

Overdose Prevention Site



An overdose prevention site (OPS) facility is meant to address an immediate need in the community. OPS can be set up quickly under the Provincial Emergency Order because they don't require a Federal exemption and do not need to seek municipal approvals.

CITY OF NANAIMO

Timeline	April 2016: BC Declaration of Public Health Emergency.	Nanaimo) made a application for an	Health (via the City of a site-specific rezoning o SCS at 437 Wesley Street. ed at Public Hearing.
December 2014: Nanaimo Overdose Prevention Working Group Formed.	January 2017: Island Health opens OPS at 437 Wesley Street with City lease agreement and support in principle.		February 2018: Community Action Team established in Nanaimo (peer-based intervention, facilitation of collaborative, crowd-source innovation specific to isolated users) with one-time funding of \$100K from Province.

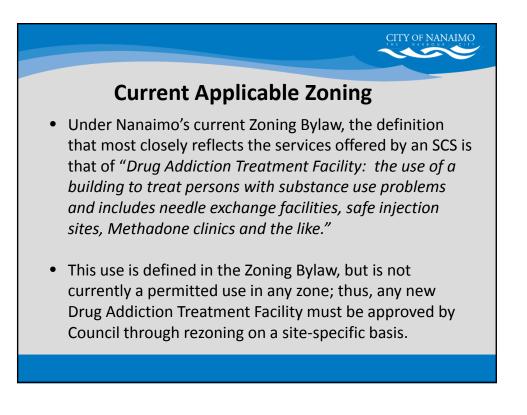
Municipal Role in SCS Siting

1) Can Provide Input for Federal Exemption Application

Application for an SCS requires the applicant undertake general community consultation and include a report on activities and a plan to address any concerns; however, <u>the application no longer</u> requires specific input from the local government.

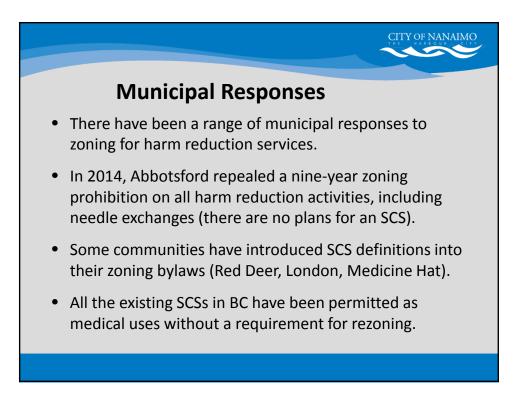
2) Land Use Zoning

Different municipalities have taken various approaches, from approving as site-specific use to including SCS as a health service. Appropriate zoning is not considered in the exemption process but is a requirement for adherence to local government bylaws.



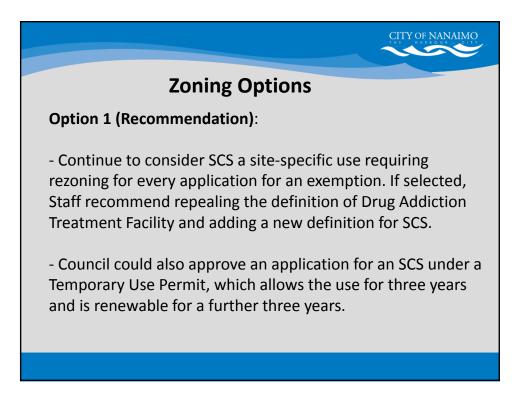
Opinion from MHO

- On 2019-MAY-23, Staff received a letter from Nanaimo's Medical Health Officer (MHO) requesting that the definition for 'Drug Addiction Treatment Facility' be removed from the Zoning Bylaw and that an SCS be considered part of 'Medical/Dental Office,' which is permitted in most commercial and mixed-use zones.
- The municipality has received ongoing input from the MHO that an SCS is an essential health service and that zoning regulations distinguishing this service from any other health service are discriminatory and stigmatizing towards drug users.



Considerations

- An SCS is definitely a health service; but there is precedent in the Zoning Bylaw for requiring site-specific zoning for uses that have the potential for greater community impact (e.g., Cannabis Retail Store, Liquor Retail Store).
- While some SCSs may include wrap-around services, right now we have no information on what these would/could be given resource constraints.
- Once zoning is in place, under existing regulations Council would not be able to put additional conditional of approval on the operation of an SCS (e.g., site management).



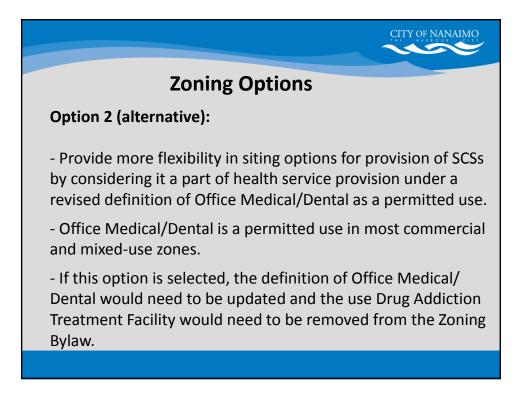
Zoning Options

Advantages:

- Allows Council greater control over the location of permanent health services that have the potential for significant community impact
- Permits Council to add conditions of rezoning approval

Disadvantages:

- Less flexibility in siting options for the SCS applicant, and potentially less ability to respond to opiate crisis
- Could be seen as stigmatizing towards substance users



Zoning Options

Advantages:

- Would strengthen relationship with Health Authority by demonstrating trust in their siting process
- Would ensure harm reduction services will be in place indefinitely to serve vulnerable populations/reduce deaths

Disadvantages:

- City would not have substantive role in site selection
- May create site-management issues that end up being addressed by RCMP and Bylaws (e.g., Wesley St.)



