

2023/2024



Housing Supply

Baseline Scan



Limitations

Collection of thorough and comprehensive data for transition and permanent housing with supports.

Moderate
Improvements to
Housing Starts



Introduction

Limited Movement in a Turbulent Housing Market

This year's scan highlights a mix of improvements and challenges facing the affordable housing market in Winnipeg. While we've seen significant improvements in the private market and in some social housing models, all other models have either decreased or stagnated. Meanwhile, supplemental data such as CMHC's Rental Market Report and Housing Market Outlook indicate that vacancy rates continue to drop while average rental prices are on the rise.

In 2025, we hope to see the recent injection of capital investments towards affordable housing from all levels of government result in several projects coming online. End Homelessness Winnipeg is encouraged to see an investment of \$73 million to support the Your Way Home homelessness strategy. We expect to see this improve affordable housing stock in Winnipeg over the next few years.

Scan Limitations: Improvements and Challenges to Data Validity

Several actions have occurred since the 2022 housing scan that have improved data validity and reliability. Manitoba Housing and the City of Winnipeg have worked diligently with us to better coordinate data requests, resulting in more accurate reporting on all social housing models and rooming houses.

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We are also pleased with the cooperation of single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels for this scan, which has resulted in a more thorough understanding of the challenges faced by these groups.

Collecting thorough and comprehensive data for transitional and permanent housing with supports continues to be a challenge. We expect this is due to two issues. First, we recognize that many organizations have limited time to participate in engagement. Second, we continue to find organizations have difficulty aligning their operations with the scan's categories/definitions.

Moderate Improvements to Housing Starts

The private rental market has shown the most significant increase in stock since the 2022 housing scan. The most significant increase is in the primary rental market at 2,901, though the secondary rental market has also increased at 170. We have also seen a moderate improvement in units receiving rent supplements through Manitoba Housing (233), as well as non-profit units developed through partnership agreements with Manitoba Housing (61).

Other housing models have either declined or remained stagnant, depending on the validity issues arising from the response rate from the non-profit survey. Of notable concern are models identified as a rapid-rehousing solution – single-room occupancy hotels and licensed rooming houses. These models are difficult to add new stock to due to restrictions in approving this land use category as well as fiscal viability.

Notably, all levels of government have made recent and significant capital investments such as the Housing Accelerator Fund, recent provincial capital investments, the Co-op Housing Development Program, and NICHI funding. We are expecting many of these funding opportunities to result in a significant increase in stock across all models soon.

Significant Increases in Demand and Average Rental Rates Continues to Pressure Affordable Housing Options

The survey with non-profit groups indicates that deeply affordable housing and rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units are generally at capacity throughout Winnipeg. Further, we understand that wait lists, including those for social housing placements and Naatamooskakowin, are continuing to increase, providing evidence that the need for low-income and fixed-income household housing continues to be in high demand.

This housing atmosphere raises several concerns. First, CMHC has indicated in several recent reports that average rental rates continue to rise while vacancy rates continue to decline across all household income brackets. This places pressure on inexpensive housing options as households with higher incomes struggle to find affordable housing at a rate unaffordable to lower household income earners, leading these households to search for housing solutions at rental rates that are required for lower household income earners, which in turn squeezes them out of the market and can become a pathway to homelessness.

Second, the cost to develop housing is expected to continue to rise as the tariff war with the U.S. progresses. This makes it more difficult for deeply affordable housing to be fiscally viable without significant supplements, thereby continuing to place pressure on the current supply of suitable housing in Winnipeg for low-income and fixed-income households.



Housing Solutions Require a Coordinated Approach to Funding and Development

Despite improvements in the private rental market, challenges for individuals experiencing or at-risk of homelessness to find suitable, permanent, and affordable housing has not improved. This indicates a need for improved opportunities for housing models that are purpose-built for low-income and fixed-income households – meaning more opportunities for non-profits, cooperatives, and Manitoba Housing to build and maintain stock. Several opportunities are available for consideration:

The Province has an opportunity through increased investments in homelessness and social housing to bring more social housing online as well as to support Manitoba Housing’s existing stock. We hope to see sustained and increased funding that will directly support bringing more social housing stock online but hope to see improved investments to support our existing stock that requires repair. Additionally, improving rent control policies would ensure that affordable units remain affordable, and that people do not lose their housing due to unforeseen rent hikes.

We continue to support maintaining the supply and improved operations for rapid rehousing options, including single-room occupancy hotels and licensed rooming houses. This can be expanded to other short-term housing models such as transitional housing with supports.

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Rapid housing solutions must be supplemented with long-term, person-centered housing that can be brought online within the next few years. Failing to do so will only require current short-term housing stock to take on these tenants until housing conditions improve. We are already seeing evidence that some short-term housing providers are beginning to informally offer their rooms to existing tenants for an indeterminate period of time, recognizing that the alternative is forced evictions.

