

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed Temporary Use Permit for the Health Contact Centre on 40 Begbie Street. While I understand the public health rationale behind this harm reduction strategy, I have serious concerns about the ongoing and future potentially negative impacts of this facility on our community.

My objections are based on the following:

**1. Public Safety Concerns**

Since the establishment of this site in 2021, there has been increased foot traffic of individuals struggling with addiction, that has contributed to public safety issues such as loitering, harassment, threatening behaviour, theft and vandalism, drug dealing, and other associated criminal activity in the immediate area. I chose to purchase in New Westminster as a senior citizen, with a vision of living an active, robust life in a vibrant and safe community. Unfortunately, in the past few years, I have had to modify my activities outdoors to avoid areas that are increasingly unsafe and physically offensive (smells, trash, vandalism, etc.). When I decided to purchase in downtown New Westminster, I was influenced by promise in New Westminster's Official Community Plan:

*"The vision and the Economic Development Plan, emphasizes a diverse economy, superior urban design, and a high quality of life for all residents."*

However, I am now pondering whether I should consider selling up and purchasing somewhere that going for a daily walk doesn't require navigating multiple "no-go" areas around my apartment.

**2. Impact on Local Residents and Businesses**

The presence of this facility has, in my opinion, resulted in an influx of homeless into the downtown core, which deters customers and families from frequenting nearby businesses and recreational facilities like the boardwalk. This has, and continues to, lead to economic decline in the area and a reduced sense of safety among residents.

**3. Lack of Community Input**

Many community members, including myself, feel this permit was initially advanced without adequate consultation or transparency. I have not been able to find any evidence that this facility has had the intended positive impact. I've posted some statistics below that I pulled from BC Government/Health websites. Personally, I am not seeing improvements from prior years (pre-2021), rather a steady increase that I've interpreted as increased migration to NW downtown from other municipalities who don't provide this service to their citizens. As mentioned, I don't disagree with the objectives and mandate of the Health Contact Centre, just it's location which I believe reduces the quality of life for residents in this area.

**4. Proximity to Vulnerable Areas**

The site is dangerously close to residential housing, retail, tourist sites, playgrounds, and family-oriented areas. Establishing a Health Contact Centre site in this location is incompatible with maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children and families in New Westminster.

I respectfully urge the board to deny this permit or, at the very least, postpone approval until a comprehensive, long term, permanent, non-downtown core, location is identified. Public health solutions must consider not only the needs of those struggling with addiction, but also the broader community's right to security, livability, and participation in decision-making.

Sincerely,  
Denise Doyle

New Westminster Columbia Street Home Owner  
16 June, 2025

## BC Emergency Health Services – Overdose Call volumes by Community

	MPDS Card 23 Events											
Top Communities	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024			
Kitimat	22	25	27	38	29	32	34	53	45			
Ladysmith	23	29	36	26	39	33	28	50	47			
Lake Country	28	33	21	24	47	27	22	38	32			
Lake Cowichan	15	17	15	12	15	14	23	16	26			
Langford	89	99	123	122	123	155	163	278	210			
Langley	468	531	454	500	593	770	735	718	871			
Lantzville	6	13	8	14	6	4	14	18	7			
Lillooet	13	5	10	12	5	9	8	12	26			
Mackenzie	7	10	3	9	13	9	16	18	14			
Maple Ridge	428	431	382	406	492	910	791	789	797			
Merritt	50	47	42	38	56	88	64	123	78			
Mission	130	207	208	236	218	398	456	395	383			
Nanaimo	512	651	637	561	664	891	1,059	2,136	1,525			
Nelson	32	57	56	59	53	47	108	225	261			
New Westminster	248	274	315	292	413	587	529	665	565			

## BC Coroner Services

### Unregulated Drug Deaths - Township of I

Unregulated Drug Deaths by Township of Injury, 2014-2025

Injury Township	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Abbotsford	7	27	40	52	41	44	65	86	91	90	76	22
Burnaby	11	15	40	44	49	29	59	80	68	52	53	6
Chilliwack	7	10	14	22	37	21	38	63	49	59	36	14
Coquitlam	10	11	15	30	22	11	28	30	35	25	26	8
Greater Victoria Area	21	26	76	106	124	72	137	140	171	175	160	28
Kamloops	7	7	44	37	47	25	60	77	93	86	92	11
Kelowna	12	20	47	73	54	34	60	74	84	104	87	25
Langley	10	10	31	37	33	24	37	58	45	46	44	11
Nanaimo	16	18	30	56	38	27	39	53	79	114	94	11
New Westminster	9	12	10	24	35	20	36	47	32	39	36	9
North Vancouver	9	7	13	19	17	11	22	18	20	23	25	2
Other Township	83	123	237	349	348	227	423	592	608	675	596	104
Penticton	3	3	7	15	16	21	17	27	31	24	26	3
Prince George	10	12	18	24	51	25	60	55	84	93	110	9
Richmond	3	6	14	28	12	14	19	33	29	28	24	7
Surrey	44	76	118	182	215	119	224	284	241	236	227	52
Vancouver	102	138	231	374	401	248	426	533	578	657	523	97
Vernon	6	8	12	24	23	14	28	43	44	57	43	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>997</b>	<b>1496</b>	<b>1563</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>1778</b>	<b>2293</b>	<b>2382</b>	<b>2583</b>	<b>2278</b>	<b>428</b>