

On Monday, November 20, 2023, the Living Space Relocation Review team from Third Party Public Inc. and Eagle Cree Consulting held a working session with some members of the CDSSAB Board and Senior Management 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 working session included the Mayors of Smooth Rock Falls, Township of Black River Matheson, Iroquois Falls, City of Timmins Councillors Curley, Robin and Whissell, and the Mayor of Timmins, along with the CDSSAB CAO and Directors of Housing, Finance, Emergency Medical Services, Ontario Works, Children's Services, and the Communications Manager. Thank you to all participants.

The meeting was facilitated by Third Party Public Inc., the organization leading the Living Space Relocation Review, in collaboration with Eagle Cree Consulting. This 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. Suggested edits have been incorporated. If you have any questions about this summary, please contact Third Party Public at nicole@thirdpartypublic.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.

Working Session with CDSSAB Board and Senior Management

Living Space Relocation Review – Part 2

Mon, Nov 20, 2023

11:30 am – 1:30 pm

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Note that no objections were raised to any of the comments made by participants, however neither was every participant asked if they agreed with every point. As a result, this summary reflects the range of perspectives shared and should not be interpreted as consensus on the part of the participants nor the CDSSAB.

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

1. **It's accessible, walkable to and from employment and/or other services, and open 24 hours.** The beds are full and people are not freezing to death. Stays are short-term.
2. **Everyone is welcome, and there's someone there to talk to in the morning.** There are no bans, restrictions, and no barriers to access. There's no triage, no service commitments, no questions at intake.
3. **There's good training and accreditation of staff.** Services are available when they're needed by clients, including after 4pm.
4. **There's active involvement of service providers.** The services and programming reflect the diverse needs of people served. The services are provided onsite, and they're also distributed in the community to clients wherever they are.
5. **Food (3 meals a day), laundry, and other services are provided on-site** so people don't need to wander to find them.
6. **People can bring their belongings and leave them in a secure spot.**
7. **There's good support from neighbours.** It has minimal to zero impacts on resident and business safety.

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

	In-town	Out-of-town
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to access and central so people from all parts of town can access it • Lot closer to services • Well used • Access to public transit • Paramedic resources are closer to being able to service other calls • Visibility of homelessness (makes challenges visible, so people know it's happening) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could have more room to provide services (e.g. individual rooms) • Anonymity • Insular, easier to monitor • Harder to victimize clients • Farther away from drug dealers
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to victimize • Visibility (causes people stress to see people in distress) • Some people experiencing homelessness are harmless, but some are not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harder to access • Farther away from services (so would need to provide all services) • Lack of visibility (out of sight, out of mind and people forget about it, so nothing happens to help people) • Some may not want to go • Makes social inclusion harder • Takes more resources to serve (e.g. paramedics), which decreases resources available and increases the time it takes to serve others in the community

Other suggestions related to the types and locations of shelter(s) that could be considered as part of the Relocation Review included:

- **Another option to consider is designating a spot for tents outside.** Some people prefer to be in the bush camping out. People could live that way year round – for example, in Prospector tents. With a wood stove and an outhouse provided nearby.
- **Consider more than one location for shelter services,** including one location that is for people using substances and a different location for those that are not using substances.

Additional thoughts:

1. **There needs to be a plan to provide better access to washrooms for people experiencing homelessness.** That could be trying to persuade private businesses to open access to their washrooms. It could also mean Porta-Potties in different locations in the city. There was an outhouse available on Saturday mornings at a local farmer's market and maintenance costs \$125/week. It was then locked up during the week. The City is already investigating options such as self-cleaning toilets.
2. **Any change needs to be funded.** Need to address who will pay for any move.

3. **We can't forget that people providing services are working hard every day to fix this.** There are real people doing great work.
4. **The Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects people.** We can't force people to do things they don't want or forcibly restrict their movements.
5. **There is homelessness in towns other than Timmins in the Cochrane District.**
6. **The overview presentation was good and is what participants in the Relocation Review need to hear.** Update the presentation before delivering it again this week to note that the CDSSAB is also accountable to other Provincial Ministries, including the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and the federal government and agencies that contribute funding to the CDSSAB.
7. **Encampments need to be considered as part of this process.** These seem to cause more issues than Living Space.
8. **With a Housing First approach, it's critical that people get appropriate social supports when they are moved into housing.** Service delivery looks different whether it's serving those at Living Space or those in the community.

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 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.