

Re: Item No. 15.1.5

HALIFAX

A Framework to Address Homelessness In Halifax Regional Municipality

February 21, 2023

Considerations about homelessness crisis

- Growth in people sleeping outside (2018-2022): 18 to 108 (500%)
- Lack of housing stock
- Market alone will not solve the problem
- Lack of access to health care
- Marginalized groups dramatically overrepresented
- Sector capacity
- Provincial rent cap

Current situation highlights

- The Overlook: 65 units: approximately 50% full
- North Park Street Shelter: 40 beds, full every night
- Dartmouth overnight shelter: varied attendance
- Sackville overnight shelter & warming centre: varied attendance
- Over 100 people residing in hotels.
- Number of encampment sites in HRM: 19 locations including:
 - 5 Designated locations
 - Dartmouth: Geary St. & Green Road – often over capacity
 - Halifax: Lower Flynn & Barrington Greenway – Lower Flynn over capacity and space is available at Barrington Greenway
 - Sackville: Correctional Centre Ball Field – has limited capacity

Recent and pending housing projects:

~ 178 units to be occupied or built

<u><i>Project Name</i></u>	<u><i># of Units</i></u>	<u><i>Location</i></u>	<u><i>Project Completion</i></u>
• Dartmouth Modular site	26 units	Dartmouth	Completed
• Halifax Modular site	38 units	Halifax	Completed
• Unnamed project	7 units	Halifax	Completed
• The Blue Building	11 units	Halifax	Completed
• The Sunflower	25 units	Lakeside	Completed
• The Overlook	65 units	Dartmouth	Completed (50% Occ.)
• Diamond Baily	21 units	Halifax	Spring 2023
• Unnamed project	8 units	Dartmouth	Spring 2023
• Unnamed project	12 Units	Eastern Shore	Spring 2023
• Truth North	44 Units	Dartmouth	Fall/Winter 2023
• SHYM (YWCA)	4 Units	Halifax	Summer 2023
• Compass NS	57 Units	Dartmouth	2024

Framework

Vision

That every resident of the Halifax Regional Municipality has a safe, supportive, and sustainable home and that all homes are purposely constructed for long-term human habitation, built to safety codes and standards, and in a suitable location based on access to transportation and amenities and municipal planning strategies.

Roles for the municipality

The Province of Nova Scotia holds the formal responsibilities for social services, health care, and housing. People with no place to go often end up sheltering in parks or other municipal property. HRM has four roles it can play in helping to address the homelessness crisis.

1. Supporting all residents sheltering outside
2. Supporting precariously housed persons and families to stay housed
3. Supporting public education efforts
4. Facilitating the construction and maintenance of affordable and deeply affordable housing

1. Supporting Residents Sheltering Outside

The municipality will help to support individuals experiencing homelessness that have no option but to shelter outside.

Outcomes

- Improved quality of life and general health for those forced to shelter outside.
- A reduction in harmful behaviours committed against persons experiencing homelessness.
- A decrease in the negative impacts of people being forced to shelter outside.

2. Supporting precariously housed persons and families to stay housed

Based on the principle of cooperation, the municipality does not have a unique role in this area and, therefore, will not launch its own diversion activities but rather support the existing efforts of other orders of government and service providers.

Outcomes

- A reduction in the number of new people experiencing homelessness and the number of chronically homeless.

3. Supporting public education efforts

As part of its approach to assisting people experiencing homelessness, the municipality, based on the principle of cooperation, will partner and support experts' work to educate the public about the issues and how they can help.

Outcomes

- A reduction in harmful behaviours committed against persons experiencing homelessness.
- An increase in appropriate community support for persons experiencing homelessness.
- A reduction in the number of people experiencing homelessness.

4. Facilitating the construction and maintenance of affordable and deeply affordable housing

The municipality is already active in this work through initiatives such as zoning changes that allow backyard and secondary suites. Efforts will continue to support the development of homes people can afford based on their income.

Outcomes

- An increase in the number of affordable and deeply affordable housing units available for rent in the municipality.
- A reduction in the number of people experiencing homelessness.

Level 1: Do what we are doing

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Maintenance, garbage, and waste management – encampments	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Training & education	\$14,500	\$14,500	\$14,500
Portable toilets	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
Water delivery	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Outreach support	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Emergency shelter support (est. three events/year)	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Administrative Support/Office Expenses	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Public Education	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Point in time counts and data collection	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Lived experience committee	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Survival supplies	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Total	\$582,500	\$582,500	\$582,500

Incremental funding required: \$334,800

Level 2: New Operational Actions

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Diversion Support	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Provision of power to designated locations	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$90,000
Provision of running water to designated locations (9 months/year)	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Additional Navigator - Funding for this position is included in the Navigator Expansion Report	—	—	—
Supports for Additional Navigator	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
HRMs contribution to a Day time support centre – 365 days/year – in 2023-2024 starts July 1st	\$598,000	\$744,000	\$744,000
Total	\$798,000	\$944,000	\$964,000

Level 3: For future consideration

	Est. cost
Tiny home project	\$2,500,000
“To-code” Shelters	\$168,000
Total	\$2,668,000

Recommendation

It is recommended that Regional Council

- 1) approve *A Framework to Address Homelessness in the Halifax Regional Municipality* (Attachment A) as a document to guide the municipality's activities in the area of homelessness;
- 2) direct funding in the amount of \$334,800 to maintain the current level of services as identified in Table 1 in the financial implications section be added to the 2023/24 Budget Adjustment List; and
- 3) direct funding in the amount of up to \$798,000 for Proposed initiatives as identified in Table 2 in the financial implications section be added to the 2023/24 Budget Adjustment List, conditional on the cost for the daytime drop-in centre being shared equally with the Province of Nova Scotia such that HRM's share not exceed an annual cost of \$744,000.