



SOS COALITION ANNOUNCES “COMMUNITIES DRIVING CHANGE” FORUM

Sept. 12 Save Our Streets forum on crime and street disorder across BC

Vancouver, B.C. (July 30, 2024): With crime, violence and street disorder plaguing communities large and small across British Columbia, B.C.’s Save Our Streets coalition has announced it will hold a day-long “Communities Driving Change” Forum at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver on September 12. The Forum will explore solutions to these issues with community and business leaders, subject experts and political leaders.

The Forum, which is being held in the lead-up to the provincial election, and a week before the annual Union of BC Municipalities Convention, will feature moderated panel discussions, keynote expert speakers, and opportunities for virtual community participation from around the province. Speaking opportunities are being offered to the provincial leaders of the NDP, Conservative Party of BC, BC United, and BC Green Party.

“Street disorder, organized retail crime, repeat chronic criminals openly stating they are not afraid of any consequence, addictions and mental illnesses, homelessness, revolving door justice, and poor access to housing are interconnected issues that are destroying our cities and eroding the quality of life of so many,” says Jess Ketchum, SOS co-founder. “One look at almost any city centre in B.C. will tell you that what we are doing as a province to solve these issues isn’t working, so it needs to change.

Ketchum says B.C. is not the only jurisdiction facing these issues.

“Other places in the world are making progress,” added Ketchum. “So, it only makes sense to re-evaluate where we are, set aside our political differences, and take an evidence-based approach to tackling these issues. That includes judicial and policing reforms and policies, and the resources needed for a full continuum of assessment, treatment and recovery for those suffering from addiction and mental illnesses, something that is clearly incomplete in British Columbia today.”

Panel topics will include judicial reform and resources, policing, addictions and mental illnesses, and the role of housing as components of the solution. The speaker invitation process is currently underway with panelists and keynote speakers to be announced in the coming weeks.

About Save Our Streets

Save Our Streets is a coalition of 100-plus community and business organizations representing every corner of British Columbia. SOS members are committed to seeing governments bring order and public safety back to communities across British Columbia. Concerned citizen groups, and B.C. businesses interested in joining or supporting SOS are invited to apply online at SaveOurStreets.ca or contact info@saveourstreets.ca.

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