

Provincial Approach to Homelessness - Application for Emergency Residential Shelter – 1701 Idylwyld Drive North

ISSUE

The Province of Saskatchewan (the Province) on October 6, 2023, announced a comprehensive strategy to combat homelessness, including the addition of 120 new permanent emergency shelter spaces. Additionally, the Province will create two complex needs emergency shelters, one in Regina and one in Saskatoon, that will provide a secure and medically supervised place to go, for up to 24 hours.

An application was received from the Province of Saskatchewan – Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement to establish an Emergency Residential Shelter at 1701 Idylwyld Drive North. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety will partner with a third-party service provider to deliver and facilitate the health supports and security of this facility. While Emergency Residential Shelters are currently a permitted use under Bylaw No. 8770, The Zoning Bylaw, 2009, City Council consideration of the time frame for operation of this application, for a temporary use up to 18 months, is required.

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council authorize Administration to issue the development permit for 1701 Idylwyld Drive North, for the purpose of providing an Emergency Residential Shelter, as a temporary use for up to 18 months, as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at the Public Hearing [meeting](#) held on November 22, 2021, approved an amendment to [Bylaw No. 8770, The Zoning Bylaw, 2009](#) (Zoning Bylaw), to add a definition and general regulations for Emergency Residential Shelters. The general regulations were created to allow an Emergency Residential Shelter to be set up as a temporary facility in emergency situations, in a safe and controlled environment, for a period of no longer than six months, within a 12-month period. City Council, at the Public Hearing [meeting](#) held on May 24, 2022, approved a text amendment to the Zoning Bylaw, which allows for an Emergency Residential Shelter to be located at an approved location, for a period of up to 18 months, subject to approval by City Council.

The Zoning Bylaw defines an “Emergency Residential Shelter” as:

“a facility where emergency temporary lodging is provided with no charge, to persons who are homeless due to poverty or disaster, operated by a public or non-profit agency, and where on-site supervision and support services are provided at all times when such shelter is occupied”.

General regulations require an application to include information identifying the temporary nature and demonstrated need for the use, which is then evaluated on the circumstances specific to each application. Applications for Emergency Residential Shelters will be handled administratively similar to how other permitted uses are handled, with the exception that City Council approval is required for the length of time of operation. City Council can approve the recommended length of time or put forward a motion for an alternate time period between one and 18 months.

Purpose of the Emergency Residential Shelter Regulations

Administration developed the definition and general regulations for temporary Emergency Residential Shelters to address an issue of life safety due to increasing levels of homelessness and inadequate shelter spaces in Saskatoon. Winter in Saskatoon presents safety hazards for people without adequate shelter. The provisions added to the Zoning Bylaw in 2021, and amended in 2022, established regulations to outline life safety requirements in a suitable facility on a temporary basis to meet this need while giving organizations the opportunity to consider longer term solutions when needed.

The regulations provide a process which does not require full building upgrades to meet the National Building Code, or other changes to meet Zoning Bylaw regulations, which would otherwise be required for any facility to be established as a permanent use. Through the application process, the agency proposing the use also confirms their operational plan for the facility, including on-site support services when the shelter is occupied, the number of people being accommodated and the timeframe for the use.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Proposed Application

As per Section 5.56 – Emergency Residential Shelters, a site zoned IL1 – General Light Industrial District (IL1) is eligible to be considered for the location of an Emergency Residential Shelter, unless an adjacent land use may create life safety issues. 1701 Idylwyld Drive North is zoned IL1 and there are no industrial land uses adjacent to this site that would create life safety issues for those using the proposed Emergency Residential Shelter.

The Ministry of SaskBuilds and Procurement have applied for a temporary Emergency Residential Shelter, for up to 15 individuals, to be located at 1701 Idylwyld Drive North (see Appendix 1). The facility is being proposed as part of the ‘Provincial Approach to Homelessness’ and would provide emergency shelter space for up to 15 individuals with complex needs. The facility will provide onsite health care personnel and supervision and offer a safe place for individuals to stabilize while being monitored for up to 24 hours. The application states that individuals would be brought to the facility by Saskatoon Police Services and would not self-refer. Prior to leaving the facility, individuals will be provided an opportunity to connect with community services, such as addictions treatment, shelter and financial support.

Potential for Permanent Facility

The application is for a temporary operation up to 18 months. The Province may consider a permanent facility, which could include this location provided further requirements are met. Any site chosen for a permanent location would be required to meet the full requirements of the Zoning Bylaw and obtain the necessary Building Permits. Administration will continue to work with the Province as they finalize the details of the facility and confirmation on plans for a potential permanent facility are developed.

Policy Review

[Bylaw No. 9700, The Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2020](#), contains an objective to encourage and support the provision of diverse and safe housing options. This includes working with community partners to help reduce and prevent homelessness in the city.

Public notice is not required for consideration of this matter, pursuant to Section 11(a) of [Council Policy C01-021, Public Notice](#).

Comments from other Divisions

Saskatoon Fire and Building Standards Department will undertake a site inspection of the building to ensure necessary life safety requirements are in place prior to occupancy and work with the applicant to ensure any necessary work is undertaken and a Fire Safety Plan approved. Upon completion of any required work, a temporary occupancy permit would be issued.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

In order to support a streamlined application process in the case of urgent need, the following approach was used for public communication for this application:

- Notification of the proposal was provided via mailed flyer in mid-November to a 300 metre radius of the property (see Appendix 2);
- Members of the public could submit correspondence to a central email address;
- Administration and the applicant would consider the received correspondence and work to mitigate noted concerns; detailed, individual responses to correspondence were not provided;
- A webpage related to Shelter Spaces has been created which includes a list of common questions and answers; and
- Members of the public would be able to register to speak to City Council at the Regular Meeting or submit correspondence directly via the City Clerk's Office.

APPENDICES

1. Location Map – 1701 Idylwyld Drive North
2. Notice – Proposed Emergency Residential Shelter

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Darryl Dawson, Development Review Manager
Reviewed by: Lesley Anderson, Director of Planning and Development
Approved by: Lesley Anderson, Acting General Manager, Community Services

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