

**APPLICANTS SUBMISSION
2404 50 STREET SE – LAND USE AMENDMENT
DC98Z111 TO DIRECT CONTROL**

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

On behalf of the Calgary John Howard Society (CJHS), please find enclosed a land use amendment application for 2404-50 Street SE. The site is home to an existing “Lodging House” that is operating under Direct Control District DC111z98. This DC district is based on the Bylaw 2P80 “General Light Industrial (I-2)” district and allows for the additional discretionary use of a “Lodging House”.

The purpose of this land use amendment is to change the existing “**Direct Control**” district (**DC111z98**) zoning to a “**Direct Control**” district based on the “**Industrial Genera (I-G)**” district that allows for the **additional discretionary use of “Custodial Care”** as defined in Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 to accommodate a Community Residential Facility for up to five (5) years. A draft Direct Control district is attached to this application.

There are no changes to the existing site proposed as part of this land use application. Please see the attached “Site Plan” for existing site details and dimensions.

The subject site is located in the community of Forest Lawn in a light industrial area near 17th Avenue East/International Avenue. There is a trailer park located to the north of the site (DC101z2006), and light industrial business uses to the west, south and east (all zoned DC80z95). Please refer to the attached maps for the site context, surrounding zoning and aerial context photo.

PURPOSE OF THE APPLICATION

The purpose of this application is to find a temporary home for the Calgary John Howard Society (CJHS) Bedford House. The Bedford House is a Community Residential Facility (CRF) as defined by Correctional Service of Canada, more commonly known as a “halfway house”. Currently located in East Victoria, the Bedford House has been expropriated to accommodate the Stampede expansion. CJHS is no longer able to continue Bedford House operations at the East Victoria site.

CJHS is proposing to lease an existing City-owned building located at 2404-50 Street SE for the Bedford House. The site is currently operating as a form of special care facility described as a lodging house. The Office of Land Servicing & Housing (OLSH) has provided CJHS with a temporary lease to operate the Bedford House at this location for a maximum of five (5) years.

The CJHS proposal plans to accommodate a maximum of twenty-five (25) residents in the lodging facility. Supervision of residents will occur 24 hours a day by on-site staff.

The proposed site is appropriate for Bedford House operations because it:

- has been home to existing special care operations,
- is physically suitable to accommodate Bedford House operations,
- is near to transit service, and
- is within close proximity of commercial uses along 17th Avenue SE.

CJHS understands that it will need to consult with existing industrial users and trailer park residents in the area to discuss the proposed operations with them and any concerns they may have. The CJHS does not propose any changes to the existing site plan to accommodate the CRF.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BEDFORD HOUSE RELOCATION

The Bedford House is a CRF that has peacefully existed in East Victoria next to parks, schools, residential buildings and businesses for over 30 years. It has the full support of the Beltline Community Association as a good special care facility operator.

In 2006, CJHS submitted an application to relocate the Bedford House within the community of Sunalta. Subsequent to a development permit (DP) approval by City Administration, the approval was appealed to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) by the community and the DP approval was overturned.

After the SDAB decision, the CJHS engaged a number of professionals including sociologists, community planners, and realtors to find another location for the Bedford House. The criteria used to find the new site were taken from the SDAB decision, the City's guidelines for the relocation of special care facilities, and the CJHS requirements for successful operations.

In 2010, CJHS successfully rezoned a permanent location for the Bedford House, along with other CJHS operations, at 4444 Builders Road SE in the Manchester Industrial area. Although CJHS will ultimately relocate to the Manchester site, the costs and logistics of such a significant move have prevented the CJHS from building on the site to date. This has led CJHS to seek an interim solution for location of the Bedford House.

As a result, CJHS is seeking to operate the Bedford House at the existing City-owned lodging housing located at 2404-50 Street SE on an interim basis. The organization is confident that the existing building will prove to be a successful interim solution for the Bedford House.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL FACILITY (CRF)?

The purpose of all CJHS programs is to reduce crime within the community and make Calgary a safer place to live. The CJHS is a grass-roots organization that has operated within Calgary for over 60 years and works at many levels within the community to help prevent crime. It operates an extensive list of support programs ranging from adult literacy to family counseling, job skills, working with at risk youth, family counseling, to name a few. CRFs are just one of CJHS' many programs.

CRFs are designed to help offenders negotiate the critical transition to the community from prison. CRFs are nongovernmental, privately run facilities funded through fee-for-service agreements with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). The CSC is the federal government agency responsible for managing institutions of various security levels and supervising offenders under conditional release in the community.

Most of Canada's federal offenders serve only part of their sentences in prison. The work of gradually releasing offenders from prison, called "conditional release", is done to ensure they do not pose a threat to anyone and to help them adjust to life beyond prison. Such work is essential because experience has shown that most criminals are more likely to become law-abiding citizens if they participate in a program of gradual, supervised release.

Conditional release occurs only after a thorough assessment of the safety risks that offenders may pose to society. Those who appear unlikely to commit crimes go on conditional release as an incentive for them to make positive changes in their lives. One option for those on conditional release is to live within CRF. If they violate the rules of the CRF, they are sent back to prison.

The Correctional Service of Canada fully supports the work done within CRFs as important to reducing crime within the community. As stated in their website:

The Correctional Service of Canada is dedicated to protecting society by controlling offenders and by helping them change the attitudes and behaviours that led them into criminal activity. The first steps toward change are taken in the prison setting. But if the change is to last, it must continue in the community, where almost all offenders eventually return. The transition from confinement to freedom can be difficult; offenders have a better chance of success if they receive supervision, opportunities, training and support within the community (<http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/faits/03-eng.shtml>).

The presence of a CRF within a community is important for the safety and well-being of the community. People who have committed a crime will nearly always be returned to the community at some point and enjoy complete freedom of movement. A CRF is a way to

ensure that those people who have serious problems living within society are able to understand and address their issues.

BEDFORD HOUSE OPERATIONS

Bedford House is a specialized Community Residential Facility (CRF) for men, geared towards meeting the social and psychological needs of offenders in order for their successful reintegration into society. Its primary mandate and obligation is to ensure the safety, security and well-being of the community. As part of the reintegration process, its residents are given support within a structured release plan which requires constant and consistent supervision. Autonomy, privilege and participation in authorized activities and programming are only extended in proportion to the individual's ability and willingness to accept personal responsibility and accountability as well as their level of risk to the community. Bedford House works closely with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) as well as other agencies to assist in the successful transition of offenders from prison to the community.

Candidates for admission to Bedford House have demonstrated positive motivation and some insight into the factors that led them to committing a crime, and a willingness to address those factors. Candidates are required to be fully committed to prepare themselves for eventual full reintegration into the community and to avoid factors that would contribute to a relapse. Staff members are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of all residents according to the conditions of their release. House rules and regulations are designed to provide the necessary amount of supervision appropriate to a community setting – i.e. curfew times, documentation of resident activities, periodic checks of these activities, and a close liaison with supervising authorities.

The CJHS chooses its residents based on its assessment of the residents' ability to be successful in the program, as well as the level of risk to the community. During the evaluation process, the primary concern of the CJHS is community safety. The CJHS only accepts residents who exhibit a genuine desire to succeed in the program and to become a law-abiding citizen.

The CJHS has the absolute right of refusal to determine who comes to Bedford House, and cannot be mandated to accept someone it does not deem acceptable by the CSC or the Parole Board.

Bedford House uses a multi-disciplinary approach to the casework process through ongoing consultation with community psychologists, a consulting psychiatrist, a psychiatric nurse, community and in-house group facilitators, and caseworkers.

LIFE INSIDE A CRF

For the residents of Bedford House, Bedford House offers a safe and non-judgmental place to learn how to live in the community again. Many of them have lost their contacts in the community and need help developing supports and resources they can rely on.

Bedford House has strict house rules about how its residents live. When a new resident arrives at Bedford they may be restricted to the House 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until staff set a regular curfew suitable for their situation. Some residents are accompanied by staff when they leave the house until they have set activities or employment.

As residents gain confidence and demonstrate that they accept the restrictions they have to live by, they are allowed to leave the house but must phone in from a landline when they reach their destination.

Residents must tell staff where they are going, when they will be back, and call in if they are to be gone longer than three hours. If they are not back within 10 minutes of the time they said they would be a Correctional Services of Canada duty officer is notified 100% of the time. Warrants may be issued for their arrest.

As residents gain privileges and demonstrate they are doing well, they earn more freedoms. These daily freedoms still require they be physically in the house for a minimum of seven hours a day. The regular house curfew is 6 pm unless they have employment or regular approved activities.

Daily activities that keep residents busy include taking classes on how to write a resume, classes on upgrading their employability skills, and regular visits with psychiatrists and social workers to help them as they work towards becoming fully functioning members of society. Residents who have earned personal freedoms can also visit and reconnect with their girlfriends, wives, children, parents and other loved ones.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of this land use application for surrounding businesses and residents, CJHS and B&A Planning Group are currently working with local Councillors and local Community Associations to tailor an appropriate consultation and engagement plan specific to this application. This engagement plan will include neighbours and other interested parties as requested or required.

SUMMARY

The CJHS is committed to reducing crime throughout Calgary and making it a better city to live in. The temporary facility provides an interim solution that will allow the CJHS to maintain service levels until the organization's Manchester site is ready for permanent use. Without organizations like the CJHS, those released from the criminal justice system are often left alone to manage their own reintegration into the community and to deal with their own issues without support. This is not the best way to ensure they have the skills to make better, healthier choices.

CLOSING STATEMENT

On behalf of the Calgary John Howard Society, Brown & Associates Planning Group submits this proposal for Land Use Amendment and seeks support of Administration, Calgary Planning Commission and City Council.