

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: October 21, 2024
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Guillermo Ferrero, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: Daytime Warming Centre Next Steps

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council direct staff to:

1. Proceed with the operation of the Daytime Warming Centre at Centennial Park (or any other location at Council's discretion);
 2. Award the contract for the 2024/2025 Emergency Daytime Warming Centre to Lookout Housing and Health Society & Engaged Communities Canada Society for the cost of \$409,970.41 and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to sign the contract for services;
 3. Increase the budget to \$409,970.41 to enable daily operations of the daytime warming Booth from November 1 to March 15, 2025; and
 4. Allocate an additional \$49,970.41 from operating contingency (for 2024 costs) and prior year surplus (for 2025 costs) to the daytime warming centre budget; and
 5. Hire extra security to patrol the surrounding area outside hours of operation and allocate an additional \$30,000 from operating contingency and prior year surplus; and
 6. Establish a Warming Centre Volunteer Group to help with area cleaning.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the next steps for Council following the October 7, 2024, Council meeting, where representatives from Sources presented two alternative locations for the Warming Centre outside of White Rock. After further analysis and consultation, these options were determined to be unsuitable.

Staff seek Council's approval to proceed with the previously used Warming Centre location at Centennial Park and secure the necessary funding to support uninterrupted operations from November to mid-March 2025. The proposed budget of \$409,970.41 exceeds the \$360,000 budget approved in 2024. However, anticipated reimbursement from the province for extreme weather days and community donations are expected to reduce the net cost. During the 2023/2024 season, \$91,000 was recouped through these funding sources (\$75,200 from the province, \$15,000 from a generous donor, and \$1,200 from other residents donations).

Staff is also recommending, given the safety concerns we heard from some residents and community groups, that extra security be implemented outside the hours of operations from the Warming Centre (10pm to 7am); Security is provided already included in the cost during 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Given the strong support and willingness from interest groups, staff recommends establishing a Warming Centre Volunteer Group with the primary mandate of assisting with cleanliness of the surrounding area, as these groups have expressed a desire to contribute to this initiative.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
2024-316 September 23, 2024	THAT Council direct staff to reach out to community groups (including churches, Sources, Central Plaza owners) to bring forward potential options for consideration of location in order to run a Warming Centre.
2024-354 October 7, 2024	THAT Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receive the October 7, 2024, corporate report from the Chief Administrative Officer, titled "Daytime Warming Centre Update" for consideration; and2. Direct staff to explore and report back regarding the options provided by Sources at the meeting (utilizing the hours provided by Sources) and work with the City of Surrey and that this be utilized during times of extreme cold weather (called by the province)

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

On September 23, 2024, Council reviewed the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a 2024/2025 daytime warming centre operator. Only one joint submission was received from Lookout Housing and Health Society & Engaged Communities Canada Society (Lookout).

At the same meeting, staff planned to present a Temporary Use Permit application for a location at 1589 Maple Street, but the property owner withdrew the offer. As a result, staff reached out to faith and community-based organizations in White Rock for alternative locations. Four out of eleven organizations responded, indicating they could not provide space.

On October 7, 2024, Council reviewed the survey results showing a 50/50 split in community support and funding, with Centennial Park being the most suggested location and a location closer to the RCMP station as second. At the same meeting, representatives from Sources proposed two locations outside City limits. After further analysis, these options were deemed unsuitable due to logistical and operational constraints.

Given the lack of viable alternatives, staff recommends returning to Centennial Park as the most feasible option, despite exceeding the initial budget.

The operator provides security services during the warming centre operation from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. It is recommended that to reduce public safety concerns that extra security be put in place from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. at a cost of approximately \$30K for the period November to mid-March.

In addition, given the strong support from interest groups to help out and support the operations of seasonal Warming Centre in White Rock, staff recommends that a Warming Centre Volunteer Group be established to help out with general cleaning around the Warming Centre Area as this was highlighted as one of the most common challenges around the operation of the Centre.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The City has budgeted \$360,000 in the 2024 Financial Plan for the operation of the Daytime Warming Centre. The proposed budget from Lookout is \$409,970.41, which includes:

- **Start-up costs:** Up to \$42,000 for trailer rentals, equipment, and supplies (depending on location requirements).
- **Daily operations:** \$2,249.10 per diem rate.
- **Additional costs:** Monthly utility and insurance fees.

To cover this shortfall, staff recommends allocating \$49,970.41 from operating contingency and prior year surplus. Reimbursements from the province for extreme weather events and community donations are expected to reduce the final net cost. An additional \$30K will need to be allocated for after-hours security patrols.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The City is not mandated to provide a warming centre service; however, it has done so for the past three years. The procurement process followed Council's Finance Policy No. 301, and awarding the contract requires Council approval as it exceeds staff's delegated authority.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

A community survey launched on October 1, 2024, sought feedback on the operation and location of the Warming Centre. The survey results are attached in Appendix A.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

The preparation of the survey, communication with faith based and community organizations, and private property owners was managed by Corporate Administration and Communications. Staff support is expected to be required for the activation of the daytime warming centre, and on an as needed basis during the operation, but not to the extent previously required for coordination of the temporary facilities.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Extreme cold weather due to climate change can significantly affect the health of individuals experiencing homelessness and those without adequate shelter.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The operation and delivery of services through a temporary emergency daytime warming centre is in line with the following Strategic Priority of Council:

Plan for adverse weather impacts to protect community safety

- Assess future location, annually seek to secure grant funding, and continue to partner with the City of Surrey to operate the Warming Centre each winter from November – March.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

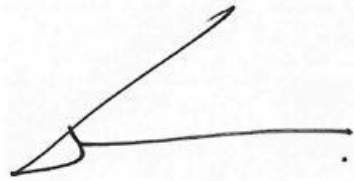
The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. **Do not proceed** with the operation of the daytime warming centre for the 2024/2025 season and rely on services already offered in neighboring municipalities. This would result in a 1.3% tax reduction for the 2025 budget.
2. **Operate only on "extreme weather events" days** with a budget cap of \$360,000 at \$2249.10 per day (24 hours' notice before and after is required) plus Startup costs which are estimated to be up to \$42,000, subject to hook up requirements depending on location, including trailer rentals, equipment, and supplies. This option poses operational challenges and overlaps with existing services offered in Surrey during extreme weather days.
3. **Operate at an alternative site.** Although Centennial Park may not be ideal (staff recommendation), it has been used for the past three years. Issues at this location (e.g., bylaw and safety concerns) would likely occur at any alternative site.

CONCLUSION

The decision regarding the operation of the Daytime Warming Centre for the 2024/2025 winter season has been thoroughly reviewed, in consideration of alternative locations, community input, and financial implications. Given the challenges associated with securing a new site, and the consistent feedback emphasizing the need for accessibility and safety, staff recommends proceeding with the location at Centennial Park. While the updated budget exceeds the initial allocation, efforts to secure reimbursement and community support will continue. Ultimately, this approach balances fiscal responsibility with the City's commitment to providing essential services to vulnerable residents during extreme weather conditions. Council's approval will ensure a seamless and effective operation for the upcoming season.

Respectfully submitted,



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment A: Talk White Rock – Warming Centre Survey