

Temporary shelter to operate for two more months at current location

March 29, 2021

1. What is happening with the current temporary shelter?

To ensure the continued health and safety of our community's vulnerable population, City Council approved an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw (Bylaw 3357/H-2021) and approved a development permit that allows the continued operations of the temporary shelter located in the north portion of the Cannery Row Building (5239 53 Avenue) until May 31, 2021. The two months gives The City the opportunity to explore alternate sites for a temporary shelter.

2. Why did the changes need to be made?

The temporary shelter at Cannery Row was established in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting need for a safe, physically distanced shelter for our community's vulnerable population. The City established the one-year shelter lease through the State of Local Emergency by means of an Emergency Order.

As the Pandemic is ongoing, and The City is no longer in a State of Local Emergency, the need for a safe, physically distanced shelter for our community's vulnerable population continues. The Land Use Bylaw's zoning (Direct Control District 28) at the subject location did not include a shelter as a use; therefore an amendment to the zoning was approved by Council on March 29, 2021 in order to allow the temporary shelter to continue at this location for an additional two months.

3. Why is a shelter needed?

There is a community need for persons experiencing homelessness to receive basic support – whether escaping the elements to stay dry and warm up, for resting, for having a coffee, or for connecting with trained staff to help clients navigate the system of housing and supports and find more permanent housing.

4. How is the shelter funded?

The Province provides funding for Safe Harbour Society to operate the shelter.

5. What is the long-term solution for shelter space in Red Deer?

On February 7, 2020, the Province committed to \$7 million in its 2020 Capital Plan for a purpose-built integrated emergency shelter in Red Deer. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Province of Alberta and The City of Red Deer was finalized in February 2021 to establish a general high-level understanding related to the provincially managed project to meet the current and future needs in Red Deer. Specifics about location, timing and operational details have not yet been determined by the provincial government.

6. How can I help if I encounter someone who is struggling?

If you are concerned for the wellbeing of someone who is experiencing homelessness, mental health challenges or substance abuse challenges, and they are not posing an immediate harm to themselves or others, call 2-1-1 then Press 2 to reach the Social Diversion Team.

The Social Diversion Team consists of specially-trained professionals that can provide front line assessment, intervention and support. They can connect people in crisis with the social services they need, such as housing supports, mental health supports, detox programs and harm reduction resources.

7. How does this help end homelessness?

Connecting trained staff with individuals experiencing homelessness creates opportunities for more permanent housing solutions. Clients who visit the shelter may be either recently homeless or chronically homeless.

Shelters are important components of the housing continuum, as they allow individuals to have their basic needs met so as to tackle more difficult challenges such as sobriety, employment, permanent housing.

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For more information, please contact:

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