



LAND USE APPLICATION SUMMARY

Property Location: 2220 16th Ave N
Project Name: Gordon Center Emergency Shelter
Prepared By: Shanna Sether, Principal City Planner, (612) 673-2307
Applicant: Hennepin County – Facilities Services
Project Contact: Margo Geffen
Request: To allow for an emergency shelter of up to 50 people who identify as female.
Required Applications:

Interim Use Permit	To allow for an emergency shelter of up to 50 people who identify as female.
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SITE DATA

Existing Zoning	R1A Single-Family District
Lot Area	226,530 square feet / 5.2 acres
Ward(s)	5
Neighborhood(s)	Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
Designated Future Land Use	Urban Neighborhood
Land Use Features	Community Corridor (Penn Ave N – ½ block to the east)
Small Area Plan(s)	Not applicable

Date Application Deemed Complete	November 12, 2019	Date Extension Letter Sent	Not applicable
End of 60-Day Decision Period	January 11, 2020	End of 120-Day Decision Period	Not applicable

BACKGROUND

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT USE. The subject property has two structures, the Willard-Hay School and the Gordon Center. The Gordon Center was built in 1950 as a school. The structure has been vacant since 2005.

SURROUNDING PROPERTIES AND NEIGHBORHOOD. The property is south of Willard Park and is located within a low-density residential neighborhood. There is a religious institution south of the site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION. The applicant is proposing to establish a new emergency shelter for up to 50 women in the Gordon Center building. The duration of stay would be 30-days or less. Shelter residents would be assigned to this shelter from the Adult Shelter Connect service, operated by Simpson Housing. This service acts as the point of access and coordination for all shelter beds reservations across six sites and five non-profit shelter providers. According to the applicant, for the past several months, an average of 20-25 people who identify as female have been refused shelter daily due to the lack of available beds. The applicant has reported that there are 893 homeless shelter beds in Hennepin County and only 182 beds are available for females. Emergency shelters are a conditional use in the R1A District. The applicant has the option to apply for an interim use permit to lawfully establish the use as an emergency shelter in R1A District, for up to five years. The applicant is proposing to operate the shelter from January 1, 2020, until June 1, 2024. If approved, the interim use permit would expire on June 1, 2024, and the applicant would either be required to convert the use of the property to a permitted use or apply for a conditional use permit to continue the use as an emergency shelter. On November 13, 2019, the City of Minneapolis approved a reasonable accommodation request to increase the maximum occupancy from 6 to 50 women within the existing facility.

RELATED APPROVALS.

Planning Case #	Application(s)	Description	Action
PLAN10060	Reasonable accommodation for occupancy.	Reasonable accommodation to allow for an emergency shelter occupancy serving up to 50 women within an existing building.	On November 13, 2019, the City of Minneapolis approved the request, subject to conditions of approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS. Staff is not in receipt of public comments regarding the proposed shelter. Any correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the City Council for consideration.

ANALYSIS

INTERIM USE PERMIT

For an interim use permit to be granted, the Zoning and Planning Committee must make the same findings that pertain to conditional use permits. In addition to these, any City Council approval of an interim use is subject to five additional conditions. Discussion of each of these findings and conditions follows.

1. *The establishment, maintenance or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort or general welfare.*

The establishment of an emergency shelter within an existing building for up to fifty people who identify as female will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort or general welfare. Shelter guests will be referred to the proposed facility through the Adult Shelter Connect. There will be a shelter manager who oversees day-to-day operations, as well as shelter operations staff, case management and other volunteers providing support to shelter guests. Emergency shelters are required to obtain a Minneapolis license through the Health Department. If approved, the new emergency shelter will require additional building permits to convert the use from a school to housing, including adding showers, updating finishes, updating IT and security, and addressing any egress or fire suppression issues. The proposed emergency shelter will be required to comply with the applicable building codes and health codes.

2. *The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the vicinity and will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.*

The proposed emergency shelter will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the vicinity and will not impede on the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property. The surrounding area is fully developed and located within an existing low-density residential area. Shelter residents would be assigned to this shelter from the Adult Shelter Connect service, operated by Simpson Housing. This service acts as the point of access and coordination for all shelter beds reservations across six sites and five non-profit shelter providers. The proposed shelter would allow for stays up to 30-days and shelter guests will be able to access to housing, laundry and bathroom facilities. In addition, on-site services including case management and healthcare will be provided.

3. *Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, necessary facilities or other measures, have been or will be provided.*

Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and necessary facilities have been provided. If approved, the new emergency shelter will require additional building permits to convert the use from a school to housing, including adding showers, updating finishes, updating IT and security, addressing any egress or fire suppression issues. Any future work shall be required to be in compliance with the zoning code, building code, and health code.

4. *Adequate measures have been or will be taken to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.*

There is not a minimum off-street parking requirement for an emergency shelter. The occupants and staff would have access to 28 off-street parking spaces available at the front of the property. There is also service parking available off the existing public alley. The site is also well-served by transit, including the METRO C-Line BRT with stops one-half block to the east, which provides high frequency service during rush hours and 15-minute headways or better during the middle of the day.

5. *The conditional use is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.*

The proposed development would be consistent with the following general land use policies of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*:

Housing Policy 3.4: Preserve and increase the supply of safe, stable, and affordable supportive housing opportunities for homeless youth, singles and families.

- 3.4.1 Promote increased development of housing for very low-income households earning 30% or less of metropolitan median income.
- 3.4.2 Support the creation of additional supportive housing units for homeless youth, singles and families.
- 3.4.3 Support the creation of additional shelter beds for youth.

- 3.4.4 Evaluate City policies and regulations related to the creation of supportive housing and smaller housing units, including Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing.
- 3.4.5 Implement and promote additional strategies to reduce homelessness, such as those identified in Heading Home Hennepin.

Housing Policy 3.5: Improve the stability and health of communities of concentrated disadvantage through market building strategies, and strategies that preserve and increase home ownership.

- 3.5.1 Work to improve the stability and sustainability of the city's disadvantaged communities by taking measures to diversify the household mix and allay historic patterns of concentration of poverty.

- 6. *The conditional use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located.*

If the requested land use applications are approved, the proposal will comply with all provisions of R1A District. In addition, the proposed emergency shelter is required to meet the following specific development standards per Section 536.20 of the zoning code:

Emergency shelter.

- (1) *The use shall be located at least one thousand (1,000) feet from all existing emergency shelters and overnight shelters.*
- (2) *To the extent practical, all new construction or additions to existing buildings shall be compatible with the scale and character of the surroundings, and exterior building materials shall be harmonious with other buildings in the area.*
- (3) *An appropriate transition area between the use and adjacent property shall be provided by landscaping, screening and other site improvements consistent with the character of the area.*
- (4) *Shelter guests shall be provided with an enclosed waiting area one (1) hour prior to opening each evening, except when the shelter accepts guests by appointment only or is open twenty-four (24) hours per day.*
- (5) *The operator shall submit a management plan for the facility, and a floor plan showing sleeping areas, emergency exits, bathing and restrooms.*
- (6) *The premises, all adjacent streets, sidewalks and alleys, and all sidewalks and alleys within one hundred (100) feet shall be inspected regularly for purposes of removing any litter found thereon.*

Interim Use Conditions

- 1. *The interim use shall be allowed as a conditional use in the zoning district in which it is to be located.*

Emergency shelters are allowed as a conditional use in the R1A District.

- 2. *Except as otherwise authorized by this section, an interim use shall conform to this zoning ordinance as if it were established as a conditional use.*

There are no exceptions to the zoning ordinance requested.

- 3. *The date or event that will terminate the interim use shall be identified with certainty. Interim uses may not be granted for a period of greater than five (5) years.*

The applicant has requested approval for the interim use permit from January 1, 2020, until June 1, 2024, a period of approximately four and one-half years.

4. *In the event of a public taking of property after the interim use is established, the property owner shall not be entitled to compensation for any increase in value attributable to the interim use.*

The applicant is aware of this standard. The property is owned by the Minneapolis Public Schools and the building has been vacant since 2005. The applicant applied for an interim use permit to lawfully establish the use as an emergency shelter in R1A District from January 1, 2020, until June 1, 2024. If approved, the interim use permit would expire on June 1, 2024, and the applicant would either be required to convert the use of the property to a permitted use or apply for a conditional use permit to continue the use as an emergency shelter.

5. *Such conditions and guarantees as the city council deems reasonable and necessary to protect the public interest and to ensure compliance with the standards and purposes of this zoning ordinance and policies of the comprehensive plan.*

The proposed emergency shelter proposal will comply with all provisions of R1A District. In addition, the proposed emergency shelter is required to meet the specific development standards per Section 536.20 of the zoning code, as noted above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the City Council adopt staff findings for the applications by Hennepin County – Facilities Services for the property located at 2220 16th Ave N:

A. Interim Use Permit.

Recommended motion: **Approve** the application for an interim use to allow for an emergency shelter for up to 50 people who identify as female, subject to the following conditions:

1. The interim use shall expire no later than June 1, 2024.
2. The emergency shelter shall be licensed as required by Chapter 236 Emergency Shelters.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Zoning map
2. Oblique aerial photo
3. Written description and findings submitted by applicant
4. Site plan
5. Plans
6. Photos