



BUSINESS PLAN

2025

Foreword

Hope does not depart from us suddenly, and it had gradually dimmed over the course of the day when I realized I was going to become homeless. I wasn't addicted to drugs. I had worked my entire adult life. It made no difference. I had been, like many in British Columbia, one bad day away from poverty. My day arrived on an overcast weekend in late autumn.

I had no family I could turn to. I had friends, but in the housing market of Victoria the space to accommodate someone else was a rare luxury. I had run through every scenario I could think of; every budgetary long shot that came to mind. I began packing my belongings without a destination. The *inevitability* of the outcome made those days very difficult for me.

After many calls and a good deal of research, I was eventually connected to knowledgeable resources who helped me to navigate my way into a shelter. Despite the unceasing demands of them, the staff there were generous with their time, energy and guidance. Hope does not return suddenly either, but I began to feel it once again within those walls. I found steady work and was able to find my own apartment. I could not sleep comfortably for a long time, but my life returned to normal.

I did not do this alone. My close friends were invaluable, and the providers who worked with were unbelievably wonderful. Colleagues at work were gentle with my silences when I could not find the words. With their combined support, I was able to gradually piece my life back together.

It was very tempting to make every effort to forget my experience and just move on. There is an undeniable and persistent stigma to homelessness, and we are often too eager to paint those who have fallen into that abyss with the broad brush of our preconceptions. Unlike many, I had the luxury of simply picking up where I had left off - acting as though it had never happened. But I found myself obligated to try and to use my experience to help others who may find themselves in that position.

I was compelled to reach out to those closest to me – those very same who had been so vital in helping me emerge out of my own situation – to see if we could help. If we might come up with a way to make things easier for the countless people in B.C. currently feeling– as I had, that afternoon – that they are out of options.

We want others to always have hope.



Erik Stone

Executive Summary

The mission of Shades (*stylized: SHVDES*) is to provide accessible, comprehensive, and current resource directories and advocacy for homeless and at-risk individuals and families in Victoria. Through the Garden City Resource Guide and its planned internet counterpart, we aspire to connect vulnerable populations with vital services such as food, shelter, healthcare, legal aid, and job training.

We believe in the value of dialogue concerning social issues in our community, and seek to encourage meaningful discussion about these complicated issues – promoting lived experiences and challenging common perceptions of vulnerable individuals. We believe that it is too easy to fall into poverty, through circumstances often beyond the control of any single individual, and that effective coordination of existing resources is a critical step towards assisting those at risk to navigate difficult circumstances towards a brighter future.

Business Description

SHVDES is dedicated to supporting homeless and vulnerable populations through two key operational objectives:

- The creation, maintenance and distribution of accessible resource directories– online and offline - offering current information on local services and support networks.
- The promotion of awareness and dialogue regarding homeless and vulnerable populations in Victoria to combat growing compassion fatigue and encourage lasting solutions to address not just the visibility of homelessness, but homelessness itself.



Market Analysis

- **Landscape:** Few existing resource guides are comprehensive or regularly updated. Guides with various degrees of success undertaken by providers and organizations in the past, but this is often one of many areas of focus – no organization currently exists primarily focused on the production and maintenance of such a guide.
- **Needs Assessment:** A lack of centralized, reliable sources of information for essential services in Victoria.
- **Target Audience:** Homeless individuals, low-income families, vulnerable demographics and those at risk of homelessness.

Service Offering

- **Garden City Resource Guide:** A comprehensive directory of local services, including shelters, food banks, healthcare facilities, legal aid, job training programs, and more.
- **Distribution Channels:** Physical copies distributed at shelters, libraries, and community centers; digital directory regularly updated at shvdes.ca upon completion of the website (estimated Spring 2025).

Marketing and Outreach Strategy

- **Community Partnerships:** Collaboration with local nonprofit and service providers, government agencies, and businesses to distribute guides and raise awareness.
- **Online Presence:** Maintain an informative website and active social media channels to reach a broader audience and encourage genuine dialogues regarding the challenges faced by vulnerable populations in Victoria.
- **Outreach Programs:** Organize events and workshops to educate the target audience about available resources.
- **Locally Focused:** Wherever possible, support local businesses in achieving operational goals (i.e. local printshops for production of physical resource guides versus national chains).

“It wouldn’t be until 22 years later that I finally found the courage to clean up. I was so lost and discouraged. Looking back, I would have benefitted from having access to a resource guide. Over my time in addiction and recovery I have had many battles. I am a Street Photographer living in Victoria. My hope is that my photography will start conversation, inspire change and to give faces to the otherwise faceless population.” - Darrell A. Craig

PHASE I (2025)

Garden City Resource Guide

Design

Data Integration

Printing

Distribution: Frontline Staff, Case Workers and CSWs in Victoria

Solicitation of Feedback

\$8,000

\$20k

PHASE II (2025)

Online Directory

Hosting

Web Design

Social Media Integration

Distribution: Urgent Care Spaces (Hospitals, Clinics)

\$12,000

\$35k

PHASE III (2025)

Non-Profit Incorporation

Part-Time Staffing

Distribution: Community Spaces (Libraries, Community Centres)

Deployment to Capital Region

\$15,000

Funding and Financial Plan

- **Funding Sources:**
 - Grants from government agencies and foundations
 - Donations from individuals and businesses
 - Fundraising events
- Recurring donation program
- Long-term partnerships to ensure ongoing funding for regular printing .

Impact Measurement

- **Metrics:** Track the number of guides distributed, internet usage statistics, and metrics from social media engagement. Regular reporting to gauge effectiveness of various initiatives and inform an agile response.

Outcomes: Evaluate the effectiveness of the resource guide in connecting individuals with essential services and improving their quality of life. Solicit feedback from DSP network in Victoria to improve the functionality of the guide and alleviate administrative pressure on service providers.

Conclusion

SHVDES is committed to supporting homeless and at-risk people in Victoria by providing a valuable resource guide that connects them with the services they need to improve their lives. With a dedicated team, strong community partnerships, and a sustainable funding plan, we aim to support existing providers and help facilitate connections between vulnerable individuals and the resources that can assist them.

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SHADES

