
From: AVA Fitness Pole Dance Studios <info@avafitness.ca>
Sent: Friday, June 13, 2025 4:59 PM
To: Mayor and Councillors
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Proposed Temporary Use Permit – Health Contact Centre on Begbie Street

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Dear Mayor Johnstone and Members of City Council,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Temporary Use Permit for the Health Contact Centre in downtown New Westminster, specifically at the location on Begbie Street.

As a long-standing local business owner of 13 years, I've witnessed firsthand the immense efforts that have gone into revitalizing and gentrifying this area. Downtown New West has made tremendous progress in becoming a safer, more vibrant, and welcoming space for families, small businesses, and the wider community — and I believe this proposal could seriously jeopardize that momentum.

Our business alone welcomes 40-50 young women, men and members of the LGBTQ+ community each day, many of whom walk from the SkyTrain to our location. We already take precautions to advise them on safety due to the existing presence of individuals struggling with homelessness and addiction in the area. While I fully support the need for compassionate and effective health services, placing an overdose prevention site in this particular location, which is already under strain, is not the right move.

We have had numerous incidents where individuals have used drugs directly outside our doors. We've had to call the police multiple times due to people openly shooting up, or getting so high that they collapse where they stand. These experiences are not rare and they have an immediate and negative impact on the sense of safety around our business and, ultimately, our ability to operate.

This issue goes beyond optics. It's about the real, on-the-ground consequences for the community, for business owners, and for the city's long-term vision for downtown. Allowing this permit would undermine years of hard work and investment to clean up the area and create a thriving urban core.

I urge you to reconsider this location and look into alternative areas where the centre can still fulfill its important mission — but without adversely impacting an already vulnerable part of the city.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Thompson

AVA Fitness Ltd

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