



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 26-081**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services  
**Resource Staff:** Jayne Hartley, Director, Housing & Social Services  
**Date of Meeting:** March 24, 2026  
**Subject:** Adelaide Street Shelter

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: 1. Support Housing Affordability

Goal: 1.1 Promote increased supply and affordability of housing.

Theme: 3. Build an Active and Connected Community

Goal: 3.1 Expand parks and recreation opportunities and participation.

**Executive Summary:**

The property municipally known as 38 Cowdy Street has operated as the Adelaide Street Shelter since January 2023 as a temporary emergency response to homelessness while the City advanced the development of additional shelter and housing capacity across Kingston. The City acquired the property in May 2023 with the long-term intent of demolishing the former school building and expanding the adjacent Frontenac Park, with potential consideration for housing along the Cowdy Street frontage.

With new emergency shelter capacity and supportive housing projects nearing completion, staff are now moving forward with the planned wind down and closure of the Adelaide Street Shelter by the end of Q1 2026. The closure is contingent upon the opening of the Sydenham Road emergency shelter which is now open, as well as a minimum of two of the three new supportive housing sites, alongside coordinated access and intensive case management supports. It is important to note that the shelter beds currently located at the Integrated Care Hub will continue to operate as they are not directly impacted by the upcoming Consumption and Treatment Services closure. City staff will work with Addiction & Mental Health Services on retaining the 24 beds within the City in the long term as it is likely that there will be a service transition when the CTS closes in June.

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Community engagement undertaken in 2025 and early 2026 reflects both strong support for park expansion and mixed feedback regarding the potential inclusion of housing on the site. Concerns raised include transparency of process, park functionality, safety, and the scale and affordability of housing.

Based on updated building condition information, emergency repair history, community input and the original intent of the purchase, staff are recommending that Council reaffirm the original direction for the property considered in closed session reporting at the time of purchase: demolition of the existing building, severance and sale of housing lots along Cowdy Street, and expansion of Frontenac Park, with sale proceeds from the housing lots to be reinvested into park development.

Demolition of the existing building at 38 Cowdy Street would be scheduled to occur in Q4 2026. This work would proceed following the wind-down of emergency shelter services on March 31, 2026, as well as vocational laundry services operated by Lionhearts scheduled which with Council's direction would end on or before September 30, 2026.

Following wind down of emergency shelter services, staff focus on the property will transition to a focus on the future development of 38 Cowdy Street, including the expansion of Frontenac Parkette and the subdivision of a portion of the property for the purpose of sale and residential development. Staff will report back to Council on these initiatives by the end of Q3 2026.

**Recommendation:**

**That** Council direct staff to negotiate and enter into a lease agreement with Lionhearts Inc. for use of the 38 Cowdy Street site for the purpose of offering vocational laundry services for a period of not more than 6 months commencing April 1, 2026, and that the lease continue to include the Frontenac Parkette space which would remain closed for the period of the lease; and

**That** Council direct staff to, following the expiry or termination of any lease with Lionhearts Inc., move forward with the demolition of the former Frontenac Public School building, conditional on obtaining all required permits and approvals; and

**That** Council direct staff to carry out all required planning processes and considerations, to identify options for the future residential development along Cowdy Street, including how best to balance this development with the intended expansion of Frontenac Parkette, and to report back to Council on those identified options by the end of Q3 2026.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

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**Jennifer Campbell,  
Commissioner, Community  
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**Lanie Hurdle, Chief  
Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	<b>p.p.</b>
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	
Jenna Morley, City Solicitor	
Ian Semple, Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	Not required

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**Options/Discussion:****Background**

The property known municipally as 38 Cowdy Street was formerly the Frontenac Public School, previously owned by the Limestone District School Board (LDSB). The site is approximately 0.64 hectares (1.59 acres) with frontage on Adelaide Street and Cowdy Street and directly abuts the City-owned Frontenac School Parkette (Frontenac Park), which is approximately 0.73 hectares (1.8 acres).

In January 2023, the City entered into a short-term lease with LDSB to operate an overnight drop-in shelter at the site, operated by Lionhearts Inc. The City purchased the property in May 2023 for \$1,450,000. A building condition assessment completed at the time of purchase identified that millions of dollars in investment would be required to bring the building to current municipal and accessibility standards for any long term use.

Given these constraints, staff assessed the property for parkland and housing potential. The site was deemed well suited to parkland expansion due to its size and central neighbourhood location. The purchase was funded from the Parkland Reserve Fund with the intent to demolish the former school and create a combined park area of up to 1.37 hectares (3.4 acres). Limited housing opportunities along the street frontage were identified at the time of purchase for future consideration in the site's development.

**Temporary Shelter Operations at 38 Cowdy Street**

Since 2023, the Adelaide Street Shelter has provided critically needed emergency accommodations. The shelter was always intended as a temporary response, with Council direction to reduce geographic concentration of shelter and housing services and to avoid further stigmatization of vulnerable populations.

Aligned to the intent to wind down and end emergency shelter services offered at 38 Cowdy Street, \$6.2 million was included in the 2025 Housing & Social Services capital budget to support the creation of new emergency shelter capacity. On September 2, 2025, through [Report Number 25-218](#), Council further directed staff to pursue residential properties for conversion into 7–8 bed supportive housing sites.

With these intents, the closure of the Adelaide Street Shelter is accommodated by:

- The opening of the Sydenham Road emergency shelter (early Q1 2026); and
- At minimum, the opening of two supportive housing (Q1 2026).

Intensive coordinated access and case management is underway with persons accessing services at Adelaide Street Shelter and these efforts will continue following the closure to support transitions for shelter residents and to direct service needs in consideration of existing shelter system capacity

The province recently announced that funding for safe injection sites including the Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) located at the Integrated Care Hub will be ending June 13, 2026.

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It is important to note that the shelter beds currently located at the Integrated Care Hub will continue to operate as they are not directly impacted by this announcement and closure of the CTS. City staff will work with Addiction & Mental Health Services on retaining the 24 beds within the City in the long term as it is likely that there will be a service transition when the CTS closes in June.

## Public Engagement

Public engagement on the wind down of emergency shelter services at Adelaide Street Shelter and future use of the site took place at the Inform, Consult and Collaborate levels of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation from September 2024 to December 2025. At the Inform level, staff shared information about shelter operations with the wider Kingston community on Get Involved Kingston and used Canada Post to deliver letters directly to 445 homes around the shelter, representing an approximate 150 metre radius of the shelter. At the Consult and Collaborate levels, staff engaged directly with near-neighbours and shelter clients by hosting three community meetings and three surveys. Staff used social media, Get Involved Kingston and Canada Post to communicate engagement opportunities with near-neighbours. Input collected at the Consult and Collaborate levels was used to inform decisions around shelter security and property maintenance around the shelter. Throughout the engagement timeframe, an "Ask A Question" form was available on Get Involved Kingston, and the FAQ section was updated with questions submitted online and in-person.

## Engagement Activities and Feedback Themes

A community meeting was held at Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School on May 13, 2025, with approximately 50 participants attending. At this meeting, City staff provided updates on the emergency shelter wind down timeline and reviewed operational changes needed to address concerns shared by community members and shelter users. A follow up meeting to discuss these concerns and collaborate on solutions was held on June 11, 2025 with approximately 60 participants. Feedback focused on mitigating current shelter impacts and future site vision.

Four key themes emerged regarding potential future site uses:

- Community amenities
- Housing
- Community centre space with programming opportunities
- Expanded green space

On December 10, 2025, staff hosted a near-neighbour meeting at Zion United Church with 12 people attending, representing a combination of residents and housing advocates. Through a presentation to attendees, staff confirmed the City's intent to demolish the building and expand the park while exploring housing along Cowdy Street. During the meeting, staff collected feedback about this intended use. To supplement in-person engagement, a survey was hosted on Get Involved Kingston from December 22, 2025 to January 14, 2026 to collect comments about proposed parkland and housing on the site. Five comments were submitted during the engagement period.

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### Summary of In-Person and Online Feedback

- Participants express support for mixed-use park and modest housing, expanded green space.
- Participants expressed concerns about transparency of the engagement process, lack of follow through on theme of community centre space, park functionality, safety and the scale of housing development.
- Participants request that any housing on the site is affordable/attainable housing, small-scale in form and that the park design is accessible.

Feedback from community members about communications and public engagement during engagement on Adelaide Street Shelter will be considered as part of the Council-directed review of these processes.

### Considerations of Building Condition

In further consideration of the Building Condition Assessment prepared for 38 Cowdy Street, the building would require approximately \$6.3 million in capital maintenance/repair over the next ten years to maintain safe and functional operations. Of this total, approximately \$4.1 million would be needed most immediately, following the closure of Adelaide Street Shelter operations and the ending of vocational laundry services at this site to address structural, mechanical, electrical and building envelope work. Repair and replacement work is also required for the underground sanitary system and costs for this work are unknown until the work is undertaken. Select emergency work was already completed on this system in 2025 to ensure the continued safe operation of the shelter and this work has re-emphasized the need for more wholistic interventions should the site be used beyond the term of the current emergency shelter operations and limited planned vocational laundry service operations.

After more detailed consideration of the building condition and recent emergency repairs completed on the site, staff do not feel that a continued exploration of community uses is warranted.

### Post Wind Down of Emergency Shelter Services

Following the wind down of emergency shelter services on March 31, 2026, the building will be closed to the public. Lionhearts Inc. is interested in remaining on site for up to 6 months to continue the operation of their vocational laundry program that provides laundry service to emergency shelters across the City. These laundry services are intended to transition to 315 Queen Mary Road; however, that site is not yet ready to accommodate this use as renovations are still being completed. As a result, staff are recommending through this report that Council support an up to 6 month lease to allow this laundry program to continue without interruption. Over the lease term, the City will carry base facility costs, anticipated at not more than \$50,000 with these expenses being absorbed within existing emergency housing capital/operating budgets. Staff will negotiate a lease agreement with Lionhearts for the entire site including Frontenac Park, which will remain closed to the public during this time. As leaseholder, Lionhearts will be responsible for oversight and security of the entire site, including Frontenac Parkette and will be responsible for and expected to address any trespass or criminal activities

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should they arise. The City will support coordination with Street Outreach teams if needed and will remain available to support near neighbours through existing channels if specific concerns arise in relation to the site and this lease use.

### **Demolition, Potential Housing Development and Park Expansion Options**

As part of the demolition project, the to-be-confirmed footprint of the future park will be restored to a base park condition consisting of appropriate grading, suitable base materials, and seeded grass to ensure safe use and ease of maintenance. Recreation & Leisure Services has allocated \$200,000 toward this base-level site development. Facilities Management & Construction Services (FMCS) is responsible for demolition, with a project budget of approximately \$600,000. The shifting of demolition from Q2 to Q4 may require additional funding beyond the \$600,000 currently allocated and this will be brought forward if needed in the Q3 report to Council. Completion of demolition is planned for Q4 2026 and base site restoration is anticipated by summer 2027.

Following demolition, a portion of the property is proposed to be severed for residential development, with the remainder retained and consolidated with Frontenac Parkette. Increases to the size of the Frontenac Parkette would change its classification from a parkette to a neighbourhood park due to the increase in size and types of amenities that may be included in the redesign.

The site was previously identified as well suited for parkland expansion due to its size, configuration and central neighbourhood location. Initial facility fit tests of the site demonstrate that there are opportunities to include certain sport amenities that are required to meet service levels, as identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Sizing and timing for the creation and sale of the residential lots will be coordinated through Planning and Real Estate services, subject to statutory approvals and market considerations. Through the recent Council approval of the North Kings Town Secondary Plan, the site was designated Residential and rezoned to the Urban Residential 11 Zone (URM11). The URM11 Zone permits apartment buildings, mixed commercial-residential buildings, townhomes and stacked townhomes.

Site options will be developed for the different permitted uses to evaluate how many units can be facilitated on a parcel that fronts onto Cowdy Street with the balance of the site being added to increase the size of the park. Site plans and 3D renderings will help with future consultations and market evaluations of the residential parcel. Development options will be reviewed by internal departments for all technical matters.

As the land was originally purchased using the Parkland Reserve Fund, the proceeds of the sale of the severed residential lots will be directed back to the Parkland Reserve Fund to support future parkland expansion. Costs for the development and amenities of the expanded Frontenac Park will be included in the 2027 capital budget.

The Adelaide Street community, including those currently registered and receiving updates through the 38 Cowdy Street – Get Involved Kingston project page, will be provided the opportunity to provide feedback on proposed options for the expansion of Frontenac Parkette

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and any housing development. Feedback gathered will help shape the options staff develop and bring forward to Council for consideration by the end of the third quarter this year.

**Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IIDEA) Considerations**

Expanded parkland and attainable housing support inclusive access to public space and housing options. Accessibility standards will be addressed through future park design.

**Existing Policy/By-Law**

The proposal aligns with zoning (Urban Multi-Residential 11), the Official Plan, the Housing & Homelessness Strategy and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

**Notice Provisions**

Municipalities are exempt from the land subdivision controls in the *Planning Act*. Therefore, the City is not required to give notice to any person of its intention to divide the land at 38 Cowdy Street.

The 38 Cowdy Street property is zoned the Urban Multi-Residential 11 Zone which permits a range of residential uses. Planning Services will develop options whereby a purchaser can build without having to apply for an amendment to the *Zoning By-Law*. Therefore, the City will not need to give notice to any person under the *Planning Act*.

The lands being added to the Frontenac Parkette will have to be rezoned from Urban Multi-Residential 11 Zone to an Open Space 2 Zone (OS2) to reflect its use as a park. Staff expect to bring a site specific zoning by-law amendment to Council for consideration at a later date once Council has decided on an option for development. Notice for this change will be provided in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

**Financial Considerations**

The adopted 2026 capital budget includes funding to demolish the existing building and return the site to green space within the first half of the year. Changes to the proposed plan that result in budget estimate amendments will be brought to Council for consideration through future reporting. The costs associated with the proposed 6 month lease agreement with Lionhearts Inc. in support of the vocational laundry program will be covered through existing and aligned capital and operating budgets in Housing and Social Services.

**Contacts:**

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**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

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Amy Elgersma, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services

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Speros Kanellos, Director, Facility Management & Construction Services

Andrew Reeson, Senior Legal Counsel, Legal Services

James Bar, Manager, Development Approvals, Planning Services

**Exhibits Attached:**

None