



Docu-Series Title: **Finding a Way Forward - A City in Crisis**

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Logline:

Kamloops, BC, population 100,000, is at the crossroads between a safe, enjoyable place to live and a storm of crises stemming from opioid overdoses, homelessness, increased crime, and businesses struggling to survive. Much work has been completed and continues to be done to alleviate the pressure, but compassion fatigue and polarized opinions are flaring like wildfires. This docu-series seeks to create a compassionate and broader understanding of the challenges and possible solutions in 'Finding A Way Forward'.

Why it Matters:

While mountains of well-written resources exist from front-line agencies and government departments the sheer volume of information is far too extensive for most people to digest. The predominance of myth and misinformation is far more accessible when trying to understand the crises that face Kamloops (and most urban communities). 'Us versus them' is the naturally adopted response when we remove real stories and facts that may lead us back to seeing ourselves in the mirrored plight of others. By providing voice and validation to the lived-experiences and fears of those who are impacted on all sides of these crises we can start to understand the problems better as well as the solutions that might become more apparent.

Synopsis:

Families in Kamloops are grieving as the number of opioid overdose deaths now approach double that of fatalities due to COVID-19 since the beginning of 2020. The number of individuals experiencing homelessness also continues to rise despite record levels of shelter and supportive housing development. With this increase in homelessness, whether by coincidence or direct correlation, increases of threats to personal safety, vandalism and other crimes related to drug use are also on the rise. Businesses and livelihoods are being threatened. Families are feeling unsafe. Neighbourhood appearances and property values are at risk. Healthcare and social service organizations are struggling with staff burn-out and policing resources are stretched to the breaking-point with officers feeling like they are being criminalized themselves.

The deep sense of community is fracturing. Traditional media continues to fan the flames for sensational 'news-worthy' stories while social media groups once known for rational discourse are becoming labelled as hate groups. Dehumanization and misinformation continue to spread through this community faster than the wildfires that have been surrounding it. Initiatives including safe-injection sites and temporary sheltered housing have been met with "not-in-my-backyard" reactions. As the municipality of Kamloops and front-line agencies work diligently towards addressing problems, and communicating with all concerned, few have time to read the information that will keep them educated and informed. Fewer still trust the information that is being presented when they already feel vulnerable and fearful in their pandemic isolated post-fake-news world.

Mastermind Studios in association with AIMCanada Mentorship Society seeks to facilitate the development and production of a reliable, unbiased, and comprehensive docu-series by giving voice to individuals who have been impacted within the community as well as those who have been working on the front lines to manage these crises. This docu-series will introduce resources, indigenous wisdom, and academic insight to help interpret and gain a greater discovery from our information-rich, often overwhelming, world. We will provide expert guidance for coping in crisis situations and effective communications. Through careful research, mentorship, and attentive storytelling we will eliminate misinformation, make sense of the information available and help this community find a way forward together as a documented blueprint that other communities may follow and build upon.

Finding A Way Forward is a universal story about finding 'understanding and hope' while facing real crises in one small BC city which, in many respects, represents almost every city around the globe.