



Office of the Chief Constable
Frank J. Elsner

April 15, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Endorsement of Cool Aid's New Housing Plan

As a frontline responder, the Victoria Police Department is heavily engaged in community issues caused by poverty, homelessness, mental health, addictions, head injuries and related challenges. In fact, a good portion of police response time in the City of Victoria is spent helping people who are homeless.

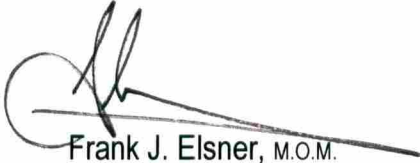
Solving street issues would be much less resource intense if appropriate housing was made available to those who need it and who are unable, for whatever reason, to provide it for themselves. Studies and police statistics here in Victoria show that when housing is provided for people who have become homeless that police calls and crime rates drop. As a result, quality of life improves for everyone.

To this end, I am pleased on behalf of the Victoria Police Department to endorse Cool Aid's plan to develop 360 new supportive housing apartments over the next five years for people who are currently homeless. The Cool Aid plan was designed to support the Coalition to End Homelessness' action plan on ending homelessness in our community. The plan, while ambitious, can be completed with a modest investment by the community and with government support.

Cool Aid's plan calls for the development of three projects which have been declared community strategic priorities by the Coalition to End Homelessness. Cottage Grove, in Saanich, will provide homes for 45 seniors who have been homeless, and will be the first project developed. The solution to ending homelessness clearly involves the construction of new, appropriate housing, and the conversion of existing apartments into supportive housing. Every individual housed will represent a cost savings to Victoria Police Department and other justice services such as courts, lawyers and jail. The result will be a reduction in future costs and improved justice services for everyone in the community. Similarly, every person who is homeless that is housed will result in significant savings to health and other community services and better access for everyone.

Please feel free to call me anytime to clarify the Victoria Police Department's support of new housing for citizens who are homeless.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Elsner', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Frank J. Elsner, M.O.M.
Chief Constable

FJE:cm