

March 12, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: West Kelowna Hygiene/Resource Hub

On behalf of Interior Health, we are pleased to support Kelowna Gospel Mission's proposed Westside Resource Hub.

People experiencing homelessness are at higher risk of poor physical and mental health outcomes and premature death. Unhoused individuals can experience significant barriers in accessing services which may result in the worsening of their health and well-being. Often marginalized individuals have limited access to hygiene facilities, increasing their risk of communicable disease and wound infections. The proposed Westside Resource Hub will provide access to clean washrooms and hygiene facilities and will help connect individuals to social and health supports. Having this service near public transportation further supports individuals to access and connect with other parts of the community, helping to address social isolation.

Interior Health collaborates with local governments and community partners to improve health and wellness by helping create policies that support healthy environments and behaviours. It is our experience that Kelowna Gospel Mission is committed to working collaboratively with Interior Health and other partners to improve the health of their clients and foster a sense of community. As such, we strongly support the proposed Westside Resource Hub project.

Sincerely,



Silvina Mema, MD MSc FRCPC
Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer



Danielle Cameron
Executive Director, Clinical Operations, Central Okanagan



Kelowna Gospel Mission
c/o Carmen Rempel

RE: Letter of Support

I am writing to express our support for the Kelowna Gospel Mission's initiative to establish a Hub on Churchill Road in West Kelowna. The prospect of having a centralized location for vital services, such as hygiene facilities and community support, is a commendable and crucial endeavor for our community.

The importance of having a dedicated space in the core of West Kelowna where individuals can access essential services like showers, laundry facilities, and connection with case managers cannot be overstated. This initiative aligns perfectly with the values and mission of our organization, Turning Points, and we are eager to offer our full support.

Turning Points is particularly interested in the prospect of being a collaborative partner in this venture. We are prepared to contribute by providing a dedicated staff member who will focus on case management to help individuals access the support and resources they need. This collaborative effort will not only enhance the impact of the Hub but also strengthen the network of services available to those in our community who are most in need.

As we all understand, addressing the basic needs of individuals is fundamental to fostering positive change and creating a sense of dignity and hope. The establishment of the Hub on Churchill Road is a progressive step towards building a more compassionate and supportive community in West Kelowna.

We believe that by working together, we can create a space that not only meets immediate needs but also serves as a catalyst for transformative change in the lives of individuals facing challenges. We commend Kelowna Gospel Mission for taking the lead in this initiative and are excited about the potential positive impact it will have on our community.

Thank you for your dedication to improving the lives of those in need, and we look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important project.

Sincerely,

Candice Berry

Candice Berry
Regional Manager of Shelter Diversion

Brittany Gadernuk

Brittany Yadernuk
Site Manager – Bartley Shelter

TURNING POINTS COLLABORATIVE SOCIETY

102-3301 24th Avenue, Vernon, BC V1T 9S8 Ph: 250.542.3555 www.turningpoints.ngo



We acknowledge that our workplace is within the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of the Okanagan Syilx and Splotsin People.



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250-768-1850 westsidesa.info@salvationarmy.ca
www.westsidesa.ca

March 22, 2024

Re: Letter of Support for proposed Hygiene Centre in West Kelowna

To Whom It May Concern,

The Westside Salvation Army is pleased to provide a letter of support for the proposed Hygiene Centre. We recognize the value this type of programming can provide. A Hygiene Centre would not only meet basic human needs, but offer dignity, connection, and various supports as well.

We are excited by the proposed partnerships and collaboration that will be required to make a Hygiene Centre a reality and are committed to contributing to its success. Currently, the Westside Salvation Army supports unhoused individuals in our community by offering clean clothing, shoes, and hygiene items.

It is challenging to keep up with the demand for clean clothing. Offering folks the ability to wash their clothes would greatly reduce the impact on our community. It will decrease the amount of soiled clothing that enters our landfill and therefore reduce environmental impacts. The Westside Salvation Army will continue to support unhoused individuals in our community by providing the proposed Hygiene Centre with clean clothing, shoes, towels, hygiene items etc.

We can confidently speak to the need for a Hygiene Centre on the Westside because we hosted the portable shower trailer last year for the City of West Kelowna. The shower program served as a central hub where folks were able to get clean, get a meal from Turning Points, get services from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and feel connected. We saw positive changes in individuals after a hot shower and believe transformation is possible when people are treated with dignity and respect.

We believe the proposed Hygiene Centre is truly integral to providing support for those in need in our community and therefore highly support this program.

Sincerely,

Christine Pomfrey
Pathway of Hope Case Manager
The Westside Salvation Army



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Kelowna

March 21, 2024

On behalf of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), we are writing to express our support for the Kelowna Gospel Mission's initiative to establish a Hub on Churchill Road in West Kelowna. The prospect of having a centralized location for vital services, such as hygiene facilities and community support, is a commendable and crucial endeavor for our community.

The importance of having a dedicated space in the core of West Kelowna where individuals can access essential services like showers, laundry facilities, and connection with case managers cannot be overstated. The initiative aligns with key areas of the organizational focus and the values of the Canadian Mental Health Association CMHA. We have significant experience developing collaborative spaces and partnering well for the good of the community. Our work with Foundry is a shining example of this.

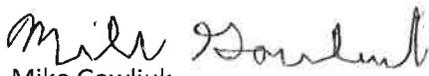
As an organization that is rooted in partnership and community collaboration, we are happy to partner. We are prepared to contribute by providing two dedicated staff members that can support outreach, case management and service delivery at the hub. We will also bring the Central Okanagan Rent Bank to West Kelowna, in order to support renters who may be one step away from homelessness.

As we all understand, addressing the basic needs of individuals is fundamental to fostering positive change and creating a sense of dignity and hope. The establishment of the Hub on Churchill Road is a progressive step towards building a more compassionate and supportive community in West Kelowna.

We believe that by working together, we can create a space that not only meets immediate needs but also serves as a catalyst for transformative change in the lives of individuals facing challenges.

Thank you for your dedication to improving the lives of those in need, and we look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important project.

Sincerely,


Mike Gawliuk

CEO



March 22, 2024

To the City of West Kelowna Council Members

The Central Okanagan Food Bank in West Kelowna has been participating in the meetings to solve issues around the unhoused people in this community. Through these meetings it has become painfully obvious that more services are needed in West Kelowna, particularly resources providing support for those coming off the streets, a place to find reprieve and to receive healthy meals.

In mid-2023 the West Kelowna branch of COFB began tracking the number of day bags (a sandwich, a drink, and a granola bar) that we give out. In September 2023 we handed out 47-day bags. In February 2024 we handed out 151-day bags, quite a significant increase. The reason for this increase is because there has been a decrease in options for meals by service and not-for profit providers. Many of the people we serve have substance use issues and mental health issues.

Many of our unhoused clients report that they can't travel to Kelowna due to transportation barriers and don't like the feeling of being displaced outside their community. Further, many unhoused folks can be seen on our security cameras digging through our dumpster. They are eating food that is not meant for human consumption. During the fires in September and throughout the summer we provided water to the unhoused people; on hot days these people struggle to get out of the heat, and they breathe in unhealthy air. In the winter they put themselves at great risk sleeping outside in freezing cold temperatures. In the months when things begin to warm up their feet are often wet, and when the evenings cool off, they are at risk of hypothermia.

The West Kelowna community needs a place where outreach workers and other service providers can meet with clients and support them to access needed services; support groups need a place to meet, and we need a safe place for people to access hygiene services and healthy meals. West Kelowna also needs to provide sufficient emergency housing to avoid having a tent city.

This food bank is hoping to support such an organization by providing sandwiches, granola bars, just add water soups, drinks, bulk items that we have in excess (food, toiletries, socks, gloves, toques, blankets etc.). We frequently have nonfood items donated to us and we would be happy to share those with a Resource/Hygiene Centre. A key focus that a resource center would provide is to provide a hot soup and a warm meal. This meal creates a sense of connection and opportunity where the resource team can address the complex care issues that the unhoused community is experiencing. Through this connection, clients are encouraged to seek a housing solution and to get back to a safe place and housing environment. The foodbank staff and volunteers are not equipped to take on this important task but are willing to support this initiative with the resources we have.

Based on the need for connection, we recommend the launch of a community-collaborated resource center that connects with the unhoused population in the West Kelowna community.

Kind regards,



Central Okanagan
Food Bank

Kathleen Alexander

Program Coordinator, West Kelowna

Phone: 250-768-1559 ex302

Email: kathleen@cofoodbank.com

2310 Enterprise Way, Kelowna

3711 Elliott Road, West Kelowna

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United Way
British Columbia

Working with communities in
BC's North, Interior, Lower Mainland,
Central & Northern Vancouver Island

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April 5th, 2024

RE: West Kelowna Housing and Homelessness Resource Hub

To the City of West Kelowna Council Members

United Way BC has been engaged in a series of meetings to better understand the landscape of unhoused and underhoused populations in the West Kelowna area. Since 2023 and through the wildfire event in 2023 there have been a significant number of people experiencing housing precarity; this has increased significantly since COVID-19 and is exacerbated by the ongoing intersecting crises of cost of living, housing, climate related events and toxic drug supply. United Way BC is aware of similar situations across communities in BC.

In the Central Okanagan the vast majority of services for the unhoused are in Kelowna and with this growing population of folk needing support and assistance there is a need to decentralize that support as well as making the supports more accessible to people without private transportation. The priority areas of need as identified by the West Kelowna Housing and Homelessness Table is for immediate access to support services such as health care, mental health supports and housing. Additionally, the need for a single place to access healthy and nutritious food is essential and lastly identifying somewhere for unhoused and underhoused people to seek shelter from the elements is crucial.

Currently these services are being provided in an ad hoc manner through piecemeal funding; the people being served are community members and residents and are in the unfortunate situation of losing their housing for a multitude of reasons. United Way BC has recently released a report highlighting the impact of the housing crisis on seniors and other people on a fixed income (Aging in Precarity); we are also aware that many of the people who are unhoused are families or people with disabilities. In order to achieve a healthy, caring and inclusive community we must grapple with the systems in which we operate to provide accessible, culturally safe and trauma informed care for all community members.

United Way BC is a connector and convener of the non-profit sector in this region; we have heard from many partners that the struggle to provide water and shelter for the unhoused population is a growing challenge. Having a single space where people can go to access these basic human rights and a space where social service sector providers can triage and support individuals is a key stepping stone on the path to addressing and preventing homelessness in the communities where we live and work.

Kind regards,

Naomi Woodland

Regional Coordinator, Central Okanagan | South Okanagan Similkameen

Community Impact and Investment, United Way BC