



Calgary

Jyoti Gondek, Mayor

October 2, 2024

The Honourable Dan Williams
Minister of Mental Health and Addiction
403 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB, T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Williams,

Last week, you suggested in media that I need to make a decision about the location of the supervised consumption site at Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre. As you know, Mental Health & Addictions is your portfolio as a provincial minister. It is not within my jurisdiction as Mayor of Calgary to make decisions for you about provincial health services in provincial health facilities.

In May 2021, your government realized that the existing supervised consumption model in Calgary was not working as intended, and the detrimental impacts to neighbourhood residents and businesses had to be addressed. As a member of City Council at that time, I agreed with your assessment and I still do.

I also agreed with the position that more treatment beds are needed, and was very interested in your government's musings in 2022 to combine addictions treatment with supervised consumption sites, as well as other ways to improve access to mental health and addictions supports.

Since 2022, Calgarians have been waiting for the Government of Alberta to offer additional or alternate solutions, given that health and addictions are provincial responsibilities. In the interest of Calgarians, it is critical to understand your solution prior to your closure of the site at Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre.

Closing the Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre supervised consumption site without proper alternatives will immediately force those seeking support on to the streets or into their homes, driving up drug poisoning deaths and creating unsafe situations throughout communities in

Calgary. It will also create further issues, like people using drugs at transit stops because they know officers are there to respond to overdoses.

There must be a comprehensive plan from the Government of Alberta to deal with mental health and addictions treatment for Calgarians who desperately need supports, and that plan must also address issues of public safety that have been observed with the existing model.

In an effort to combat this crisis and enhance public safety, City Council has invested over \$15 million in additional transit safety measures, increased funding for additional security downtown, and implemented recommendations from the Downtown Safety Leadership Table. We await, and would welcome, additional investments by your government to assist us in these endeavours.

Given the likelihood of a City Council discussion about this issue, I am interested in understanding what decisions you will be making around supervised consumption so that we can plan for any consequences. We are here to be good partners and I am respectfully requesting that your ministry engage our City Council in next steps around closure of the supervised consumption site at Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre.

I look forward to your response and an opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,



Jyoti Gondek
Mayor, The City of Calgary

CC: Premier Danielle Smith
Calgary City Council