

2015 /16 PROGRESS REPORT ON NEW SUPPORTIVE HOUSING TO END HOMELESSNESS

TORONTO MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING NETWORK

We are organizations that provide housing with support to people recovering from mental health and addictions challenges who were formerly homeless or at risk of homelessness. Together we use a range of different approaches to provide 5000 units of supportive housing across Toronto.

We Believe:

- Safe and affordable housing is a basic human right and a platform for mental health recovery and healthy living.
- Permanent supportive housing contributes to housing stability, tenant recovery and quality of life.
- Toronto needs a coordinated Supportive Housing system with a diversity of flexible approaches to meet the changing needs and desires of existing clients, tenants and applicants.

For more information about our network, visit our web site at WWW.TOSUPPORTIVEHOUSING.CA

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLES LIVES

“Having a stable place to stay and call my own has been amazing. I am doing a lot better most of the time, as I do not have to deal with the day to day stressors of the shelter or the streets. Having my own place makes me feel like I am more independent and have more control over my life.”

(Michelle)

“I couldn’t really live or start to enjoy life until I found supportive housing for women with mental health issues. I felt really fortunate to have a spot there because they gave me lots of help and support. The staff are strong female role models and my best friends are women that I met while living there. Supportive housing has definitely changed my life for the better.”

(Cathy)

THE NEED FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GROWING

This progress report is intended to assess the progress that we are making in Toronto in responding to the need for supportive housing. The tables on the following pages show that:

- Housing Affordability is a Key Issue for people working for minimum wage or living on social assistance - and it’s getting worse!
- Housing Need in the City of Toronto is Growing
- New Affordable and Supportive Housing is Needed

THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE IT BETTER

In the Spring of 2016, both the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario indicated in their budgets the intention to spend money to support the development of affordable and supportive housing. These expenditures are expected to begin to address the significant needs identified in this report card.

As well, the governments indicated their intention to develop new frameworks for affordable and supportive housing. The Federal Government will consult over the next year on the development of a National Housing Strategy and the Ontario Government’s Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy will include a Supportive Housing Policy Framework.

The Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network will work with the government and other committed partners to ensure that these expenditures and policy frameworks include measures to address the significant needs identified in this report card.

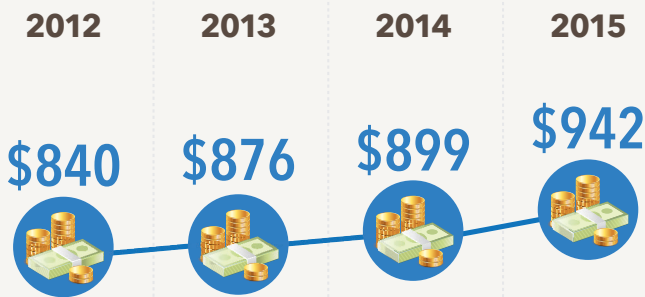


Housing Affordability is a Key Problem (and it's getting worse!)

People working for minimum wage or living on social assistance can't afford to pay Toronto's high rents.

AVERAGE MARKET RENTS

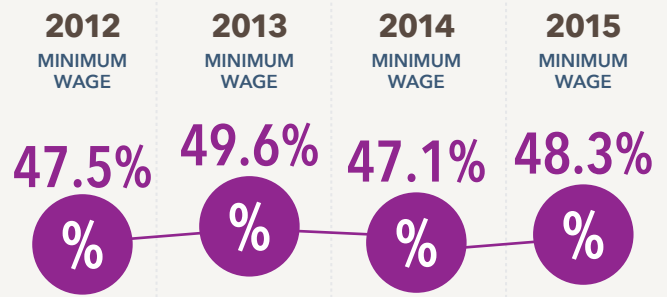
Average Market Rents continue to increase year over year. The average rent for a bachelor apartment **increased by \$23** from 2013 to 2014 and an **additional \$43** by 2015. While single people also live in 1 bedroom apartments or single rooms, with higher or lower rents, the bachelor rate is used as a reasonable benchmark.



AVERAGE MARKET RENT (BACHELOR UNIT)

MINIMUM WAGE

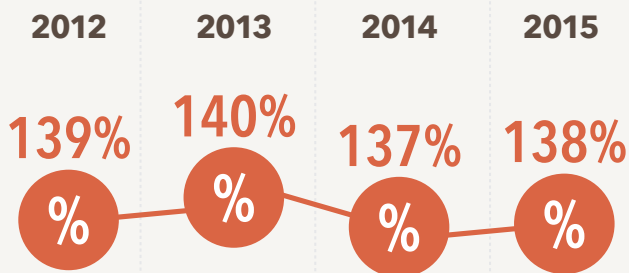
Incomes have not increased to keep pace with the increase in rents. The minimum wage remained the same for several years and increased only slightly in 2014 and 2015 to **\$11.25**. A person working 40 hours a week at minimum wage would still need to pay more than **48% of their gross income for rent**, leaving little for food and other necessities.



% REQUIRED FOR AVERAGE RENT

ONTARIO WORKS

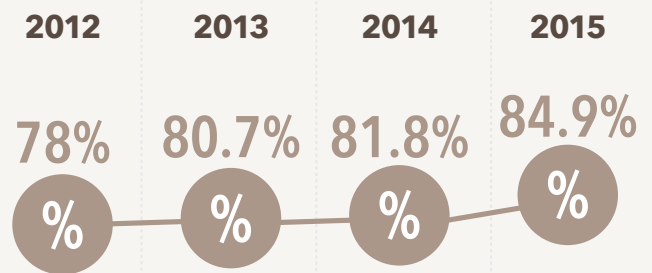
People who live on social assistance have even more difficulty affording housing in the market. The allowance for a single person on Ontario Works increased slightly over the 4 years. By the end of 2015, the **total benefit was \$681 a month**, of which **\$376 is intended for housing costs and the remainder for basic needs like food and clothing**. The person would need more than their entire benefit to pay average market rent.



% REQUIRED FOR AVERAGE RENT

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

People who receive Ontario Disability Supports are only marginally better off. The allowance for a single person on ODSP **increased by \$35 over the 4 years**. By the end of 2015, the **total benefit was \$1110 a month** of which **\$479 is for housing**. The proportion of the benefit needed for rent is increasing year by year.



% REQUIRED FOR AVERAGE RENT

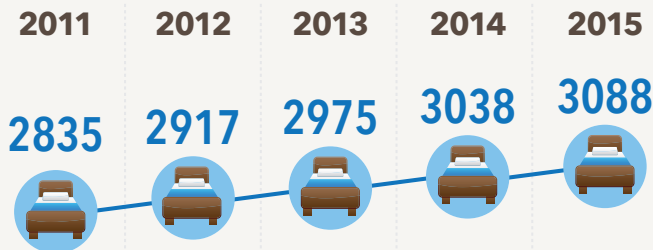


Key Indicators of Housing Need in the City of Toronto

The overall picture for affordable housing in the City of Toronto is becoming more challenging every year. Waiting lists for subsidized housing, the proportion of the rental housing stock that is vacant, and the number of people using emergency shelters are all indicators of the level of unmet need for affordable housing.

EMERGENCY SHELTER USE BY SINGLE PEOPLE

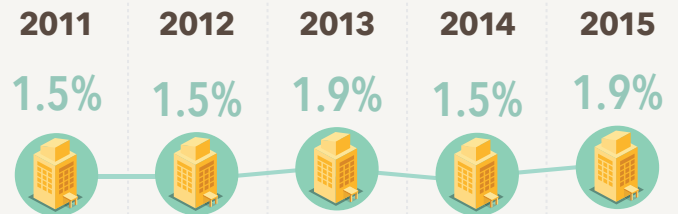
Emergency shelter use is an indicator of the rate of homelessness and the lack of affordable housing. The numbers shown are for single people and do not include couples or families with children. About **45% of the individuals** on the waiting list for supportive housing report that they **are homeless or at risk of homelessness**.



EMERGENCY SHELTER USE BY SINGLE PEOPLE (AVG. NO. BY NIGHT)

VACANCY RATE FOR BACHELOR APARTMENTS IN TORONTO

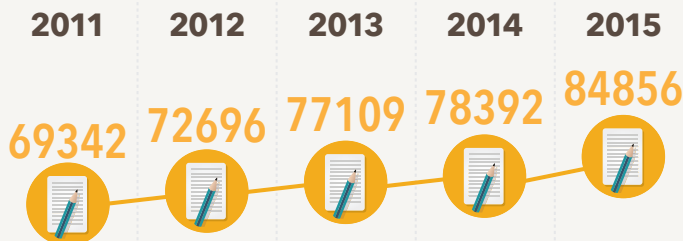
Every October Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation does a survey of all rental housing in buildings with over 3 units to identify the proportion of units vacant on that date. The lower the vacancy rate, the more difficult it is for a person to find a place to rent. Experts suggest that a **4% vacancy rate** is needed to ensure that people have the opportunity to find the housing they need.



VACANCY RATE FOR BACHELOR APARTMENTS IN TORONTO

HOUSEHOLDS ON ACTIVE WAITING LIST FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

Toronto Housing Connections maintains a centralized waiting list for all of the subsidized housing in the City. The number of households on the list **increased steadily over the 5 years** up to 2015. The Access list for supportive housing is, for the most part, over and above these numbers.



HOUSEHOLDS ON ACTIVE WAIT LIST FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

THE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WAITING LIST IS GROWING

The chart indicates the rate of growth in the Access List for Mental Health & Addictions housing and support in Toronto over a period of 5 years. Below the chart are the number of people housed off the waiting list each year. At the current rate, the **wait could be as long as 27 years**.













New Affordable and Supportive Housing is Needed

While the documented demand for supportive housing continues to grow dramatically, we are not producing enough new supportive housing to respond to the need.

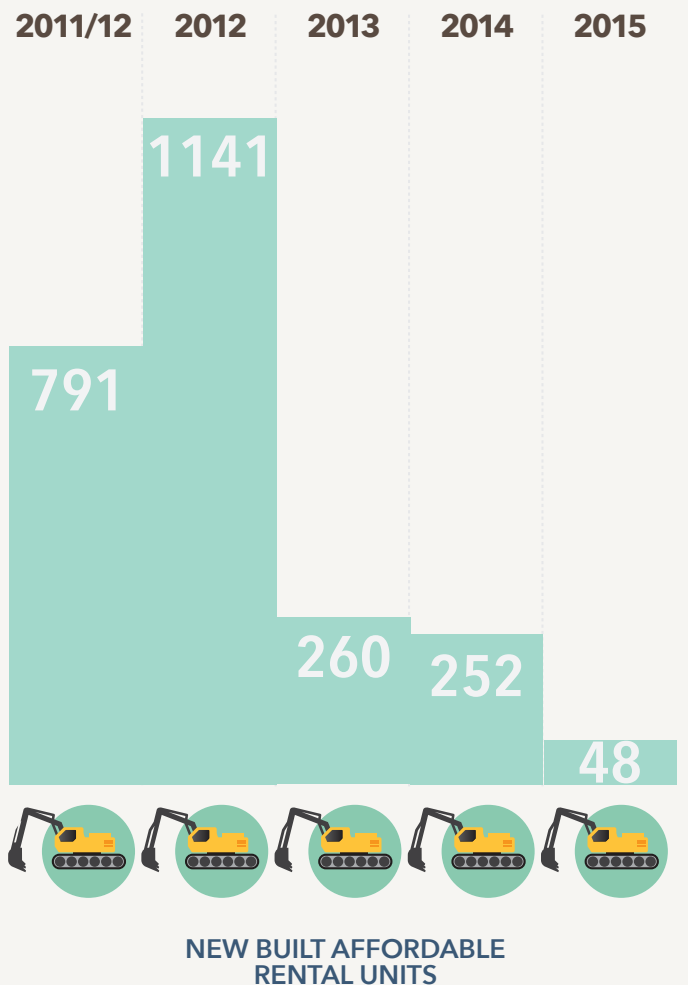
NEW SUPPORTIVE HOUSING MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

The demand for supportive housing could be addressed by building new housing or by providing rent supplements - subsidies to help people pay the rent in private housing. The table illustrates the number of new units of supportive housing provided.¹

2012	2013	2014	2015
			
NEW BUILT UNITS			
0	0	0	0
			
NEW RENT SUPPLEMENT UNITS			
272	216	8	85
TOTAL NEW UNITS	TOTAL NEW UNITS	TOTAL NEW UNITS	TOTAL NEW UNITS

NEW AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING CITY OF TORONTO

At the same time, there is a need for new affordable housing² for a range of different populations. Very little new affordable rental housing has been built in Toronto in the past few years.



¹ Units are sometimes announced in one year and are taken up by tenants in a subsequent year, leading to some variation in the number by year. The numbers indicate that the magnitude of new units is very small by comparison with the waiting list.

² Affordable Housing is used to describe housing which rents for 80% of the average market rent as determined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE

The Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network welcomes the commitment of the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario to funding the development of significant amounts of affordable housing, including development of a range of approaches to supportive housing to meet the needs of a diverse population.