

October 3, 2024

Mayor and Council
City of Thunder Bay
500 Donald St. East
Thunder Bay, ON
P7E 5K4

Subject: Letter of Support for the Municipality's Human Rights-Based Community Action Plan to Address Encampments

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of Elevate NWO, I am writing to express our support for the City's comprehensive Human Rights-Based Community Action Plan to address encampments. This initiative represents a crucial and well-structured approach to addressing the pressing challenges of unsheltered homelessness in our community and aligns with our shared commitment to fostering safety, well-being, and dignity for all residents.

We strongly endorse the key components of the plan, including:

- **Permissible Encampment Areas** that provide essential services in controlled environments, which will greatly reduce strain on community resources and improve conditions for encampment residents.
- **Temporary Village Sheltering Units** that offer not only immediate indoor sheltering, but also the wrap-around services necessary to help individuals stabilize and transition to long-term solutions.
- **Advocacy to Provincial and Federal Governments** to secure the funding and policy changes needed to address homelessness in a sustainable way.
- **Integration of Lived Experience Voices**, ensuring that the decisions made are rooted in the real-life experiences of those directly affected by unsheltered homelessness.

At Elevate NWO, we are particularly interested in the "Temporary Village" and believe that this is an essential part of the community response. It not only provides transitional housing for people but also allows for the development of a personalized plan of care to address the root causes that

led to person becoming houseless an opportunity to practice new skills with the support of dedicated staff to reduce repeat houselessness.

We stand ready to contribute to the efforts of this plan through providing our expertise in “wise practice” standards for engaging houseless individuals, providing harm reduction services and access to health care supports for people within our core mandate of HIV and Hep C.

This plan represents the best approach we have seen in our community since the onset of the housing crisis. By offering people living houseless with **choice**, you will create better “buy in” and better outcomes. By giving **voice** to people living houseless you ensure that you are meeting the needs of people living in impossible situations. By implementing this plan, Thunder Bay can set an entirely new practice standard and truly live into its Strategic Plan “**Maamawe (All Together).**”

We look forward to working alongside the municipality and other community partners to ensure its successful implementation.

Sincerely,



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