



## INDIGENOUS-LED SHELTER

### Project Background

Indigenous people in Edmonton are disproportionately affected by homelessness and housing insecurity. However, the vast majority of emergency shelter spaces offered in the city are provided by non-Indigenous, faith-based non-profit organizations. The relative lack of trauma-informed, culturally diverse and low-barrier shelter options in Edmonton is a contributing factor to the rise of homeless encampments across the city. There is a growing recognition that culturally appropriate services can increase uptake and the success of services and supports, leading to better outcomes for service users, the health and social services sectors, and the broader community.

The City of Edmonton's Community Safety and Well-being Task Force and the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls have both called for increased access to Indigenous-led emergency shelter spaces for Indigenous people in general and Indigenous women in particular.

In 2022, Administration [engaged](#) Indigenous stakeholders regarding the provision of Indigenous-led shelters, housing and programming. Participants supported the expansion of Indigenous-led programming in the homeless-serving sector, but were not supportive of the congregate shelter spaces that make up the majority of current emergency shelter offerings. Although participants expressed a preference for long-term solutions, such as more affordable housing options, they recognized the need for emergency and transitional spaces in the short term.

### Interested operators and design input

In 2022, City Council earmarked \$1 million for early design work of an emergency shelter that would be funded by the City and operated by an Indigenous-led organization or government. This could include models that are non-congregate, 24/7, low barrier, semi-private and/or small scale.

The City is seeking an Indigenous-led organization or government that may be interested in operating a shelter and/or has current assets that could be used for this purpose. In addition, we invite the knowledge and guidance of Indigenous-led organizations and governments on how to create a safe, comfortable and culturally appropriate space where Indigenous people experiencing homelessness can find the physical, emotional and spiritual support they need.

Based on the number of responses received, the City may form a design committee of representatives from interested organizations or governments to provide input on the built form requirements. The interested operator(s) or design committee will work with an architectural

consultant and City staff from Integrated Infrastructure Services and Affordable Housing and Homelessness to determine design needs and site location preferences.

Participants may be asked to provide a vision for an Indigenous-led emergency shelter and review and provide feedback on architectural concepts to help shape the built form requirements that will best meet clients' needs. The City may use this input to help shape a proposal for a City-funded, Indigenous-led shelter for people experiencing homelessness in Edmonton. The proposal will be shared with City Council for its consideration. A timeframe for opening an Indigenous-led shelter is dependent on submissions and Council approval.

If a design committee is formed, it will require a time commitment of 4 to 6 months. All work of the design committee will be completed in virtual meetings of about 4-6 hours per month and participants will receive a per diem in alignment with the City's compensation for agencies and boards.

### Submission Contents

Interested organizations are asked to provide the following information:

- Name of a key contact person, including telephone number and email address;
- Brief company profile; This includes name, location of office(s), length of time in business, and numbers/types of staff;
- Information on legal status
- A list of locations where your organization has offered similar services
- A vision or concept for an Indigenous-led shelter
- Potential sources of operating funding and any other available financial contributions in addition to the City's potential contribution
- Potential buildings or locations under your organization's ownership that could be used for this purpose, if applicable
- Any other information your organization would like the City to consider

Other information that would be helpful, but not required for the submission, include:

- Preference for total number of clients to be served and/or housed
- Types of amenities to be included
- Types of programming and service offerings (including culturally appropriate services) and collaborations with Indigenous and/or non-Indigenous partners (individuals, groups, or organizations)

### Submission Format

- Please provide the information in a Word, Google Doc or PDF document

- Email to [housing@edmonton.ca](mailto:housing@edmonton.ca). **Include in the subject line: “Expression of Interest: Indigenous-led shelter”**
- **Please provide your information by May 19, 2023.**

#### Other information

- Email [housing@edmonton.ca](mailto:housing@edmonton.ca) with any questions. **Include in the subject line: “Question: Indigenous-led shelter”**
- Preference may be given to an organization with existing access to or ownership of a building or location that can be adapted to a permanent Indigenous-led shelter.
- The description and duties of the design committee may change from what is outlined above, should the project parameters change.
- More information may be required if the City is considering entering into an agreement.
- Any personal information collected as part of this outreach is for the Indigenous-led shelter and transitional space project and will be used to identify interested Indigenous operators and may be included in a public report for City Council. Collection is authorized under section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act and is managed and protected in accordance with the Act. In case of questions about the collection, please contact Surma Das, Social Planner, Affordable Housing and Homelessness, City of Edmonton at [surma.das@edmonton.ca](mailto:surma.das@edmonton.ca) or 780-423-4857.

The City thanks all organizations that submit a response for their time and effort.