

# EWALD BERGEN

## C O N S U L T I N G

P.O. Box 29144  
Okanagan Mission RPO  
Kelowna, B.C. V1W 4A7

phone: (250) 469 - 2884  
email: [ebergen@shaw.ca](mailto:ebergen@shaw.ca)  
fax: (250) 861 -4843

April 23, 2009

City of Kelowna  
1435 Water Street,  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4

DELIVERED

Attention: Her Worship, Mayor Sharon Shepherd,  
Councillor Robert Hobson,  
Councillor Andre Blanleil,  
Councillor Brian Given,  
Councillor Michele Rule,  
Councillor Luke Stack,  
Councillor Angela Reid,  
Councillor Graeme James and  
Councillor Charlie Hodge



Dear Mayor Shepherd and City of Kelowna Councillors:

Re: The Okanagan Boys and Girls Club's  
Affordable Rental Housing Building Project;  
Seeking Your Formal Approval and Consent

Please be advised that the *The Okanagan Boys and Girls Club* (OBGC) is embarking upon a very exciting and much needed community project, namely, the construction of a multi-purpose and affordable rental housing construction project. Furthermore, please be advised the OBGC has retained the writer to act as its Development Manager regarding this project, that is, to take this project from its current initial conception stage to the construction stage.

Very briefly, the OBGC envisions the construction of a five (5) storey building with a general design or lay out as follows:

1. First floor - to be designated as primarily "social enterprise", possibly in partnership with Okanagan College and/or UBC Okanagan, offering OBGC clientele the chance to engage in some real life, work experience;
2. Second floor - to be designated primarily as office space (for OBGC & other organizations);
3. Third floor - to be designated as affordable rental, apartment housing for OBGC clientele, that is, those of our young people who, for one reason or another, are still at least one step removed from being able to live independently within the larger community;

A handwritten signature or set of initials in the bottom right corner of the page.

4. Fourth floor – also to be designated as affordable rental, apartment housing for OBGC clientele;
5. Fifth floor – to be designated as affordable rental, apartment housing for another segment of the population in our community.

At this initial stage, we are seeking out potential partners, in our community and beyond, who will be willing to give meaningful input to the overall purpose, design and lay out of this proposed building, as well as partners who will be willing to concretely support to this laudable endeavour, both financially and otherwise.

On behalf of the OBGC, I am extending an invitation to the City of Kelowna Mayor and Council to seriously consider partnering with us in this noteworthy building project. More specifically, we are inviting the City of Kelowna to:

- (a) join us in this initial dialogue process about what shape and purpose this building should ultimately take;
- (b) consider setting aside a specific parcel of city owned land for the location/construction of this multi-use community facility; and
- (c) consider entering into a formal long term lease arrangement with OBGC accordingly.

I am advised by the City's Community Development & Real Estate division that before we can engage in any meaningful dialogue with any City Hall staff regarding the merits and possibilities regarding this project, we first need to seek formal approval and consent from City Council. Consequently, the purpose of this letter is to request such formal consent and approval from this City Council to enter into such a dialogue with City Hall staff.

I would ask that this matter be included on City Council's Agenda for its meeting on Monday, May 4, 2009, if at all possible, as I understand that the next Council meeting after the 4<sup>th</sup> of May to consider new matters is scheduled for Monday, May 25, 2009.

Lastly, please note that Mr. E.R. (Ted) Grimwood has graciously agreed to act as 'special Advisor' to the OBGC with respect to this project.

Please do not hesitate to contact the writer if you require any additional information at this time.

Thanking you in advance for your kind and prompt attention to this matter,

Yours very truly,

Ewald Bergen  
Development Manager & Consultant

cc. Mr. Craig Monley,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
The Okanagan Boys and Girls Club

Mr. E.R. (Ted) Grimwood,  
President,  
Wasa Developments Inc.

## **A Request of the City of Kelowna Council**

**Presentation Date:** 8:15 a.m. on Monday, May 4, 2008

**Presenter:** Ewald Bergen on behalf of The Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs

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### **Applicable Rules:**

#### **City of Kelowna Procedural Bylaw No. 9200**

##### **Part 4 – Public Attendance At Council Meetings**

- paragraphs 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6...

### **Our Request:**

The Okanagan Boys and Girls Club is seeking formal approval and consent from City of Kelowna Council to allow it to engage City Staff:

- (a) in a dialogue about what shape and what purpose this building should ultimately take;
- (b) to consider setting aside a specific parcel of city owned land for the location and construction of this multi-use community facility; and
- (c) to consider entering into a formal long term lease arrangement with the OBGC accordingly.

### **Relevant Background Facts:**

1. In March, 2009, The Board of Directors of The Okanagan Boys and Girls Club ("OBGC") decided to embark upon a multi-use affordable youth rental housing building project. Mr. Ewald Bergen was retained by OBGC as its development manager.
2. Earlier this month, Mr. Bergen met with several City of Kelowna staff to introduce them to this project and to canvass with them what role the City of Kelowna might be prepared to play in this building project.
3. On April 20, 2009, Mr. Bergen received an email from Mr. Ron Forbes, City of Kelowna Community and Real Estate Division, which stated:

*Ewald;*

*As I mentioned in the voicemail message that I left earlier on today, thank you for your email requesting free land from the City for the construction of the*

*Affordable Rental Housing Building Project on behalf of the Okanagan Boys and Girls Club.*

*I have had a discussion with Doug Gilchrist and he has asked that I reply.*

*Any request for free use of City land for construction of a building must be made directly to City Council. Staff do not have the authority to act on the request without Council direction.*

*I wish you the best of luck in pursuing this project.*

*Sincerely,*

*Ron*

4. APPENDIX ONE – Some Facts About Affordable Youth Housing in Kelowna
5. APPENDIX TWO – Moving Towards A Viable Solution in Kelowna

Respectfully Submitted,

Ewald Bergen  
Development Manager & Consultant  
**EWALD BERGEN CONSULTING**  
PO Box 29144, RPO  
KELOWNA, BC V1W 4A7  
Tel: (250) 469 – 2884  
Email: [ebergen@shaw.ca](mailto:ebergen@shaw.ca)

## **APPENDIX ONE - Some Facts About Affordable Youth Housing in Kelowna**

- providing affordable housing for the “homeless” members of our communities has gained significant political popularity throughout North America, as well as British Columbia, over the past decade. While this is certainly laudable and long overdue, unfortunately nearly all of these project initiatives have targeted only ‘homeless’ adult populations.
- since 2004, homeless youth counts in Kelowna have consistently found that, in any given month, between 25 to 35 young people under the age of 19 do not have any shelter. OBG statistics confirm that between 25 to 35 young people per month seek out its Richter Street Youth Drop In Centre for shelter purposes.
- these figures do not include the “hidden” youth homeless population in Kelowna, that is, young people not on the street or in a certain shelter, but without any permanent residence – “couch surfing” or shifting from home to home.
- in 2008, *The McCreary Centre Society* published a study entitled, “Improving the Odds, Next Steps Workshops with Marginalized and Street-Involved Youth in BC”.
- primary contributors from Kelowna included Amanda Durham, Megan Ferdinands & Chelsea Braby.
- *McCreary Centre* reports that the single most important topic for youth in every workshop was the need for accessible housing in their communities, including emergency shelters, transitional housing, as well as safe and affordable housing.
- most youth reported experiencing difficulty finding a place that was clean, safe and affordable. Youth described waiting for months to find housing and resorting to living in dilapidated accommodations in neighbourhoods where they felt unsafe.

### *Youth Said*

#### → ACTION

- Affordable housing is almost impossible to find. **Provide more safe, clean and affordable housing**
- Landlords don't want to rent to young people, even if youth have money to pay rent. > Open more youth shelters and emergency accommodation.
- It is difficult to find housing that is clean, and safe. > Provide more transitional housing.
- Finding affordable housing is not just a Vancouver problem. > Provide more places to rent.
- Waitlists for youth shelters are too long. > Offer support to youth so they can keep housing when they do get it.
- Age 19 is too young to have to leave youth shelters and it leaves older youth with nowhere safe to go. > Create more low-income housing for youth under 16 and over 19.
- Young mothers and youth without children have different housing needs; mothers get complaints about being up at night with their babies. > Help youth transition into adulthood by opening a youth shelter for young people over 19.
- Youth in Nanaimo praised the youth housing unit. They reported that they enjoyed living in the unit because they had their own space. They felt that this was really important but not available in many other places. > Encourage landlords to rent to youth. They could be educated and offered incentives to provide accommodation to young people.
- *It's hard to find a place, it took me a year and a half to find a nice place.* > Create a low-income housing unit specifically for young mothers and pregnant youth. In the marginalized and street-involved youth survey, youth on Vancouver Island reported the highest rates of pregnancy or causing a pregnancy (36%). It was therefore not surprising that youth in the workshops in Victoria and Nanaimo emphasized the needs for services for young mothers.
- *You can't wait a few months for low income housing.*

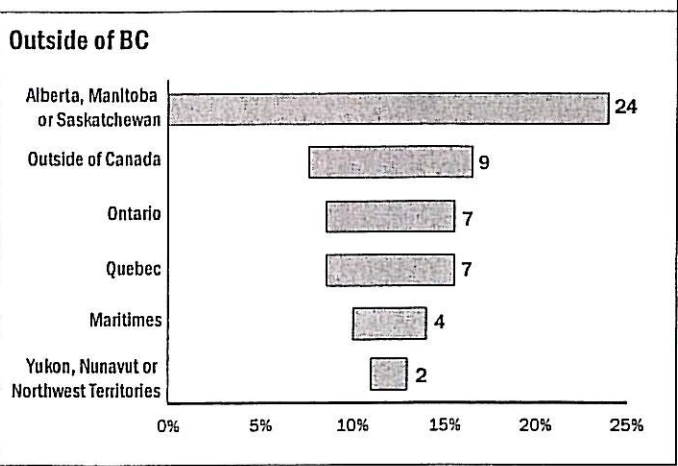
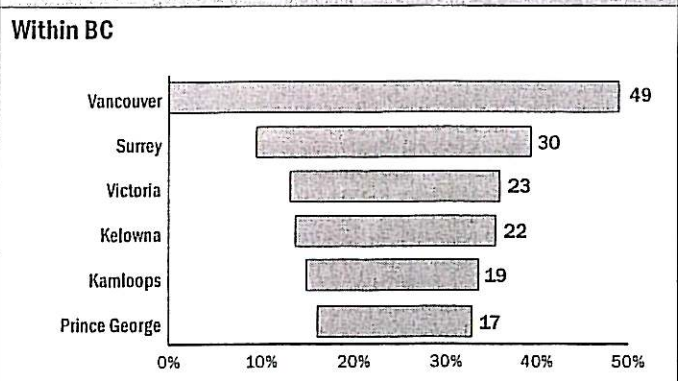
- the Kelowna Ministry For Children and Families Youth Services Advisory Committee, a group of service providers that meet quarterly to discuss the issues impacting youth in our community, have identified affordable youth housing as the number 1 (one) need for the young people whom they are serving.
- PHAT-CO (The Poverty and Homelessness Team of the Central Okanagan) has identified affordable youth housing as the number 2 (two) priority issue in the Central Okanagan.
- *The McCreary Centre*, in its initial "Against the Odds: A profile of marginalized and street-involved youth in BC" Study published in 2007, youth were asked to identify the services that they felt were most needed in their respective communities.

Top 5 Recommendations for Interior	
Shelter	41%
Safe House	37%
Job training	37%
Safe and affordable housing	32%
Work experience	31%

Suggestions for Services in the Communities	
Job training	47%
Shelter	40%
Work experience	39%
Affordable housing	38%
Safe House	37%
School program for street youth	32%
Life skills	30%
Alcohol and drug counselling	28%
Youth treatment and youth detox	27%
Street nurses	26%
Dental services	24%
Affordable childcare/babysitting	23%
Mental health services	22%
Services to obtain ID	22%
Safe injection site	20%
Needle exchange	19%
Transitional housing	19%

- more information from this initial Study regarding what attracts our youth on to our streets is set out on the following page...
- there are currently no supportive affordable youth housing projects being planned in Kelowna nor the Central Okanagan.
- furthermore, OBGC staff, as well as housing workers from the Canadian Mental Health Association and Okanagan Metis Children and Family Services report that landlords in the community are not prepared to rent to young adults, often due to negative past experiences and the fact that there are a surplus of renters in our community – demand for rental accommodations exceeding supply of rental accommodations.

### Where Youth Spent Time on the Streets



### Reasons for Hanging Out on the Streets (Youth could choose more than one option)

	Males	Females
Friends on streets†	32%	49%
Do not get along with parents†	24%	34%
Feel accepted	25%	32%
Ran away†	18%	28%
Alcohol/drug addiction†	16%	25%
Kicked out	25%	19%
Violence/abuse at home	13%	17%
Didn't like foster/group home	7%	11%
No job	12%	9%
Travelling	9%	8%
No affordable housing	9%	8%
Sexual orientation†	2%	6%
Avoiding criminal charges	7%	4%
Other	11%	10%

† Significantly different between males and females

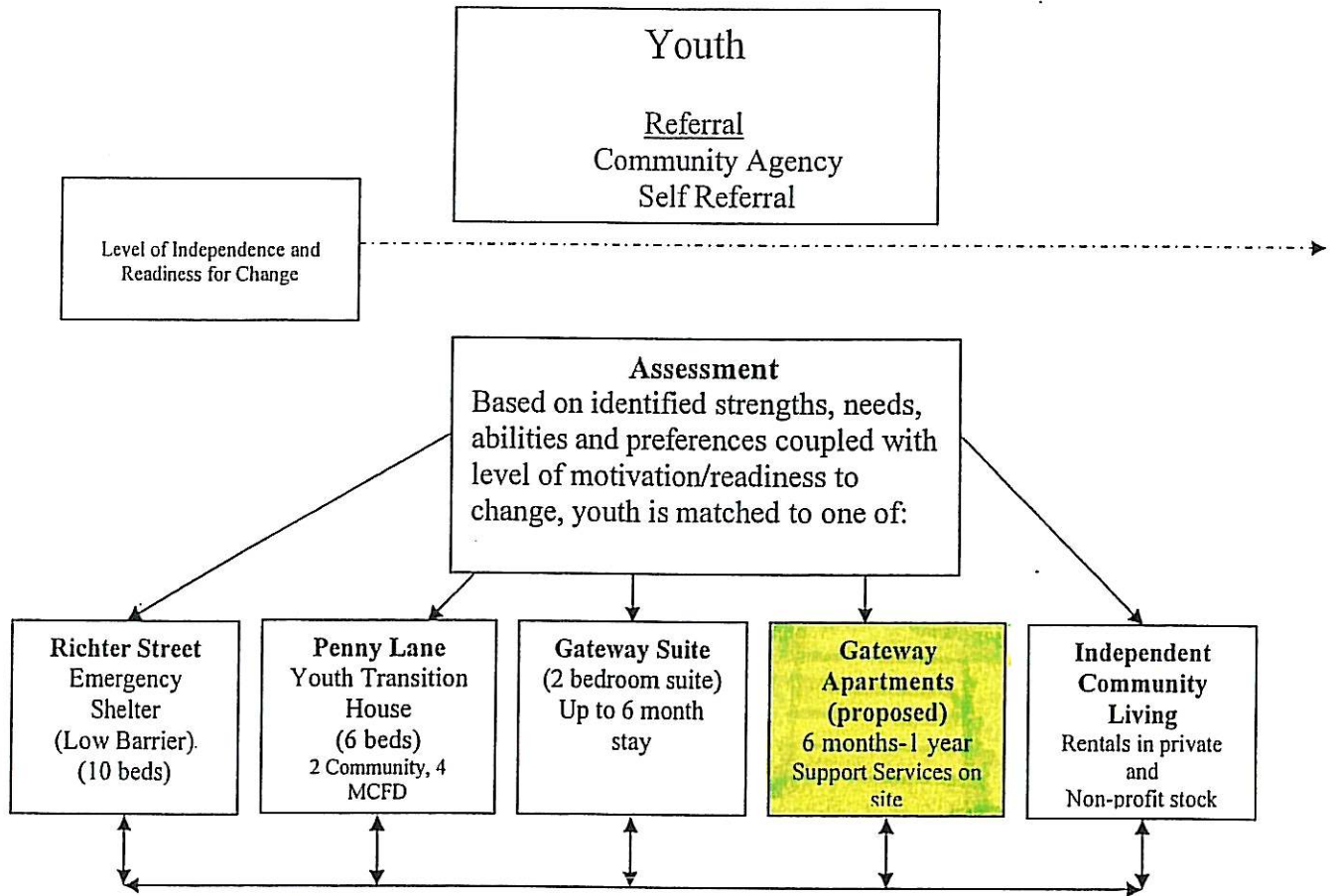
### Reasons for hanging out on the streets

Youth were asked to choose among various reasons why they were currently street-involved (they could choose more than one reason). Almost half of the females (49%) reported that they hung out on the streets because their friends did, compared to 32% of males. One in three females (34%) also reported hanging out on the streets because they did not get along with parents, compared to 24% of males. Gay, lesbian and bisexual youth were more likely than others to report that they hung out on the streets not only because of conflict at home about their sexual orientation (12% gay/lesbian/bisexual vs 1% heterosexual), but also because they did not get along with parents (39% vs 27%) and because they felt accepted on the streets (39% vs 27%). Among all youth, the five most common reasons for hanging out on the street were the same in 2006 as they were in 2000.

[The McCreary Society is a non-government non-profit organization committed to improving the health of BC youth through research, education and community based projects. Founded in 1977, the Society sponsors and promotes a wide range of activities and research addressing unmet health needs of young people in BC.]

**APPENDIX TWO – Moving Toward A Viable Solution in Kelowna**

**Okanagan Boys and Girls Clubs: Gateway Project**



- the primary goal of this project is two-fold: one, to provide safe, accessible, affordable temporary housing for homeless and at risk of homeless youth in Kelowna; and two, to prepare homeless and at risk of homeless young people to be able to live independently in our community.
- homeless youth as well as those young people at risk of homelessness in Kelowna face a number of barriers in finding and retaining reasonable housing, including:
 

lack of income	age discrimination
lack of life skills	drug & alcohol issues
lack of housing references	mistrust & alienation
lack of proper identification	termination of MCFD services at age 19
lack of transportation	
- accordingly, providing appropriate educational services and job training opportunities are envisioned to be an integral part of any affordable youth housing endeavour OBGC undertakes. As such, this proposed project will provide not only a gateway to independent living and a subsequent life of self-sufficiency, it will also provide a gateway to services that will address the multiple issues faced by these young people.





Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs

# Vision Statement

Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs is the most well known and respected child, youth and family serving non-profit organization in the Okanagan, and we have a presence in all organized communities in the Okanagan. Clubs and centres are at the heart of community and neighbourhood life where important community and family events are held. We give infants and children a good start in life, and assist, support and guide young people to maturity. We provide a place for families that is welcoming, supportive, and where real help and support is available to parents and their families. Our youth centres provide immediate and unconditional support to any young person who needs our help. We are known for never turning someone away who can't afford to pay. Our professional staff are involved, empowered and provided with competitive compensation. We have credibility with all levels of government and are sought out for our views and opinions.





# Mission Statement



Okanagan Boys and Girls Clubs provides a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.



## Core Values

**Inclusion & Opportunity** We strive to offer children and youth from all economic, cultural and social backgrounds access to the resources, supports and opportunities that will enable them to overcome barriers and achieve their positive potential in life.

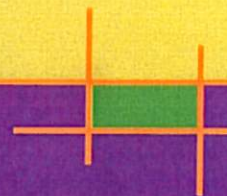
**Respect & Belonging** We provide a safe, supportive place, where every child is listened to, treated with respect and valued in an environment of inclusion and acceptance. Our staff and volunteers model honesty, fair play, positive attitude, cooperation and respect for self and others.

**Empowerment** We believe all young people can grow into responsible, contributing and self-reliant members of society. Children and youth are at the centre of everything we do. Through adventure, play and discovery, we encourage and empower them to develop healthy lifestyles, a life-long passion for learning, leadership and life skills and a sense of social responsibility.

**Collaboration** We work together with families and volunteers in each community, in partnership with government and other organizations, to create healthy community solutions to providing children and youth with what they need for optimal development.

**Speaking Out** We speak out on behalf of children, youth and their families to reduce disadvantage, enhance their lives and enable their voices and ideas to be heard.

# 2007-2017



2002-2007  
Consolidation  
(The inaugural 5 year Goal)

To consolidate Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs into one cohesive organization, at the forefront of service delivery to kids and families in the communities we serve.

2007-2009  
Staging  
(2 year goal)

In 2007-2009, we will set the stage for the future by strengthening clubs, infrastructure, professional staff and capitalizing on opportunities. We will integrate the financial and operational annual plans into one cohesive strategic plan, moving us closer to our vision. We will develop tools and train staff to conduct community child and youth assessments and participate in the development of child, youth and family services in each community we serve. We will use the information generated to secure our plans for the future.

## Strategic Directions for 2 years 2007-2009

### Strengthen clubs in program quality and personalized service

In our clubs, we will emphasize our core values by creating and reinforcing in our children youth and parents a sense of belonging through the value of membership. We do this through recreation and leisure skills and activities, developing citizenship and leadership, and through our service foundations of active living and nutrition, life long learning and literacy, and safety and violence prevention.

### Strengthen Infrastructure

In our organization, we will finish our efforts to consolidate, by standardizing our information systems, finding efficiencies in functions and purchasing, and further plan and monitor the integration of finance and operations. We will target designated funds and deferred revenue towards the achievement of our vision.

### Strengthen our Professional Staff

We will prepare our staff to be community leaders, representing a strong organization, by investing in our identified and emerging leaders through exposure to our Professional development opportunities, mentorship and successorship programs, in support of our vision.

### Capitalize on Opportunities

We will continue to seek out opportunities for community early childhood, child and youth development consistent with our vision, mission and values and that are financially sustainable over time.



2007-2012  
Launch  
(5 year goal)

To move towards the realization of the vision of Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs. We will have a strong regional voice that speaks about core social issues that affect children, youth and families. We will be considered experts in our field within the province, and demonstrate our influence into social/recreation planning in the communities we serve. Our staff will be involved in leadership activities in their communities and the provincial movement and compensated at a level comparable or better than our top 3 competitors in the valley. We will have established a presence in two new communities in the Okanagan. We will ensure that our services are responsive, effective and community based by listening to the strong and loud voices of the communities, parents and youth that we serve. There will be evidence of their input guiding our work. We will maintain professional standards and best practices by achieving accreditation and conforming to Boys & Girls Clubs Operating Standards.

2007-2017  
Arrival  
(10 year goal)

The realization of our vision.



A good place to be.