



BOARD REPORT #HS-2024-038

FOR INFORMATION or FOR APPROVAL

Date: November 27, 2024

Purpose: Cold Weather Response Update

Department Head: Stacey Cyopeck, Director of Housing Services

Approver: Melanie Shaye, Chief Administrative Officer

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Alignment with Strategic Plan 2022-2042: Healthy, Sustainable Communities

Maximize Impact **Remove Barriers** **Seamless Access** **Learn & Grow**

Maximize Impact – The Cold Weather Response plan will allow DNSSAB to build on and expand partnerships to assist the homeless population, aiming to leverage internal and external service integration.

Remove Barriers – The Cold Weather Response plan will provide the homeless population with access to services and warm places to stay warm.

Seamless Access – The Cold Weather Response plan will provide navigational services that connect persons experiencing homelessness to needed services.

BACKGROUND

As per Board Report [#HS-2024-031](#), a Cold Weather Housing Response Program (CWHRP) for the upcoming winter will be located at 590 Chippewa Street West, North Bay, the current Low-Barrier Shelter site at Northern Pines. This site has been selected temporarily while DNSSAB, in collaboration with the City of North Bay, Crisis Centre North Bay, and other partners, is actively seeking a permanent location for a 24/7 Integrated Shelter and Housing Hub.

The CWHRP will provide shelter and services to 24 individuals and was anticipated to open on November 1, 2024, pending the renovations in Northern Pines Phase 3. Five additional double occupancy motel rooms have also been secured from mid-November to mid-March to further

increase capacity over the winter. These rooms and the CWHRP increase the shelter capacity to 34 individuals, all within the approved budget.

The renovations in Northern Pines – Phase 3 have been delayed primarily due to a fire door and the kitchen not being up to code due to required materials being unavailable and on backorder. The delay is expected to be addressed by November 22, 2024.

In addition to the CWHRP, current measures, including those related to extreme cold, that are in place will continue, such as:

- Extreme Cold Weather Policy – The cap on overflow beds is flexible during extreme cold weather periods, allowing additional temporary spaces to be opened.
- District-wide outreach services continue to be provided through True Self which attends areas throughout the district where individuals live unsheltered, providing support and connections to services.
- DNSSAB will continue to support and collaborate with community partners to implement protocols for people experiencing homelessness during extreme cold weather.
- DNSSAB has contracted with Low Income People Involvement (LIPI) to act as the lead for emergency homelessness responses when multiple households (five or more) are at risk of homelessness due to an event such as fire, flood, or a building being condemned.

FINANCIAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

Given the delay in opening the CWHRP, Crisis Centre North Bay – the operator for CWHRP - has extended the hours of the Low-Barrier Shelter until the renovations are completed at Northern Pines - Phase 3. The operating hours of the Low-Barrier shelter are 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m., with breakfast and dinner served to clients.

Housing Services staff continue to closely monitor and stress the urgency of completing the necessary renovation work at Northern Pines - Phase 3 with the landowner.

The Crisis Centre North Bay and DNSSAB's Housing Services staff are developing formal triage and admission protocols, including a formal referral process, for individuals identified as unsheltered in outlying areas of the district. These protocols could include transportation, shelter beds, and risk mitigation, which will apply year-round.

OPTIONS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

NEXT STEPS

1. Ensure that all outstanding and required renovations in Northern Pines Phase 3 are addressed.

2. Transition the Low-Barrier Shelter's closure with the CWHRP's opening in Northern Pines - Phase 3.
3. Continue to collaborate with the Crisis Centre North Bay and community partners to ensure that the Cold Weather Housing Response Program is operating at its full potential.
4. Explore opportunities to offer the cold weather response protocols across the district.
5. Work with district municipalities to develop and implement Emergency Response protocols for Extreme Weather.

RESOURCES CITED

N/A

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