

THE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PARTNERSHIP Charter

The Mandate

The Housing and Homelessness Partnership (The Partnership) exists to put an end to homelessness and housing poverty in the Halifax Region.

The Partnership

We are a collaborative, multi-sectoral group of 9 organizations committed to working together differently to achieve revolutionary change:

- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia
- Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation
- Capital District Health Authority
- Halifax Regional Municipality
- Housing Nova Scotia
- Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia
- IWK Health Centre
- Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
- United Way Halifax

The Work

The Partnership will have two streams of thought and action. They are of equal weight, will launch simultaneously and run concurrently:

1. We will address homelessness using a variety of evidence-based approaches to systems change for improved outcomes.
2. We will upgrade, preserve and expand the existing stock of affordable housing so as to address core housing need over the middle to longer term.

Accomplishing the work will involve, as a minimum:

- a. Developing an understanding of the issues around and barriers to addressing homelessness through the provision of housing;
- b. Devising a plan for addressing the issues and eliminating the barriers;
- c. Operationalizing an implementation program that is informed by a community engagement program;
- d. Monitoring and improving upon those programs as necessary;
- e. Changing the plan as necessary; and
- f. Regularly reporting on the plan.

Our Collective Beliefs and Commitments

1. The Partnership is committed to applying a social determinants of health lens to examining the issues and developing solutions.
2. We believe in housing first principles (see Appendix A) and that they speak to both homelessness and affordable housing.

Collective Beliefs and Commitments (cont'd)

3. We believe that a shelter is not a home and that approaches must be tailored to the unique circumstances of homeless persons.
4. We believe that working together differently for revolutionary change involves finding systemic solutions that span traditional boundaries. We see this as prerequisite to collective success and will look at changing our respective policies and practices to enable it.
5. We will adopt outcome-oriented indicators and other measures for monitoring and reporting. We will all own each of the outcomes equally, choosing targets that mark our progress.
6. Those to whom we are accountable have given us the power and reasonable scope of resources to advance the work.
 - a. We will include measurable goals and further refine each partner organization's roles and contributions in this Charter once a Work Plan has been developed.
 - b. Each partner organization will make contributions that are within its mandate and use the tools within its jurisdiction.
 - c. We are willing to use our public relations capacity to advance the conversation and the work.
7. In addition to a shared accountability to the broader community, we accept mutual accountability to one another for active participation, preserving timelines and sustaining momentum.
8. We believe that transparent communications and evidence-informed decision-making will be key to doing our work differently and gaining the trust and buy-in of all stakeholders.

Our Roles and Contributions

We intend to shape our roles and contributions to align with bold outcomes.

Partner Organization	Primary Contributions	Secondary Contributions
Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding, through our management of the Federal Government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice, counseling and experience regarding systemic problem solving
Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging federal resources by liaising with and coordinating the involvement of government departments • Contributing advice, counseling and experience in housing best practices, using our vast network to expedite progress. We will also connect to other CMHC resources such as market analysis, and underwriting, as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seed funding to qualified projects
Capital District Health Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing access to appropriate clinical support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to expertise for program evaluation

Our Roles and Contributions (cont'd)

Partner Organization	Primary Contributions	Secondary Contributions
Halifax Regional Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraging municipal resources by liaising with and coordinating the involvement of municipal departments and services. Exploring ways to positively impact affordable housing via programs, policies and regulations that the Municipality controls, as per the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community development/ engagement to build public understanding and acceptance of various forms of housing across the Municipality
Housing Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraging provincial resources by liaising with and coordinating the involvement of government departments including Community Services Holding and financing provincially-owned social housing assets in support of government's housing programs; securing and managing funding to support affordable and social housing development; providing mortgages and/or loans to qualifying housing projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the development of analytics to help understand the current situation and inform target setting and evaluation
IWK Health Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to appropriate clinical support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong advocacy. Access to expertise for program evaluation. Advice in policy and program development. Targeted training.
Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to existing rental apartments and supportive property owners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing insight and expertise regarding property management, operations and development.
United Way Halifax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner, Convener, Advocate, Funder and Researcher relative to innovative housing programs so that our community has a range of supportive and affordable housing in all areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective, appropriate advocacy and flexible funding capabilities focused on outcomes

The way we'll work together

1. Structure & Process:

- a. The '**Partners**' are the most senior appointed officials of the respective organizations. They are considered the 'champions' of this initiative within their organization and as such will be as personally invested as possible in the Partnership's activities.

The way we'll work together

Structure & Process (cont'd)

- b. The **Partnership** as a collective is the gathering of representatives for each of the 9 member organizations. It will be responsible for:
 - i. Establishing a common vision, strategic directions and goals;
 - ii. Adopting outcomes and other indicators;
 - iii. Endorsing Work Plans and associated indicator targets; and
 - iv. Monitoring progress.
 - c. Each organization will identify one representative for Partnership decision-making purposes. Others may attend but will not normally actively participate unless arranged in advance and in association with a specific agenda item.
 - d. The Partnership will meet more frequently until the vision, strategic directions, goals and outcomes have been agreed. Thereafter it is assumed that quarterly meetings would be scheduled.
 - e. Continuity is key to focus and momentum. It is hoped that the 'champion' for each organization would attend the majority of Partnership meetings. Alternates are not encouraged but understood to be sometimes necessary.
 - f. There will be **2 Working Groups**, one for homelessness, and a second for affordable housing. Members may include Partners but will also include others with particular content expertise or experience. The Working Groups should seek continuity by adopting the same discipline with respect to alternates.
 - g. The purpose of the Working Groups is primarily to recommend options for advancing the vision, strategic directions and goals that the Partnership has established. Once the Partnership has made decisions concerning the recommendations, the Working Groups will develop a more detailed Work Plan. They will also periodically report on progress and problems relative to the Work Plan.
 - h. The Partners will agree on a communication strategy to ensure the public is aware of its work and progress.
 - i. The Working Groups will ensure that the stakeholders have a reasonable opportunity for input to their respective processes.
2. **Decisions** of the Partnership and the Working Groups will ordinarily be made by consensus, meaning:
- a. General agreement (not unanimity on all points);
 - b. Commitment to funding will be considered by each organization;
 - c. Important needs or values will not be compromised; and
 - d. All involved can answer, "Yes" to the question: "*Will you support this decision outside the room?*"

The way we'll work together

Decisions (cont'd)

An exception for the Partnership will be the adoption of the Vision, Strategic Directions, Goals and Outcome Indicators. In that case, the Partners will vote [no alternates], indicating the commitment of their respective organization.

- 3. Logistics and Operational Support.** The United Way Halifax will play the role of secretariat to the Partnership, providing logistics and operational support. As a minimum, they will assume responsibility for Partnership support and project management (with stakeholder relations and government relations being other possibilities).

The agenda for Partnership meetings will align with the content and timing of the adopted Work Plan and will be distributed with supportive materials one week in advance of each meeting.

Further in principle, each partner will support in kind, the activities associated with its contributions and the work assigned to it.

Performance Evaluation

The Partnership will not only assess its progress toward adopted housing and homelessness targets, but also the participation and contribution of its respective members. This will happen as a minimum, annually.

Our Endorsement

As the most senior appointed officials of our respective organizations, we are signatories to this Charter.

Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia

Housing Nova Scotia

Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation

Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia

Capital District Health Authority

IWK Health Centre

Nova Scotia Department of Community Services

Halifax Regional Municipality

United Way Halifax

Appendix A

Principles behind our Housing First Approach

1. Client and staff relationships are grounded in respect and compassion.
2. Housing and other services are separate; acceptance of services or abstinence is not a requirement for accessing or maintaining housing.
3. Clients will have a choice in their housing options and standard lease provisions will apply.
4. Clients are supported to define their own goals and to progress toward them at their own speed; support is provided for as long as it is needed.
5. Client support is asset/strength based and embodies a recovery model.
6. Client support adopts a harm reduction approach for those clients with addictions and/or mental health issues.