



CS01762

Edmonton

Edmonton's Approach (2023/24) - Supporting Those Experiencing Homelessness

Community and Public Services
Committee
May 1, 2023

Winter 2022/23 Context



- Between **2,650 and 2,800** Edmontonians were experiencing homelessness
 - **1,250 - 1,350** self-identified as primarily sleeping in emergency shelters or outdoors
- Up to **1,427 overnight** emergency shelter spaces
 - Government of Alberta funded 1,202 spaces
 - Al Rashid Mosque provided up to 75 additional spaces (only during extreme weather activations)
 - West End Shelter provided up to 150 additional spaces
- **997 daytime** spaces
 - 280 day shelter spaces
 - 627 24/7 shelter spaces
 - 90 temporarily funded 24/7 shelter spaces

Winter 2022/23 Activities

Extreme Weather Activations

- ETS Extreme Weather Buses and Boyle Street Warming Bus
- 75 emergency shelter spaces at Al Rashid Mosque
- Encampment response teams support
- City facilities open for warming purposes

Connecting People Experiencing Homelessness in ETS Facilities to Supports

- Winter response bus
- Well being checks of vulnerable Edmontonians in ETS facilities
- Support connections during ETS station nightly lock ups

West End Shelter

- Shelter and transition housing spaces

GoA Shelter Supports

- Permitting and logistical support

Other Supports

- Day Shelter supports
- Shigella response

Winter 2022/23 Findings

- Winter 2022/23 has seen **45 days** of extreme weather activations
- While the total number of beds has expanded to meet demands, there is some evidence the shelter system is still not meeting the needs of many individuals experiencing homelessness.
 - An average of **225** individuals were asked to leave ETS facilities during nightly lock-ups, with an average of **106** of those 225 individuals refusing transportation to shelter
 - Consistent presence of encampments through the winter
- Agency, ETS and TPO staff shortages was a significant operational concern.
 - Out of 117 requested shifts for outreach workers on the extreme weather buses, only 23 were filled
 - On 15 nights in December, three nights in January and six nights in February there were not enough TPO staff to fully staff the shelter shuttle using overtime resources.

Winter 2022/23 Findings



The City is developing a strategic plan and mandate to clarify its corporate role in addressing homelessness. The new Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness (October 30/23) and the Corporate Homelessness Plan (Jan 2024) will provide this clarity. However, planning for supports through the summer and next winter needs to begin now.

Expiration of Agreements

- West End Shelter (former Bedford Inn)
 - **Agreement expires December 31, 2023**
 - Unspent funds are forecast to support operations until September 30, 2023
- Day Shelter Services Spaces
 - Winter 2022/23 funding provided expanded day services programming and increased operational hours
 - **Boyle Street Community Services funding expires April 30, 2023**
 - **Bissell Centre funding expires May 31, 2023**
 - Both organizations have requested ongoing City funding, which is outlined as a potential option

Winter 2023/2024 Base Level Activities

Base budget funding of **\$1.25 million** is available for winter 2023/24 activities:

1. Extreme and cold weather activations
 - Transportation during Extreme and Cold Weather activations
 - Winter Warming Bus
 - Al Rashid Mosque - CoE support for shelter spaces
 - Encampment response teams support
 - Open some city facilities for warming purposes
2. Support for GoA funded shelters
 - Logistical support and permitting assistance
3. Other supports
 - Ongoing shigella response



Winter 2023/2024 Additional Options

- Augmenting day shelter spaces - **\$3.79 million**
 - Bissell Centre (June 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024)
 - Boyle Street Community Services (November 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024)
- Additional Shelter or Housing Spaces - **\$11 - \$13 million** per year
 - An additional 200 continuous stay shelter or bridge housing spaces
- Supplemental transportation services - **\$TBD**
 - Increased shuttle buses, additional transit Peace Officer staff to support operations and transit centre lock-ups for people experiencing homelessness in ETS facilities
 - Costs identified once evaluation and planning work complete

Winter 2023/2024 Additional Options

Funding any of these additional options will be a challenge.

Potential funding sources for additional options include:

- Community Safety Well-being funds held within Financial Strategies
 - Not recommended as community-informed recommendations will come forward for Fall SOBA
- New funding requests through the 2023 Fall Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment process
 - Would be too late to implement options for the full winter 2023/24 season

Next Steps

1. Council guidance on the potential further activities for the winter 2023/24 season.

Questions