

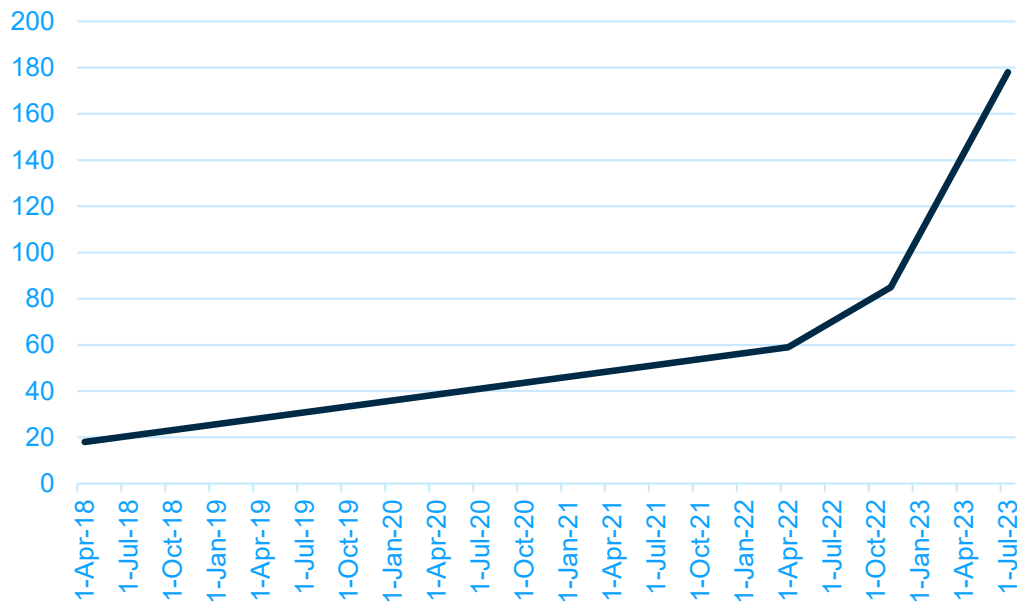
HALIFAX

Homelessness Update

Item #: 15.1.7

Date: September 12, 2023

Growing homelessness crisis



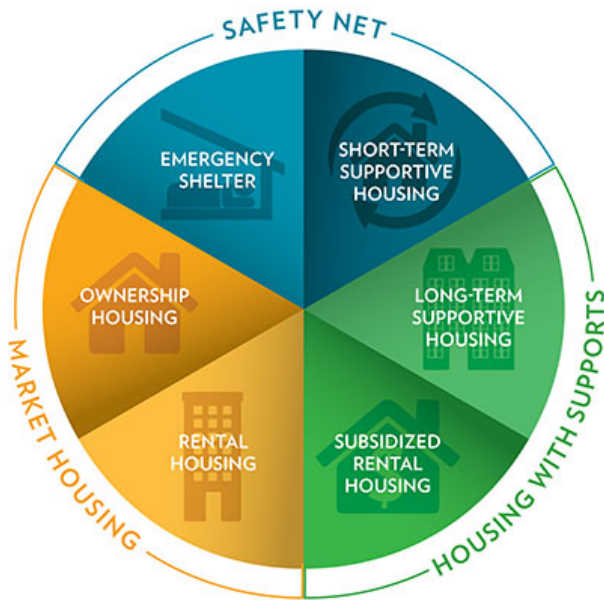
Number of unhoused

2018: 18 people
April 2022: 59 people
Nov. 2022: 85 people
July 2023: 178 people

Housing and sheltering growth

- Over the past year the Province of Nova Scotia has added 64 beds to the shelter system and opened 304 new supportive housing units.
- 5 designated locations.
- 62 non designated locations.

The solution



Deeply affordable housing

- Housing geared to income.
- Safe, supportive, sustainable, and accessible.
- Can't be built and operated by the private market without support.

The future

- More than 30,000 households in HRM are in core housing need.
- January 1, 2024: 5% rent increases.
- Population increasing faster than housing stock.
- No public plans in place to address the need for deeply affordable housing.

Designated locations

- Currently 5 locations, most overcrowded
- Large non designated spaces such as Victoria Park and Grand Parade plus approximately 30 small ones
- Need to designated 18 – 20 park space now with an additional 20 next year

Immediate response

New designated locations

- Grand Parade
- Victoria Park
- Halifax Commons (2 stages)
- Others as needed

Immediate response

- Share the park initiatives
- Leasing of private land
- Use of right of ways
- Parking lots
- Surplus municipal land
- Other types of municipal properties

Other considerations & initiatives

- Temporary housing options
- Tiny homes
- Vehicle parking

- Climate change
- Increased humanitarian aid and supports for encampments

Risk

- More dramatic increases in the numbers of people sleeping rough.
- Private landowners do not choose to participate.
- Extreme weather creates greater need to humanitarian aid and supports.

Recommendations

1. direct the CAO to lease private property, if possible, as locations for persons experiencing homelessness to shelter.
2. endorse an exception to the June 14, 2022, criteria prohibiting the use of active sports fields for homeless encampments for use of the Halifax Common camping for the purpose of sheltering.

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Recommendations

3. direct the CAO to establish additional encampments, temporary housing, or tiny home's locations on all types of municipality-owned properties. Such sites may include rights of way, parking lots, and surplus lands.
4. direct the CAO to write to the province requesting their immediate plans to create deeply affordable housing options in HRM.

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Recommendations

5. direct the CAO to explore the options of the non-park property types outlined in this report, as well as campgrounds, and outdoor facilities, as locations for unhoused persons who are sheltering in a vehicle.