



June 24, 2019

Lance Kayfish
Director of Community Safety
City of Kelowna

Re: Public washroom facilities

Dear Mr. Kayfish,

We are thrilled to provide a letter of support for this City initiative to provide temporary washroom facilities in strategically placed areas of the city for the summer. The Journey Home Strategy to end homelessness is a five year plan. While we work that plan, there are still people outside, homeless in our community, without access to toilets and showers. Few, if any, of the businesses in the downtown core permit their washrooms to be used by our street entrenched population. That leaves people who sleep outside without any place to deal with their bodily functions or get cleaned up for the day.

Our Lived Experience Circle on Homelessness (LECoH) advisory group tells us that having access to this basic need would be appreciated by the citizens who would use it. If done well, it would also be a facility that others who need access to it would be able to use. With the increase of people downtown during the summer tourist season, it is worthwhile to make the washroom facility appealing, clean, funky and a safe, easy thing to access for citizens and tourists alike.

By partnering with social enterprise PEOPLE, staffing it, cleaning it and keeping it safe and accessible to everyone creates opportunity for engagement between people with lived experience of addiction and homelessness with others in the community. We have the opportunity to break down barriers and stigma through this venture. It is a courageous step, and one worth taking. The board and staff of the Central Okanagan Journey Home Society support this project and strongly encourage the City of Kelowna to pilot it this summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. Askeland", is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Gaelene Askeland
Executive Director