

# Report to Council



**Date:** April 9, 2018

**File:** 00615-20-02

**To:** Acting City Manager

**From:** Co-Chairs, Journey Home Task Force

**Subject:** Journey Home Task Force Update

Report Prepared by: Social Development Manager, Active Living & Culture

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the update report from the Journey Home Task Force Co-Chairpersons, dated April 9, 2018.

**Purpose:** To provide Council with an update on the progress of the Journey Home Task Force's public engagement process to develop Kelowna's long-term plan to address homelessness.

## **Background:**

The Journey Home Task Force began the consultation phase in January 2018 and to date there have been a total of 1,697 points of engagement. According to Dr. Alina Turner of Turner Strategies, the number and diversity of the participants (see Appendix 1), along with the quality of the input throughout the Journey Home community engagement process has been unprecedented as compared to other communities. Based on the feedback received, all indications show there is a high interest in addressing homelessness, and citizens want to be engaged in contributing to solutions.

The Youth Homelessness Summit and the Community Summit in January launched the consultation phase of the strategy development with 178 participants. The summits were full day workshops bringing together representatives from the homeless-serving sector. Both the community summit and youth summit helped to inform the topics for the continuing consultation that took place through: a public survey, a series of youth focus groups, and a two-week series of 24 Design Labs. In addition, the Lived Experience Circle has been meeting since the end of January and has provided input that will be critical in the development of the final Journey Home Plan. A summary of participation and key insights that have emerged follow in this report.

### Public Survey

An online public survey was launched on February 7<sup>th</sup> to gather public input and closed on March 18<sup>th</sup>. A total of 501 survey responses were submitted. Participation reflected a diversity of age groups and sectors.

The majority of respondents indicated that they are aware of the homelessness plan development:

- 79% of respondents felt that solving the issue of homelessness in Kelowna is very important, an additional 17% believe it to be somewhat important
- 52%, were satisfied with the current efforts to address homelessness, 32% indicated that they were dissatisfied.
- 85% of respondents indicated that they believe homelessness is on the rise in Kelowna; another 10% indicated that they believe it has stayed the same.
- In terms of solutions, there was strong belief that measures such as Housing First and Long Term Supportive Housing could improve the situation.

#### A Way Home Kelowna Youth Focus Groups

A Way Home Kelowna conducted a series of five focus groups together with one on one interviews, for a total engagement of 50 youth between 12-15 years old. These sessions were designed to provide youth with a forum through which they could provide their input into the plan development process. Some of the key service gaps for youth were identified including: residential treatment facilities; ensuring a continuum of housing; addressing stigma; skill building and recreation opportunities to create a connection to community; and improved accessibility to services.

#### Lived Experience Circle

The Lived Experience Circle began meeting in late January. The lived experience circle is a convening of those with living or lived experience of homelessness. The design of the Lived Experience process was based on evidence-based practices across Canada that indicate that the voice of lived experience expertise is critical in the development of success strategies to address homelessness.

The Lived Experience Circle has had 107 individuals participate overall to date. Some of the key points emerging from the Circle include: the importance of individual choice; the need to address discrimination through education and awareness; 24/7 access to services; peer support for navigating services; and culturally and trauma-informed services. The Circle will continue working over the next few months on how to address the need for public education and awareness. The Journey Home Task Force is extremely grateful to those participants that have given their time and expertise.

#### Journey Home Design Labs

A total of 23 two-hour Design Labs were hosted over a two-week period, each focusing on a topic that emerged from the Community and Youth summits held in January. 636 participants attended the labs representing over 68 different organizations. Attendees included: interested citizens; Indigenous representatives; service providers, Provincial Ministries; local businesses, developers and builders; funders and foundations; faith community; and local researchers and technology sector. At least two individuals with lived experience participated in each lab.

The outcomes of the Design Labs will assist the Task Force in building the Journey Home Plan. There were key themes that emerged, and many of them were woven through the conversations over the two weeks. Turner Strategies indicated that prevention, innovation, and lived experience were underlying themes throughout consultation and will assist in building a made-in Kelowna strategy to address homelessness. Other key outcomes include: coordinating body and partnerships, housing with

supports, and inclusion and Reconciliation. These become important focal points for the strategy moving forward.

#### Summary

Next steps for the Journey Home Strategy development include a *What We Heard: Strategic Directions & Input* session on April 10<sup>th</sup> where participants from the Journey Home Summits and Design Labs will have the opportunity to comment on the direction of the strategy. The process will be open for public input from April 11-18 as well as the presentation will be video recorded and an online tool for feedback will be made available via [kelowna.ca/journeyhome](http://kelowna.ca/journeyhome). On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the Task Force Co-Chairpersons together with Turner Strategies will present a framework for the Journey Home Plan to Council, and the final Plan will be presented for Council's consideration on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Journey Home Task Force is grateful to all those that spent time answering the public survey, attending the Community Summits and Design Labs, and to the Youth and Lived Experience Circle that have contributed valuable input. The level of engagement in the community dialogue has strengthened the Task Force's ability to create a meaningful and relevant strategy for our community to address the needs of our most housing-vulnerable citizens and we look forward to presenting the final document in June.

**Internal Circulation:** Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture, Communications Advisor

#### **Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Alternate Recommendation:

**Submitted by:** Journey Home Task Force Co-Chairpersons

**Approved for inclusion:** J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture

Attachments: Community Engagement – By the Numbers  
PowerPoint Presentation

Cc: Divisional Director, Community Planning & Strategic Investment  
Divisional Director, Strategic Corporate Services