

On Monday, November 20, 2023, the Living Space Relocation Review team held a “pop-up” engagement session at the [Timmins Youth Wellness Hub](#) to share the results from Part 1 of the Living Space Relocation Review and seek feedback on factors to consider when contemplating the relocation of the Living Space emergency shelter.

The pop-up connected with about 10 young people at the Hub, including a subset of staff and a board member. Thank you to all participants.

The pop-up was facilitated by Third Party Public Inc., the organization leading the Living Space Relocation Review, in collaboration with Eagle Cree Consulting. This draft summary was written by Nicole Swerhun and Ruth Belay. As facilitators that are not advocating for any particular outcome of the Relocation Review, the intent is to capture the perspectives shared during the discussion, not to assess the merit or accuracy of any of these perspectives. This summary does not indicate an endorsement of any of these perspectives on the part of Third Party Public or Eagle Cree Consulting.

A draft of this summary was subject to participant review before being finalized. No suggested edits were received. If you have any questions about this summary, please contact Third Party Public at [nicole@thirdpartypublic.ca](mailto:nicole@thirdpartypublic.ca). For more information about the Relocation Review, see website at [www.livingspacereview.ca](http://www.livingspacereview.ca).

Note that points are numbered in this summary for ease of reference only and are not intended to imply that some points are more important than others.

## Pop-Up at the Youth Wellness Hub

Living Space Relocation Review – Part 2

Mon, Nov 20, 2023

3:30 – 5:00 pm

## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Conversations at the [Timmins Youth Wellness Hub](#) were held one-on-one and in small groups, with some people joining and leaving the discussion at different times. As a result, this summary reflects the range of perspectives shared and should not be interpreted as consensus on the part of the participants.

### What does an emergency shelter that's working well look like to you?

1. **It provides life skills, like budgeting.** This is important to helping people live on their own.
2. **It doesn't have a curfew.** Because if people can't get in, then they have to sleep outside or break and enter into private properties.
3. **It has better regulations.** Rules at Living Space need to be enforced.
4. **It keeps people with active addictions separate from others.** This means considering two emergency shelters, one for people using substances and another for those not using substances.
5. **It is supported by more and nicer rehab services and more mental health services.** Timmins has one psychiatrist, all others are locums, and there's a long wait list of free psychiatric services. There are many youth struggling with addiction.
6. **There needs to be an emergency shelter that supports youth.** Some youth are scared to access services at Living Space. There needs to be a place to provide culturally responsive services to youth with complex needs including those facing a combination of addictions, mental health, and homelessness challenges.

7. **The community around the shelter needs to be more open and willing to learn about the circumstances that impact people experiencing homelessness.** In general, youth are more understanding and compassionate.
8. **It doesn't contribute to safety concerns.** There are some parents that have prohibited their children from walking alone in the downtown area. It is already difficult for youth, especially female-identifying youth, to walk at night but it has become even worse now. Businesses are also being broken into. There's also a lot of talk about safety concerns related to Living Space on Facebook, including concerns about an increase in police and ambulance services there.

### What do see as the advantages and disadvantages of in-town and out-of-town potential locations for the emergency shelter?

1. **The emergency shelter needs to be close to services and other people.** Moving it out of town will isolate/further victimize people experiencing homelessness from their communities, services, and employment opportunities.
2. **The location of Living Space to be away from people but accessible by bus.** Don't move Living Space to Gillies Lake. There are families around the area.
3. **Some strongly suggested not moving it out of town but not in the downtown area.** Good Samaritan is a shelter that is functioning well.

### Additional thoughts:

1. **There are many issues and challenges in Timmins that go beyond the location of Living Space.** Things that impact the quality of life of youth include things like:
  - Long wait times for primary care physicians are a big issue. It can take 5 years to get a family doctor and there are no walk-in

- clinics. That means that a young person that needs to see a doctor is more likely to self-diagnose and then use Rocket Doctor online to get access to a prescription.
- There are no medical specialists in Timmins, including nothing for gender-affirming care, no endocrinologists, no pediatricians, no child specialists, no 2SLGBTQ+ specialists.
- Access to psychiatrists is limited, and travelling down south to get access is expensive.
- Access to rehab facilities is limited.
- There is limited affordable counselling.
- Need for more guidance counsellors to support youth at high schools.

2. **It's easy to pin everything that's happening on people experiencing homelessness, but anyone can end up homeless.** Youth are aware of what's happening with Living Space and the Safe Injection Site. Compassion is important. There's compassion fatigue and people are desensitized, but even so it's not fair to film people in active addiction. Timmins was not always like this, but a lot has changed since COVID. A lot of people fell back into drinking, smoking, and drugs after being isolated and lonely for so long. There are needles along the walking path between Living Space and the Safe Injection Site because people are travelling between the two to access different services.
3. **The Timmins Youth Wellness Hub (TYWH) first opened its doors at 45 Spruce Street South on October 25, 2022.** It is a safe, inclusive, and welcoming space for all youth aged 12-25 to access mental health, addictions and wellbeing services, resources, and support. The TYWH is part of a network of Hubs called Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario.
4. **The Relocation Review process can connect with more youth by:** going to places where youth already are (such as high schools); conducting surveys that have incentives to participate (such as \$25 gift card from Tim Hortons or Starbucks); hosting a meeting at a school and offering pizza. Food is a very good incentive for getting people to participate.

5. **Timmins will need many little pieces to change to have improvements.** Timmins.care is a website that could be part of the solution, along with the re-launch of 211 (with the City's support). DIY Health is funded by the federal government and the City of Timmins to provide more street level community support).

### Next steps:

The Third Party Public team committed to sharing a draft summary of the feedback from participants for their review to confirm nothing major from the discussion was missing or off-base. The same process will be followed for all working sessions held, with final summaries posted on the Relocation Review website. That way people can review all summaries and see the same inputs as the Relocation Review team.

In addition to in-person working sessions, there is an online feedback form at [www.livingspacereview.ca](http://www.livingspacereview.ca) that asks the same questions. That gives an opportunity to people who are unable to attend working sessions to share their thoughts and/or those who have additional perspectives to share either before or after the working sessions. All feedback is important. Anything received before Friday, December 8, 2023 will be included in our Part 2 Feedback Summary, with any comments received after that point being captured in our final Relocation Review Report.