

TO: MAYOR & COUNCILLORS

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND
GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY SAFETY

SUBJECT: **24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK WINTER SHELTER
RESPONSE AT 7320 BULLER AVENUE**

PURPOSE: To request an increase in winter shelter hours to 24 hours, 7 days a week at 7320 Buller Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT staff be directed to amend the license agreement with BC Housing for the operations of a 24/7 winter shelter at 7320 Buller Avenue until April 30, 2024; and

THAT BC Housing, Progressive Housing Society, the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby, Fraser Health Authority and the Mayor's Task Force on Unsheltered Community Members be advised of the changes to the winter shelter hours, as outlined in this report.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

This report aligns with the following Council-adopted policies, plans, and strategies:

- *Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2021);*
- *Community Safety Plan (2020);*
- *City's Equity Policy (2020);*
- *Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing (2019);*
- *Corporate Strategic Plan (2022);* and
- *Social Sustainability Strategy (2011).*

2.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting on June 09, 2023, the Mayor's Task Force on Unsheltered Community Members received correspondence from the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby requesting that the City take action to provide additional winter shelter services in Burnaby.

Upon confirming with BC Housing that funding was available to support a winter shelter service in Burnaby, staff explored options based on a model where BC Housing provides operating funding, the City provides a suitable site at a nominal rate, and a non-profit operator provides the services. Based on the above, staff identified the front portion of the east side of the Buller warehouse at 7320 Buller Avenue as a suitable location (see Attachment 1).

On November 06, 2023, Council authorized staff to establish a license agreement with BC Housing for the operation of an overnight winter shelter at 7320 Buller Avenue from December 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024. BC Housing would be responsible for contracting with the operator, Progressive Housing Society, for the operation of the winter shelter. The shelter would open from 4:00pm to 8:00am, seven days a week. These proposed hours of operations would allow the operator to provide dinner and greater access for clinical outreach teams to visit the site.

It was also noted that Council requested staff to explore the option of providing 24-hour service versus an overnight service. This report responds to the request for a 24-hour winter shelter service.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

Since the opening of the winter shelter on December 15, 2023, City staff and Progressive Housing Society have worked together to connect and shelter individuals in Burnaby. At the time of this report, the operator has noted that all 40 spaces are occupied.

3.1 Temporary 24/7 Winter Shelter Operations (January 12 to 19, 2024)

In response to the extreme cold weather conditions, the City, BC Housing, and Progressive Housing Society are planning to temporarily operate the winter shelter at 24 hours a day for one week (from January 12 to 19, 2024) as an interim measure. The operator has confirmed that BC Housing would fund and support this temporary initiative.

In addition, the adjacent City-operated extreme weather warming centre on the west side of 7320 Buller Avenue remains available should extreme weather conditions trigger activation this winter (as identified by Emergency Management BC guidelines).

3.2 Proposed 24/7 Winter Shelter Operations (January 20 to April 30, 2024)

The City has also learned that BC Housing has funding available to increase the existing winter shelter hours from 16 hours to 24 hours, seven days a week. BC Housing proposes to fund the remaining eight-hour shift, as well as provide an additional daytime meal until April 30, 2024. The extension to 24 hours would provide improvements for individuals to stay warm, dry, fed, and connected to a range of health and homelessness services.

It is therefore recommended that Council approve the increase in winter shelter hours and services from 16 hours to 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 7320 Buller Avenue until April 30, 2024 and direct staff to amend the license agreement, as necessary.

3.3 Shower Access

Currently, there are no shower or laundry facilities available for individuals to access on-site at 7320 Buller Avenue. Having access to showers was identified by the operator as a service that should be made available in a 24/7 facility, and should Council approve

the increased winter shelter hours, City staff would work with community partners and shelter guests to explore different showering options.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

If the proposed increase in winter shelter service is approved by Council, BC Housing would provide a notification letter to properties in the immediate vicinity of the site. The letter would provide contact information where further information could be obtained about the shelter use.

Further, should the 24/7 winter shelter service be approved, it is recommended that the changes to the winter shelter hours be communicated to BC Housing, Progressive Housing Society, the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby, Fraser Health Authority and the Mayor’s Task Force on Unsheltered Community Members.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations related to the proposed winter shelter service as BC Housing is proposing to fund the additional service.

Respectfully submitted,

E.W. Kozak General Manager Planning and Development and

Dave Critchley, General Manager Community Safety

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – 7320 Buller Avenue

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Kai Okazaki, Planner 2 and reviewed by Margaret Manifold, Planner 3, Wendy Tse, Director Community Planning and Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.