



STAFF REPORT

DATE: Regular Meeting of Council - 28 Jul 2026

REPORT: DEV 26-064

FROM: Deepa Chandran, Manager of Planning and Climate Readiness

FILE: 3360-20/2026

SUBJECT: BYLAW NO. 2015: ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENTS TO REGULATE EMERGENCY SHELTER USE IN THE TOWN OF SMITHERS AND TO ADJUST PARCEL SIZES IN THE AIRPORT ZONES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council give First Reading to Bylaw No.2015 – Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 Amendment No. 26-02.
2. THAT Council give Second Reading to Bylaw No.2015 – Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 Amendment No. 26-02.

PURPOSE:

Staff are seeking First and Second readings of Bylaw No.2015 – Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 Amendment No. 26-02. This will change two elements of the zoning bylaw: 1) establishing a robust regulatory framework for regulating emergency shelter use within the Town boundaries, and 2) ensure Airport parcel sizes comply with proposed leasehold subdivision.

BACKGROUND:

Emergency shelters (or “shelters”) play a vital role in British Columbia's social support system by providing temporary accommodation, safety, and essential services to individuals experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, natural disasters, or other crises. If the traditional emergency shelters had a “bed for the night” approach, shelters established through BC Housing's Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) initiative and the Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS) follows a broader approach to addressing homelessness by combining the core shelter services with health care, counselling, and community support services, serving as a gateway to long-term housing solutions.

As homelessness continues to affect many communities across British Columbia, emergency shelters remain an essential component of the province's homelessness strategy. At the local government level, emergency shelter use is regulated through zoning bylaws, building and fire safety codes, licensing requirements, and Official Community Plan (OCP) policies. These regulations seek to balance the need for emergency housing with community planning, public safety, and the protection of shelter residents.

In the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw, emergency shelter use is currently permitted in the C-1A Downtown Commercial zone under 'rescue mission'. The Town's approval of the TWS in November 2025 revealed issues associated with the existing shelter approval approach. As the first step to strengthening the approval process, staff had presented report DEV 26-028 to Council at its March

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24, 2026 Regular Meeting, providing a comparative analysis of the various categories of shelters and the regulatory options available to local governments (see **Attachment 1**).

On July 14, 2026, based on feedback received from Council, stakeholders, and public as part of the recent shelter-related discussions, staff initiated Zoning Bylaw Amendment application no. R26-02 (see **Attachment 2**), leading to Bylaw No. 2015 (see **Attachment 3**). The proposed Bylaw intends to amend the existing shelter-related Zoning Bylaw provisions, helping to establish a regulatory framework that balances the various public interests involved. The proposed amendments do not intend to regulate either Emergency Response Centre Shelters or Extreme Weather shelters, both of which are regulated by provincial legislation.

In addition, the proposed bylaw also includes an amendment to the AP-1 Airport One Zone and AP-2 Airport Industrial Zone regulations as necessary to support efficient use of airport lands and infrastructure, contributing to sustainable airport operation.

DISCUSSION:

Shelter facilities are a critical part of the social services available to vulnerable individuals in any community. Depending on the core function, objectives, and services provided, BC Housing categorizes shelter facilities into 'Year-Round Shelters', 'Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS's)', and Extreme Weather Response (EWR) Shelters' (see **Attachment 1**). Establishing a shelter approval process at the local level that prioritizes the wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness while also including opportunities for public input and meaningful discussions supports effective planning, operation, and management of these facilities, helping to proactively minimize potential impacts and land use conflicts.

A) Current Approach: Currently, shelters are permitted on any parcel zoned C-1A, provided the operator obtains a Business License from the Town, including any required building inspections to ensure occupant safety. Shelters are also permitted in the CD-1 Comprehensive Development Zone when developed as part of supportive housing. Key provisions of the current Zoning Bylaw include:

- C-1A is the only zone that permits stand-alone emergency shelters.
- As 'rescue mission' is a permitted principal use in the C-1A zone, there is no opportunity for public feedback before a shelter is established. Council's involvement—if triggered by a Development Permit—is limited to form and character rather than the proposed use or its impacts.
- As CD-1 zone is established through a development application, the public has opportunities to provide feedback when shelter spaces are created as part of supportive housing.
- The 'rescue mission' definition is outdated and does not distinguish between different shelter types, creating ambiguity. For example, Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS's) operate under the same use as year-round shelters.
- The Zoning Bylaw does not regulate shelters operating as part of Emergency Response Centre (ERC) or Extreme Weather Response (EWR) initiatives, which are established under the Emergency and Disaster Management Act and the Assistance to Shelter Act. The Town has also adopted a Cold Weather Response Plan to support the timely establishment and safe operation of extreme weather shelters.

B. Proposed Approach and Rationale: To improve the Town's shelter approval process, staff recommend the following changes:

- Remove the term 'rescue mission' from the Zoning Bylaw, including its definition and from the list of permitted principal uses in the C-1A zone.
- Add a definition for 'year-round shelter' that recognizes different shelter types and limits the term's scope to shelters available year round for serving individuals impacted by non-disaster / non-emergency-related homelessness.
- Add new definitions for Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS's), Emergency Response Centre (ERC), and Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelter, illustrating their unique functions while also differentiating each of these uses from the accommodation service provided through year-round shelters.
- To provide further clarity, list of uses permitted in all zones will be expanded to include ERC and EWR operations established in accordance with provincial legislation.
- TWS's—which, under BC Housing funding regulations, may operate between October 1 and April 30—will not be permitted in any zone without obtaining a Temporary Use Permit (TUP).
- Continue permitting 'year-round shelters' as a principal use in the CD-1 zone. To provide greater flexibility, list 'year-round shelter' as a separate permitted principal use rather than combining it with supportive housing.
- The Town currently has only two CD-1 zoned parcels: Goodacre Place and the proposed Alfred Avenue Supportive Housing and Shelter development (see **Attachment 4**). As year-round emergency shelters would only be permitted in the CD-1 zone, any new shelter proposal would require rezoning to CD-1.
- Tighten the 'institutional use' definition to exclude 'year-round shelters' and 'temporary winter shelters' from the wide range of possible community / civic uses that it encompasses.
- No Official Community Plan amendments are required, as the proposed changes remain consistent with housing and inclusion policies and do not prohibit emergency shelters within the Town.

The proposed approach will strengthen the Town's shelter regulatory framework in the following ways:

- Aligning the shelter definitions and regulations in the Zoning Bylaw with BC Housing's shelter framework ensures transparency and predictability around shelter use in the community, benefiting the proponents, decision makers, and public alike.
- Creating opportunities for public engagement before year-round shelters or TWS's are established, increasing public confidence in the decision-making process while also contributing to better planning, operation, and management of such facilities.
- Ensuring Council makes the final decision on proposals for establishing new year-round and temporary winter shelters, after considering the various public interests involved.
- Allowing existing shelters—including the proposed HEARTH shelter on Third Avenue approved through a TUP—and ERC and EWR shelter operations to continue without restriction or interruptions.

C) Airport Zoning Amendments: The Zoning Bylaw designates airport lands into the AP-1 Airport One and AP-2 Airport Industrial zones (see **Attachment 5**), with a minimum parcel size of 558 m² and a minimum parcel width of 25 m. Provincial legislation requires leases exceeding three years to be registered as leasehold subdivisions. However, due to environmental contamination issues, the

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Town has not been able to complete the registration process with the Land Title and Survey Authority (LTSA), with the lease areas managed under individual lease agreements between the Town and its lessees. The current arrangement does not comply with provincial requirements and limits the Town's ability to collect property taxes.

Following recent meetings with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (MOECCS) related to site remediation requirements, the Town can now proceed with lease registration. However, several existing lease areas in the AP-1 zone do not meet the current minimum parcel size and width requirements, preventing them from being registered as independent leasehold lots. Similarly, a proposed leasehold lot in the AP-2 zone does not meet the minimum parcel width requirement. Therefore, staff propose eliminating the minimum parcel size and width requirements for AP-1 zoned leasehold lots and reducing the minimum parcel width in the AP-2 zone from 25m to 15m, ensuring further flexibility in leasing both AP-1 and AP-2 lands. The proposed amendments will facilitate lease registration, improve compliance with provincial legislation, increase municipal property tax revenue, and enhance the attractiveness of airport lands for future industrial development. As all the existing AP-2 zone lease areas exceed the 558 m² minimum parcel size requirement established, no amendment to the same is proposed.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS:

As a Town-initiated Zoning Bylaw amendment, all costs associated with the community engagement and adoption of the proposed bylaw will be covered by the Town. Shelter development proponents will cover costs of processing any future Zoning Bylaw amendments or TUPs triggered by such developments.

LEGISLATION / POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

Local Government Act permits local governments to establish land use and development regulations as necessary to protect the broader community interests. The proposed shelter-related amendments support Sections 7.2 Housing Diversity and Flexibility (policies 8 and 9), 7.3 Housing Affordability and Availability (policies 4 and 11), 8.3 Commercial (policy 4) of the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1935 (see **Attachment 6**). The amendments also align with the recommendations of the Smithers Housing Needs Report (2024), which establishes the need for creating more homeless shelter spaces in the community.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

Not Applicable.

CONNECTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The proposed bylaw amendments align with the following areas of the Strategic Priorities Plan 2023-26:

- **Community Livability** – Advocate for the provision of services and adequate shelter for vulnerable populations.
- **Community Livability: Housing Affordability and Diversity** - Strive for adequate, appropriate, and diverse housing for all;

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- **Organizational Excellence** - Create an effective, accountable and inclusive organization with strong governance structures.
- **Economic Prosperity – Smithers Regional Airport:** Continue Smithers' tradition of being home to many services to the resource industry, entrepreneurs, and employees, including advocating for alternate airport funding and governance.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The proposed Zoning Bylaw amendments will trigger community engagement, for which notifications will be sent in accordance with the requirements established by the Community Charter, Development Procedures Bylaw, and the Public Notice Bylaw.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Not Applicable.

ALTERNATIVES / OPTIONS:

1. Amend the proposed sections based on Council discussion.
2. Direct staff to bring additional information to a future meeting.
3. Another option as determined through Council discussion and motion.

ATTACHMENTS:

[DEV 26-064 Attach.1 Staff Report DEV 26-028](#)

[DEV 26-064 Attach.2 Application R26-02](#)

[DEV 26-064 Attach.3 Draft Bylaw No. 2015](#)

[DEV 26-064 Attach.4 Comprehensive Development Zone 1 Parcels](#)

[DEV 26-064 Attach.5 AP-1 and AP-2 Parcels](#)

[DEV 26-064 Attach.6 Relevant Sections OCP Bylaw No. 1935](#)



STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 13, 2026 **REPORT:** DEV 26-028
FROM: Deepa Chandran **FILE:** 6410-01
Manager of Planning & Climate Readiness
SUBJECT: Options for Regulating 'Rescue Mission' Use in Smithers

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive staff Report DEV 26-028 *Options for Regulating 'Rescue Mission' Use in Smithers* for information.

BACKGROUND:

Shelter services provide a critical bridge between immediate survival and long-term stability for unhoused individuals. By offering protection from environmental risks and violence, these spaces serve as a foundation for accessing resources to transition into permanent housing. BC Housing acts as the primary provincial agency for addressing homelessness in British Columbia by funding and coordinating a "Housing First" approach, providing a range of shelter services in collaboration with community organizations and/or local governments. See **Attachment 1** for the various types of shelter services provided by BC Housing and their key features.

Currently, the provision of shelters operation in Smithers is permitted in the C-1A Downtown Commercial zone under 'rescue mission', and in the CD-1 Comprehensive Development Zone 1, under 'emergency shelter' use. The current regulations will enable service providers to operate shelters from any parcel in the C-1A zone, provided that the building complies with the applicable Building Code requirements and the operator obtains a Business License from the Town.

At present, the Bulkley Valley Harm Reduction Society (BVHRS) operates a Temporary Winter Shelter (TWS) in Smithers, providing a 24/7 safe space for unhoused individuals during winter months. Located in the former Fabrications building at 3892 - 3rd Avenue (see **Attachment 2**), the shelter started its operation in early November 2025 and will be open until March 31, 2026, with funding from BC Housing.

Agenda Date:	March 24, 2026
Meeting Type:	Regular Meeting of Council
Agenda Placement:	Staff "B"

Recognizing potential land use conflicts that may result from permitting unrestricted shelter operation from the C-1A zone, at the December 9th, 2025 Regular Meeting, Council made the following motion:

Wray/Buikema

THAT Council direct staff to report to Council options to remove 'Rescue Mission' from the list of permitted principal uses in the C-1A Downtown Commercial Zone, requiring Council approval process prior to establishing the use in the future.

CARRIED.

As directed by Council, this report intends to outline the potential options that Council may consider in regulating shelter uses in Smithers in the future, while also providing pros and cons of each approach. Based on the analysis of shelter regulations from communities across the province, staff recommend a site-specific Zoning approval process for establishing emergency shelters (long-term) while adopting a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) approach for establishing temporary winter shelters.

DISCUSSION:

While Official Community Plans (OCPs) outline high-level housing policies including those on temporary housing and shelters, the specific regulations governing their establishment and operation are governed by Zoning Bylaws. These regulations focus on integrating facilities into the community while mitigating potential impacts. Terminology used for shelter regulations in the Zoning Bylaws vary across the province, as municipalities often categorize shelters based on their specific community need, services available, and objectives. **Attachments 3 and 4** of this report provide a summary of the shelter regulations from various communities cross the province and the common trends / practices observed.

This section aims to analyze the Town's existing zoning regulations on shelter use and to outline options for their modification as necessary to minimize land use conflicts, support their effective integration into the community while supporting those in need.

A) History of Shelter Regulations in Smithers:

The Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw uses the term 'Rescue Mission' as an equivalent of shelter services. Provided below is a timeline of how the Town regulated 'rescue mission' use in its Zoning bylaw:

- 1999 (C-1A Zone): The term "Rescue Mission" was introduced at the request of the Salvation Army to permit temporary housing and meal services.
- The 9-bed Broadway Shelter operated 24/7 year-round from 2009-2019 (until the opening of Goodacre Place)
- 2017 (CD-1 Zone): 'Rescue mission' was added as a principal use in the CD-1 zone created to facilitate Goodacre Supportive Housing.

- 2022 Zoning Bylaw Update: For the CD-1 zone, "Rescue Mission" was updated to "Emergency and Temporary Shelter" to align with the current planning standards. Nonetheless, 'rescue mission' unintentionally continued to be a permitted principal use in the C-1A zone.

The current approach permits shelter use on any parcels in the C-1A zone without any restriction, potentially creating land use conflicts. Any shelter operations proposed outside the C-1A zone will require the operator to complete a Zoning bylaw amendment or obtain a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) approval prior to its operation. The temporary winter shelter services that BC Housing has had operated in Smithers in the past -- including from the mobile trailer placed on a portion of the Veterans Peace Park, through a 5-month TUP -- are examples. Despite the institutional character of shelter operations, 'rescue mission' or 'emergency shelter' is not specifically listed as a permitted use in the public use zones.

B) Options for regulating Shelters:

The below planning tools provide flexibility for local governments to permit and regulate shelter uses -- both shelters intended to operate long-term and temporary winter / extreme weather shelters -- by considering factors such as duration of operation, community impact, and consistency with broader planning objectives.

- Site-specific (existing zone): This approach restricts shelters to specific parcels within an existing zone. It requires Council approval and a public hearing, allowing residents to provide feedback. While the process takes approximately 2.5 months, it is a popular method for addressing context-specific concerns.
- Site Specific (new zone) / Comprehensive Development Zone: CD zones offer custom regulations for unique developments that don't fit standard categories. While ideal for integrated, mixed-use projects (e.g., CD-1 zone for Goodacre Place and the proposed Alfred Avenue Supportive Housing & Shelter), this approach is generally not recommended for stand-alone emergency shelters.
- Zone-specific use: This permits shelters anywhere within a specific zone. While this assumes shelters are compatible with surrounding uses, it removes Council and public oversight from the decision-making process before a shelter opens. This is the Town's current approach to permitting shelter use in the C-1A zone.
- Temporary Use Permit (TUP): TUPs are used when a shelter is not permitted by existing zoning and there is no intent for permanent placement. While the time-limited nature makes this unsuitable for year-round facilities, it is an appropriate option for winter-only shelters, provided the application is initiated well in advance.
- Unspecified but approved as institutional use: The approach is followed by municipalities that don't identify shelters as a separate land use rather treat it as part of the broader "institutional uses". Even if the Town removes 'rescue mission' from the list of C-1A principal uses, technically, a shelter may still be permitted in the same zone under 'institutional use' owing to its largely institutional character. This approach will also permit unrestricted shelter operations in numerous other zones as well such as C-1, C-2, M-1, and M-2, potentially creating land use conflicts.

C) Removing 'Rescue Mission' – Next Steps:

To balance the need for essential services with community integration and Council oversight, the Town may consider the following regulatory updates:

- Standardize Language: Replace the out-dated term "rescue mission" with "emergency shelter"
- C-1A Zone Update: Remove 'rescue mission' from the list of permitted principal uses in the C-1A zone.
- Refine Definitions: Establish a clear definition for "emergency shelter" that distinguishes between year-round operations and temporary/extreme weather shelters.
- Clarify Institutional Use: Modify the "institutional use" definition to specifically exclude emergency or temporary shelters, ensuring tighter regulatory control.
- Apply Site-Specific Zoning: Use a site-specific amendment approach for stand-alone, long-term shelters to allow for context-specific review, including for permitting shelter operations from specific parcel(s) in C-1A or public zones.
- Utilize CD Zones: Use Comprehensive Development (CD) zoning when shelters are proposed as part of larger social housing projects. Depending on the complexity and nature of the project projects, the Town may create a new CD zone or rezone a subject parcel to CD-1 zone.
- Use Temporary Use Permits (TUPs): Apply the TUP process for temporary winter shelters to provide flexibility for short-term operations without requiring permanent rezoning.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposed changes will trigger development approval requirements prior to establishing new shelters. The application processing fee will cover the costs required as part of the Public Hearing and Council approval process.

LEGISLATION / POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

Various sections of the Local Government Act permit local governments to establish regulations pertaining to land uses and developments to protect the broader community interests. The options outlined in this report for Council consideration are tools that are available at local governments' disposal to uphold the broader public interest.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

Not Applicable.

CONNECTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The proposal aligns with the following areas of the Strategic Priorities Plan 2023-26:

- **Community Livability** – Advocate for the provision of services and adequate shelter for vulnerable populations..
- **Organizational Excellence** - Create an effective, accountable and inclusive organization with strong governance structures.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Any amendments to the Zoning Bylaw will trigger community engagement, for which notifications will be sent in accordance with the requirements established by the Community Charter, Development Procedures Bylaw, and the Public Notice Bylaw.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Not Applicable.

ALTERNATIVES / OPTIONS:

1. Direct staff to proceed with a Zoning Bylaw amendment as per Council motion.
2. Direct staff to bring additional information to a future meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. DEV 26-028 Attach. 1 BC Housing – Types of Shelters
2. DEV 26-028 Attach. 2 Location of Existing TWS
3. DEV 26-028 Attach. 3 Zoning Regulations on Shelter Use
4. DEV 26-028 Attach. 4 Trends / Patterns in Shelter Regulations in B.C. Zoning Bylaws

Respectfully submitted:



Deepa Chandran
Manager of Planning & Climate Readiness

Reviewed by:



Mark Allen
Director of Development Services

Approved for Submission:

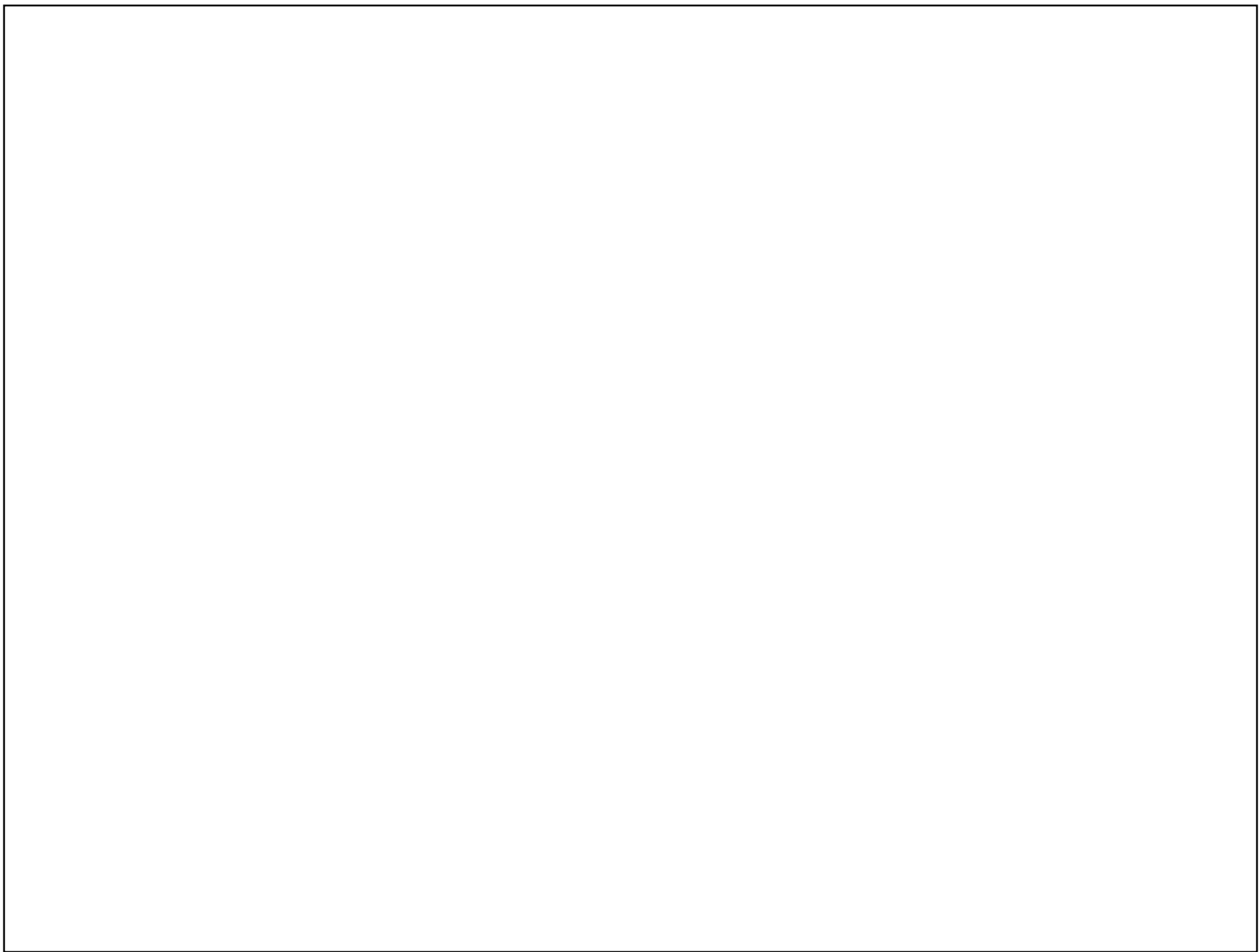


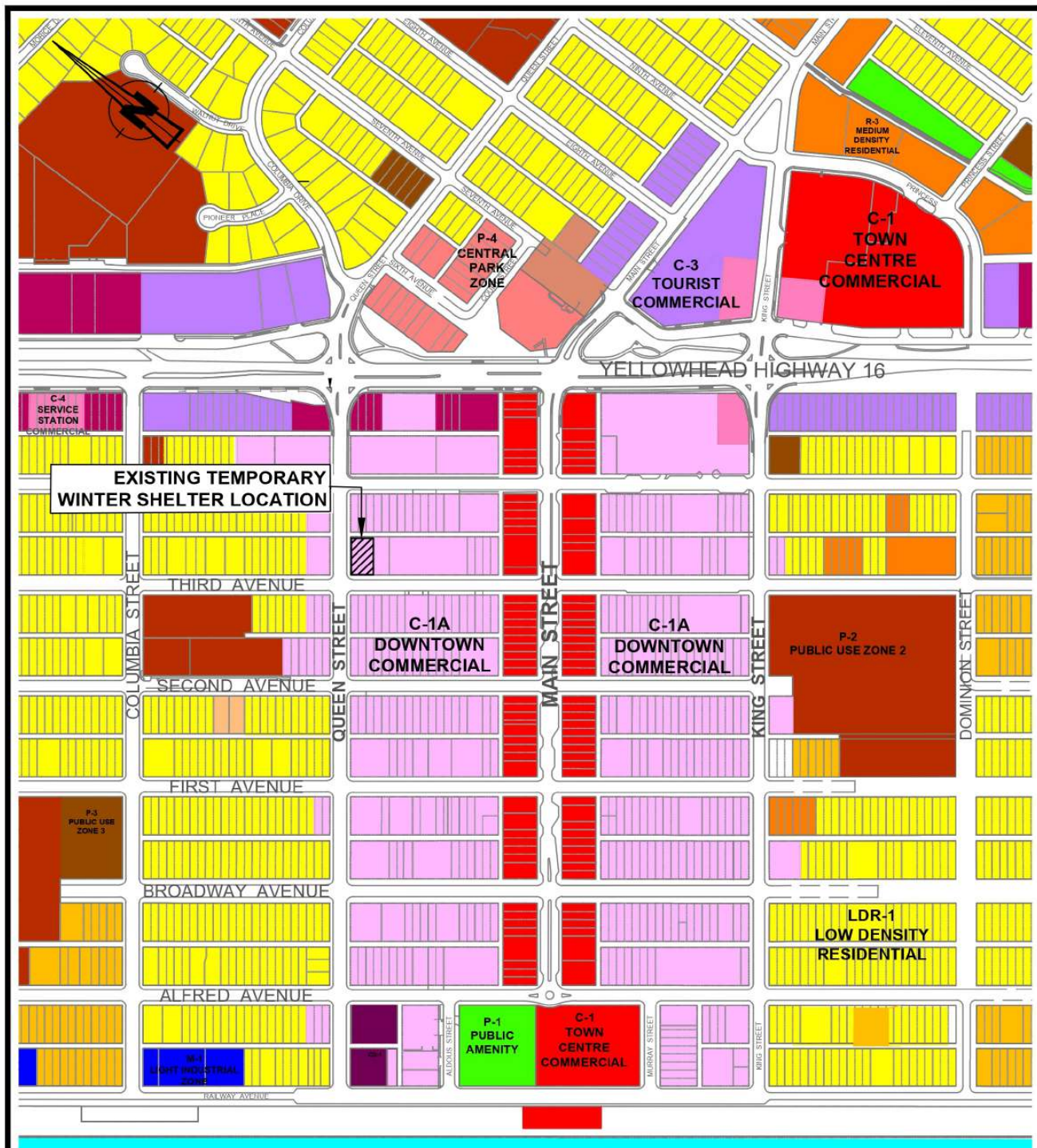
Michael Dewar
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment.1 BC Housing – Types of Shelters

	Year-Round Shelter	Temporary Winter Shelter (TWS)	Extreme Weather Response Shelter (EWR)
Availability	• Year-round • Open every night, 24/7	• Open every night (October 1 - April 30) • Many operate 24/7 • Can increase capacity during colder months	• Operational October 15 – April 15 • Only open during evenings of extreme weather alerts issued • Community-led
On-site Services	• Sleeping beds, including mattresses and/or pods • Hygiene services, meals, laundry access	• Sleeping mats, cots or beds • Hygiene services, meals, and may have laundry access	• Sleeping mats and/or cots when beds are unavailable • Food, snacks, warm drinks, washroom access • Other services dependent on staffing capacity and the space
Other Options	• Referrals to other services • Access to a case worker, health, social and housing services	• Referrals to other services • May not have access to social services available at year-round shelters	• Referrals to other services

Source: www.bchousing.org/





TITLE:

TEMPORARY WINTER SHELTER ZONING MAP

SCALE: 1:5000

DRAWN BY: AS

DATE: 2026/03/06

APPROVED BY: MFA

DATE: 2026/03/06

DRAWING PATH:

N:\6400-6999 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT\6410
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT -
GENERAL\6410\01 - GENERAL\7026\Reserve Mission

Attachment. 3 Zoning Regulations on Shelter Use

Municipality	Regulation/Definition	Defenitions/Conditions/Details
Smithers	Rescue Mission	Means a building (or portion thereof) that is used or intended to be used to provide to homeless individuals temporary accommodations, shelter, meals, devotional activities or any combination thereof. Ancillary commercial retail uses may also be permitted provided they are run by a non-profit agency. For the purposes of this section, a 'homeless individual' includes an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence. Permitted in C-1A without any site-specific or operation-related restrictions. Also permitted in CD-1 zone as part of supportive housing development.
	Institutional use	Land and buildings that provide for civic and other public functions and amenities, including but not limited to, schools, colleges, courts of law, community centres, hospitals, libraries, and museums. Technically, given the highly flexible and lenient definition of 'institutional use', a proponent may claim their right to operate shelters from any zone that currently permit 'institutional use'.
Burnaby	Emergency Shelters	A building providing temporary accommodation and protection from weather or danger, overnight or for a greater duration. Must be located entirely within a building, permitted in all public and institutional zones.
Squamish	Emergency Shelter	A use staffed and supervised by a public authority or non-profit agency for the purpose of providing temporary sleeping accommodation for people in need of emergency shelter on a short-term basis (to a maximum of 30 days). Emergency Shelter use includes drop-in and meal services as well as accessory administration and office space for use by program staff.

		Permitted in CD zones as part of larger social housing developments, with several conditions regarding operation.
Kamloops	Emergency Shelter	An establishment providing temporary communal accommodation for individuals who are temporarily or permanently homeless, lack adequate accommodation, or are in a crisis/emergency situation. Use permitted on two parcels, zoned multi-family residential and commercial.
Vernon	Temporary Shelter Services	The provision of communal, transient accommodation sponsored or supervised by a public authority or non-profit agency intended to provide basic lodgings for persons requiring immediate shelter and assistance for a short period of time. This use includes an ancillary Supportive Housing Use if most of the gross floor area is used for Temporary Shelter Services. Typical examples include hostels and over-night shelters. Several conditions on operation, amenities, and fencing for such facilities. Use permitted in community service zone.
Kelowna	Temporary Shelter Services	Provision of communal, transient accommodation sponsored or supervised by a public authority or non-profit agency for persons needing immediate shelter and assistance for a short period. Includes ancillary supportive housing if it's the majority use. Typical uses include hostels and overnight shelters. Use permitted in multiple commercial and public zones and on a designated site in rural residential zone.
Nanaimo	Emergency Shelter	Use of a building or portion of a building to provide temporary accommodation free of charge to meet immediate basic needs for shelter and may include emergency and support services. Use permitted in one downtown zone; permitted in all zones, when proposed for a temporary period in response to extreme weather alerts issued in accordance with the Assistance to Shelter Act.

Hope	Shelter	Immediate, short-stay housing for people at risk, up to a maximum of 15 beds. Permitted in a CD zone, as part of a larger supportive housing development.
Penticton	Emergency Shelter	A boarding home operated by non-profit society or government agency which provides temporary emergency accommodation, meals and support services for individuals who are in a housing crisis. Permitted on a site-specific basis from two commercial and 1 residential zones.
Surrey	Temporary Homeless Shelter Temporary Winter Shelter	A building used to provide temporary sleeping accommodation at no cost for persons in need. No permitted in any specific zone (indicating that a TUP approval is needed). A building used to provide temporary sleeping accommodation at no cost for persons in need during the months of October through April, where the building and/or operator are funded or regulated by provincial or federal agencies and operated by a provincial or federal agency or non-profit service provider. Permitted in all zones that allow community Service uses. May operate from any zone that allows community service uses provided that the building complies with the residential occupancy and Building Code standards.
Prince George	Temporary Shelter Services	The provision of temporary accommodation for individuals who are homeless, lack fixed, regular, or adequate accommodation, or may be in a crisis or emergency situation. Permitted in multiple commercial and one institutional zone, without restricting operations to specific parcels.
Port Coquitlam	Emergency Shelter	Any facility providing temporary sleeping accommodation for persons

	Shelter, temporary – extreme weather response	who are otherwise homeless or are in need of emergency or temporary sleeping accommodation. No permitted in any specific zone (indicating that a TUP approval is needed). A facility offering temporary overnight accommodation to a maximum of 20 people, during periods of extreme weather between the months of November and March. Use permitted on a specific site / CD zone as part of a larger social service development.
Langley	Temporary Homeless Shelter Care Facility	Means a building, or part thereof, used to provide temporary emergency or other sleeping accommodation at no cost for persons in need. Use permitted on a specific site / CD zone as part of a larger social service development.
Kitimat	Extreme Weather Refuge	A temporary housing facility which provides free or low-cost overnight accommodation during extreme weather conditions for a defined period (November 1 to March 31). Use permitted on a designated parcel in downtown.
Quesnel	Emergency Shelter	The use of a building for the purpose of a temporary residence providing emergency and support services. Permitted on specific parcels in downtown. Operates from designated location(s) in the downtown commercial zone.

Source: Zoning Bylaw documents available online

Attachment: 4 Trends / Patterns in Shelter Regulations in B.C Zoning Bylaws

- The words such as 'emergency shelter', 'temporary shelter', 'temporary emergency shelter', and "temporary homeless shelter" are commonly used to refer to facilities that provide temporary accommodation for individuals in need, serving a social function.
- The term "emergency shelter" implies a temporary nature, but where "temporary emergency shelter" is used, it may include specific operational conditions or durations. Some municipalities specifically use terminologies such as 'temporary winter shelter' or 'extreme weather response shelter' to denote the temporary provision of such services.
- "Rescue mission" is not a standard term used to denote shelter uses in B.C. Smithers is the only community that uses this terminology, indicating its origin from the zoning amendment request received from Salvation Army.
- Despite the differences in the specific terminology, definitions, and conditions, these regulations generally address the provision of temporary accommodation for individuals in need, often with an emphasis on non-profit operation and integration with social services.
- Several municipalities follow a site-specific approach to permitting shelter use, where shelter operations are permitted only on specific parcels within a zone. (e.g., City of Quesnel), while several other communities like the City of Courtney and Town of Smithers permit shelter use as part of larger social housing developments by establishing Comprehensive Development Zones.
- There is no single category of broader zoning designation that is recognized as the best fit for accommodating shelter uses. The rationale for permitting different types of shelter uses within broader zoning categories varies from one community to another depending on the planning policies and the nature of the shelter operations.
- Permitting emergency shelters in specific commercial zones, including downtown, is common in many communities (e.g., Town of Smithers, City of Quesnel, City of Prince George). Majority of these communities, if not all, designate specific sites for shelter operation, limiting their impacts on the community and adjacent land uses.
- As the function of an emergency shelter often aligns with the purpose of institutional zones, they are frequently permitted in zones that serve institutional, public, or community support functions (e.g., City of Langley and City of Prince George).
- Penticton and Kamloops are two of the few communities that permit site-specific shelter use from selected residential zones. In addition, both these communities permit site-specific shelter use from commercial zone(s) as well.
- A few Zoning Bylaws do not identify emergency shelters as separate land use, rather they consider such operations as part of the broad institutional use even if their specific zoning bylaws don't use the exact phrase. However, their Official Community Plans (OCP) include policy statements and goals that confirm the need and support for the

establishment of emergency shelter operations in various ways (e.g., City of Terrace, Cambell River).

- Mostly, small communities do not differentiate between the different levels of shelter operations and/or specify separate regulations for each category but regulate them under a single 'emergency shelter' or 'temporary shelter' category.
- Some communities differentiate shelter services depending on the actual function, establishing different conditions for each category. (e.g., City of Port Coquitlam; District of Kitimat).
- Communities like Nanaimo permit temporary extreme weather shelters in all zones when extreme weather alerts are issued in accordance with the Assistance to Shelter Act.



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Telephone (250) 847-1600 Fax (250) 847-1601
E-mail: devserv@smithers.ca www.smithers.ca

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL APPLICATION

APPLICATION TYPE: Enter all applications under miscellaneous (MS) category development (DEV)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Joint Official Community Plan & Zoning Amendment (\$2,060) DEV001 | ☐ Board of Variance (\$775) DEV003 |
| ☐ Official Community Plan Amendment (\$1,545) DEV001 | ☐ Development Variance Permit (\$775) DEV003 |
| ☒ Zoning Bylaw Amendment (\$1,545) DEV001 | ☐ Development Variance Permit (minor)* (\$310) DEV003 |
| ☐ Development Permit with minor variance* (\$825) DEV003 | ☐ Development Permit with no variance (\$775) DEV003 |
| ☐ Development Permit with variance (\$1,135) DEV003 | ☐ Development Permit Amendment (\$620) DEV003 |
| ☐ Temporary Use Permit (\$1,030) DEV003 | ☐ Temporary Use Permit Extension (\$1,030) DEV003 |

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT

Name(s): Town of Smithers
Mailing address: Box 879
Phone: 250-847-1600
Fax/Email: mallen@smithers.ca

REGISTERED OWNER(S)

Name(s): Town of Smithers
Mailing address: Box 879
Phone: 250-847-1600
Fax/Email: mallen@smithers.ca

SUBJECT PROPERTY INFORMATION

Civic address: 1027 Aldous Street
Legal description: Applicable to all properties within the Town of Smithers
Description of the present use of the property: Applicable to all properties within the Town boundaries

Existing OCP designation: <u>Not applicable</u>	Existing zoning designation: <u>Not applicable</u>
Proposed OCP designation: <u>Not applicable</u>	Proposed zoning designation: <u>Not applicable</u>

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION (supplemental letter of intent/rationale is encouraged):

To amend the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 to establish a land use framework for permitting year-round shelter use within the Town boundaries. The proposed amendments aim to balance the different public interests associated with the various types of temporary shelter uses and set a path forward that maximize community wellbeing.

Amend AP-1 and AP-2 minimum parcel size from 558 sq m to 200 sq m and minimum parcel width from 25m to 12 m to support additional flexibility and enable lease registration with LTSA.

* Minor variance means a request to vary a provision of a Town bylaw as permitted under sections 7.2 - 7.5 of the Town of Smithers Development Procedures Bylaw No. 1908.

ATTACHMENT CHECKLIST

A) PLEASE ATTACH THE FOLLOWING FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

- ☒ NA Letter of authorization if the applicant is other than the registered owner(s).
- ☒ NA Site Disclosure Statement in accordance with the *Environmental Management Act* and *Contaminated Sites Regulation*.
- ☒ NA Site plan (including 1 set of reduced 8.5x11 plans) showing:
- ☐ Location of existing and proposed buildings and structures, lot dimensions & setbacks.
 - ☐ Parking areas, loading space, access/egress, garbage areas & landscaping.
 - ☐ North arrow & scale.
 - ☐ Measurements in metric (imperial measurements may also be included).
- Supplemental letter of intent & rationale is strongly encouraged but not required.
- ☐ Other information as necessary to assess the development proposal.
- ☐

B) OCP &/OR ZONING AMENDMENT APPLICATIONS ONLY:

- ☒ NA Acknowledge sign notification posting requirements as specified by the Town of Smithers.

C) ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS ONLY:

- ☐ Plans showing:
- ☐ Toe of slope and top of bank;
 - ☐ Location of watercourses and any watercourse setback areas that are located on or that abut the site;
 - ☐ Existing and proposed grades, including details on proposed retaining walls;
 - ☐ Floodplain areas;
 - ☐ Areas to be cleared, areas of cut and fill and proposed sequencing/timing.

D) FORM & CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS ONLY:

- ☐ Elevation drawings illustrating all sides of the building(s) & including proposed signage details.
- ☐ Exterior samples and materials.

E) TEMPORARY USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS ONLY:

- ☐ Rationale & long-term plans outlining when & how temporary use will be ended, buildings/area to be used, hours of use & site rehabilitation.
- ☐ Permit length requested (max. 3 years): _____

AUTHORIZATION

As the applicant or approved agent, I hereby make application in accordance with the above-stated information and declare that the statements are true and correct.

I understand that this application form is a public document and that any and all information contained in it, including personal information as defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* of BC, is open for inspection by the public and may be reproduced and distributed to the public as part of a report(s) to Council or for purposes of a public hearing.

I acknowledge that fees as per the Town of Smithers Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 1941 do not imply or guarantee application approval.

Applicant Signature: Mark All

Date: July 14, 2020

Your personal information is maintained in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you have any questions regarding the use of your personal information, please call the Director of Corporate Services for the Town of Smithers at 250-847-1600.

Updated February 13, 2026



BYLAW NO. 2015

**TOWN OF SMITHERS ZONING BYLAW NO. 1987
AMENDMENT NO. 26-02**

WHEREAS the Council may, under the authority of Section 479 of the *Local Government Act*, create different zones and regulate uses, density, and siting within each zone;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Town of Smithers, in open meeting assembled, hereby enacts as follows:

1. CITATION:

- 1.1 This bylaw may be cited as "Bylaw No. 2015 – Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 Amendment No. 26-02" and takes effect as of the date of adoption.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION:

- 2.1 If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase in this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of any Court of competent jurisdiction, the decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of the bylaw.

3. TEXT AMENDMENTS:

- 3.1 Section 1.2 Definitions is amended by **deleting** the following:
*"**rescue mission**" means a building (or portion thereof) that is used or intended to be used to provide to homeless individuals temporary accommodations, shelter, meals, devotional activities or any combination thereof. Ancillary commercial retail uses may also be permitted provided they are run by a non-profit agency. For the purposes of this section, a 'homeless individual' includes an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence;*
- 3.2 Section 1.2 Definitions of the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 is amended by **adding** the bolded words to the 'institutional use' definition:

TOWN OF SMITHERS

BYLAW NO. 2015

Page 2

“institutional Use” means use of land and buildings for providing civic and other public functions and amenities, including but not limited to, government offices, schools, colleges, courts of law, community centres, hospitals, libraries, and museums, but excluding both year-round and temporary winter shelters.

- 3.3 Section 1.2 Definitions of the Town of Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987 is amended by **adding** the following definitions:

“emergency response centre” or “emergency operations centre” means a central command, control, and strategic management facility used to coordinate disaster response, manage resource allocation, and analyze information during high-impact events -- including but not limited to natural disasters, public health emergencies, and human-caused incidents -- operating as per the Emergency and Disaster Management Act.

“extreme weather response shelter” means temporary accommodation free of charge to persons to meet their immediate basic shelter needs for a period during which an extreme weather alert has been issued in accordance with the Assistance to Shelter Act.

“temporary winter shelter” means a seasonal, community-based facility designed to protect people experiencing homelessness from the harsh elements during the colder months, as early as from October 1st to April 30th, providing access to a warm place to sleep, meals, basic nutrition and hygiene, and essential supports.

“year-round shelter” means a facility or establishment that is open year-round and provides non-disaster / non-emergency related temporary accommodation -- including meals and support services -- for individuals without stable, permanent, or appropriate housing, typically operated by non-profit societies or government agencies.

- 3.4 Section 1.5.7 is amended by **adding** the following to the list of uses permitted in all zones.

“(g) Extreme Weather Response Shelters;

(h) Emergency Response Centres and related services”

- 3.5 Section 1.5 Basic Provisions is amended by **adding** the following:

1.5.8 Temporary Winter Shelters shall only be permitted through a Temporary Use Permit.

TOWN OF SMITHERS

BYLAW NO. 2015

Page 3

- 3.6 Section 5.2.1 Permitted Principal Uses, C-1A Downtown Commercial Zone is amended by **deleting** the following:
“(v) rescue mission”
- 3.7 Section 9.1.1 Permitted Principal Uses, CD-1 Comprehensive Development Zone 1 is amended as follows:
Delete *“(a) supportive housing including complex care units and emergency shelter”*
Add *“(a) supportive housing, which may include complex care units
(b) year-round shelter”*
- 3.8 Section 9.1 CD-1 Comprehensive Development Zone 1 is amended by **adding** the following:
“Additional regulations
9.1.3 Despite the temporary nature of the accommodation provided, if needed, a year-round shelter may allow an individual to stay in the facility for more than 30 days at a time.”
- 3.9 Table 8.1 AP-1 Airport One Zone is amended by **modifying** the parcel area to *“No minimum”* and the parcel width to *“No minimum”*.
- 3.10 Table 8.2 AP-2 Airport Industrial Zone is amended by **modifying** the parcel width to *“15 metres minimum”*.

TOWN OF SMITHERS

BYLAW NO. 2015

Page 4

READ A FIRST TIME THIS	DAY OF	2026.
READ A SECOND TIME THIS	DAY OF	2026.
PUBLIC HEARING HELD THIS	DAY OF	2026.
READ A THIRD TIME THIS	DAY OF	2026.
RECEIVED APPROVAL OF THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT ON THIS	DAY OF	2026.
ADOPTED THIS	DAY OF	2026.

The Corporate Seal of the Town of Smithers
was hereto affixed in the presence of:

Gladys Atrill
Mayor

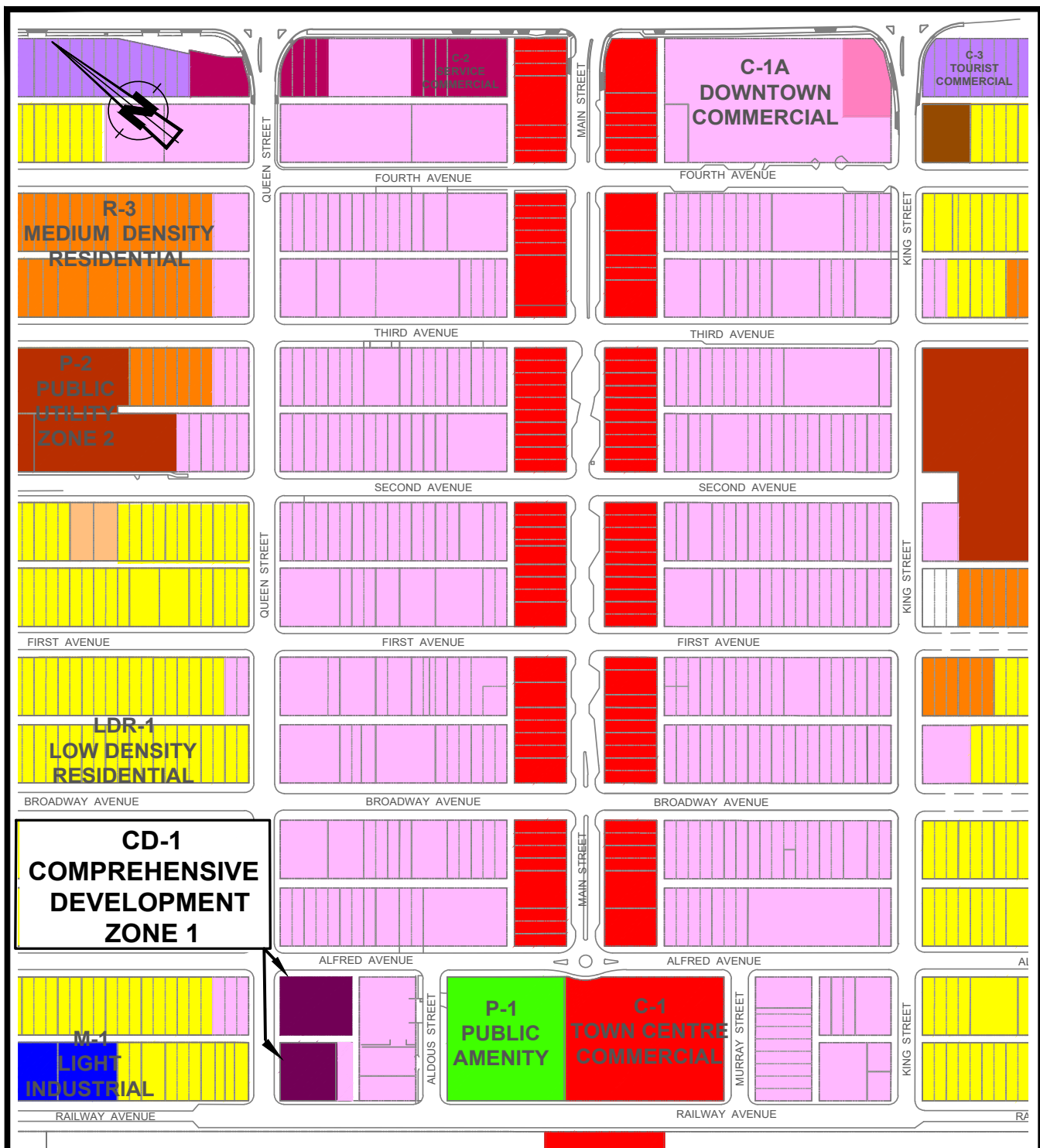
Michael Dewar
Chief Administrative Officer

**CERTIFIED A TRUE AND CORRECT
COPY** of "Bylaw No. 2015 – Town of
Smithers Zoning Bylaw No. 1987
Amendment No. 26-02".

David Schroeter
Corporate Officer

DC

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amendment 26-02-draft(modified).docx



ZONING MAP:

**CD-1 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT
ZONE 1 PARCELS**

SCALE: 1:3250

DRAWN BY: AS

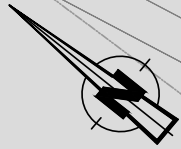
DATE: 2026/07/18

APPROVED BY: MFA

DATE: 2026/07/18

DRAWING PATH:

N:\3000-3699 LAND ADMINISTRATION\3360
ZONING AND REZONING\3360-20 - APPLICATIONS
BY YEAR\2026\R26-02-Rescue



**AP-1
AIRPORT ONE
ZONE**

**A-1
AGRICULTURAL**

HIGHWAY 16

**AP-2
AIRPORT INDUSTRIAL**

**P-1
PUBLIC
AMENITY**

**P-2
PUBLIC USE
ZONE 2**

**R-6
RURAL
RESIDENTIAL**

LAUGHLIN



AIRPORT AP-1 and AP-2 PARCELS

SCALE: 1:7500

DRAWN BY: AS

DATE: 2026/07/18

APPROVED BY: MFA

DATE: 2026/07/18

DRAWING PATH:

N:\3000-3699 LAND ADMINISTRATION\3360
ZONING AND REZONING\3360-20 - APPLICATIONS
BY YEAR\2026\R26-02-Rescue

7.2. Housing Diversity and Flexibility

Objective:

- To increase the mix of housing types, tenures, and densities to meet the diverse community housing needs of existing and future residents.

Policies:

1. Reference the Smithers Housing Needs Report (updated every 5 years) for the most current information regarding local housing need.
2. Support residential intensification on areas designated as low density residential by permitting greater flexibility for constructing rental suites & creative residential intensification. This includes supporting the construction of both a carriage house and secondary suite on one lot in a range of housing types, provided off-street parking is available (*Bylaw 1973*).
3. Encourage medium and high-density residential development that allow residents to downsize their home and remain in the community as they age, including various forms of supportive housing and multi-level care facilities.
4. Support proposals for a wide range of supportive housing, including the co-location for on-site supports.
5. Use incentives for rental housing development, such as density bonussing, reducing required parking, tax incentives and participating in external incentive programs.
6. Encourage innovative proposals for residential developments, such as small lot subdivisions and micro suites.
7. Housing types, sizes, and tenures should be mixed wherever possible to encourage a social mix within individual neighbourhoods.
8. Support the development of residential rental suites as an auxiliary use in commercial, civic use, and light/medium industrial designations.
9. Appropriate temporary residential uses are supported on lands within the Town of Smithers.
10. Support non-profits, educational institutions, and senior levels of government to create new housing developments in Smithers, including senior/elder housing, Indigenous housing, housing for those experiencing homeless or at risk, and supportive housing. Encourage new housing to be in walking distance to downtown, amenities and transit.
11. Encourage residential design to meet Universal Design standards and best practices.
12. Support Indigenous led approaches to Indigenous housing.



7.3. Housing Affordability and Availability

Objective:

- To encourage a range of safe and affordable housing options which meet the needs of individuals and families of varying income levels, age groups, and needs.

Policies:

1. Give priority to development proposals for small and compact forms of housing such as small-lot single detached homes, town homes, and low-rise apartments.
2. Monitor participation in the Town of Smithers Rental Housing Incentive Program, and update, as required.
3. Encourage alternative housing tenures within residential areas such as co-housing, cooperative housing, and fee-simple town homes, especially where these meet an affordable housing need.
4. Integrate seniors and supported housing into the community where there is good access to public transit and basic support services.
5. Support the creation of new, and the retention of existing, rental housing and discourage the conversion of rental housing to strata ownership.
6. Support the location of supportive or transitional housing within the Town (the provisions of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* govern many aspects of these homes).
7. Encourage the retention and creation of mobile home parks, in appropriate locations, as a viable and important source of affordable home ownership in Smithers.
8. The Town will continue its role in developing Town land by inviting private developers to bid on developing the land. Lot prices will, generally at a minimum, recover the actual costs of development, but will also be used to shape and focus housing in particular areas of Town.
9. Consider density bonusing provisions for residential projects that help achieve specific housing goals such as the creation of additional senior/elder housing, affordable rental housing, and supportive housing.
10. Encourage large-scale hotel and resort developments to ensure there is an affordable supply of rental housing for employees, and where required, include the provision to provide employee housing.

- 
11. Encourage the development of partnerships among community groups, non-profit organizations, the business community, professionals, and all levels of government to provide affordable and available housing.
 12. Support partnerships with the local non-profit organizations and housing providers to leverage Town-owned land for attracting higher density residential development consistent with the community vision and goals and the current Smithers Housing Needs Report.

7.4. Housing Quality

Objective:

- To encourage high quality residential design that creates a positive interface with the public realm and that reinforces the unique history and character of Smithers.

Policies:

1. All proposals for mixed-use and multi-unit development must demonstrate how they address the Development Permit Area guidelines.
2. Multi-unit developments are encouraged to provide quality landscaping and opportunities for fruit and vegetable gardening.
3. Encourage innovative and site-sensitive housing and subdivision designs that reduce storm water run-off, demonstrate energy efficiency in building performance, and demonstrate a sensitive response to the site and its context.
4. Require thoughtful and functional design of the amenity space provided in multi-unit developments.



8.3. Commercial

Objectives:

- To increase commercial density and vibrancy in the downtown core to reinforce the downtown as the heart of the community.
- To encourage commercial development and redevelopment along the Highway 16 corridor.

Policies:

1. Continue to invest in downtown Smithers through ongoing improvements to the streetscape, public spaces, and public amenities. Encourage community-led programming of the downtown and public spaces.
2. Participate in incentive programs to encourage improvements to rear facades (from lane) of all downtown buildings, in particular those buildings along Main Street.
3. High density, mixed commercial land uses are encouraged in the downtown area. Support high density residential as a primary use in the downtown avenues (excluding Main Street).
4. Appropriate Temporary Commercial Uses are supported on lands designated commercial.
5. Support local small scale gaming ventures operated by non-profit organizations and service clubs. Large scale destination casinos or video lottery terminals are not supported.
6. Create simple and clear mobile vendor busking regulations at no cost to the operator to encourage the animation of streets in the downtown core. Ensure the Noise Bylaw is consistent with regulations to promote increased activity in the downtown.
7. Incentivize development and redevelopment along with Highway 16 commercial corridor through the creation of a Highway 16 Revitalization Tax Incentives.

8.4. Industrial

Objective:

- To encourage appropriate airport and industrial development in Smithers.
- Secure adequate industrial lands to ensure capacity for industrial uses and future capacity for any tourism and/or resource-based ventures.