



# City of Prince Albert

**RPT 2025-167**

**TITLE:** Temporary Development Permit Application – Shelter – Dave G. Steuart Arena (950 Exhibition Drive)

**DATE:** April 22, 2025

**TO:** City Council

**PUBLIC:** X

**INCAMERA:**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the temporary Development Permit Application for a Shelter to be located at the Dave G. Steuart Arena, 950 Exhibition Drive, legally described as Parcel A, Plan 82PA14083, be approved for the period from July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2027, or until a permanent shelter is operational;
2. That the Director of Community Development, in consultation with the City Solicitor, prepare a Development Agreement between The City and the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation containing appropriate area amenity supports such as security services, area patrol, site clean-up, etc.;
3. That the Director of Community Development, in consultation with the City Solicitor, prepare a Licensing Agreement between The City and Saskatchewan Housing Corporation for the Dave G. Steuart Arena property, including the following provisions:
  - a. Monthly lease payment in the amount of \$7,500; and,
  - b. Fixed term of 2 years for the period of approval;
4. That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the Licensing and Development Agreements, once prepared; and,
5. That the Dave G. Steuart Arena Expression of Interest 26-2025 be cancelled.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Government of Saskatchewan has allocated funds to establish a property for a permanent, 24-hour enhanced emergency shelter. This will provide a new location for Stepping Stones, currently located at the Prince Albert Exhibition Grounds, which is not a viable long-term location. The shelter will offer comprehensive services, including case planning, wellness and cultural support, financial assistance, and help transitioning to appropriate housing.

Since 2020, Stepping Stones Shelter has provided services out of the Grandstand at the Exhibition Grounds. Although initially intended as a one-year/temporary solution, the shelter remained at this location due to ongoing and increasing demand for services. Recently, the operator gave notice to discontinue their services as of May 15, 2025, as there are concerns with the state of repair of the building and its suitability for occupancy.

In order to ensure continuity of services until a permanent location is secured - and to provide the City with the tools necessary to manage the ongoing homelessness crisis, including the ability to dismantle encampments when required - a new temporary shelter location is required. At this time, the Dave G. Steuart Arena has been selected as the most appropriate site for a temporary shelter for up to 2 years while a permanent solution is developed.

As Administration's review has not revealed any significant land use impacts, approval of the proposed resolution is recommended.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Since 2020, the Stepping Stones Shelter has operated under multiple temporary development permits to provide shelter services out of the Grandstand at the Exhibition Grounds. Although initially intended as a one-year/temporary solution, the shelter remained at this location for five (5) years due to an ongoing and increasing demand for services. The City has now been advised that there are significant and increasing public health concerns at the current Stepping Stones location. As a result, the current operator has given written notice to the Exhibition Association that they will discontinue as the shelter operator as of May 15th, 2025. Being ultimately responsible for the emergency shelter, the province has committed to work with the City and the Exhibition Association to complete any emergency repairs necessary to continue operations until a more suitable temporary location has been approved by City Council. They are also committed to securing a new shelter operator to ensure the continued operation of this important service in Prince Albert.

Concurrently, and for several years, housing providers, the Province, and members of City Administration have been exploring potential locations for a permanent emergency shelter. Since March 2024, Administration has been part of a working group exploring potential permanent sites for the shelter. The working group has also focused on community consultation and communication to raise awareness and gather informal feedback.

On December 16, 2024, City Council Resolution No. 0370 was carried unanimously:

*"That Administration engage with residents across The City to raise awareness and collect feedback for consideration on the establishment of a permanent shelter."*

Further, on March 24, Executive Committee Resolution No. 0057 was carried:

*"1. That Administration negotiate with the Provincial Ministry of Social Services and the YWCA to establish a permanent shelter on City property that is located within the vicinity of the current Stepping Stones Shelter, as has been identified during the Public Consultation process; and,*

*2. That a Development Permit for a permanent shelter be brought forward for consideration at an upcoming City Council meeting.”*

Taking this into consideration, since a new permanent shelter will take 18-24 months to procure and/or construct, there may be a 2 year window where there will be no shelter in Prince Albert for the unhoused.

## **PROPOSED APPROACH AND RATIONALE:**

In recent years, City Administration brought forward multiple reports for Council's consideration regarding the shelter situation in Prince Albert. A great deal of work has been completed in recent months to move this matter forward in a meaningful and sustainable way. Please see the attached documents, including the most recent report regarding Stepping Stones' 2024 operations at the Exhibition Grounds and the accompanying report prepared by Anna Dinsdale, Community Safety and Wellbeing Manager.

### New Temporary Development Permit Application

Administration is in receipt of a Development Permit Application from the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation for the operation of a temporary shelter at the Dave G. Steuart Arena. The proposed term is from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027, or until a permanent shelter location is approved and operational. Please see the attached location plan for reference.

Temporary Development Permits are designed to allow interim land uses with a clearly defined start and end date. In this case, the recommended term is for 2 years, allowing enough time for a permanent shelter to be constructed.

As per Section 14 of the City of Prince Albert Zoning Bylaw, a “Shelter” is defined as:

*“the use of a building, or a portion thereof, for the temporary housing and support of those who are vulnerable, homeless, or are in need of emergency short term accommodation”.*

The subject property is located in the I1 – Institutional General zoning district, the purpose of which is to:

*“provide large parcels of land throughout the city to accommodate a diverse mixture of regional scale Institutional uses. Located along arterial and collector corridors, the intention of the I1 – Institutional General Zoning District is to ensure that larger scale uses such as schools and care facilities are appropriately accommodated within residential neighbourhoods and within the city”.*

In the I1 – Institutional General Zoning District, a Shelter is considered a Discretionary Use – Council, which requires City Council approval. As per Section 4.16 of the Zoning Bylaw, development may be approved temporarily and shall be subject to the standard review process.

As work continues to identify and develop a permanent location for the Stepping Stones Shelter, temporary accommodations are essential to ensure continuity of service for individuals experiencing homelessness. The main rationale for this new location hinges on these two points:

1. Although there is a commitment to remediate any immediate safety concerns, the Grandstand facility has significantly deteriorated and is no longer suitable to safely house individuals beyond 2 – 3 months. Ongoing issues, such as frequent renovations and mold remediation, have further emphasized the need for relocation.
2. Without a functioning shelter, the City is legally limited in its ability to effectively manage and disband encampments. Encampments have become more prevalent across Prince Albert and present substantial safety risks; without the legal tools to manage encampments, the risk of uncontrolled fires, which endanger both encampment occupants and nearby residents, remains high.

In reviewing the potential land use impacts, and overall, the proposed use aligns with the intent of the Zoning Bylaw and meets all relevant regulations.

Given the temporary suitability of the site, the urgent need to maintain shelter operations, and the significant coordination already undertaken, Administration believes this location is appropriate.

For the reasons mentioned above, Administration recommends approval of the Temporary Development Permit Application for the Stepping Stones Shelter to operate at the Dave G. Steuart Arena from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027, or until a permanent shelter is operational.

### **CONSULTATIONS:**

The Community Development Department has been in contact with the applicant throughout the Development Permit review process to ensure that they are aware of all municipal requirements and to manage expectations and timelines.

Administration has advised the Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Culture and Financial Services Departments, along with the Fire Department, of this permit application. No concerns were raised regarding the permit application.

### **COMMUNICATION AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENT PLAN:**

The applicant will be notified in writing of City Council's decision.

The Building Division will be notified of City Council's decision as a Building Permit is required.

### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The City has collected a Development Permit Application fee of \$500. Once construction drawings are submitted for a Building Permit Application to the Building Division for their review, a permit fee based on the square footage will be determined.

The City will receive \$7500 per month in lease revenue for the use of the Steuart arena. These revenues will recoup utility and insurance costs.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS:**

At an Executive Committee meeting, dated February 3, 2025 resolution number 0028 was approved:

*“That Administration be authorized to proceed with an Expression of Interest to formalize future options for the Dave G. Steuart Arena.”*

It should be noted that if Council chooses to approve the recommendations outlined in this report, the noted expression of interest will be cancelled.

There are no other policy, privacy, safety or environmental concerns to consider with this report.

#### **OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION:**

There are no options to the recommendation to consider with this report.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

An area of focus in the Strategic Plan 2023-2025 is “Social Equity” where the city will examine options for stimulating shared problem ownership and collaborative solution building for Prince Albert’s social issues.

#### **OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN:**

As per Section 6.4.1 of the Official Community Plan, the proposed development permit application is further supported by the OCP, as it increases the number of shelter beds available in the City of Prince Albert:

***“Supportive housing forms and tenures, such as private and public care homes, senior’s housing, residential care homes, child day care centres, shelters and other forms of supportive housing should be facilitated in all areas of the City”.***

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE:**

Public Notice is required for consideration of this matter, pursuant to Section 10 of the Public Notice Bylaw No. 24 of 2015. Public Notice was issued on April 8<sup>th</sup> to all property owners within 150 metres of the subject property.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Location Plan
2. Enhanced Emergency Shelter Consultation Results – RPT 2025-106

4. Public Notice Issued on April 8, 2025

**Written by:** Craig Guidinger, Community Development Director

**Approved by:** City Manager