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1,000 OFFICIALLY REPORTED

UN-REPORTED UP TO 10,000 HOMELESS ACROSS DURHAM

DURHAM - According to Durham Region there are more than **1,000 people on Durham Region's By-Name List** as of August, it's a record of people experiencing homelessness that want help. Unfortunately there are thousands of others that are not documented and walk about Durham with no shelter. Last un-official number was around 10,000 people across the Region.

**It is estimated that Oshawa has over 4,500 people living on the street/cars and or with friends and relatives. Whitby approximately 1,500. Ajax 2,500. Pickering about about 1,000 and in Clarington about 500.**

The Region is being overtaken by people coming from all over and many local folk that fall on real hard economic times. Most don't even know of the services available to them. Others in the system complain that the Municipalities are doing nothing. The Region are stacking number in order not to deal with the very real shortage of decent shelter. Yet, others blame the Province and the Federal government.

The bottom line people are suffering on our streets. This compounded with mental health, addiction among the homeless. Quality of life across the region is diminishing by the day.

The Region of Durham supports Intensive Case Management support across the system.

The Region's Transitional Support Program (TSP) of case coordinators connect individuals with essential financial, health, wellness and housing resources through Intensive Case Management. They are being pushed to the max. The problem is not those registered but those that are not registered putting a huge burden on local police and support workers.

"There are many factors that can lead someone to experiencing homelessness, including employment barriers, trauma, health challenges and others," said John Henry, Regional Chair and CEO, Region of Durham. "As the number of people experiencing homelessness continues to rise across Ontario, the Region of Durham remains committed to helping people find and keep safe, appropriate housing. Housing is a basic need for everyone, and we continue to work diligently with community partners to address local homelessness." The TSP team also supports:

Micro-homes Transitional Housing: The micro-homes in Oshawa features 10 units for temporary, transitional housing with supports. The TSP team provides case management for program participants to transition into permanent

housing.

Veterans Homelessness Program: The TSP team provides case management for confirmed veterans experiencing homelessness in Durham Region. This year, only 293 people on the By-Name list have moved into housing.

Durham has over 1000 people who are currently experiencing homelessness according to the Durham By-Name List. Durham Region in response to this critical need, the Region of Durham said it is actively working on several fronts:

Supporting Affordable Housing: Recognizing the critical role of affordable rental housing, the region supports over 7,000 households through various programs. Additionally, redevelopment projects like those at Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation properties and the exploration of housing opportunities at the former Ritson School site aim to increase available units.

Incentivizing Development: The At Home Incentive Program provides funding to public and private partners for creating affordable housing. The program's recent success saw \$17.7 million allocated to create 209 units across Durham. At a cost of 81,33 per unit.

Addressing Barriers: The Region acknowledges the complex causes of homelessness and has adopted a "housing-focused approach" that prioritizes supporting people into stable housing. This includes emergency shelters, transitional housing with support services like Beaverton Heights and Oshawa Micro-homes, and street outreach teams that connect with unsheltered residents.

Winter Preparations: With winter approaching, the Region's Winter Warming Plan provides a lifeline for those without shelter. Warming centers will be open from December 1st to March 31st, and shelters will adjust capacity based on cold weather alerts.

Transitional housing: The Region also offers transitional housing with supports at Beaverton Heights and the Oshawa Micro-homes. Transitional housing is time-limited accommodation with supports for developing life skills and requires participants to work toward their goals and overcome barriers to housing. There are limits on how long a person can stay, as the purpose is to help someone successfully transition into permanent housing.

November 2nd is normally, "National Housing Day" highlights the work being done across Canada to improve access to safe, affordable housing," stated John Henry,

Regional Chair and CEO. "Finding a place to call home is especially challenging right now, and the Region of Durham is committed to increasing the supply of affordable rental housing to address this urgent need."

Durham's Street Outreach Teams are diligently working to ensure unsheltered residents have access to supports and services, including access to emergency shelters.

Not only are we entering cold temperature seasons. We are also being hammered with an economic downturn.

It is estimated that 200+ persons are being impacted by withdrawal of rental support. With winter approaching, more than 200 individuals — 114 children and 88 adults needing financial assistance — are being impacted by the withdrawal of funding for affordable housing support in Durham.

The Salvation Army Guarantor program was set up with landlords to support tenants, with the Salvation Army paying rent directly to landlords. Durham Region funded the Salvation Army to deliver the program aimed at reducing homelessness, delivering wraparound supports, and preventing housing loss. Now landlords have no guarantee on rents from the impacted persons.

There were 1000 homeless people Durham in August, according to Durham Region, which the same month announced a \$6.4 million federal grant to address homelessness.

"We can confirm that the supported housing program operated by the Salvation Army in Durham Region is currently in a wind-down phase," said Glenn van Gulik, Salvation Army Director of Strategic Engagement and Brand. "This follows the Region of Durham's decision not to renew the funding agreement for the program."

The Salvation Army was notified on April 17, 2025, that funding for the program would end on May 17, 2025. At the time of that decision, the program was actively and successfully supporting 88 adults and 114 children."

Each person's situation is different, and we're working to provide additional resources and support with next steps or exploring other options. There are housing retention supports to help those who have complex needs," said a statement from Durham Region.

The program continues to run in the regions of York and Peel.

Landlords, who gave their properties for the affordable housing program too are impacted as they cannot afford to keep the program tenants on as their rent is not guaranteed anymore. One

landlord is faced with a big renovation bill on their program properties.

Just this week a Toronto housing mega project across the sprawling Downsview lands is set to receive a double funding boost from city council and the federal government, with plans to expand infrastructure in the area and build more than 500 modular homes.

A gaggle of federal and municipal leaders gathered on the site — which is planned to host more than 100,000 people when it is completed — on Tuesday to announce that their vision for a "city within a city" was set to move forward.

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow said \$425 million in city funding and \$280 million from the federal government would combine to expand the area's Black Creek Trunk Sewer, which is nearing capacity.

Expanding the 1960s sewer was the key, she said, to "unlocking the potential of this neighbourhood." Without the upgrades, work on 63,000 units in the area could stall.

Housing Minister Gregor Robertson said the money would give confidence to the city that it could keep approving new units, and provide the infrastructure builders need.

"We have come to the point now where growth has outpaced capacity, and without an upgrade, the city cannot approve new housing permits in this (area)," he said.

"In the short term, our investment will ensure new housing developments can be approved with confidence and at speed."

In total, the federal organization is looking to add 540 modular homes to Downsview. The government said at least 40 per cent would be affordable and the development would provide studios and one- to three-bedroom homes.

"Our first development in Toronto will help demonstrate how coordinated public-private partnerships and innovation in home building can support the accelerated construction of below-market homes in growing communities."

The broader redevelopment of Downsview is described in city council reports as a 30-plus-year plan with "significant financial implications" for Toronto.

In 2021, Northcrest Developments and the federal Canada Lands Company submitted a joint bid to amend the city's official plan for the 210-hectare area, including the disused airport.

City staff have envisaged the area as a potential arts and culture hub, as well as a massive boost of new homes.

With this announcement it brings hope to those homeless even though the numbers in Toronto are much higher.

The problem many have said

is not the numbers but the fact that we live in one of the world's richest countries and we have in such numbers living on our streets.

One local Oshawa homeless said, "Please don't judge me by the way I look. I do not choose to live on the street. I lost my wife, I lost my house to the mortgage company that would not renew. I have no family and no one to turn to.

After all these years of working hard. Thinking I would retire next to my loved one. She leaves me due to death. Now I have nothing. I don't expect handouts. I expect that my luck will soon change."

Another person in Ajax said, "It is that I don't want to work. The problem is I been on the street for so long. I have lost the sense of reality. I look around me and many drink and do drugs. It is hard living out on the street. I have lost all hope."

With most that we talked to. People are truly hurting. The stereotype in many cases

does not fit the circumstance. A couple in their late 60's living in their car.

When asked what happened, the said, "I am a proud Canadian and I can't believe I do not have a place to call home. Me and my wife are on tight pension. We can barely pay for food, gas and insurance in this old van. We can't afford an apartment. We can't find anything under \$1,200/mth.

Most want first and last. We just do not have it. I feel less than human. I always thought that we lived in the richest country in the world.

Why don't they help us Canadians suffering and fighting our own economic wars. I feel betrayed. I even went to my local MP's office and all I heard was the usual political words. I do not know what my future holds. I hope neither of us get sick, or the van breaks down.

I am afraid of what winter will bring. Sometimes, I wonder if it's worth living.



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