



King County

Men's Winter Shelter: Analysis of Alternative Locations

Response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 86, Provisos A, B, and C

Department of Community and Human Services

June 2015

SECTION 1: Winter Shelter Proviso

This report fulfills a King County Council proviso request included in Ordinance 17941. Specifically, this report provides the responses to provisos A, B, and C of Section 86, due June 30, 2015. Provisos A, B, and C of the ordinance are stated below:

A. A summary of usage of the King County men's winter shelter for winter 2014-2015, with the average number of those accommodated and turned away by week;

B. An analysis of potential alternative locations for a men's winter shelter that could accommodate between fifty and one hundred single adult men who are experiencing homelessness. The analysis should compare the winter shelter's current location in the King County administration building with other potential locations in or near the downtown Seattle area. The analysis of potential locations should include for each potential location:

- 1. Bed capacity;*
- 2. Location for men to queue while awaiting the shelter's opening each night, noting potential locations that could offer a covered waiting area;*
- 3. Hours of availability each night;*
- 4. Months of availability each winter;*
- 5. Ability to store mats, bedding and other shelter supplies;*
- 6. Ability to launder bedding and shelter supplies; and*
- 7. Estimated cost for rent, security, utilities and other site-related expenses based on an analysis of fifty beds and one hundred beds for:*

- a.(1) eight hours per night;*
- (2) nine and one-half hours per night; and*
- (3) eleven hours per night; and*
- b. (1) six and one-half months of service, for October 15 through April 30;*
- (2) seven and one-half months of service, for October 15 through May 31;*
- (3) nine months of service, for October 1 through June 30; and*
- (4) a full year of service; and*

C. A description of potential opportunities for coordination with the city of Seattle to secure a new shelter location, to expand an existing shelter location or to provide services that would replace the need for emergency shelter.

SECTION 2: Background on the Men's Winter Shelter

King County has provided funding for a Men's Winter Shelter for nearly twenty years. Since the shelter's inception it has been housed in the King County Administration Building, located at 500 Fourth Avenue in downtown Seattle. The bed capacity for the shelter has fluctuated between 50 and 100 beds and the hours of operation between 8.5 hours and 11 hours per night. Since 2002, the County has entered into an annual contract with The Salvation Army to operate the shelter.

The County's adopted budget for 2015 includes \$89,381 for shelter program operations and \$91,240 in 2016. In addition to the costs to operate the shelter are facility costs incurred by the Facilities Management Division (FMD). For 2015, FMD's costs are budgeted at \$161,718. The current adopted budget is based upon providing 50 beds for 9.5 hours per night. Additional funds were added in January 2015 to extend the capacity of the shelter to 100 beds and operating hours from 9.5 to 11 per night through April 15.

The cost to operate the winter shelter in the King County Administration Building is high when compared to other shelters due to the added County security personnel and facility operation costs. A key piece of this proviso is to assess potential alternate locations for a men's winter shelter that could accommodate between fifty and one hundred homeless men per night. The analysis compares the winter shelter's current location in the King County Administration Building with other potential locations in or near downtown Seattle.

SECTION 3: Usage and Cost – Winter Season 2014-2015

A. Operations Narrative

The Men's Winter Shelter 2014- 2015 season was October 1, 2014 through April 15, 2015. For the October – December 2014, period the shelter capacity was 50 men at 11 hours of operation per night.

In January 2015, the capacity remained at 50 men a night but the operating hours were reduced to 9.5 hours as approved by the County budget. In early January 2015, the city of Seattle agreed to provide additional funding to increase the shelter capacity by an additional 50 mats, doubling the capacity to 100 men for the period of January 15, 2015 through April 15, 2015. In addition, the County Council approved additional funding to reinstate the shelter operating hours from 9.5 to 11 hours per night starting February 1, 2015.

B. Data – Occupancy and People Served

Below is the 2014-2015 winter shelter season usage table:

| Month | Total Bed Nights | Usage Percentage |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| October 2014 | 1,352 | 87.2 % |
| November 2014 | 1,481 | 95.5 % |
| December 2014 | 1,528 | 98.7 % |
| January 2015 | 1,961 | 81.7 % |
| February 2015 | 2,483 | 88.6 % |
| March 2015 | 2,049 | 98.3 % |
| April 2015 | 1,426 | 95.0 % |

During the past winter season the shelter served 877 unduplicated men. For January, if only the regular 50 bed shelter was counted, the occupancy would have been 96 percent. It takes time for the program to ramp up when there is a change in shelter beds and hours mid-way through the operating period. Predictable, regular hours and dates of operation allow the shelter to function most optimally.

In late fall of 2014 The Salvation Army created an outreach worker position to work with clients in shelter programs. This position was funded independently from the County. Eighteen men are known to have engaged with the outreach worker and transitioned on to longer term transitional housing or permanent housing from 12/1/14 through 4/15/15.

The winter shelter does not count people turned away. Homeless men are made aware of the shelter location and availability by word of mouth and through referral sources such as 211 and Operation Nightwatch. There is general knowledge among the service population and service providers that the shelter is full on any given night. Individuals in need of shelter will generally not wait in line for a shelter they know is full. In addition, once the shelter has processed individuals for the night, the building is securely locked by King County Security. Consequently, The Salvation Army staff does not know if someone outside is trying to access the shelter.

The Salvation Army staff works with Operation Nightwatch and hospitals to arrange for late night arrivals if bed space is still available after clients have initially entered the building for the night. In addition, clients who are employed are able to make arrangements with staff for a late night entry into the shelter.

C. Costs – 2014-2015 Season

The total cost to operate the Winter Shelter during the 2014-2015 season was \$371,513 (2,100 total hours; \$176/hr). Expenses include approximately \$169,000 for staffing (not including security) and \$201,000 for rent, utilities, and security.

As a comparison, the cost to run the Compass Housing Alliance Operation Nightwatch Shelter costs \$357,000 annually (3,467 total hours; \$102/hr). Expenses include approximately \$251,000 for staffing, \$38,000 for rent, \$4,100 for utilities, and \$7,500 for supplies and maintenance. The remaining costs include general costs such as communications and IT and general agency overhead. The shelter has capacity for 75 men and is open year round for 9.75 hours per night. This shelter is located near the intersection of 12th and Jackson in the International District.

Catholic Community Services St. Martins de Porres Shelter costs \$1,366,848 annually (4,927.5 total hours; \$277/hr). The rent is free. Expenses include approximately \$860,000 for staffing, \$145,000 for utilities, \$70,000 food, and \$64,000 in maintenance. The shelter has capacity for 212 men age 50 and older and is open year round for 13.5 hours per night. This shelter is located on the Seattle waterfront at 1561 Alaskan Way South.

Section 4 – Potential Alternate Shelter Sites:

A. Process for Identifying Alternate Shelter Sites

1. Advisory Group

A key piece of the proviso work involved identifying and analyzing potential alternate locations for the winter shelter from the current location at the King County Administration Building. This work involved comparing the current shelter location with other potential locations in terms of location, cost, capacity, basic amenities, and availability.

To this end, DCHS convened a small advisory group made up of community stakeholders with expertise in working with homeless, single adults, and operating emergency shelters. City of Seattle and King County staff also participated. The Advisory Group was composed of the following individuals:

| Name | Organization |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Alison Eisinger | Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness |
| Capt. Dana Libby | The Salvation Army |

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Ameer Faquir | King County Facilities Management Division |
| Mary Bourguignon | King County Council Staff |
| Mary Flowers | City of Seattle Human Services Department |
| Nicole Macri | Downtown Emergency Service Center |
| Wayne Wilson | Compass Housing Alliance |

The Advisory Group’s purpose was to help King County determine the geographical boundaries for an alternate shelter site, develop a list of required or desired facility or neighborhood elements, and review and provide feedback on information staff gathered on alternate locations. The Advisory group met twice and provided valuable feedback regarding alternate shelter locations, including advice on how to evaluate possible sites. DCHS staff considered this advice in developing the staff recommendations outlined below.

2. Site Identification Process

The proviso stated the potential alternate locations should be in or “near downtown”. The Advisory Group determined the geographic parameters for alternate shelter sites to be Denny Avenue to the north; I-5 to the east; Puget Sound to the west; and Dearborn to the south.

In addition, the proviso and the Advisory Group established a list of basic criteria and amenities to consider in a potential location. The list included the items listed below.

- Capacity from 50 to 100
- Hours of Availability 8 – 11 per night
- Adequate Hygiene Facilities
- Proximity to Transportation
- Ability to Queue
- Storage
- Minimum 3,000 SF
- Seasonal Availability 6.5 mo to 12 mo
- Adequate HVAC
- ADA Accessible
- Ability to Loan/Unload
- Ability to Launder Bedding

NOTE: Not all amenities listed above are required.

B. Sites

1. Site Identification

DCHS staff and the Advisory Group considered three potential sources for identifying potential sites within the established geographic catchment area. These included County-owned facilities, City of Seattle-owned properties, and privately owned commercial properties.

For **County-owned sites**, the Facilities Management Division provided a list of properties located in the catchment area. Of the 29 County-owned properties identified, the majority were unsuitable for indoor emergency shelter and included parking lots and garages. In addition, the list contained several King County Metro properties including the Power Distribution Headquarters, Convention Place Station, Ryerson Base and Atlantic/Central Base. None were viable options. The majority of the properties are secured sites and/or have 24/7 hours of operation. Convention Place Station hours of operation are from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. However, the site is essentially outdoors. The remaining King County properties included the King County Court House, the Yesler Building, the King County Administration Building and the King County Correctional facility. (See Attachments A, King County Owned Sites and Attachment B, Map – King County Owned Sites).

The **City of Seattle** is in the process of reviewing its homeless investments, including expanded emergency shelter services. At least one additional city of Seattle shelter is likely to open in 2015 at the north end of downtown. Beyond that there are no additional city of Seattle properties available in the identified catchment area.

For the **private market sites**, FMD entered into a contract with a private real estate brokerage service to search for properties in the catchment area that met the basic specifications. It should be noted that operation of a seasonal shelter at a private property would require an annual lease agreement. In addition, many property owners are unwilling to lease space for use as a winter shelter.

2. Site Evaluation

With the site identification complete, the Advisory Group and DCHS staff identified three potential alternate sites for the winter shelter. These are identified in the table on the following page.

| | 500 4 th Ave (Admin Building) | 420 4 th Ave | 1760 1 st Ave S | 1915 1 st Ave S |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ownership | County | County * | Private | Private |
| Estimated Shelter Cost | \$255,222** | \$119,592** | \$286,460*** | \$376,460*** |
| Rent | \$133,230 | n/a | \$60,000 | \$156,000 |
| Security | Included in rent | | | |
| Utilities | \$2,400 | n/a | \$6,000 | Included in rent |
| Staffing | \$119,592 | \$119,592 | \$220,460 | \$220,460 |
| Notes | Current shelter location | Does not include rent or utility payments. Site will likely require code and tenant improvements* | Does not include tenant improvements | Does not include tenant improvements |

* Tenant and code improvement appropriation was not included in the purchase ordinance.

** Total cost (lease + operating cost) for 11 hours of operation, 6.5 months per year for 50 beds.

***Total Cost (lease + operating cost) for 11 hours of operation, 12 months per year for 50 beds.

The following map identifies the location of the four sites.



420 4th Avenue, Seattle WA 98104 (Recent County Acquisition)

This property is located in downtown Seattle in the Pioneer Square neighborhood. The three story standalone building is located directly south of the King County Administration Building.

The King County Council approved an appropriation ordinance (enactment number 18058) to purchase this building, but without funding for tenant improvements and required repairs. Consideration has been given to using the first floor for the Winter Shelter. The first floor is approximately 3,900 square feet. The space would have a separate entrance from the rest of the building and is conveniently located in the downtown core in close proximity to the population served by the shelter.

Staff Recommendation: Do Not Pursue. Although the property is well located and County-ownership provides long-term stability, the uncertain nature and cost of both tenant and code required improvements results in the property not being recommended for winter shelter use at this time. In addition, it is not possible to make an accurate estimate of operating costs,

including any expected rent payments to FMD. **Note:** At the time of final Advisory Group feedback, County acquisition of the 420 4th Ave building was uncertain.

1760 First Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134 (Private)

This former restaurant is a stand-alone building located in the SoDo neighborhood. Approximate square footage is 3900 feet. The building is currently in poor condition due to squatters living in the space. All copper plumbing and electric wire has been stripped from the building. The facility currently has no electricity.

The tenant would be responsible for any necessary improvements. Recent bids solicited by the owner were for approximately \$160,000 to return the building to basic shell space. These costs would need to be covered by the tenant.

The rent would be \$5,000 per month, plus an estimated \$500 per month for other costs including utilities. The lease would be a one-year term and would contain a 90-day termination clause. The tenant would need to have a one-year term lease regardless of whether the facility is used for only part of the year.

Other considerations include possibly needing a construction permit to change the use and occupancy of the building. There is a Metro bus stop on 4th Avenue with an approximate half mile walk to the facility. Considering health and other mobility limitations of shelter residents, it is reasonable to assume that transportation assistance will be required at this site. In addition, if pursuing this option, there are likely neighborhood notification requirements that will need to be met.

Staff Recommendation: Do Not Pursue. Although the site has a number of appealing characteristics, the high tenant improvement costs and permitting uncertainty lead to the do not pursue recommendation.

1915 First Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134 (Private)

This property is a stand-alone building located in the SoDo neighborhood and formerly housed the Paper Zone. Approximate square footage is 11,000 feet. The space is large and open.

There is only one toilet and sink in the entire facility, inadequate for a shelter housing 50 to 100 men. Additional toilets and sinks would need to be added at the tenant's expense.

The rent would be \$13,000 per month, plus other costs including utilities and any tenant improvements. The lease would be a one-year term and would contain a 90-day termination clause. The tenant would need to have a one-year term lease regardless if the facility is only used for part of the year.

It is unclear if any permits regarding use or occupancy would be needed for this site. There is a Metro bus stop on 4th Avenue with an approximate half mile walk to the facility.

Staff Recommendation: Do not pursue. The building is larger than necessary and the rent is high. In addition, tenant improvement costs could prove prohibitively expensive.

For an analysis of costs, availability, and basic amenities see Attachment C, Winter Shelter Alternate Locations Matrix.

Section 5: City of Seattle Coordination

As previously discussed, the city of Seattle is currently reviewing its homeless investment strategy, including expanded shelter options. With this analysis ongoing, representatives from Seattle were not able to offer alternate sites. It is important to note that the city of Seattle did provide additional funds in 2015 to expand the capacity of the shelter from 50 mats to 100 mats. In addition, in recognition of the regional nature of homelessness, the city of Seattle, together with the United Way of King County, recently provided one-time funding for expanded shelter service in King County (outside Seattle). The following shelters were selected for additional funding:

- Catholic Community Services (CCS) Women's Home Shelter, Kent;
- CCS Reach Out Shelters for Men and Women, Federal Way;
- CCS Eastside Winter Shelter for Families and Women, multiple eastside locations;
- Congregations for the Homeless Eastside Winter Shelter for Men, Bellevue
- Congregations for the Homeless Snoqualmie Valley Winter Shelter, North Bend and Snoqualmie;
- Friends of Youth-The Landing, Redmond;
- Renton Ecumenical Association of Churches Family and Women Shelter, Renton; and
- Union Gospel Mission's Women's Kent Home Shelter, Kent.

The combined funding of \$325,000 (city of Seattle and United Way) will support expanded operation of these facilities for a period of one year. The city of Seattle provided \$175,000 in one-time funds and United Way \$150,000 in annual funding, with the possibility of funding being extended beyond one year.

Section 6: Conclusion

In the final analysis, it is the recommendation of DCHS to maintain the Men's Winter Shelter at the King County Administration Building. The site is centrally located and operates well in conjunction with other downtown shelters. Although it appears more costly than other alternatives, when including the uncertainty of tenant improvement this may not be the case. If an alternate site is ultimately deemed necessary, the 1715 1st Ave S property appears to be the best option. Cost uncertainty, transportation needs, and neighborhood notification concerns remain.

In addition, DCHS should continue to closely coordinate with the City of Seattle on the provision of homeless shelter services. As both the City and County continue to evaluate and evolve homeless services, additional partnership opportunities may become available.

Attachment A: King County Owned Sites

| | DESCRIPTION | ACREAGE | Description | Acquisition Date | ZONING | ASSESSED VALUE | Building Sq. Ft. | CAT_TYPE | ADDRESS |
|----|----------------------------|---------|--------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | CORRECTIONAL FACILITY | 1.27 | ADULT DETENTION | 05/1980 | DOC1 | \$ 40,079,200 | 385,274 | BUILDING SITE | 500 5TH AVE |
| 2 | KING COUNTY COURTHOUSE | 1.31 | PROPERTY SERVICES | 04/1903 | DCM340 | \$ 22,848,000 | 482,760 | BUILDING SITE | 516 3RD AVE |
| 3 | KING COUNTY ADMIN BLDG | 1.36 | PROPERTY SERVICES | 01/1968 | DCM340 | \$ 29,640,000 | 157,329 | BUILDING SITE | 500 4TH AVE |
| 4 | JEFFERSON PARKING LOT | 1.9 | PROPERTY SERVICES | 09/1980 | DMC340/290 | \$ 41,216,000 | 241,811 | PARKING LOT | 415 6TH AVE |
| 5 | KING COUNTY PARKING GARAGE | 0.66 | PROPERTY SERVICES | 08/1959 | DMC340/290 | \$ 14,160,000 | 303,939 | BUILDING SITE | 401 5TH AVE |
| 6 | YESLER BUILDING | 0.37 | PROPERTY SERVICES | 03/1991 | PSM-100 | \$ 2,602,500 | 90,040 | BUILDING SITE | 400 YESLER WAY |
| 7 | NORTH PARKING LOT | 1.78 | STADIUM OPERATIONS | 12/1971 | PSM-85 | \$ 12,368,800 | | BUILDING SITE | |
| 8 | CONVENTION PLACE STATION | 2.88 | TRANSIT | 01/1986 | DOC2400 | \$ 58,180,000 | | TRANSIT TUNNEL/STATION | 906 PINE ST |
| 9 | CENTRAL OPERATING BASE | 4.38 | TRANSIT | 10/1976 | IG2U/85 | \$ 12,404,500 | 60,250 | TRANSIT BASE | 1523 AIRPORT WY S |
| 10 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.74 | TRANSIT | | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,605,000 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 11 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.67 | TRANSIT | 07/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,479,200 | | TRANSIT BASE | 6 Ave S |
| 12 | CENTRAL OPERATING BASE | 6.6 | TRANSIT | 07/1988 | IG2U/85 | \$ 14,365,200 | 24,640 | TRANSIT BASE | 1333 AIRPORT WY S |
| 13 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.74 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,605,000 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 14 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.55 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,563,200 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 15 | CENTRAL OPERATING BASE | 8.13 | TRANSIT | 10/1976 | IG2U/85 | \$ 23,096,400 | 45,527 | TRANSIT BASE | 1500 6TH AVE S |
| 16 | RYERSON BASE ACCESSORY | 2.44 | TRANSIT | 07/1988 | IG 2 | \$ 5,312,600 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 17 | CENTRAL OPERATING BASE | 0.63 | TRANSIT | 03/1993 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,375,000 | | TRANSIT BASE | 1535 6TH AVE S |
| 18 | CENTRAL OPERATING BASE | 1.1 | TRANSIT | 03/1984 | IG2U/85 | \$ 932,500 | 7,200 | TRANSIT BASE | 1523 6TH AVE S |
| 19 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 1.1 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 2,403,500 | 36,480 | TRANSIT BASE | 1505 6th Ave S |
| 20 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.91 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,992,500 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 21 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.46 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,003,200 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 22 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.5 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,093,100 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 23 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.23 | TRANSIT | 05/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 505,600 | | TRANSIT BASE | |
| 24 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.58 | TRANSIT | 08/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 1,264,800 | 315,770 | TRANSIT BASE | 1201 6 Ave S |
| 25 | ATLANTIC/CENTRAL BASE | 0.25 | TRANSIT | 08/2002 | IG2U/85 | \$ 545,500 | | TRANSIT BASE | 2255/2261 4TH AVE S |
| 26 | POWER DISTRIBUTION HQ | 1.24 | TRANSIT | 11/1988 | IG1U/85 | \$ 3,240,000 | 23,143 | TRANSIT BASE | 101 PREFONTAINE |
| 27 | METRO TUNNEL EASEMENT | 0.2 | TRANSIT | 04/2003 | PSM-100 | \$ 4,005,200 | | TRANSIT TUNNEL/STATION | |
| 28 | DENNY WAY REGULATORY | 0.18 | WASTE WATER | | IC/45 | \$ 408,000 | tidelands / N/A | REGULATOR STATION | 3165 ALASKA WY |
| 29 | NORTH PARKING LOT | 0.35 | WASTE WATER | 12/1971 | PSM-85 | \$ 2,330,400 | paved parking / N/A | BUILDING SITE | |

Attachment B: Map of King County Owned Sites

