



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members of City Council
DATE:	October 31, 2024
SUBJECT:	Update #1: Temporary Emergency Shelter Expansion (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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The purpose of this update is to provide City Council with a high-level summary of key tasks and milestones completed or initiated since the Council's approval of Report HSC24027(b) / FCS24028 / PED24162 Reducing Homelessness and Managing Encampments on September 25, 2024. This update highlights the progress made in the implementation of the report recommendations, focusing on:

- the creation of 192 temporary emergency shelter beds to respond to the needs of unhoused individuals, homelessness and encampments;
- development of a Temporary Outdoor Shelter to be located on lands in the Barton/Tiffany neighbourhood for the provision of 80 temporary outdoor shelter beds, prioritizing (but not limited to) couples and individuals with pets; and,
- steps taken to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place for the protection of residents using the Temporary Outdoor Shelter site from any contamination present.

INFORMATION

Since the Council approval/ratification of Report HSC24027(b) / FCS24028 / PED24162, several steps have been taken to operationalize the report recommendations focused on three primary areas: the 192 Temporary Shelter Bed Expansion, site-specific developments at Barton/Tiffany, and the operational aspects of the Temporary Outdoor Shelter.

Staff project leads from the Housing Services Division have been identified and a comprehensive workplan has been developed to implement the recommendations, with multiple City departments mobilized to support the process. While the goal is to operationalize these initiatives as soon as operationally feasible, staff remain focused on ensuring due diligence in areas such as environmental assessments, operator

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

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selection and onboarding, resident safety and security, integration of community supports, and addressing potential community impacts.

Progress on Temporary Emergency Shelter Expansion

Contact with all of the identified providers has been completed in order to confirm full operational requirements for the approved 192 temporary shelter bed expansion, and the development, amendment, and execution of contracts is underway. Staff are also creating a model to ensure proper referral pathways for accessing these new beds, while working to ensure data and reporting mechanisms are in place. The onboarding process for providers is progressing on schedule, with the expectation that a majority of these beds will be fully operational by early December 2024 as agencies complete hiring processes.

Barton Tiffany Site-Specific Progress

Immediate efforts related to the Barton/Tiffany site have focused on ensuring the safety and viability of the location, with staff doing due diligence to consult on any potential health impacts on site due to contamination present. The City has contracted an external firm specializing in professional engineering services and environmental sciences to conduct a site evaluation, including:

- review of the existing Environmental Site Assessment to identify locations on the site where risks related to environmental contaminant impacts may be present;
- site reconnaissance to observe the current condition of the site; and,
- the development of a Due Diligence Risk Management Plan to provide potential risk management measures that could be implemented at the site as a means to limit the potential exposure of contaminants of potential concern to users of the site (potential risk management measures may include capping of potentially impacted areas, fencing around potential hotspot areas, or others as may be justified based on the professional recommendations).

Ordering of physical units for the site is in progress, as staff have contracted a structure provider for 40 units (up to 2 persons per unit), 2 common buildings, and mobile washroom/shower/laundry facilities, and are in the process of confirming ancillary site preparation and infrastructure set-up.

Where possible, feedback from both City Council and the community has been carefully incorporated into tentative site planning to this point, such as proposed location (set back from Barton Street if possible), privacy (fencing and incorporating / retaining healthy tree lines where possible), and establishment / development of partnerships for enhanced community safety and responsiveness (i.e. City of Hamilton Housing Services Division and Street Outreach Team, Municipal Law Enforcement, Public Works and Hamilton Police Services Social Navigator Program). Staff continue to review submitted

feedback to further inform full site plan development. To ensure immediate action following the results of the Due Diligence Risk Management Plan, staff have aligned processes and tentative agreements for the completion of the site plan and to address physical site needs and ensure it meets all necessary technical requirements (i.e. clearing, grading and ground preparation, fencing, regular site maintenance, waste collection, electrical connection, etc.).

Barton Tiffany Operations

Operational planning for the Barton/Tiffany site is well underway, including discussions with the potential non-profit operator of the Temporary Outdoor Shelter, with a strong emphasis on ensuring necessary supports are in place at the temporary site 24/7, while prioritizing the safety and security for both residents of the shelter and the surrounding community.

Housing Services staff have drafted an initial Service Plan agreement, based on existing emergency shelter guidelines/standards, and have incorporated additional elements referencing the operational principles of a fully managed, low barrier service model as outlined in Appendix “B” to Report HSC24027(b)/FCS24028/PED24162. The Service Plan includes program requirements, such as: program overview of supports and services; partnerships and collaboration; facility management and provision of essential services; policies and procedures; referrals, intake, and admission; staffing and case management; data, reporting and coordinated access; and performance targets and measurement. It is expected that the experienced non-profit operator of the Temporary Emergency Shelter will officially be in place by early November, with a one-year operational agreement, with the opportunity to renew.

The draft Service Plan is meant to act as a framework for operations, including a comprehensive approach to safety and security, while highlighting the integration of critical support services, such as mental health and addiction recovery programs, which will be delivered either onsite or through partnerships with community organizations. As the Service Plan is operationalized and expanded, there will be an opportunity to further incorporate feedback from persons with lived experience, service providers, partners and community to support the integration of the Temporary Outdoor Shelter into the community.

Next Steps

While staff are working to have the 192 temporary shelter beds operational as soon as possible, efforts across the corporation are mobilizing to support a working timeline for the Temporary Outdoor Shelter to be operational by December 1, 2024. Despite this ambitious timeline, supported by delegated authority and mobilization / co-ordination of City departments, delays are expected due to external contractor / fabricator timelines

and availability, as well as any potential measures required through the Due Diligence Risk Management Plan. City staff remain focused on advancing these initiatives with diligence, ensuring that all necessary measures are taken to implement the report recommendations effectively.

From an operational perspective, staff will continue supporting partnerships and readiness for both the temporary emergency shelter bed expansion and the Barton/Tiffany Temporary Outdoor Shelter. This includes establishing referral pathways, data reporting mechanisms, and a comprehensive service plan. Efforts will also focus on integrating community support, such as mental health, addiction recovery, and outreach services, into the operational framework. Collaborations with the Temporary Shelter Operator and service providers will ensure critical supports are coordinated effectively. Where needed, memoranda of understanding will formalize these partnerships, creating a cohesive support network as the shelters become operational.

The City is also working on a communications plan to keep residents informed of developments at the Temporary Outdoor Shelter, to listen to and acknowledge concerns or hopes for the project, and to support feedback on how input received was used to inform the project.

As a first step, on October 18, 2024, Housing Services launched a dedicated section on the City website to provide timely updates and essential information on ongoing efforts to implement approved recommendations. This page will be updated over time, and features information, frequently asked questions (FAQ), status updates, a community feedback portal, reports, and resources. Staff are reviewing the submissions to the community feedback portal and are identifying common themes and questions in order to guide future updates / reports back to community.

The Approved Temporary Shelter Expansion page can be accessed at:
www.Hamilton.ca/TemporaryShelterExpansion

For more information, please contact Michelle Baird, Director, Housing Services Division, at Michelle.Baird@hamilton.ca or 905-546-2424 ext.4860.