

### **Background:**

The Journey Home Strategy is a 5-year plan to address homelessness in our community with an emphasis on housing first. The goal is to ensure a coordinated and easy-to-access system of care for those in Kelowna who have lost, or are about to lose their home.

The Journey Home Strategy premise was approved in principle at Kelowna City Council on May 7, and a final draft will be presented on June 25, 2018. It's important that we continue to move forward and be proactive in our efforts to ensure we do not lose the momentum we have generated so far through the Journey Home process. Over the course of the past year, the Journey Home Task Force has been diligent in bringing together agencies, organizations, social services and those with lived and living experience of homelessness, recognizing that in order for this plan to be successful, everyone needs to be involved.

In an effort to further demonstrate the community commitment to the Journey Home Strategy, we are inviting the community to show their support by signing a pledge to accompany the final Strategy presentation to City Council on June 25th, 2018. In addition to showing evidence that the community is poised and ready to move forward with the Strategy, the signed pledges will serve as a visual reminder that addressing homelessness effectively takes the whole community.

### **What is the pledge?**

It's a symbolic show of support that you and/or the organization you represent are committed to the strategic premise and direction of the Journey Home Strategy. Following the extensive consultation of the Journey Home process, the pledge is intended to continue the inspiring momentum that has culminated over the past six months, proving that the community is poised and ready to move forward.

### **Why is a pledge necessary at this stage?**

The intent of the pledge is to demonstrate community and organizational commitment to the Journey Home Strategy. Signed pledges will be presented to Council on June 25<sup>th</sup> with the final Strategy. They will provide another level of evidence of community commitment as we move into a transitional stage and begin to implement the Strategy.

### **Who can sign the pledge?**

Anyone can sign the pledge. It is especially encouraged for those organizations or individuals working to improve the lives of those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness in our community.

### **What level of commitment does it require from me or from my agency/organization at this stage?**

The pledge is not a monetary commitment and it is not legally binding. The pledge commitment will help build the foundation for the Backbone Organization, once in place, to move forward. It will serve as a launch point for the Backbone in building and strengthening relationships with organizations and individuals already invested in ensuring everyone's journey leads home.

### **Upon signing, what is the expectation of our agency/organization or of myself as a community member moving forward?**

That you will be mindful of the spirit of Journey Home in your decision making and will take the principles of the strategy back to your own organizations or agency to suggest ways to collaboratively move forward.

### **If I don't sign by the deadline, will there still be an opportunity to sign the pledge?**

Yes. The pledge can be signed at anytime. However, we encourage individuals and organizations to sign by June 8 to be included in the final Strategy report going to City Council on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **What happens after June 25?**

A Journey Home Transition Team will begin the work of implementing the Journey Home Strategy, including setting the framework and structure for the Backbone Organization and the hiring of staff. The Lived Experience Circle will also continue past June 25<sup>th</sup> in a number of capacities. The Circle will host a series of focus groups discussing various challenges. In addition, a Lived Experience working group will serve in an advisory role to the Transition Team in planning for their involvement with the Backbone Organization.

### **What will the Backbone Organization look like?**

The Backbone Organization will be a newly established neutral organization with a focus on accountability for Journey Home Strategy implementation. The Backbone will be primarily responsible for promoting collaboration between service providers together with alignment of diverse partners including governments and donors in creating a responsive and coordinated system of care. The Backbone Organization will hold a leadership role and be responsible to report to the community and stakeholders on progress, build partnerships across sectors to support strategy goals, build capacity of those working in the homeless-serving sector and coordinate funding to ensure a complimentary approach.

### **Will those who have signed the pledge be made public?**

Yes. The pledges will accompany the Council Report on June 25<sup>th</sup>; everything in this package will be public.

---

If you have questions about the pledge not addressed here, please don't hesitate to contact us at [journeyhome@kelowna.ca](mailto:journeyhome@kelowna.ca). More information about Journey Home, including the pledge document, can be found at [kelowna.ca/journeyhome](http://kelowna.ca/journeyhome).