

Date:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: URGENT HELP NEEDED TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL HEALTH &  
SUBSTANCE USE ISSUES - CITY OF TRAIL**

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I am writing as a concerned citizen of the City of Trail to ask for your support for our community.

For some time, we have been experiencing increasing numbers of vulnerable persons in our community. These individuals have complex needs with many of them experiencing homelessness, precarious living, or mental health and substance use issues. I remain concerned that many of these individuals are facing barriers in meeting their basic needs on a daily basis and are putting our citizens and community at risk.

I understand Trail City Council is working diligently with BC Housing on long-term solutions to homelessness, but know that these solutions will take some time to implement. The homeless population in the City of Trail is in urgent need of enhanced supports and access to services, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, including housing options, access to basic hygiene and food, enhanced mental health and harm reduction supports, wellness checks, and outreach support. It is my hope that further investment in these core pillars will stabilize the vulnerable population in Trail and provide them with the layers of support they require.

Since the start of the pandemic, the City of Trail has been working collaboratively with Career Development Services, the RCMP and Interior Health to provide immediate assistance to those in need. Trail City Council is fully engaged in this matter. However, as a small municipality, Trail simply does not have the resources or capacity to fund positions or assume a greater role. These types of issues and problems are the responsibility of more senior levels of government that have the expertise and resources to deal with what has become a chronic and escalating problem in our community and across British Columbia.

The local RCMP continue to direct significant resources to the vulnerable population due to substance use, mental health issues, and ongoing property crime that are increasingly prevalent. These ongoing issues place additional strain on the consistently understaffed local RCMP detachment, which often results in stress leave for some of its members. This reduced staffing negatively impacts the service the RCMP provides for our community and places additional stress on its active members. Solutions such as pay equity, sick leave management, and further investment in recruitment and training are needed to address the deficiency in RCMP officers available for active duty.

This manpower shortage comes at a time when business operators, already hard hit by the pandemic, are faced with managing the burden of ongoing property crimes, vandalism and vagrancy issues.

We implore you to provide funding and to work with municipal agencies within the City of Trail to develop solutions that may not fully solve the issue, but at least make a difference as part of helping vulnerable people and reducing the negative impacts on residents and property owners in the City of Trail.

Sincerely,