

January 23, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

**Re: Letter of Support for Youth Recovery House
The Bridge Youth and Family Services
Our File Number: COR-711**

The Town of Osoyoos Council endorses 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. Within the Okanagan, there are zero facility based treatment options for youth under the age of 17.

The Town of Osoyoos recognizes that facility-based treatment is a critical component in the continuum of care for young people diagnosed with substance use disorder, alcohol use disorder, and/or concurrent disorder. Health outcomes for young people in the Okanagan will improve when 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.

At its very core, youth treatment is all about prevention: if our community services can respond to people who are struggling with addiction when they are young, we will positively affect the safety, vibrancy and health of the Okanagan for years to come. The Youth Recovery House will 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. They have a plan that will provide spaces of solace, healing and recovery for our most at-risk young people and their families. Town Council endorses that plan.

Yours truly,



Sue McKortoff
Mayor

SM/dc

C: Council
Allan Chabot, CAO