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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WRCLS' Response to Region of Waterloo's decision to appeal court decision on 100 Victoria encampment

On Tuesday, June 16, Waterloo Regional Council voted to appeal the Ontario Superior Court's May 2026 ruling regarding the 100 Victoria Street encampment in Kitchener. This ruling stated that the Region's site-specific-bylaw to clear the encampment in December 2025 violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as it applies to encampment residents.

As legal representatives for encampment residents in this case, we are disappointed with the decision to appeal. The appeal suggests the Region does not accept Justice Gibson's ruling or the guidance provided on how to move forward with the dispute, including opportunities to engage in solutions to homelessness—namely, establishing a safe tenting protocol, providing an alternative encampment site in the area, or both. A safe tenting protocol is a reasonable and practical policy tool that can be used by municipalities to balance competing needs of shared public spaces.

Taking this case to the Ontario Court of Appeal not only uses valuable time and resources that could be better used elsewhere, but also further delays the work of finding meaningful solutions to homelessness locally. This course of action does nothing to resolve this growing issue of homelessness in Waterloo Region. This course of action will also inevitably cause further delay to Metrolinx's work on the Kitchener Central Transit Hub.

We remain engaged in this case and committed to helping people who live at the site to get access to justice. We encourage the local community to continue following the case and stay engaged in the advocacy happening around the community on this issue.

Additional information about the case can be found on the WRCLS website at www.wrcls.ca/3878-2.

For further information regarding this media release, please contact Ashley Schuitema, Executive Director, at 519-743-0254, ext. 17.