



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

January 16, 2020

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To Whom It May Concern,

As Mayor of the City of Kelowna, I am happy to endorse the plan proposed by The Bridge Youth & Family Services to build an Okanagan Youth Recovery House for young people under the age of 19 who are experiencing addiction. Currently, British Columbia has less than 50 publicly funded youth treatment beds, and there are no facility-based treatment options for youth under the age of 17 in the Okanagan.

I recognize that facility-based treatment is a critical component in the continuum of care for youth diagnosed with substance use disorder, alcohol use disorder, and/or concurrent disorder. I hope that health outcomes for young people in the Okanagan will improve once they can receive addiction treatment in their home community. The absence of a local resource results in youth languishing on wait lists for weeks and months, if they are able to access a service at all. This results in untold distress for many families and places our young people at considerable risk of death while they wait.

Youth treatment is all about prevention. If our community services can respond to youth who are struggling with addiction, it would improve the safety, vibrancy and health of our citizens. The Youth Recovery House would stem the tide of poverty, trauma, family breakdown, homelessness, and mental and physical illness that a lifetime of addiction often entails.

The Bridge Youth & Family Services has a strong reputation for providing expert, evidence-based recovery and addictions care. Their plan will provide spaces of solace, healing and recovery for our most at-risk young people and their families. I hope their proposal will be met with approval.

Yours very truly,

Colin Basrah
MAYOR

