

# Effects of Density on Lifestyle

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Recently in session housing mentioned that they had spent \$80,000 in a single month to give temporary housing accommodation to 11 people. I think we can do better, we can provide sustainable homestead farms which will reduce crime and improve mental health as well as providing food and firewood to locals.

Over the last couple of decades we've lost more than 20% of the middle class. Now granted, this is not intended as an option for all homeless or people looking for housing, but rather having a target market of people interested enough and able bodied enough to become productive farmers using manual labour to bootstrap, generally under 50 years old from my brief survey of the homeless community.

And while it is applicable to the homelessness crisis, it can also prioritize local youth and families with children that want to get into farming. Even a brief mention of the possibility yielded a significant number of interested parties from a variety of people, including homeless people under 50, young landless Mennonites/Amish and local middle class families.

To grow one's own food, firewood and have some surplus to sell in our area needs 1.2 hectares or 3 acres per person in our area minimum.

Currently a hundred acres near Owen Sound costs about a million dollars. That would be enough for 33 homestead farmers, if they all receive just OW rental portion (\$390), can pay off the mortgage in 7 years if all of it went to that.

Downpayment is 80k, and assuming mortgage payment is 2k per month, 33 OW homesteaders would provide income of 12,870, or lets say 10k surplus. in 8 months would have enough month to make another downpayment to house an additional 33 homesteaders.

Of course this is ignoring many other costs, like the initial hamock, tent, stove, tools and winter clothes the homesteader would need to stay warm and feed themselves. Notably while it may not sound like much for homeless people sleeping under bushes because the police keep stealing their tents it's luxury accommodation.

A bedroom of a double hammock with underquilt, tarps, and sleeping bag \$300 A high efficiency tent stove \$300 A hot tent to use as a kitchen/day shelter \$300 An axe (for chopping wood), potty trowel, and kitchen set \$100. Winter boots, winter coat, winter snow pants \$300.

Could even add in a fat bike for transportation \$700

So about \$2000 for the homestead starter kit.

In the example above where 33 people are housed on a hundred acre plot, may need to wait an additional 6 months to get back the money that was spent on their starter kit from their OW payments. So about 14 months in total before can run a second iteration with the starter capital.

On OW they also get \$343 for basic needs, which they can use to buy bulk grains and beans, as well as additional clothing.

This would also massively save on police and mental health services since urban density is the leading factor in creating crime and mental issues (sources <https://lyis.ca/pfet/density-problems.pdf> ).

I don't know how much staff time may cost in terms of offering support or anything. But considering the people will likely be spending most of their time chopping wood, carrying water, cooking food, planting, tending and harvesting, they should stay out of trouble. Indeed they will be able to help each other.

To save on staff costs can probably make each homestead farming community comprised of people from a variety of backgrounds in addition to the homeless. That way the residents will be able to manage their own affairs with minimal oversight from the county. Such as the children/youth of farmers and foresters or those who worked in the field but do not yet have land of their own to help those new to growing food and firewood how to get started. Could also have some people that are spiritual such as children of pastors or social workers who are familiar with organizing weekly gatherings to foster peace and solidarity in the community. Someone who may be a contractor or repair person could also be helpful.

In terms of precedent, Russia has a functional Homesteading Act where anyone can apply for a hectare of land though they need a business plan to get it, and the land is in Siberia. Ukraine also has a homestead program, but due to excessive government corruption only the oligarchs are able to use it.

North America was settled mostly through homesteading, and lest you try to embarrass yourself by saying it was "Free land" or something, it wasn't, indeed it was all hard won through genocide of the indigenous people living there – same goes for that land in Siberia. So buying land on the real estate market to help local struggling people and families become farmers is much cheaper in that respect.

This homestead farming method is also used by Mennonites throughout the Americas, wherever they are able to, they often buy large tracts of land, and then portion it off to Mennonite families to homestead. Our local ones may not have had the same opportunity due to official plan restrictions, but in central and South America it is the leading practice amongst them, as well as the Hutterites in the prairies.

Would probably need a motion for the county staff to look into the option and make a report on it to see how best to move forward on this option.

May you be blessed.