

Temporary winter shelter shows positive trends

(Penticton, BC – February 7, 2025) – A report to Council says preliminary data from the first months of the Temporary Winter Shelter’s operation have shown promising results for the model being used.

“Working with 100 More Homes, BC Housing, Interior Health, local business and other partners, we wanted to create a locally made solution that ensured shelter residents received the care they need and that a safety plan provided support for neighbours,” says Julie Czeck, the City’s director of public safety and partnerships. “The early data provides valuable insights into the progress of this model and it’s collaborative approach.”

The data shows that since opening the shelter has accommodated 65 unique individuals, with 60 per cent of them reporting they have lived in Penticton for longer than five years. Since the shelter has opened, seven individuals have transitioned to permanent housing, either in market or supportive housing.

Interior Health has also experienced a high demand for their services by TWS shelter guests, with 47 primary care physician contacts in December. Additionally, there were 15 mental health and substance use connections, seven clients began opioid antagonist treatment and committed to further care, and 15 clients improved their wound care significantly, preventing hospitalizations that would have been necessary if they were sheltering on the street.

Police calls for service in the industrial area decreased by 15 per cent from November to December 2024 (from 173 to 148 calls) and by three per cent compared to November 2023 (153 calls). The RCMP’s Integrated Crisis Response Team (ICRT) maintained a strong presence at the TWS, and members have dedicated 134 hours to proactive patrols near the shelter in December.

A key aspect of the shelter’s operations Chamber of Commerce and Penticton Industrial Development Association representatives, who served as liaisons for businesses that may be impacted by the shelter operations near their businesses. As well, 100 More Homes has been hosting neighbourhood forums.

“Overall, from all parties involved in the safety plan there is shared consensus that this model of shelter is bearing positive outcomes due to each organization involved ‘bringing their best to the table.’ This is not to say there are not challenges – but challenges are met with a quick response,” reads the report.

The full report is available at www.penticton.ca/agendas

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