



SOS JUSTICE PANEL TO EXPLORE POTENTIAL REFORMS TO REVOLVING DOOR JUSTICE SYSTEM

Forum available via livestream. Vancouver Mayor Ken Sim added as speaker.

VANCOUVER, B.C (Jan. 14, 2025) – Canada’s justice system will come under the microscope on January 23rd when the Save Our Streets **Communities Driving Change Forum** kicks off with its **Justice for All: Challenges and Choices panel** featuring representatives from the BC Crown Counsel Association and BC First Nations Justice Council, along with former judge and B.C. Attorney General, Wally Oppal, and Nanaimo Mayor Leonard Krog, a lawyer who also served as MLA and opposition Attorney General critic.

In addition to its four expert panel presentations, the Forum will feature an address by Vancouver Mayor Ken Sim to begin the afternoon portion of the program. Also speaking will be Conservative Party of BC Leader John Rustad and a representative from the Province of BC.

Public safety and crime are issues of crisis proportions for British Columbians, with individuals, businesses, and communities feeling the daily impact of crime and street disorder. In SOS’s province-wide survey conducted in September, only 38 per cent said they have confidence in the justice system to deal with crime and public safety in their community, while 61 per cent said the justice system in B.C. does not achieve the appropriate balance between the rights of offenders and those of victims. Notably, more than 83 per cent said they support: modifying the bail system to ensure repeat offenders remain in custody while awaiting trial; establishing harsher penalties, including incarceration for individuals convicted of multiple offenses; and new legislation to allow for confiscating assets of people convicted of drug trafficking offences.

On hand to explore what resources, reforms and actions are required to rebuild public confidence so there can be justice for all, including offenders, victims, and communities, will be panel members:

- **Honourable Wally Oppal**, K.C., Senior Counsel, Boughton Law, former judge and B.C. Attorney General
- **Christina J. Cook**, Senior Policy Lawyer, BC First Nations Justice Council
- **Leonard Krog**, Mayor, City of Nanaimo, and former MLA
- **Adam Dalrymple**, President, BC Crown Counsel Association
- **Jas Johal**, CKNW (Moderator)

“These days, it seems every person arrested is already “known to police” as they continue to victimize residents and businesses due to a justice system that is too often under-resourced to process their cases in a timely matter or unwilling to pose stiffer penalties,” says Jess Ketchum, Co-founder, SOS. “In every community, British Columbians have clearly indicated they are open to new ideas and willing to support new and expanded approaches to tackle crime and reform our justice system. We’re looking forward to fascinating discussion in this first panel.”

The day-long **Communities Driving Change Forum** at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver will feature four professionally moderated, non-partisan and future-focused panel discussions on the justice system, housing, policing and addictions and mental illnesses (See agenda below).

Recognizing the need for possible new approaches, greater collaboration and informed decision making when it comes to addressing these decades-old issues, SOS has assembled an extraordinary group of subject matter experts, each with extensive experience and expertise in their fields.

Note: While registration for the free Forum is now full, people wishing to attend are invited to register to get on the waiting list for available spaces. The Forum will be livestreamed at the following link: <https://bit.ly/40eO8OY>

The SOS Communities Driving Change Forum is made possible through the support of London Drugs, Anthem Properties, Purdys Chocolatier, Pattison Food Group, National Police Federation, Independent Contractors and Business Association, CGI Digital, 7-Eleven and J. Gordon Enterprises.

About Save Our Streets

Save Our Streets is a coalition of 120-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 submit online at SaveOurStreets.ca or contact info@saveourstreets.ca. For more information about SOS and the Forum, or to receive Save Our Streets news releases and the *Street Scene* newsletter, please visit SaveOurStreets.ca.

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AGENDA: **SAVE OUR STREETS COMMUNITIES DRIVING CHANGE FORUM**
Thursday, January 23, 2025, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

8:00am **Registration Opens**

8:30am **Official Welcome** Clint Mahlman, SOS Co-founder and Chair
Program Overview Jess Ketchum, SOS Co-founder

Panel One: Justice for All: Challenges and Choices

Public safety and crime are issues of crisis proportions for British Columbians, with individuals, businesses, and communities feeling the daily impact of crime and street disorder. Meanwhile, recent SOS polling highlights public concerns about the effectiveness and capacity of the judicial system, with an increasing disconnect between public expectations and courtroom realities. This panel will explore what resources, reforms and actions are required to rebuild public confidence that there can be justice for all, including offenders, victims, and communities.

Honourable Wally Oppal, K.C., Senior Counsel, Boughton Law, former judge and B.C. Attorney General

Christina J. Cook, Senior Policy Lawyer, BC First Nations Justice Council

Leonard Krog, Mayor, City of Nanaimo, and former MLA

Adam Dalrymple, President, BC Crown Counsel Association

Jas Johal, CKNW (Moderator)

Speaker: Honourable Terry Yung, Minister of State for Community Safety and Integrated Services, Province of British Columbia

Panel Two: Policing and Public Safety: Options and Opportunities in Changing Times

Businesses feel under siege because of the extent of retail crime and public disorder and British Columbians are feeling unsafe in their communities. At the same time, modern-day policing has become more complicated with the growing issues of the illicit drug trade, addiction and mental illnesses, and homelessness. In the face of changing times, this panel will explore what resources or reforms are needed to support our police in protecting British Columbians.

Deputy Commissioner Dwayne McDonald, Commanding Officer, BC RCMP

Chief Adam Palmer, Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department

Kash Heed, Councillor, City of Richmond, former West Vancouver Police Chief, and former Solicitor General

Chief Norm Lipinski, Chief Constable, Surrey Police Service

Simi Sara, CKNW (Moderator)

Keynote Speaker: Marshall Smith, Vice President, Rubicon Strategy and former Chief of Staff to the Premier of Alberta

Panel Three: Prescription for a Continuum of Care: Addictions and Mental Illnesses

Addictions and mental illnesses are fueling a significant segment of British Columbia's crime and street disorder. No community in BC is immune from these underlying health related pressures. While a comprehensive continuum of care seems broadly supported, it is a practical commitment that is lacking as a standard across the province. This panel will explore what the essential elements are of a province-wide continuum of care from assessment through treatment and recovery.

Dr. Pouya Azar, Addiction Physician

Dr. Nickie Mathew, Addiction and Forensic Psychiatrist

Marshall Smith, Vice President, Rubicon Strategy and former Chief of Staff to the Premier of Alberta

Carole Taylor, Carole Taylor's Journal (Moderator)

12:20pm-1:30pm **Lunch Break**

Speaker: **Ken Sim**, Mayor, City of Vancouver

Speaker: **John Rustad**, Leader, Conservative Party of BC

Panel Four: A Place to Call Home: The Role of Housing in Combatting Crime, Violence and Public Disorder

In a comprehensive continuum of care, a place to call home, located strategically and providing access to required care is key. Stable and safe housing translates into public safety as individuals become less vulnerable and prone to crimes of survival and have a much better chance to recover. Across British Columbia, in communities of every shape and size, the daily public cost and impact of homelessness makes housing a local priority. This panel will explore successful housing models, and what the challenges are to defining and delivering housing along with services that make life better for individuals, and safer for the community.

Heidi Hartman, Associate Vice President, B.C. Housing

Deb Lester, CEO, Covenant House Vancouver

Sam Sullivan, Founder, Global Civic Policy Society, former BC Cabinet Minister and Mayor of Vancouver

Richard Zussman, Global (Moderator)

Panel Five: Now what?: What have we learned?

As the Save Our Streets forum wraps up, what stood out from the panel sessions, and what are the recommended corrective measures we hope to see implemented by our governments? For the more than 120-member community and business organizations of SOS who are facing crime and street disorder every day across British Columbia, today provides a critical but only potential turning point. The entire Province, including governments, community and business groups need to put the collective shoulder to the wheel and bring about immediate action and change.

Members of Save Our Streets Oversight Council

Jess Ketchum, Co-founder, Save Our Streets (Moderator)

Closing Remarks and Thanks

Clint Mahlman, Chair and Co-founder, Save Our Streets