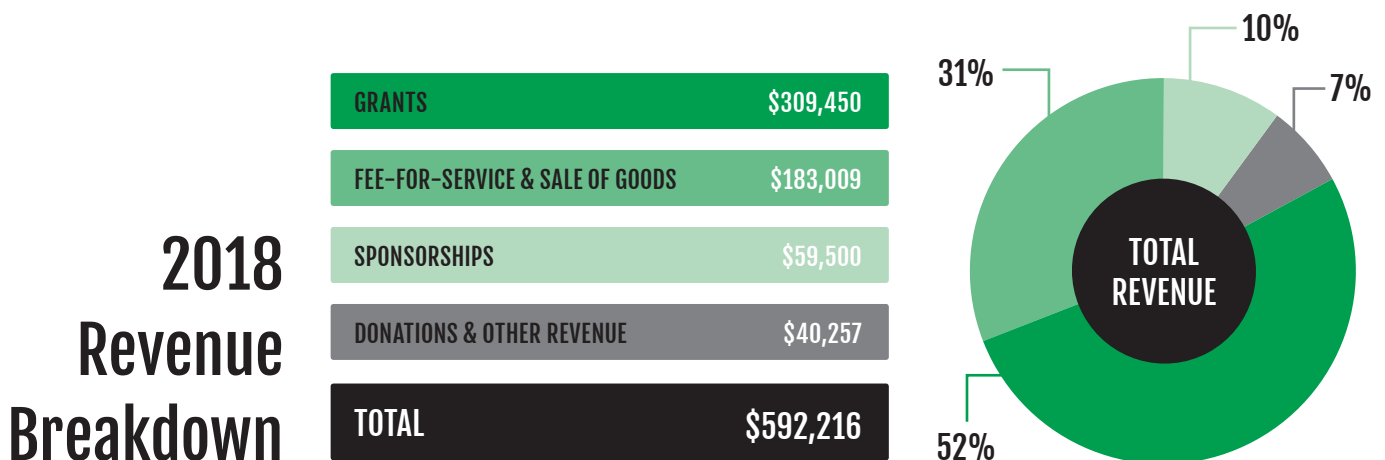
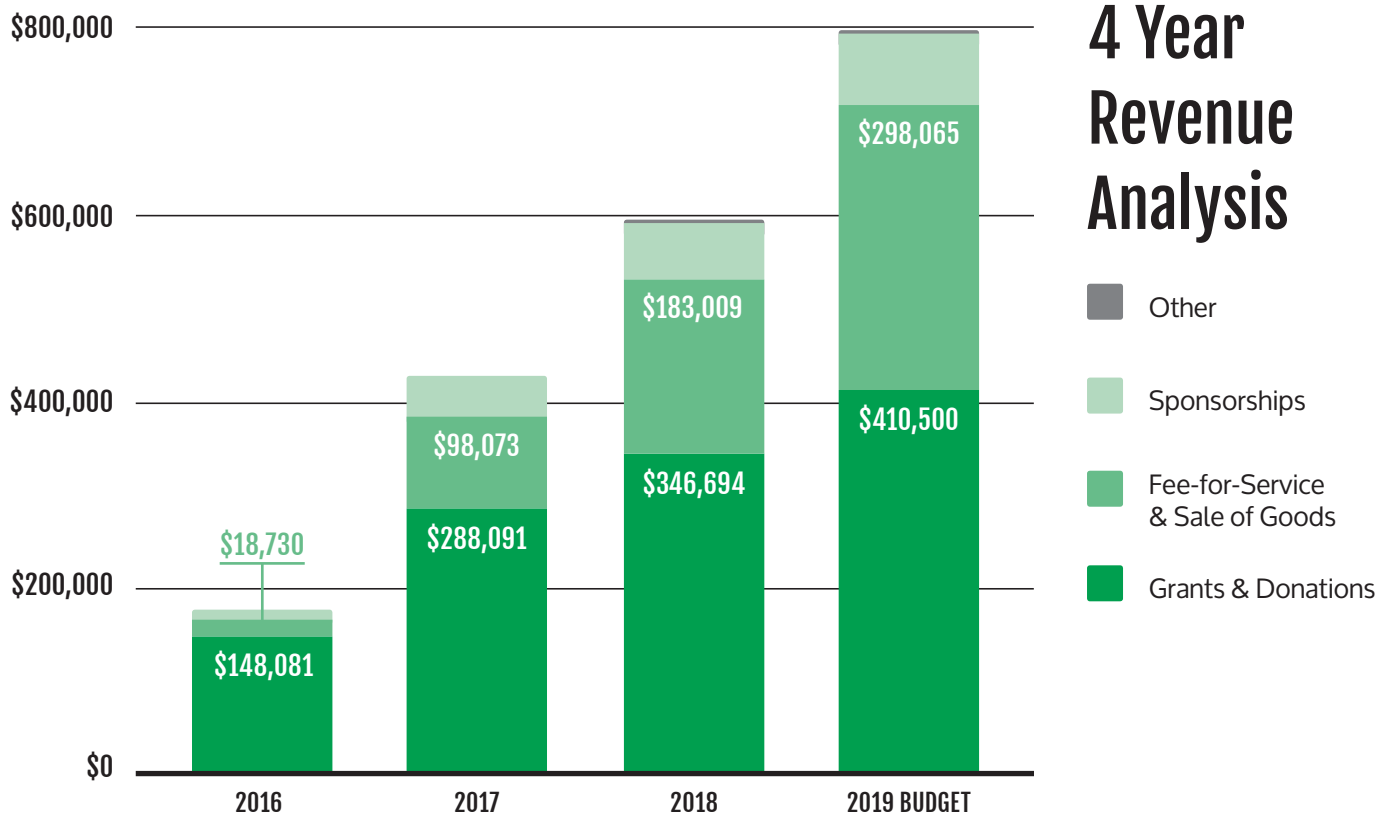
A big thanks to the 2018 cart sponsors.



Binners' Project Financial Overview

THE BINNERS' PROJECT'S operating budget in 2018 was \$592,216, which is an increase of 27% from 2017. Grants continue to be the core funding stream and covers core operations, organizational infrastructure, and membership expenses.

Our Community Economic Development programs continued to make decisive strides towards financial sustainability. Funds generated by the program accounted for \$183,009. For more info on this, please refer to Page 12.

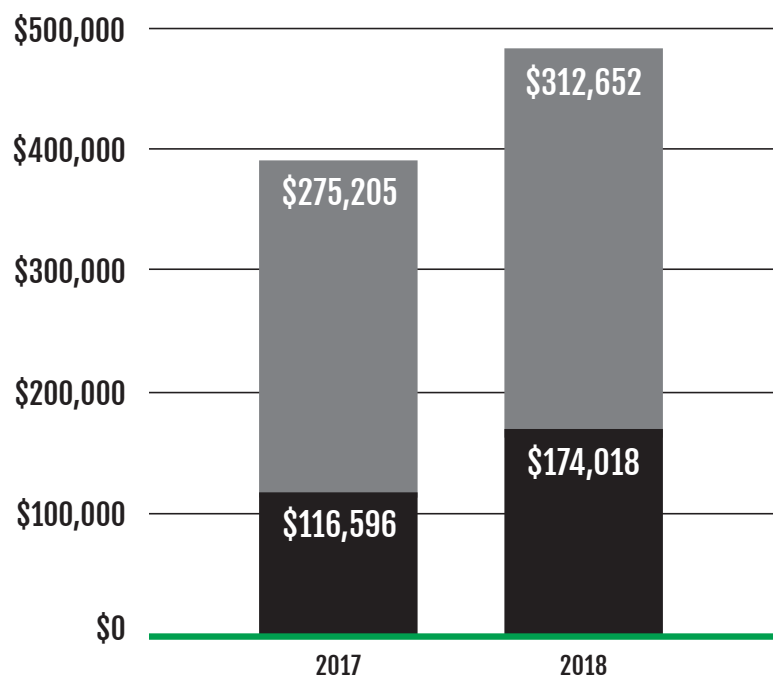




2 Year Income to Binners Analysis

We care about recognizing the financial value of members' involvement in our programs. In 2018, binner-members took home a total of \$174,017.66, up from \$116,596 in 2017.

- Other project expenses
- Income to Binners



The Team

WE ACKNOWLEDGE the binner-members, whose dedication and effort inspires the incredible team of staff, volunteers, funders, and supporters Binnars' Project is fortunate to have in its corner. Additionally, we take this opportunity to recognize the contributions of the following groups and individuals:

Our Core Staff

Core staff are full or part-time with Binnars' Project.

Anna Godefroy Co-founder & Director since 2014

Gabby Korcheva Co-founder & Strategy & Program Sustainability Manager, since 2014

Davin Boutang Former binner, Programs & Outreach Manager & member since 2015

Brianne De Man Communications and Operations Coordinator, since 2017

Bertha Cardinal Binner and Coordinator & member since 2015

Andrew Jack Binner and Coordinator & member since 2016

Our Leadership Team

All staff members, the leadership team is made of the following binnars:

Mark DeFreitas Binner & Team Lead

Brian Rutledge Binner & Team Lead

Shirley Vivian Binner & Team Lead

Sheldon Bowers Binner & Team Lead

Ed Hawkey Binner & Team Lead

Kelly Angecone Binner & Team Lead

Dave Collicott Binner & Team Lead

Jon Guerette Binner & Team Lead

Glenn Grafton Binner & Team Lead

Bill Vanyk Binner & Team Lead

Tides Canada, Our Shared Platform

Binnars' Project joined Tides Canada's shared platform in 2015. It provides governance, human resources, financial, and grant management for leading environmental and social projects across Canada, allowing projects to more effectively achieve their missions. All projects contribute 10-12% of revenue to the collective operation of the shared platform.

Our Binner-Staff

Binnars who started as volunteers and decided they were ready to take on more work with us:

Michael Leland Binner & member-staff

Melanie Collicott Binner & member-staff

Pat Bazinet Binner & member-staff

Francis Taban Binner & member-staff

Sonia Bruin Binner & member-staff

Sam Hamm Binner & member-staff

Our Steering Committee

The steering committee provides administrative oversight of **BINNERS' PROJECT**. In 2018 the group met once a month with the director in addition to attending Binners' Project events and representing the Project at various meetings. This year, the steering committee recruited two new members, Scott Fraser and Steven Johnston.

Jeanette Ageson, Co-Chair (2017-present)

Publisher, The Tyee

David Lee, Co-Chair (2015-present)

Executive Director, Organization Development, John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland of BC

Scott Fraser (2018-present)

Former President and CEO, Encorp Pacific

Steve Johnson (2018-present)

Executive Director, Exchange Inner City

Kathleen Leahy, Outgoing Chair (2015-present)

Director, UBC Learning Exchange

Rebecca Loyo Mayo (2017-January 2019)

Director, Corporate Responsibility at a fashion retailer

Lori MacIntosh (2016-present)

Lecturer, Faculty of Education & Social Justice Institute, University of British Columbia

Our Ad Hoc Advisors & Consultants

Ken Lyotier

Shane Frei

Belinda Li

Sean Condon

Shaugn Schwartz

Johanna Li

Amanda Burrows

Karina Pacey

Michaela Montaner

Our Partners & Funders



Eastside Community Fund



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Learning Exchange



BINNERS' PROJECT is a group of waste-pickers aided by support staff dedicated to improving their economic opportunities, and reducing the stigma they face as informal recyclable collectors. Binners' Project is a project on Tides Canada's shared platform, which supports on-the-ground efforts to create uncommon solutions for the common good. **TIDES CANADA** is a national Canadian charity dedicated to a healthy environment, social equity, and economic prosperity.



Don't wait until our next report for an update! Join us on social media or our low-traffic email list to keep up with our activities year-round:

binnersproject.org/signup



facebook.com/binnersproject



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linkedin.com/company/binners'-project