

From: **"Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>**
To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**
Date: 10/15/2023 5:23:36 PM
Subject: Homelessness - winter response
Attachments: ACCS - GM - Memo (Council) - Winter Response Strategy 2023-2024 (2023-10-15).pdf

Good evening Mayor and Council,

The attached update from Sandra Singh provides an overview of our work with the Province and community partners to activate additional indoor spaces in anticipation of winter weather. Key points are as follows:

- There are currently 1,400 year-round shelter spaces activated in Vancouver.
- The City's Winter Response program – enabled through partnership with the Province, City Departments, and local service providers – activates additional spaces between November and March each year.
- In preparation for winter 2023/2024 ACCS Housing and Homelessness Services staff have confirmed 373 additional indoor spaces, a combination of:
 - Temporary Winter Shelter spaces - 67 spaces across 2 sites
 - Extreme Weather Response shelters - 70 spaces across 4 sites
 - Warming Centres - 236 spaces across 7 sitesAdditional information on these spaces and activation criteria can be found in the attached memo.
- Staff will continue to explore additional sites throughout the season.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Sandra directly.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Snw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

October 15, 2023

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Interim Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: 2023-2024 Winter Response Strategy for People Experiencing Homelessness

RTS #: N/A

PURPOSE

This memo provides an update on the 2023-2024 winter response for people experiencing homelessness.

BACKGROUND

Year-Round Shelter Spaces Currently in Operation

There are currently 1400+ shelter beds available 365 days a year in Vancouver.

- **Permanent year-round shelter beds: ~900 beds**
These shelters serve a range of community members (men, women, seniors, youth), and offer a range of services. These shelters are funded by BC Housing and depending on the operator, shelters may provide space for couples, pets, carts, meals and laundry and follow a harm reduction model.
- **Temporary year-round shelters beds: ~500 beds**
Temporary shelters are opened through a partnership between BC Housing and the City of Vancouver. The City typically leases the space and contributes to tenant

improvements, and the Province provides operating funding and in some cases, also contributes to tenant improvements. Temporary shelter beds are in addition to the permanent shelter beds. There are currently ten temporary shelter sites which depending on the operator, provide space for couples, pets, carts, meals and laundry and follow a harm reduction model.¹

In addition to these beds, the City and Province partner to activate additional spaces during the cold and wet winter months.

Of note, the City of Vancouver's Tiny Shelter pilot program is scheduled for completion in late November 2023. This unique pilot will add shelter capacity for an additional 18 individuals.

DISCUSSION

2023-2024 Winter Response Strategy

Through a long-standing partnership with BC Housing, additional shelter spaces are deployed between November to March to expand shelter capacity to ensure all residents have a safe, warm, place to come inside during the cold and wet winter months.

There are three main types of spaces that are activated as part of our winter response:

1. Temporary winter response shelters
2. Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelters
3. Warming Centres

This winter, there will be an additional 373 spaces to ensure people can access a safe, warm place to come inside.

1. Temporary Winter Response Shelters (67 spaces)

For the 2023-2024 winter season, there are two temporary winter shelters that will be open every night between November 2022 and March 2023, providing 67 additional shelter spaces.²

2. Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelters (70 spaces)

EWR shelters are Provincially funded (through BC Housing) and delivered through partnerships with community-based service providers and faith-based organizations to provide additional temporary emergency shelter spaces during periods of extreme winter weather which threaten the health and safety of individuals experiencing homelessness.

These spaces are activated based on criteria including:

- Temperatures near zero with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for those experiencing homelessness to remain dry
- Sleet or freezing rain or Snow accumulation
- Sustained high winds
- Temperatures at or below 0°C, or "feels like" 0°C with wind chill

¹ This number does not include the winter only temporary shelter spaces. These spaces are included in the Winter Response Strategy below.

² Last winter, there were three additional sites: the Gathering Place provided 34 spaces temporary winter space which have now transitioned to year round beds; due to operational and capacity considerations, Osborne shelter has transitioned 40 temporary winter spaces to Warming Centre spaces; finally, 1648 E. 1st Avenue (20 winter spaces and 40 year round beds) have closed as the lease expired.

- Rainfall of at least 50mm in a 24-hour period
- EWR season runs October 15, 2022-April 15, 2023

EWR Sites 2017-2023

EWR Sites							
Sites	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Number of Nights open	69	86	90	107	114	101	TBD
Total Spaces	100	120	145	75	114	88*	70*
Total Sites	4	6	6	5	6	5*	4*

**As of October 13, 2023; additional sites continue to be explored*

It is important to note that the year-round shelter capacity has grown over recent years.

3. Warming Centres (236 spaces)

Funded by the City of Vancouver, Warming Centres are activated when temperatures reach -4 degrees Celsius (or feels like -4). Warming Centres do not provide beds or cots, but do provide a place for individuals to come inside, warm up and have a snack during periods of extreme cold. Warming centres are located in community spaces, drop-in centres, and/or other available locations.

This year, seven warming centre sites will provide up to 236 spaces when activated. It is important to note that people may come and go and staff work to ensure anyone who wants to come inside to warm up has an opportunity to do so.

Warming Centre Sites 2017-2023

Warming Centre Sites							
Sites	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Number of Nights open	32	43	17	13	25	28	TBD
Total Spaces	130	194	149	103	161*	116	236
Total Sites	5	6	4	5	7*	5	7

**During a typical activation, four sites were open with 101 spaces available*

Summary of 2023-2024 Winter Capacity

In total, there are currently confirmed 373 Temporary Shelters, Extreme Weather Response (EWR) and Warming Centre spaces available this winter (See Appendix A for listings). This is in addition to the 1,400 permanent available year-round shelter beds available (see below).

Winter Response Additional Capacity, 2023-2024	Capacity (approx.)
Temporary Winter Shelters (open every night)	67
EWR (upon activation)	70
Warming Centre (upon activation)	236
Total (to date)	373
Existing Shelter Capacity	
Year-Round Shelters	1400
TOTAL Capacity (approx.)	1,700+

Staff continue to work to identify and deploy additional sites and will update Council with the creation of any new spaces.

Communication Efforts to Bring People Inside

EWR and Warming Centre activations are broadcast to community service providers, government stakeholders, BC211, Translink, VPD and others. Staff also post activations via social media channels. The City's Homelessness Services Outreach team and multiple service provider organizations working with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness also encourage people to come indoors.

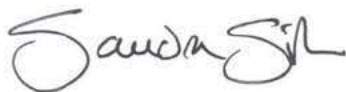
All EWR alerts, shelter and warming centre locations can be found on the www.vancouver.ca. When an alert is issued, a banner will be present at the top of the page. Also, all Vancouver-owned social media channels post current information for where people sheltering outside can access a warm place indoors.

FINAL REMARKS

This year's Winter Response Strategy will provide an additional **373** spaces to ensure people experiencing unsheltered homelessness can access a safe, warm, place to come inside during the cold and wet winter months.

Staff will also continue working with senior government and non-profit partners to identify and activate additional spaces and increase services for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at sandra.singh@vancouver.ca and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.



Sandra Singh, General Manager
 Arts, Culture, and Community Services
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Appendix A: Winter Response Sites

Temporary Winter Response Shelters

Temporary Winter Response shelters are typically open on a nightly basis from November to March.

Temporary Winter Shelter Sites 2022-2023						
Shelter	Operator	Gender	Age	Details	Intake Info	Beds 2022-23
Evelyn Saller Centre 124 Dunlevy Ave	City of Vancouver	All	19+	All genders. 19+ years. Accessible site, but sleeping is mats only. No pets. No carts.	Nov 21-April 21, 2023 11:00pm-8:00am Weekdays; 10:00pm-8:00am Weekends	42
Tenth Ave Alliance Church 11 West 10 ^h 604-264-1680	Lookout	All	19+	Accessible, but mat program only.	Nov 15-March 31, 2023 10:30pm-6:30am	25
Total Beds						67

Extreme Weather Response Shelters

EWR shelters are typically activated as a time-limited, weather responsive temporary shelter from October to March

Extreme Weather Response Shelter Spaces 2022-2023					
Address	Operator	Details	Hours	Contact	Mats 2022-23
Directions Youth Services Centre 1138 Burrard St	Directions Youth Services	All genders. Youth only, 19-24 years. Accessible. Pets allowed with restrictions (max 4).	10:00pm-7:00am	604-633-1472 Press 1	10 youth
Langara YMCA 282 W 49th Ave	Lookout Society	All genders. 19+ years. Accessible. Food offered on entering and in the morning. Enter using Gym doors at the rear parking lot. No pets.	9:30pm-7:00am	236-888-1335 (opening hours only)	30
Cascades Church 3833 Boundary Road	Lookout Society	All genders. 19+ years. Not accessible. Food offered. Enter through left side door in rear parking lot. No pets. No carts.	9:30pm-9:00am	604-498-3328 (opening hours only)	10
Salvation Army Belkin House	Salvation Army	Not accessible. Breakfast served at 7:30am. No pets.	9:00pm - 7:00am	Phone: 604-681-3405	20

Extreme Weather Response Shelter Spaces 2022-2023					
Address	Operator	Details	Hours	Contact	Mats 2022-23
(Additional Winter EWR Capacity) 555 Homer St		Can accommodate 15 men and 5 women. Not wheelchair accessible. No pets.			
Total					70

Warming Centres

Warming Centres are activated when the temp reaches -4 degrees Celsius (or feels like -4) between November and March.

Warming Centre Spaces 2023-2024				
Address	Operator	Details	Hours	Number of spaces
New Chinatown Peace Church 375 E. Pender St.	City of Vancouver	All genders, couples are welcome. Accessible, pets OK, bikes OK, carts OK. Hot beverages and snacks.	TBD	15
New Parish of St. Mary's Kerrisdale 2490 West 37 th Ave.	Lookout Housing and Health Society	Accessible, carts OK outside	8:30pm-7am	30
Aboriginal Front Door	Aboriginal Front Door Society	Open 11pm - 7am. Drop in site. All genders and couples welcome. Can accommodate pets. No carts. Hot beverages and snacks available. Accessible. No reservation required.	11:00pm – 7:00am	30
Bud Osborne Shelter, (Additional Warming Centre Capacity) 27 W Hastings St Phone: 604-681-2806	PHS	All genders, Accessible, pets OK, storage available but cannot accept carts	TBD	40
Powell St Getaway 450 East Hastings St	Lookout Housing and Health Society	All genders, couples are welcome. Accessible, pets OK, bikes OK, carts OK, Overdose Prevention Site.	9:00pm – 7:30am	25
Odd Fellows Lodge 1443 W 8 th Ave	City of Vancouver	All genders, couples are welcome. Not accessible. Cannot accept pets or carts.	9:30pm – 8:30am	20

Warming Centre Spaces 2023-2024				
Address	Operator	Details	Hours	Number of spaces
	(with Odd Fellows)	Bikes OK. Hot beverages and snacks.		
Marpole Neighbourhood House 8585 Hudson St (*this program will move to EWR when operationally ready)	Lookout Housing and Health Society	All genders, couples are welcome. Accessible, pets OK, bikes OK, carts OK. Hot beverages and snacks.	10:00pm – 8:30am	40
West End Community Centre 870 Denman (enter on Haro St)	City of Vancouver (with West End Community Centre)	All genders, couples are welcome. Accessible, pets OK. Hot beverages and snacks.	11:00pm – 6:00am	16
Mount Pleasant Community Centre 1 Kingsway (Enter off 8 th)	City of Vancouver (With Mount Pleasant Community Centre)	All genders, couples are welcome. Accessible, pets OK. Hot beverages and snacks.	10:30pm – 6:30am	20
Total spaces				236