

2015 Report on **Housing &** **Homelessness** in the City of Kingston & County of Frontenac

667 people used an emergency shelter in 2015 – down from 782 in 2014

2.8% – Kingston's vacancy rate increased in 2015

A balanced rental market is 3-5%

\$270,768

average home sale price in Kingston, down 8.3%

(MLS average sales from Feb 2015)

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Introduction

“One of the primary roles of the housing and social services department of the City of Kingston is to administer quality housing and homeless services delivered with the help of our community partners. Each year we highlight the successes of these programs and are pleased to release the fourth annual *Report on Housing & Homelessness*. You will find updates on the homeless-services system, which was implemented in 2015 as well as statistics on the housing incentive programs.”

– Sheldon Laidman
Director, housing and social services department

“Kingston city council continues to advance affordable housing, and specifically the implementation of the *10-Year Municipal Housing and Homelessness Plan*, as a key council priority. As this report will highlight, we continue to make progress on our goals, including the revitalization of Rideau Heights.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank our community partners who have been working with us to meet the diverse needs of our community in the creation of affordable housing and reducing homelessness.”

– Bryan Paterson
Mayor, City of Kingston

Average market rent (2015)

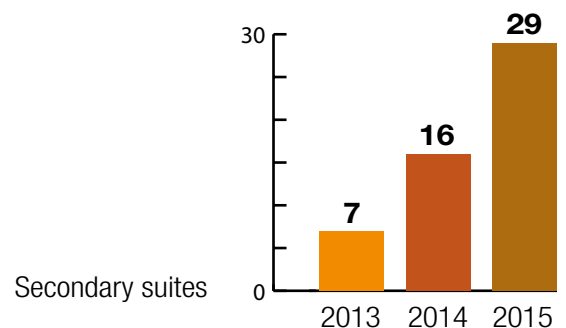
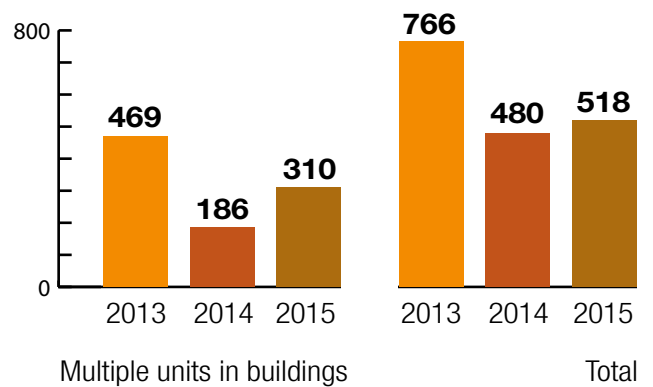
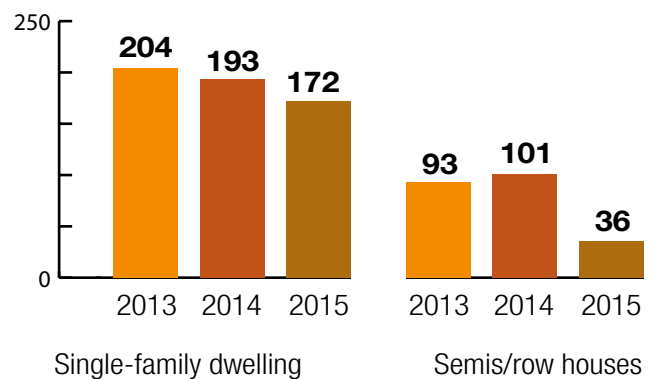


Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

New housing permits issued by community

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Kingston | 518 |
| North Frontenac | 28 |
| Central Frontenac | 18 |
| South Frontenac | 60 |
| Frontenac Islands | 9 |

Housing permits by unit type



Revitalizing Rideau Heights

In the spring of 2013, the City partnered with the Kingston and Frontenac Housing Corporation (KFHC) and began planning to revitalize social housing and public parklands in Rideau Heights. The first stage assessed the conditions and configurations of the 501 KFHC social housing units and the infrastructure that served them. Next, opportunities to enhance the neighbourhood design were evaluated.

Extensive feedback was collected from the community to understand the challenges and opportunities from the residents' perspectives. Feedback included a desire for the City and KFHC to continue to provide affordable, safe and healthy housing; improve connections throughout the neighbourhood; enhance parks and public spaces; support the development of a mixed-income community and continue to build trust and community support with visible successes and enhanced communication.

In November 2015, city council adopted the *Rideau Heights Regeneration Strategy* – a 20+ year plan to

revitalize the neighbourhood. Key components of the plan include:

- the new Rideau Heights Community Centre and library branch
- enhancements to Shannon Park and other recreational spaces
- redistribution of social housing to other areas of the city
- the introduction of mixed-income housing options including homes that are owned and homes that rent on the open market
- improved access for waste handling and emergency services
- improved transportation connections across the community and
- enhanced sightlines to improve neighbourhood visibility and safety

To learn more about the long-term neighbourhood plans please visit:

www.CityofKingston.ca/City-hall/Projects-construction/Rideau-heights

Rideau Heights Community Centre & Shannon Park Revitalization *Community Centre: Opening late 2017*



1. Rideau Heights Community Centre and library
2. Rideau Heights Public School
3. Shade structure multi-purpose court
4. Skate park
5. Play area
6. Parking lot
7. Soccer field
8. Future townhome development
9. Parking lot
10. Storm-water channel
11. Baseball diamond
12. Community garden
13. Existing splash pad, restroom and play area

“KFHC is confident that, through the partnership with the City of Kingston and working with senior levels of government, the goals and the objectives of the strategy will be met. The Rideau Heights community will be revitalized and the neighbourhood concerns addressed, making it a desirable area in the city in which to live, work and play.

– Mary Lynn Cousins Brame, CEO Kingston & Frontenac Housing Corporation

“You can have a project, but without the community's support it will always fall short – you need the people that live there to be involved. I feel lucky that the City has taken an interest in Rideau Heights.

– KFHC tenant living in Rideau Heights

Developing affordable housing

The City's affordable housing program uses provincial and municipal funds to encourage the creation of housing that will be affordable to low-income households. Under this program:

- **Private or non-profit housing developers receive public funding in exchange for charging lower rents.**
- **Rent (for an apartment) is usually set at 80 per cent of the average market rent based on Canada Mortgage and Housing (CMHC) data.**

In 2006, the Ontario government introduced the first of a series of capital funding programs to provide construction funds to housing developers who include a portion of affordable housing units in their developments. In 2011, city council committed \$1 million a year for five years to stimulate development and provide affordable housing units. Since 2006, within Kingston and Frontenac, approximately \$29 million of federal, provincial and municipal funds have gone toward developing 398 affordable housing units in 23 housing developments.

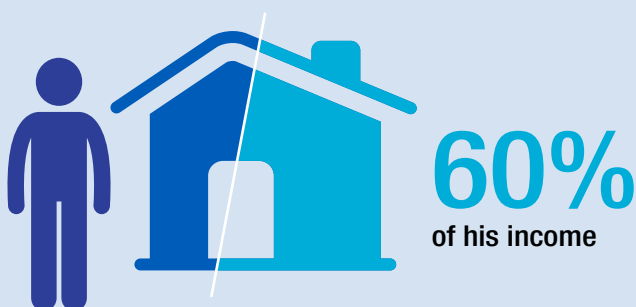
Generally, to occupy an affordable housing unit, applicants must apply directly with the landlord or property management company. To be eligible, households must disclose their income to ensure they require the affordable housing benefit. Affordable housing units are usually occupied by working tenants earning modest incomes or other tenants with fixed-incomes including seniors.

New affordable housing units by location



Affordability scenarios

Liam, a single man receiving Ontario Disability Support Program benefits, received a total of \$1,132.08 each month, which includes \$479 for shelter. In Kingston, the average rent for a bachelor apartment is \$679, or **60 per cent of his total monthly income.**



Stephanie and Phil are looking for work, and have one child. They receive \$1,569.92 from Ontario Works and child tax benefits, of which \$655 is a shelter allowance. In Kingston, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,099, or **70 per cent of their total monthly income.**



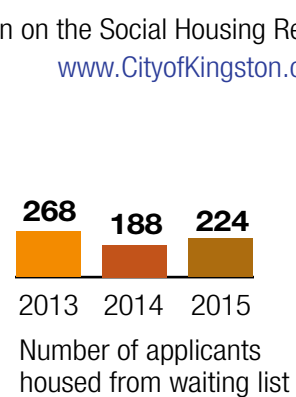
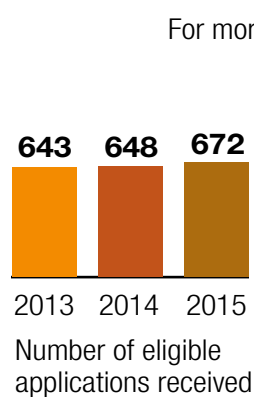
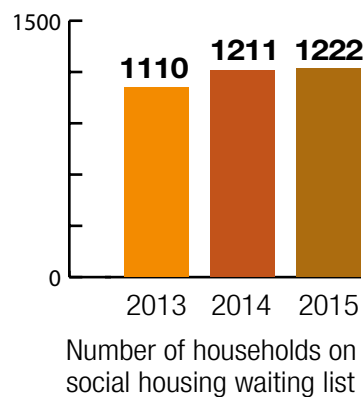
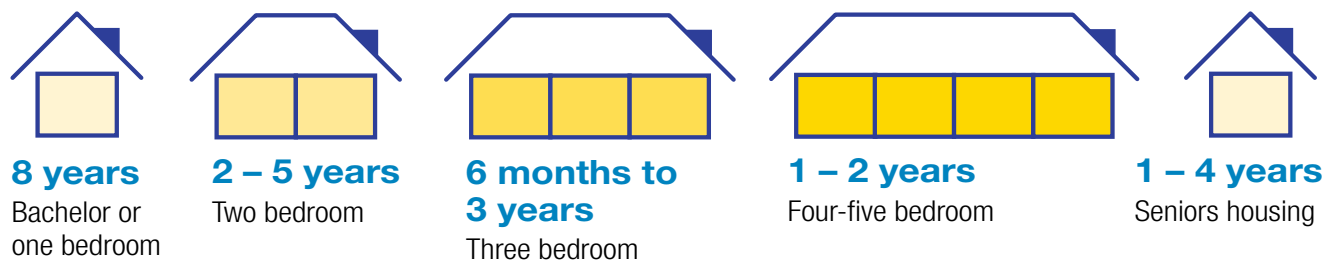
Social Housing

- This is also known as rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance and is governed by the *Housing Services Act*.
- Rent is usually 30 per cent of the tenant household's income if they're not receiving social assistance. Tenants receiving social assistance are charged a fixed amount as legislated.

Households wishing to apply for social housing must submit an application to the Social Housing Registry. Eligible applicants are added to a centralized waiting list in chronological order. Priority is only given to victims of domestic violence.

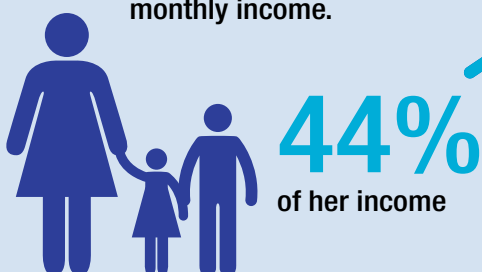
Wait times vary depending on neighbourhoods selected and bedroom size, as there is more demand for some units than others. Because households may be on lists for multiple buildings with varying wait times, applicants are not told where they may be on the waiting list.

Social Housing average wait times



For more information on the Social Housing Registry visit www.CityofKingston.ca/Housing

Aleisha, a working single mom with two kids, makes minimum wage and earns \$2,478.55 per month, including child tax benefits. She could afford to pay \$743.56 for rent (that's 30 per cent of her income). In Kingston, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,099, or **44 per cent of her total monthly income.**



Edward receives \$1,362.22 per month from Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. He could afford to pay 30 per cent of his income, or \$408.67, for rent. In Kingston, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$921, or **68 per cent of his total monthly income.**



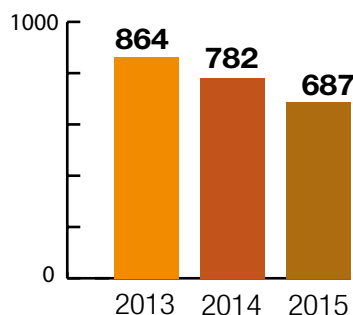
Improving service delivery for pe

The City continues to make progress on its *10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan* and has made significant strides in implementing a homeless services system that is seamless, coordinated and client-oriented.

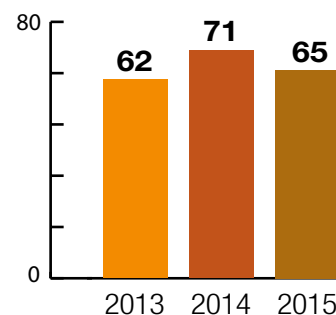
One enhancement is the introduction of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), our new computerized database that allows us to track in real time the demand for homeless services and to respond to changing needs.

Shelter services

In July 2015, as a result of the *10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan* goal to reduce demand for shelters, there was a major change to shelter services. After nearly 30 years of distinguished service to the community, Dawn House and Kingston Harbour Light are no longer part of the integrated shelter system, while the Elizabeth Fry Society has expanded its existing services by adding a six-bed shelter for vulnerable women.



Total number of clients accessing shelter



Average nightly shelter demand by client

There was a decrease in both the number of people requiring shelter and the average daily demand for shelter beds, from 2014 to 2015.

Elizabeth Fry Kingston helps vulnerable women

Established in 1949, Elizabeth Fry Kingston offers services and programs for women who are involved in the justice system, at risk of being involved in the justice system, and those facing social and financial barriers. As part of these services, the agency owns and operates 41 rent-geared-to-income, self-contained units with additional wrap-around support services.

Elizabeth Fry Kingston opened its six-bed shelter on July 1, 2015 and expanded to eight beds on March 1, 2016. The agency offers daytime services and information on personal safety, budgeting, health and wellness, knowing one's rights and accessing community resources. The goal is to support and encourage women in recognizing their own strengths, so they can emerge from poverty and sustain control over their lives.

Women experiencing homelessness need to be given a fresh (re)start to improve their quality-of-life, and to build stronger, healthier and cohesive communities.



It was a natural progression for us to expand our services specifically to women experiencing homelessness. It has been through the tremendous support of our community partners that our 24-hour women's shelter is able to offer daytime services and wrap-around supports. Every day, we work to provide a safe, inclusive and anti-oppressive space for all women of Kingston.

– Trish Crawford,
Executive director, Elizabeth Fry Kingston

People who are homeless



I like that you come to see me where I am at in my apartment. I don't have to come to an office to see you.

My apartment gives me stability, a place to lay my head and be happy.

This has been a long and stressful time, but finally I have a place to call my own... again.

I couldn't be happier; this will be my forever home.

– Housing First program participants

Ending chronic homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac

In 2015, Kingston began using a housing first approach to address chronic homelessness. In this new program, case managers work one-on-one with chronically homeless people to find suitable housing as quickly as possible, while addressing their unique needs and helping to sustain housing. Specialized teams, operating out of Addiction & Mental Health Services – KFLA and Home Base Housing, assisted 95 highly vulnerable households to find and move into housing in 2015.

Addiction & Mental Health Services – KFLA helps people stay housed

One third of people experiencing homelessness in Kingston or Frontenac in 2015 self-reported a mental illness and 21 per cent disclosed an addiction. These barriers can make it very difficult for homeless people to find a new place to live.

AMHS-KFLA provides an extensive range of supports and services to more than 4,000 people in our community with mental health and/or addiction concerns. Programs range from immediate crisis response services to longer-term addiction and mental health services including rehabilitation treatment and supports. AMHS-KFLA also offers independent housing units and 24-hour specialized, supported housing.

The Kingston community benefits from the expertise that AMHS-KFLA lends to the Housing First program and its success in working with clients who struggle with mental health and substance use. With the addition of Housing First to the range of services provided by AMHS-KFLA, the system is better able to help newly-housed people stay in their homes and fully engage in their new communities.

“The integration of Addiction and Mental Health Services with housing and homelessness services is critical if we are to reach our goal of successfully ending homelessness!”

– Rob Yeo,
Service director, AMHS-KFLA

Affordable housing grants

Kingston Frontenac Renovates

Kingston Frontenac Renovates provides grants of up to \$3,500 for accessibility improvements, or forgivable loans of up to \$10,000 for repairs so that eligible homeowners may stay in their homes.

In 2015 this program assisted 27 households (17 in the county, 10 in the city) with total funding of \$184,055.

Since 2012, 128 households have received more than \$850,000 in grants and loans with this provincial funding.

For more information on the Kingston Frontenac Renovates program visit www.CityofKingston.ca/Renovate.

Home ownership program

The home-ownership program assists low-to-moderate-income renter households to buy affordable homes by providing down-payment assistance in the form of a forgivable loan.

Renters in Kingston or the County of Frontenac who do not own any other real estate may apply to the home ownership program for down-payment assistance equal to five per cent of the purchase price to a maximum of \$14,529.

In 2015, the program assisted 13 households (12 in the city, one in the county) with total funds of \$147,643.

Since 2007, 110 households have received funding to purchase homes totalling more than \$1,000,000. For more information on the home-ownership program visit www.CityofKingston.ca/HomeOwnership.

Secondary suites affordable housing grant

The secondary suites affordable housing grant provides grants of up to \$15,000 to offset capital costs associated with building a secondary suite, and a municipal fee rebate of up to \$7,000 in cases where planning applications are required.

This grant is available to homeowners interested in creating a secondary suite and renting it out at an affordable rate.

In 2015, the secondary suites affordable housing grant program approved eight applications and committed \$97,939 in funds.

For more information on the secondary suites program visit www.CityofKingston.ca/SecondarySuites.





Addressing youth homelessness

The United Way's Ending Youth Homelessness initiative, supporting the City's *10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan*, addresses the unique needs of homeless and at-risk 16 to 24 year-olds. It has led to the development of an integrated, collaborative and youth-centric approach to the delivery of programs for youth. Partners in this initiative include the City's housing & social services department and major youth service providers, such as correctional services, school services and Children and Family Services.

In 2015, the homeless youth services system:

- Created a map of services provided to homeless and at-risk youth, which has been used to identify and fill community service gaps
- Developed system-wide goals and actions related to addressing the issue of youth homelessness in



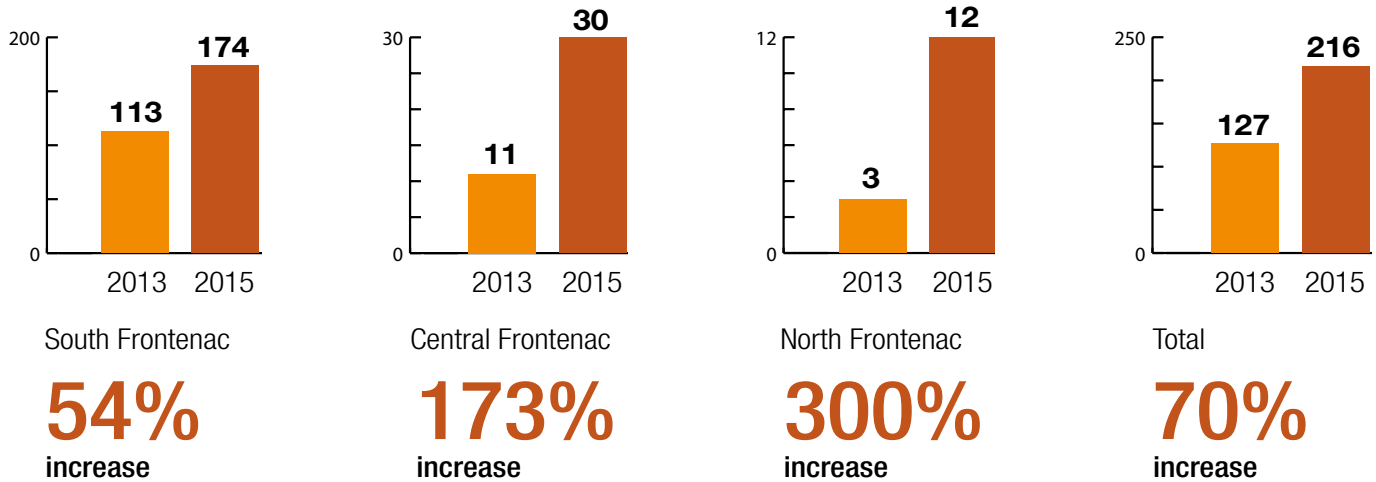
- KFL&A, aligned with the goals in the *10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan*
- Helped 96 homeless youth find suitable housing

Expanding community services in the County of Frontenac

In 2015, Southern Frontenac Community Services began working closely with Addiction & Mental Health Services – KFLA and Northern Frontenac Community Services and now offers services in Verona and Sharbot Lake, in

addition to those offered in their Sydenham main branch. This has allowed Southern Frontenac Community Services to serve 70 per cent more households in 2015 compared to 2013.

Households served



Affordable housing for seniors on Wolfe Island

The Township of Frontenac Islands is moving on a county initiative to improve seniors' housing and transportation by endorsing: a proposal for a five-unit seniors' housing project in Marysville.

The *10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan* identifies housing for seniors as a major and growing issue in the County of Frontenac. It takes one to four years for seniors to access social housing – and demand is expected to rise due to our aging population.

I am...

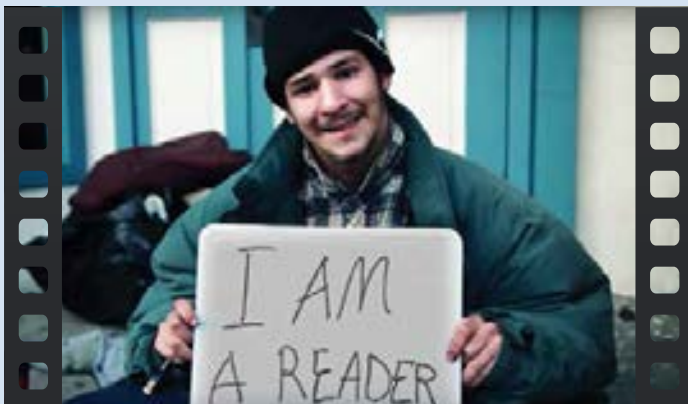
In December 2015, the City of Kingston spoke with real people who are homeless to highlight that people are more than their housing status. They are readers, mothers, woodworkers and storytellers.



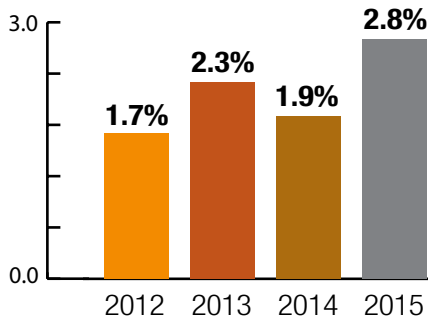
Survey in Kingston and Frontenac County



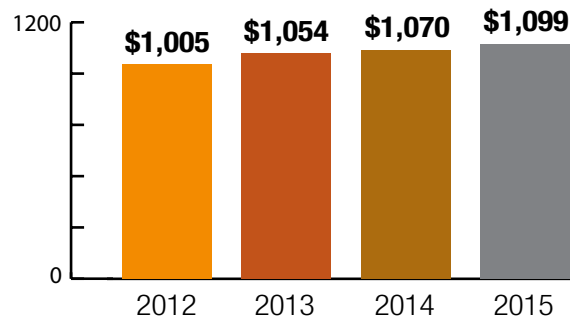
Watch the full video on Youtube: bit.ly/1S4qKqL



Vacancy Rate per year



Average Market Rent per year (2-Bedroom)



95 highly vulnerable homeless households were housed through the Housing First program in 2015

224 households were housed from the Social Housing Registry wait list in 2015

The City of Kingston is the service manager for housing and homelessness programs for the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac and welcomes your feedback.

To comment on this document please contact:
housing@cityofkingston.ca

Cityscape graphic created by BmDodo Strategic Design.

If you require this information in an accessible format call 613-546-0000 or ContactUs@CityofKingston.ca

