

The Halifax Affordable Housing Community Land Trust Initiative

HRM is currently in a housing crisis. There is a lack of quality, sustainable, affordable housing in the community. With stagnant incomes, record high real estate and rental prices, limited housing supply, growing demand, and an under-developed non-profit sector that struggles to access capital funding, there is a growing population unable to find and keep affordable housing. Data suggests that the number of individuals living in a state of homelessness in Halifax has nearly doubled since 2018 (2022 Point in Time Count).

One possible solution: Community Land Trusts (CLTs).

Community land trusts have existed for decades in the U.S. and U.K. and have proven to be a way to keep housing available and affordable for marginalized community members. A CLT is a community-based non-profit organization that owns land and puts it to use for community benefit.

CLTs often address issues of housing affordability, gentrification, social equity, food security, inclusion, resource conservation, and more. The trust owns and manages this land outside the real estate market by holding and stewarding land and other public assets on behalf of community in perpetuity. This limits inflationary pressures and related cost increases. CLTs also provide social enterprise opportunities and, in many cases, opportunities to build generational wealth for Black and Indigenous people who have missed these opportunities due to colonization.

Goals of the Halifax Community Land Trust project:

Establish a CLT that serves as a response to the systemic roots of housing insecurity, through the stewardship of a growing portfolio of safe, secure, and sustainable housing opportunities. The values of equity, diversity and inclusion are embedded in this project, making it unique for Halifax. We see tremendous potential in areas such as social and economic equity, community resilience, and non-profit sector development capacity, all of which will remain key priorities throughout the project. Some examples in other parts of Canada include accessible and affordable housing for people with disabilities and rental units for seniors living on a low income. The final design of the CLT will depend on the interests and the opportunities identified by community consultation – especially those most marginalized.

Through our work with community, Davis Pier, and the Housing and Homelessness Partnership, we believe we have established the level of support required from key stakeholders to make a Halifax CLT a viable housing solution for generations to come.

Learn more:

Thank you for your interest in this project. If you are interested in learning more about how a CLT could benefit your community or would like to discuss how you and/or your organization can take part in our CLT initiative, please reach out to our team at anytime.

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