



November 2, 2023

Dear Members of the Thames Centre Municipal Council,

We are writing to express our sincere gratitude for the invaluable support provided by the Thames Centre Municipal Council in offering access to facilities in Thorndale, allowing BGC London to deliver programs and services for local youth. The commitment and dedication of the council to promote youth engagement in Thorndale has been instrumental in the success of our summer programs and the launch of the Thorndale Youth Action Team (T.Y.A.T.) youth leadership group this fall.

The summer programs we facilitated were incredibly successful, with an overwhelmingly positive response from families and youth in Thorndale. These programs were developed to provide local youth who are outside of the age to participate in general summer programs and camps with a chance to stay active and develop new skills, keeping them busy during the summer. We facilitated the Summer Skills Academy that focused on supporting youth to explore leadership, baking, Soccer and Flag Football, and offering Next Level Sports' Basketball and Volleyball leagues. In July and August, we were able to reach a total of 85 participants through these unique services. Here is a testimonial from a family we received about our programs this past summer.

*"This was our first year being part of the BGC programs. We were so very impressed with the content and the councilors/coaches! (Very competent/knowledgeable). We look forward to participating in many more programs over the years. Thank you so much to all that made this experience so enjoyable for my granddaughter!"*

The launch of the Thorndale Youth Action Team (T.Y.A.T.) this fall is another significant milestone in our youth engagement efforts. This youth leadership group provides young people with a platform to voice their ideas, concerns, and aspirations for the future of our community. We are proud to be working with the local elementary school, West Nissouri P.S., to engage students in grades 7 and 8 and to host the weekly meetings after school in the school library.

While we have made great strides in youth engagement, there is still much more to do, including finding new ways to involve local youth and exploring ways to engage the secondary school students from Lord Dorchester and Medway. We are kindly requesting your continued collaboration and partnership to keep the Thorndale youth engaged and be able to work with youth leaders to create more opportunities, ensuring that local youth have access to programs and services that cater to their specific needs and interests. We are invested in continuing to bring new programs to Thorndale with the vision of establishing a Club model of programs and

activities. This model would see us offer various opportunities out of the Thorndale Lions Community Centre and on the Fairgrounds on a regular schedule and a longer-term basis, allowing youth to rely on having a safe space to go where they can enjoy skill building and general recreation programs. Some of the programs and activities we anticipate bringing to Thorndale include games and sports, visual and dramatic arts, S.T.E.A.M., life skills, pre-employment training and career exploration, leadership training, and events.

In addition to expressing our gratitude and vision for our continued investment in local youth engagement, we wanted to update you on our partnership with I Love Community/I Love Thorndale and the use of the Youth Clubhouse. We have been made aware that if our partnership with Thames Centre is extended with a commitment to providing us with space for programming for a longer term, this local organization intends to close the Clubhouse and direct any remaining funds that were raised to support youth engagement in Thorndale to BGC London for the purchase of items such as equipment and supplies, etc. We appreciate their partnership and support for our work. However, it is essential to note that once this funding is exhausted, there will be no further financial support available for the youth programs.

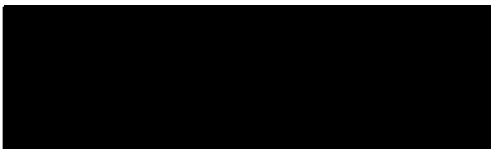
With the support from I Love Thorndale, we can set up the Thorndale Club, and being able to book facilities at no cost through Thames Centre is helpful. However, we know that to sustain these youth engagement initiatives, we will need to explore additional revenue sources, such as increasing program fees or establishing services that families are willing to pay for.

One opportunity we propose for your consideration is offering P.A. Day Camps in Thorndale at the Thorndale Lions Community Centre, with the generated revenue allocated to support youth programs. This is one idea for helping to support this work. If we can extend our partnership agreement with a commitment from Thames Centre Municipal Council to continue to work with us for a longer term, we will develop a business plan that will explore all of the ways that we can leverage resources and establish fee-based programs to sustain this work into the future.

This partnership will ensure the continuity of our youth engagement efforts, allowing us to provide ongoing opportunities for the youth in the Thorndale community. We are asking for you to commit to extending our current agreement for no less than three years, giving us a chance to continue to explore new programs and to work to establish consistency that will lead to more youth being involved and engaged in programming that supports their overall well-being.

We look forward to your continued support and partnership in making Thorndale a vibrant and engaging place for local youth. Thank you once again for your support, and we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to continue to work together in support of local youth.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Arden McClean, Manager of Program Services, Child & Youth, BGC London