

From: [Molly Harris](#)
To: [Ian Irvine](#); [Deb Hopkins](#); [Victoria McKean](#); [Sarah Holloway](#); [Dan Horan](#)
Subject: FW: The Forge
Date: August-26-25 2:14:23 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[CFBC The Forge Mike V4 \(1\).pdf](#)
[20250822 - LTR to CRD Mayors from Langford - Support of The Forge.pdf](#)

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

- Ian, Director of Finance
- Deb, Corporate Officer
- Victoria, Committee Coordinator – For Action
- Sarah – Deputy Corporate Officer – For COTW Agenda scheduling
- CAO

Molly Harris

Corporate Services Assistant

Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services

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From: Mike Manhas <mike@cfbc.ca>
Sent: August-26-25 10:53 AM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: The Forge

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Dear Mayor Council and Corporate Services,

I'm reaching out to kindly request a spot on your next council meeting agenda to share an exciting new initiative we're launching: *The Forge* — a peer-led and driven recovery and wellness hub located in the former Savages Biker Clubhouse, which we've recently purchased. The Forge is being transformed into a safe and welcoming space offering free access to treatment, counseling, aftercare programming, recovery coaching, and a social club/sober bar. Our mission is to provide people — especially those in the construction and trades industries — with a place to reclaim their lives and walk confidently in their own shoes.

We are requesting a \$5,000 contribution to help support the recovery and renovation of the building. This will match the generous support already pledged by the City of Langford (see Mayor Goodmanson's letter attached), and will directly support the creation of this vital community space. At a time when overdoses and mental health struggles are deeply impacting tradespeople across BC and Canada, The Forge will offer a lifeline through connection to tried and tested supports. I've also attached a one-page overview of the project for your review.

Warm regards,

Mike Manhas

Construction Foundation of British Columbia

215 – 963 Langford Parkway, Victoria, BC V9B 0A5

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I gratefully acknowledge that I live and work on traditional First Nations territories in British Columbia. I thank the many Nations that have called this land home for thousands of years for allowing me to live, learn and walk softly on their territory.

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the FORGE

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Members of the Trades Community, Every day, the people in BC's trades show up with boots laced, tools in hand, and a determination to build the world around us. They construct our homes, pave our roads, wire our cities, and keep our province running.

Yet while they've built towers, tunnels, and bridges, we haven't built something equally essential: a dedicated place for tradespeople to turn to when life becomes overwhelming – when pain is too quiet to be noticed or too loud to face alone.

Too many in the trades are struggling in silence. Too many have been lost. It doesn't have to be this way.

That is why we are building The Forge.

More than a building, The Forge is a recovery hub and community created by and for people in the trades. It's a hands-on, peer-driven space that offers free mental health and substance use support, delivered by people who understand the unique pressures of this industry. Here, strength is redefined – not by how much you can carry, but by the courage it takes to ask for help.

A Space Reclaimed. A Future Rebuilt.

We've purchased what was once a notorious biker clubhouse in Langford and are transforming it into something entirely different – a safe place for healing, connection, and recovery.

This is restorative justice in action, taking a place once marked by pain and turning it into a place for hope. The Forge will be built by tradespeople, for tradespeople. It will be a place where individuals walk in with burdens and walk out with tools for healing.

This is not a clinic. This is not a system. This is community.

At The Forge, guided by people with lived experience, you'll find:

- A peer-to-peer network and mentorship from those who have walked the same path
- Rapid access to treatment and early intervention
- Licensed counselling and therapy
- Aftercare, monitoring, and recovery coaching
- Employment counselling and training opportunities
- Group therapy, 12-step and non-12-step meetings
- A social club for practicing the art of living again — no judgment, just real connectionn

This is about building bridges, not only between care programs, but between people and possibilities. Like welding steel into a solid structure, The Forge will unite people, purpose, and support..

Why This Matters Now

The numbers are staggering:

- In British Columbia, studies show that 30–50% of men who died of opioid-related causes were tradesworkers. <https://campusmentalhealth.ca/toolkits/skilled-trades/substance-related-harms/>
- Across Canada, the suicide rate in the construction industry is more than three times the national average, with 83% of tradespeople reporting mental health struggles. <https://dontchangemuch.ca/mental-health/peer-support-construction-mental-health/>

These are not just statistics. They are fathers, mothers, apprentices, journeypersons, coworkers, and friends. Each life lost is a story that could have been met with a hand up, instead of a closed door..

Help Us Build It

We are proud that so many in our industry have already stepped up: unions, workers, and industry partners alike. But to finish what we started, we still **need your help to raise the final \$500,000** to reclaim this space, open the doors, and welcome people home.

This isn't charity, it's solidarity.

It's not a handout, it's a hand up.

It's what it means to take care of our own.

Every dollar, every conversation, every connection brings us closer to transforming this building into a place that will save lives, restore dignity, and support the people who build the communities we live in.

Please join us. Give what you can, share our message, and connect us with others who believe in standing shoulder to shoulder with those who need us most. **Together, we can make this happen, and when we do, it will be because we did it as a community.**



With resolve and gratitude,

Mike Manhas

Director of Philanthropy

The Forge / Construction Foundation of BC


mike@cfbc.ca

entertheforge.ca

DONATE NOW

P.S. This isn't about building walls, it's about breaking them down. It's about creating a place where stigma ends, and healing begins. **With your help, The Forge will stand as a beacon of hope for tradespeople across BC. Let's build that future together.**

The Construction Foundation is a registered Canadian charitable society.
Charitable Registration: BN 83026 6300

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

2025/08/22

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the City of Langford, I am pleased to share that we have matched the generous \$5,000 donation from the West Shore Developers Association in support of The Forge, a new trades-focused mental health centre being developed in Langford by the Construction Foundation of BC. This initiative is a vital step forward in addressing the mental health crisis affecting our region's skilled trades workforce.

The Forge is built on the principle of peer-led support, where tradespeople with lived experience are trained to support their peers directly on job sites and within industry networks. This model fosters trust breaks down stigma and creates real pathways to recovery. Built into their framework is a full continuum of support options, including access to clinical counselling, recovery coaching, and expedited admission to addiction treatment.

The statistics are alarming:

- The construction industry has the highest suicide rate of all industries in Canada, 53.2 suicides per 100,000 workers, five times higher than all other construction-related fatalities combined.
- 83% of workers report experiencing mental health struggles.
- Substance abuse rates in the trades are nearly double the national average.

These are the people who build our communities, our homes, schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. Their wellbeing is foundational to the strength and resilience of our region.

Given the importance of this organization and the services they provide to all our communities, we are challenging each of your municipalities to match Langford's \$5,000 contribution and stand with us in championing mental health in the trades. Together, we can lead with compassion and collaboration, sending a powerful message that the wellbeing of our tradespeople is a commitment we all share.

Please feel free to reach out to my office at mayor@langford.ca to coordinate further. We would be honoured to work alongside you in supporting this transformative project.

Warm regards,



Mayor Scott Goodmanson
City of Langford