

# REPORT

## *Planning and Development*

**To:** Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council  
**Date:** October 21, 2024

**From:** Jackie Teed, Director,  
Planning and Development  
**File:** TUP00033  
#2581869

**Item #:** 2024-584

**Subject:** **Temporary Use Permit: 28, 32, 34 Sixth Street and 606 Clarkson Street (the Cliff Block Residence) – For Emergency Winter Shelter Use**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **THAT** Council provide notice that it will consider the issuance of a Temporary Use Permit (TUP00033) for an emergency winter shelter use at 28, 32, 34 Sixth Street and 606 Clarkson Street (the Cliff Block Residence) as outlined in this report; and
  2. **THAT** Council waive the application fee for the Temporary Use Permit in the amount of \$1,120.30, which would be reflected in a comparable decrease in projected 2024 planning permit revenues.
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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the issuance of a Temporary Use Permit for an emergency winter shelter use on the lower floor of the Cliff Block Residence located at 28, 32, 34 Sixth Street and 606 Clarkson Street, and to request Council waive the associated fee.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Lookout Housing and Health Society has applied for a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) to operate an emergency winter shelter use on the lower floor of the Cliff Block Residence at 28, 32, 34 Sixth Street and 606 Clarkson Street. A TUP is necessary as a shelter use is not permitted under the property's C-8 (Columbia Street Historic Comprehensive Development Districts) Zone.

The proposed emergency winter shelter use would accommodate up to 25 beds for men and women and operate on a 24/7 basis between November 1, 2024 and April 30, 2025. At this time, there is no plan to operate an emergency winter shelter use beyond this timeframe.

The proposed emergency winter shelter use would decrease the potential for death, illness and injury for the unhoused, particularly during extreme weather events, and reduce demand on the nightly shelter, which is facing capacity issues. It would also reduce externalities related to homelessness, including: overnight sheltering in parks and business alcoves and doorways; discarded belongings; open burning to keep warm or to cook; and the presence of human waste in both public realm and private spaces.

**BACKGROUND**

Lookout Housing and Health Society is seeking to develop a multidisciplinary health clinic on the lower floor of the Cliff Block Residence at 28, 32, 34 Sixth Street and 606 Clarkson Street. This space was recently renovated to accommodate this use; however, funding has not yet been received. As such, there is an opportunity to house an emergency winter shelter use with up to 25 beds for men and women, which would operate on a 24/7 basis between November 1, 2024 and April 30, 2025. At this time, there is no plan to operate an emergency winter shelter use beyond this timeframe.

**SITE CONTEX AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

*Site Characteristics and Context*

The site is approximately 368 square metres (3,957 square feet), and is surrounded by other commercial and high rise residential buildings. To the south is Columbia Street and to the east is the New Westminster Police Station.

The building is 1,750 square metres (18,842 square feet), is owned by Lookout Housing and Health Society, and houses 23 transitional and supportive housing units for people with a history of homelessness and mental health challenges. Previously, the lower floor has accommodated both extreme weather program and emergency winter shelter uses.

*Proximity to Public Transit*

The location is in close proximity to the Columbia Street SkyTrain station, thereby providing for access to rapid transit, frequent transit, and a number of other bus routes, as well as providing for strong regional connections.

Transit Facility	Frequency	Distance
SkyTrain station	SkyTrain: 2-3 minutes (peak hours) Buses: approximately 15 minutes	190 metres (625 feet) to Columbia Street SkyTrain station

Figure 1: Site Context Map and Street View



*Land Use Designation and Zone*

The Official Community Plan designates the property as Columbia Street Historic Mixed Use, which allows for mixed-use (commercial and/or residential) along Columbia Street, with office, restaurant, retail, service, arts and culture, entertainment and recreation at street level. The retention of heritage buildings is expected. The property is zoned C-8 (Columbia Street Historic Comprehensive Development Districts).

The emergency winter shelter use is not permitted in the property’s C-8 (Columbia Street Historic Comprehensive Development) zoning district, so it requires a Temporary Use Permit (TUP). The TUP would allow this use to operate for three years, with an option to renew for an additional three years subject to Council consideration and approval. For more information on land use policies and TUPs, refer to attachment 1.

**ANALYSIS**

*Homelessness Situation*

The city is facing increasing homelessness. The March 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count found 57 unsheltered and 146 sheltered homeless people in New Westminster. Combined, there were 203 unsheltered and sheltered homeless people, which represented a 65% increase between 2020 and 2023. Regarding the sheltered homeless number, it is misleading as it is significantly bolstered by the nightly shelter. Of importance, those using the nightly shelter are unsheltered between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. On the night of the count, 63 people were using the nightly shelter. As such, the daytime unsheltered homeless number is 120 people.

*Crises Response Pilot Project*

The City has launched a Crises Response Pilot Project, which addresses the three crises of homelessness, mental health and substance use. The pilot project includes a number of initiatives to better address the needs of those directly impacted, while

containing or limiting the associated externalities. This includes enhanced extreme weather and emergency winter shelter capacity; a temporary and a permanent 24/7 emergency shelter; additional supportive housing and a drop-in centre or a hub. The first three initiatives will ensure that guests or residents can meet their diverse needs on-site and the fourth initiative will ensure that the unhoused have a place to go, meet their needs and spend time. Collectively, these initiatives will significantly reduce the daytime unhoused population when businesses are operating and residents are circulating in the community.

*Proposed Emergency Winter Shelter*

The proposed emergency winter shelter use would accommodate up to 25 beds for men and women and operate on a 24/7 basis between November 1, 2024 and April 30, 2025. It would decrease the potential for death, illness and injury for the unhoused, particularly during extreme weather events, and reduce demand on the nightly shelter which is facing capacity issues. It would also reduce externalities related to homelessness, including: overnight sheltering in parks and business alcoves and doorways; discarded belongings; open burning to keep warm or to cook; and the presence of human waste in both public realm and private spaces.

**DISCUSSION**

The application has been evaluated using the evaluation criteria for Temporary Use Permits (TUPs), per Section 190.46 of the Zoning Bylaw. For more information, refer to attachment 2. The application would provide a community benefit in regard to providing an emergency winter shelter use for unhoused people; would be temporary in nature; and would reduce externalities related to homelessness for businesses and residents. The applicant and funder have indicated that they would have the proper measures in place to address potential externalities, including related to management, staffing, programming and security. The TUP would include conditions relating to operational requirements. For more information, refer to attachment 3.

**APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS AND NEXT STEPS**

The anticipated steps in this application’s review process are:

1. Report to Council requesting that Council provide notice that it will consider issuance of the Temporary Use Permit (TUP). **(we are here)**
2. Notification to be provided to properties within 100 metres of the proposal, with feedback on the application to be provided to the City by e-mail, mail or drop-off at City Hall. In accordance with City practice, there will be no opportunity to be heard.
3. Council to receive a summary of feedback and consider issuance of a motion to issue the TUP on November 4, 2024.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The applicant has requested that the fee be waived for the Temporary Use Permit application given that the emergency winter shelter use is meeting an identified and urgent community need. In the past, the City has waived this fee for non-profit organizations addressing an identified and urgent community need. Should Council wish to waive the application fee for this project, this amount would be reflected in a comparable decrease in projected 2024 planning permit revenues.

**OPTIONS**

There are three options for Council’s consideration:

- 1. That Council provide notice that it will consider the issuance of a Temporary Use Permit (TUP00033) for an emergency winter shelter use at 28, 32, 34 Sixth Street and 606 Clarkson Street (the Cliff Block Residence) as outlined in this report.
- 2. That Council waive the application fee for the Temporary Use Permit in the amount of \$1,120.30, which would be reflected in a comparable decrease in projected 2024 planning permit revenues.
- 3. That Council provide staff with other direction.

Staff recommends options 1 and 2.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 – Land Use Policy and Temporary Use Permits
- Attachment 2 – Evaluation Criteria for Temporary Use Permits
- Attachment 3 – Terms and Conditions

**APPROVALS**

This report was prepared by:  
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This report was reviewed by:  
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This report was approved by:  
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Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer