



Council Report

For the Meeting of July 25, 2024

To: Council **Date:** July 11, 2024
From: Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Update on Bylaw Amendments for Social Service Centres

RECOMMENDATION

That the following bylaw receive first, second and third readings:

1. Social Service Centres Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 24-052.

That the following bylaw be adopted:

1. Social Service Centres Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 24-052.

BACKGROUND

On June 20, 2024, Council passed the following motion with regard to social service access centres:

1. *That Council direct the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development to initiate, as part of the Official Community Plan update and zoning modernization projects, work exploring the appropriate regulation for social service centres in Victoria and report back to Council on the results of that work as part of future reports back on Official Community Plan update or zoning modernization projects as appropriate.*
2. *That Council instruct the City Solicitor and the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development to bring forward zoning amendments to permit, as a temporary measure, social service centres throughout Victoria subject only to the following conditions:*
 - a) *The number of overnight shelter spaces not to exceed the number of persons considered to be reasonable by City staff and at all times not to exceed 50;*
 - b) *Must not be located within 100 metres of another social service centre;*
 - c) *An agreement, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community development and in the form satisfactory to the City Solicitor, requiring that the property is well kept and maintained at all times to reduce impacts on the neighbouring community; and*
 - d) *Operation of the social service centre, including activities outside its property, must not cause nuisance or otherwise negatively impact neighbouring community.*
3. *That Council waive the holding of a public hearing prior to the adoption of these zoning amendments.*

4. *That, subject to publication of notices required under the Local Government Act, these amendments be expedited and brought forward for Council's consideration and adoption at the earliest opportunity.*

Following Council's direction staff have considered information from various sources to determine an appropriate maximum threshold for the number of beds to support the Zoning Bylaw Amendments for Social Service Access Centres. It is challenging to determine an optimal maximum threshold for shelter beds as the successful operation of any shelter is largely determined by the population being served, capacity and funding of the operator, associated staffing and the design of the facility.

However, based on discussions with local operators, other local government staff as well as the City's experience with MyPlace there is a general consensus that approximately 40 shelter beds is a reasonable threshold for low-barrier populations. There is also acknowledgement that as the number of beds increases to 50-60 there is greater complexity and greater likelihood of challenges for operators. The threshold of 40 is also reinforced by available data from Statistics Canada that identifies a national and regional average of 36 beds for emergency shelters.

Overall, the threshold of 40 is recommended for the Zoning Bylaw Amendments with an expectation that staff will review this number through the 10-Year OCP Update and Zoning Modernization work over the next year.

CONCLUSIONS

It is recommended that Council consider the motion to give first, second and third readings and final adoption to the Social Service Centre Bylaw (Attachment A).

Respectfully submitted,

Alec Johnston
Assistant Director
Development Services

Karen Hoese, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Social Service Centres Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 24-052