

SHELTER POD FAQs

What are shelter pods and what are they for?

Shelter Pods are a different approach emergency shelter. Rather than supervise a large group in common area, Shelter Pods allow clients access to secure individual rooms, where they can safely spend the night. The intent is that they will replace our current emergency shelter program – the Community Mat Program.

These rooms will come in the form of renovated 7-room oilfield camp trailers. The trailers will be renovated for this specific purpose, to make them more durable and secure.

How will the program work?

Pods will be available to clients between designated times, likely 8PM and 9AM, and accessed via an intercom connected to volunteer/staff cell phone. Clients will connect with the volunteer who can then record the name of the client and remotely assign and unlock a pod. The clients will be given a pin which the client can use to exit and re-enter their pod as they need for the duration of the night. Clients have access to their pods until a set time the following morning at which point they will need to leave the pod for the day, along with all their belongings. Pods will be cleaned and sanitized daily.

Where are the pods going to be located?

Council has approved 5309 54 Street as the location for the pods. This is the yard of the former Public Works shop.

Will the program be supervised when in use?

There will not be any in-person supervision of the pods but there will 24/hr video surveillance and additional lighting. The video is connected to an app on the staff cell phone. The RCMP are also involved and supportive of the project and will be keeping an eye on the location.

Is this program better than the Mat Program? Why?

Shelter Pods are a different approach to temporary emergency shelter that we hope will improve access for unsheltered community members. This program has much lower staffing requirements and will be available year-round. The mat program is typically only available during the winter months and almost entirely reliant on outside funding which is not guaranteed from year to year.

Where is the money for this coming from?

Drayton Valley and District FCSS applied for and received a federal grant to cover the initial capital cost of the project. While the Town has guaranteed the operational costs for the next 5 years to secure the grant, our intent is that these costs will be covered through fundraising and grants.

Is anyone else doing this?

We are basing our Shelter Pod program on a project piloted in Edson. We are in constant contact with the Edson group to learn from their experience and adjust our plans based on their advice. Our project differs slightly from theirs in that they built theirs as an addition on to their recycling facility, where as our will be self-contained and can be moved should the need arise.