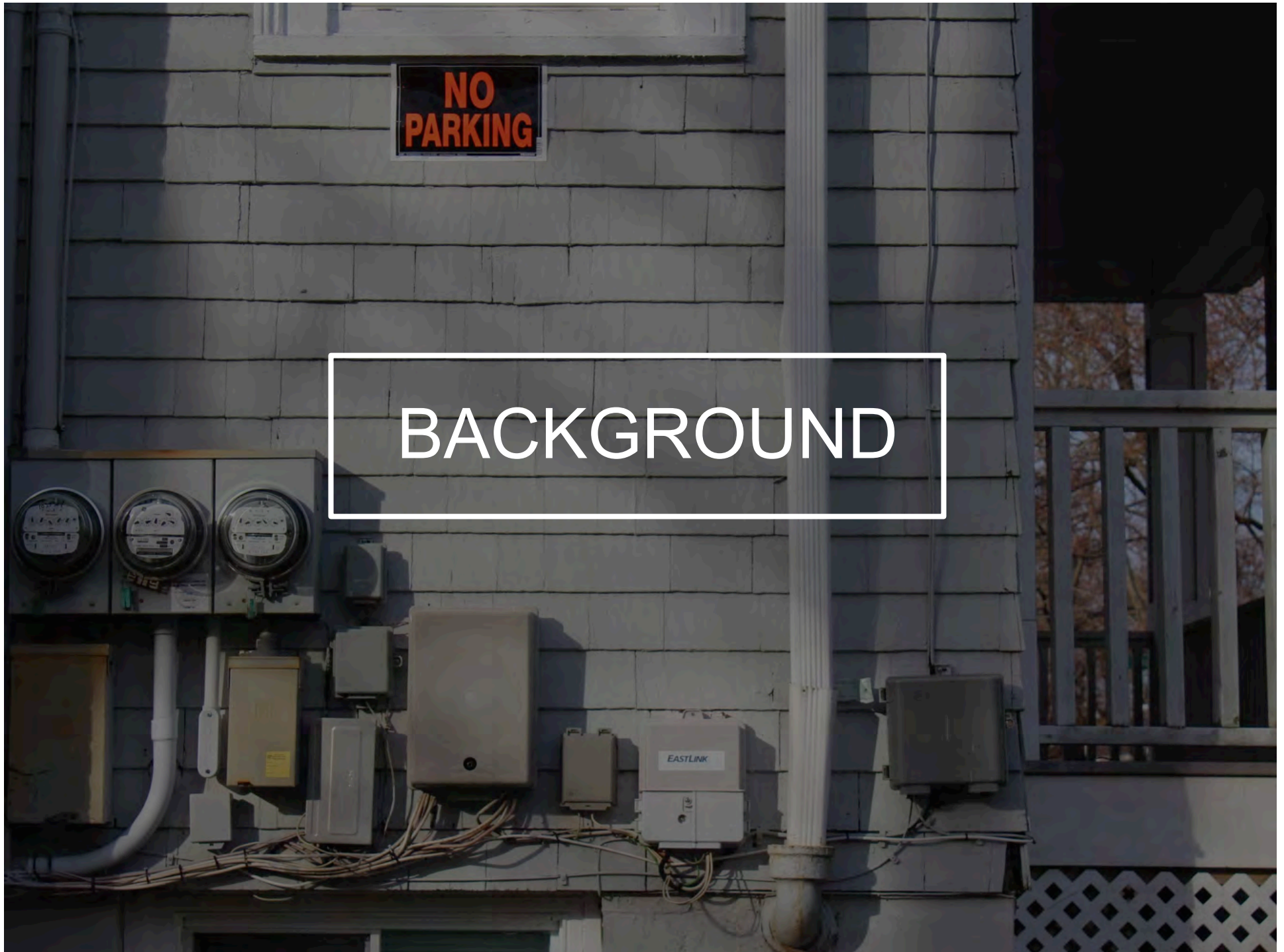


ARE WE LOSING ROOMING HOUSES IN HALIFAX?

Uytae Lee
Advisor: **Dr. Jill Grant**
NCRP Meeting
May 19th, 2016





WHAT ARE ROOMING HOUSES?

Also known as
SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCIES
(S.R.O.)

NCRP RESEARCH ON ROOMING HOUSES

Andrew Kaufman and Jino Distasio (2014) Winnipeg's Vanishing Rooming Houses: Change in the West Broadway and Spence Neighbourhoods

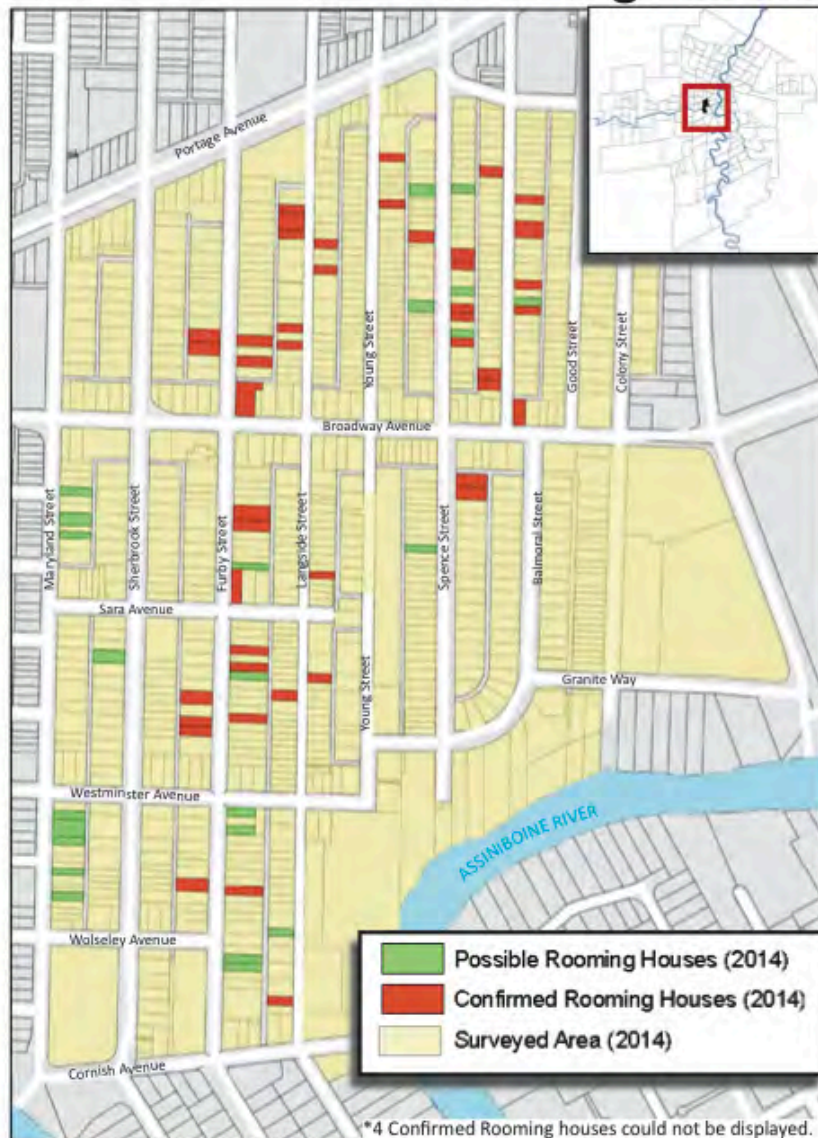
SPENCE NEIGHBOURHOOD

*"Our most conservative estimate is that there has been a **23% decrease** in the number of rooming houses in Spence between 2002 and 2014. A more likely estimate is a **40% decrease** when both confirmed and possible rooming houses are taken into account."* (Kaufman & Distasio, 2014, p.7)

WEST BROADWAY NEIGHBOURHOOD

*From 1995 to 2014, there has been a **45% decrease** in possible rooming houses. A more probable estimate is a **63% decrease** in confirmed rooming houses.* (Kaufman & Distasio, 2014, p.8)

2014 West Broadway Rooming Houses



2014 Spence Neighbourhood Rooming Houses



Kaufman & Distasio, 2014

CONTEXT OF HALIFAX, NS



Image source: <http://theplanner.ca/destination-halifax/>

ROOMING HOUSES MAY HAVE DECLINED IN HALIFAX

“In 2007, there were 153 rooming houses in HRM; last year there were just 25, and five of those are for sale” (Bousquet, 2013)

“The number of rooming houses has declined by over 90% in the last decade” (AHANS, 2014, p.19)

“According to municipal Planning staff, the number of legal rooming houses has decreased from over a hundred to just 18 although they suspect that there are still about a hundred illegal rooming houses in the Municipality.” (HRM, 2015, p. 54)

QUASI ROOMING HOUSES IN HALIFAX

“A boom in quasi rooming houses that threaten to ruin some of Halifax’s toniest neighborhoods”

(Bornais, 2005)

“Residents across Halifax, but especially in the south end, have watched with growing apprehension as former single-family homes and duplexes have been turned into apartments with as many as 12 bedrooms.”

(Bornais, 2005, p.7)

“A CBC News investigation has found numerous examples of buildings that even police and fire services call rooming houses, but which don't show up on the city's list of licensed properties.”

(Murphy, 2015)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Where were rooming houses and quasi-rooming houses located in Halifax from 1995-2016?
2. How many rooming houses have been lost or gained over the last two decades and how?
3. What are some differences between rooming houses and quasi rooming houses?



METHODS

METHODS: Database of Rooming Houses

RESEARCH CHALLENGES

- No official record of rooming houses in HRM available before 2007.
- Past records from Metro Non-Profit Housing and Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency have been lost.
- Multiple legal definitions for a rooming house in Halifax.

METHODS: Database of Rooming Houses

CRITERIA

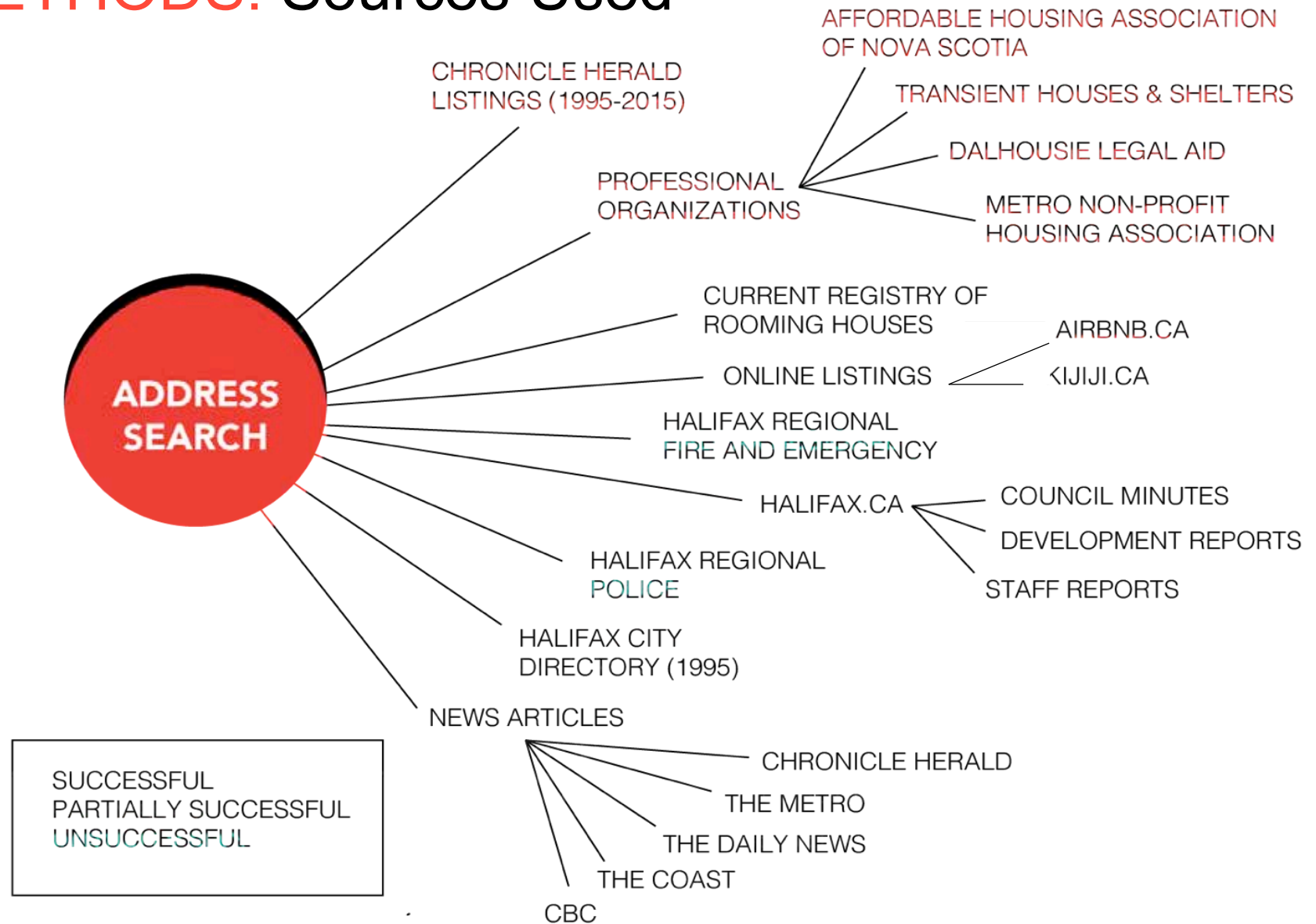
Rooming House (RH)

Any address that is described, advertised, or registered as a rooming house

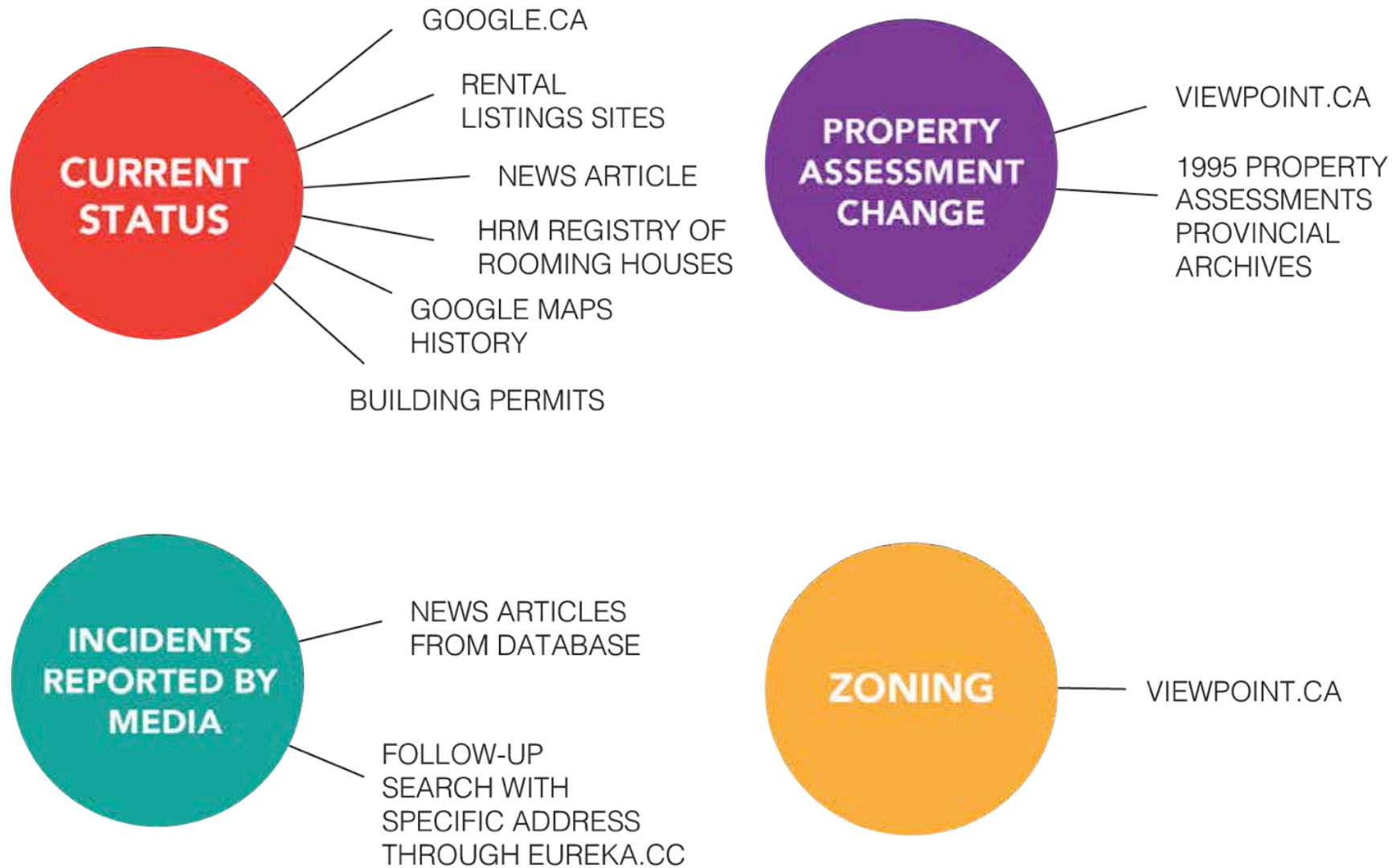
Quasi Rooming House (QRH)

A rental unit advertising 6 or more bedrooms that does not explicitly mention itself as a rooming house.

METHODS: Sources Used



METHODS: Follow-up Data Collection






RESULTS

RESULTS: Addresses Found by the Study (1995-2016)

57 QUASI
ROOMING
HOUSES

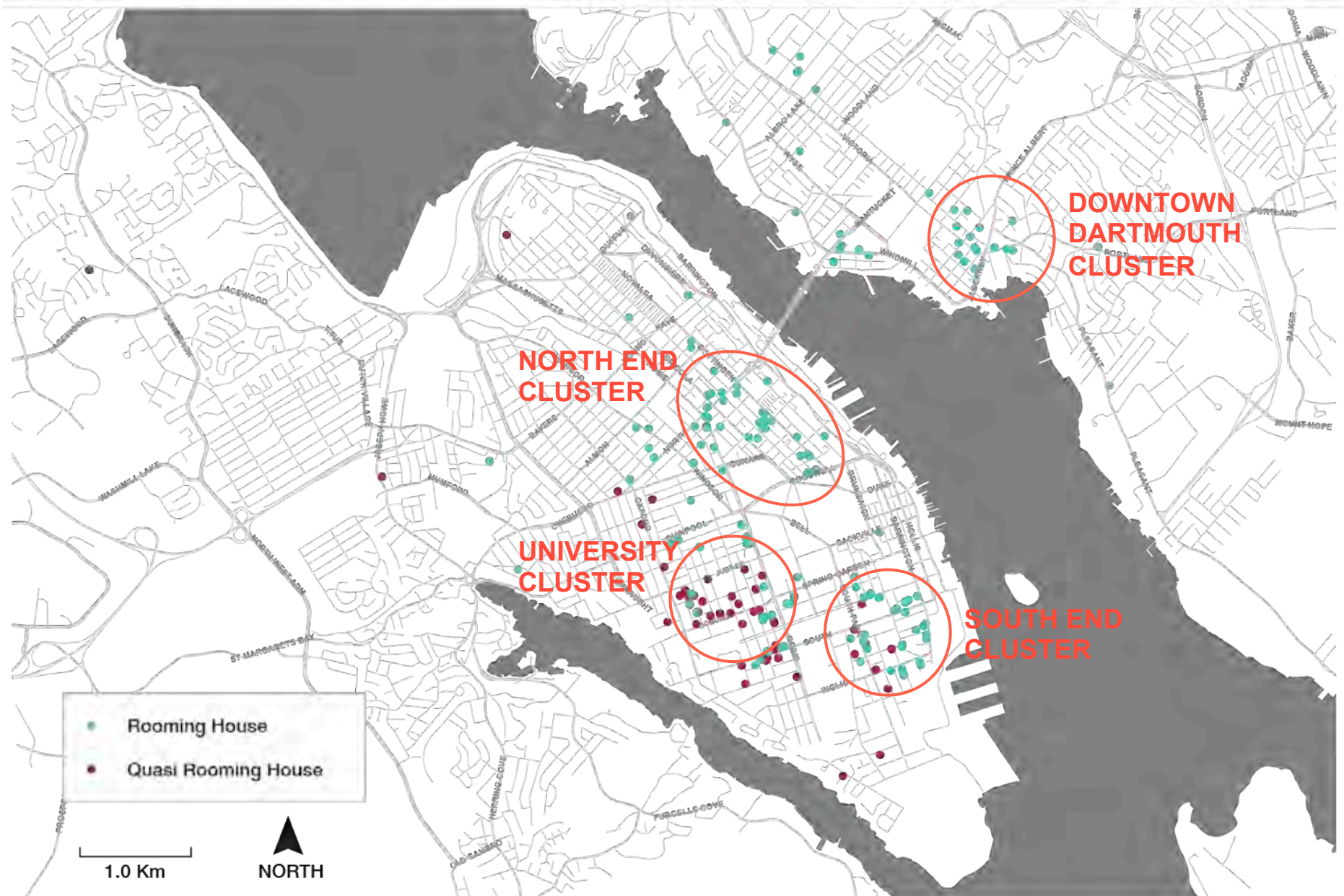
151 ROOMING
HOUSES

A dimly lit room, likely a bedroom or a small office. In the foreground, there is a bed with a white sheet. To the right, there is a desk with a black office chair. A window is visible on the left side of the frame. The overall atmosphere is dark and somewhat somber.

WHERE ARE ROOMING HOUSES AND QUASI ROOMING HOUSES IN HALIFAX?

ROOMING HOUSES AND QUASI ROOMING HOUSES IDENTIFIED IN HALIFAX (1995-Present)

Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Uytay Lee



Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Uytae Lee

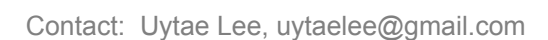
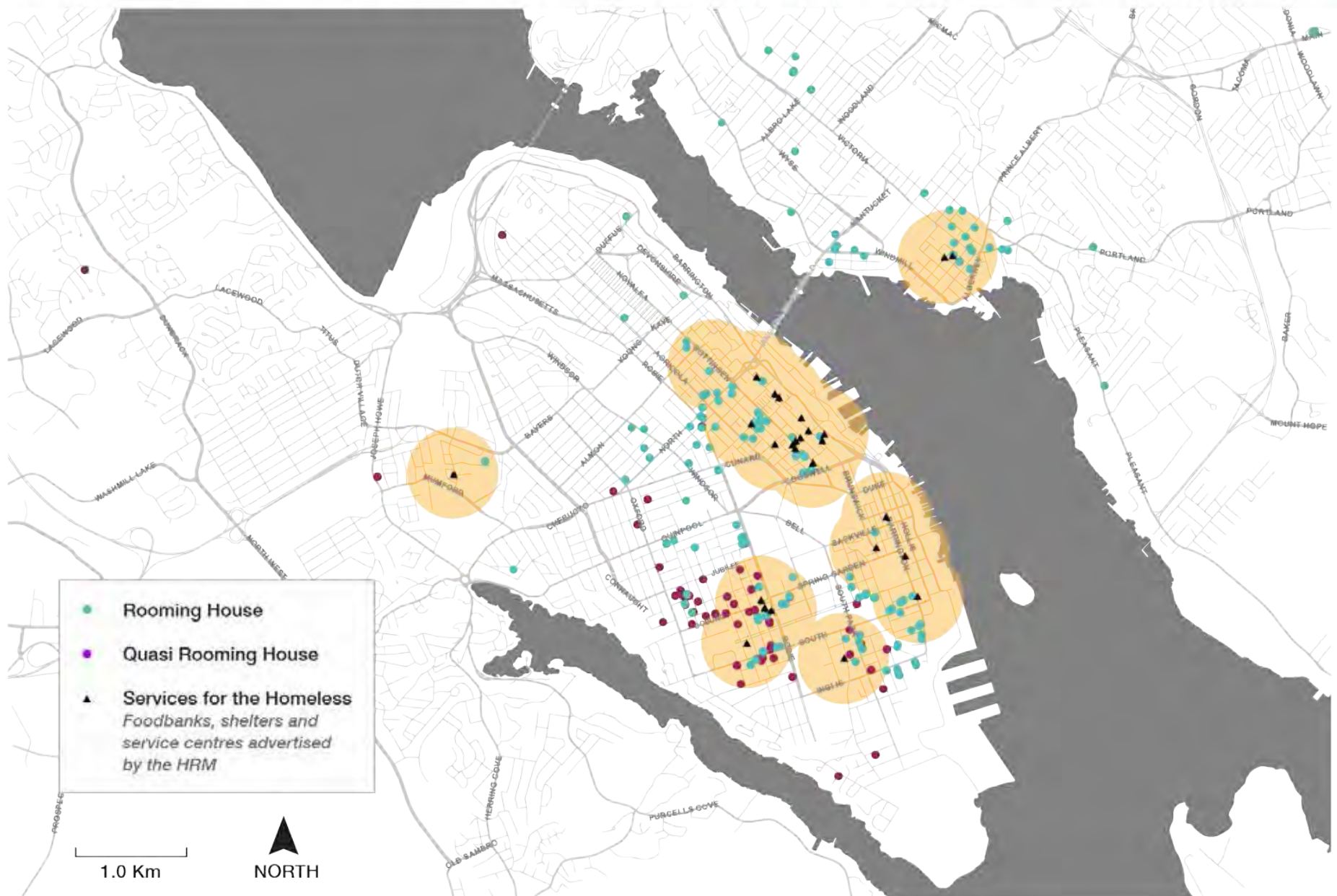


FIGURE 6.1.1 PROXIMITY OF RH & QRH TO SERVICES FOR THE HOMELESS (1995-2016)

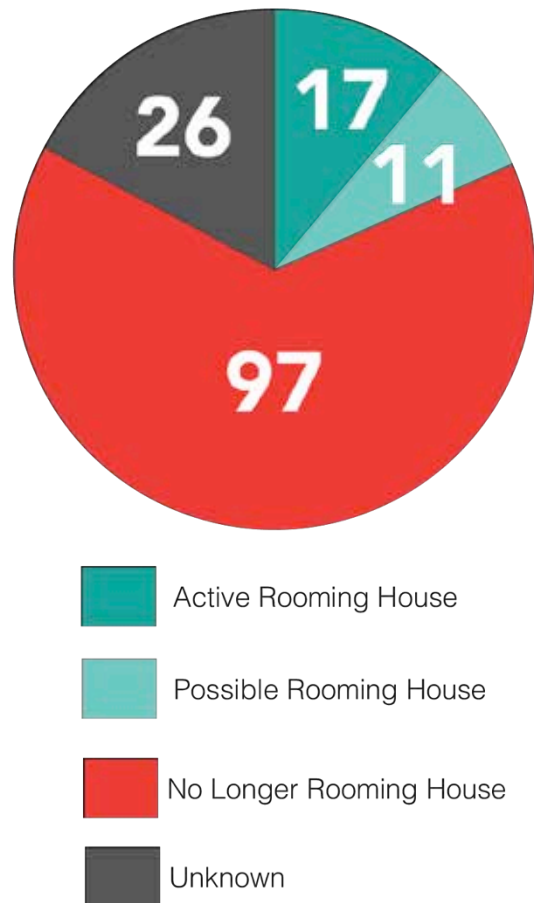
Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Janelle Derkson & Uytay Lee





HOW MANY ROOMING HOUSES HAVE WE LOST?

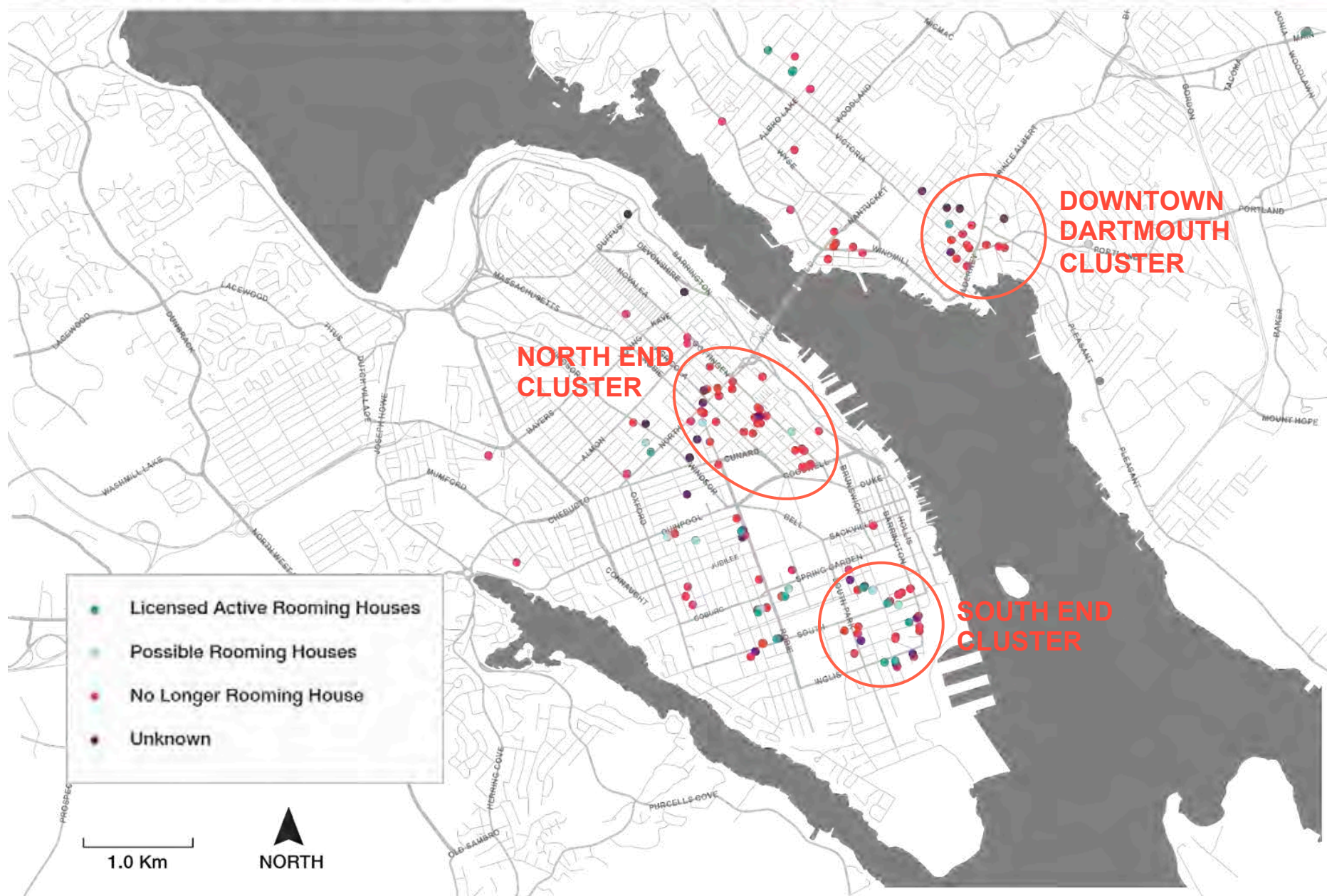
CURRENT STATUS OF ROOMING HOUSES



Current Use	Count
Active Rooming House	17
Possible Rooming House	11
Social Housing	3
Apartments	58
Empty Lot	17
Executive Suites	1
Fraternity	2
Possible Rooming House	11
Private House	4
Condominium	3
Unknown	26

CURRENT STATUS OF ROOMING HOUSES

Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Uytay Lee



CURRENTLY LICENSED & ACTIVE ROOMING HOUSES

Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Uytae Lee





214 Portland St. (Source: maps.google.ca)



2380 Gottingen St. (Source: maps.google.ca)



5538 Inglis St. (Source: maps.google.ca)



ROOMING HOUSES AND QUASI ROOMING HOUSES

RH & QRH: Assessment Change

- Quasi rooming houses have relatively high and stable growth in property assessments
- Former rooming houses are have a much wider range of property assessment change
- Licensed rooming houses see much slower growth in property assessment

RH & QRH: Assessment Change

Current Use	Change relative to CT
Active Rooming House	-13.88%
Possible Rooming House	24.77%
Social Housing	-75.21%
Quasi Rooming House	19.79%
Apartments	5.68%
Closed - Current Use Unknown	28.14%
Condominium	N/A
Empty Lot	-83.98%
Executive Suites	3.82%
Private House	41.84%
Fraternity	39.95%

RH & QRH: Incidents and Media Coverage

- Rooming houses have much more incidents associated with them than quasi rooming houses
- Certain notorious rooming house locations are mentioned much more frequently in the media

RH & QRH: Incidents Covered by the Media

1

**OUT OF 57 QUASI
ROOMING HOUSES**

54

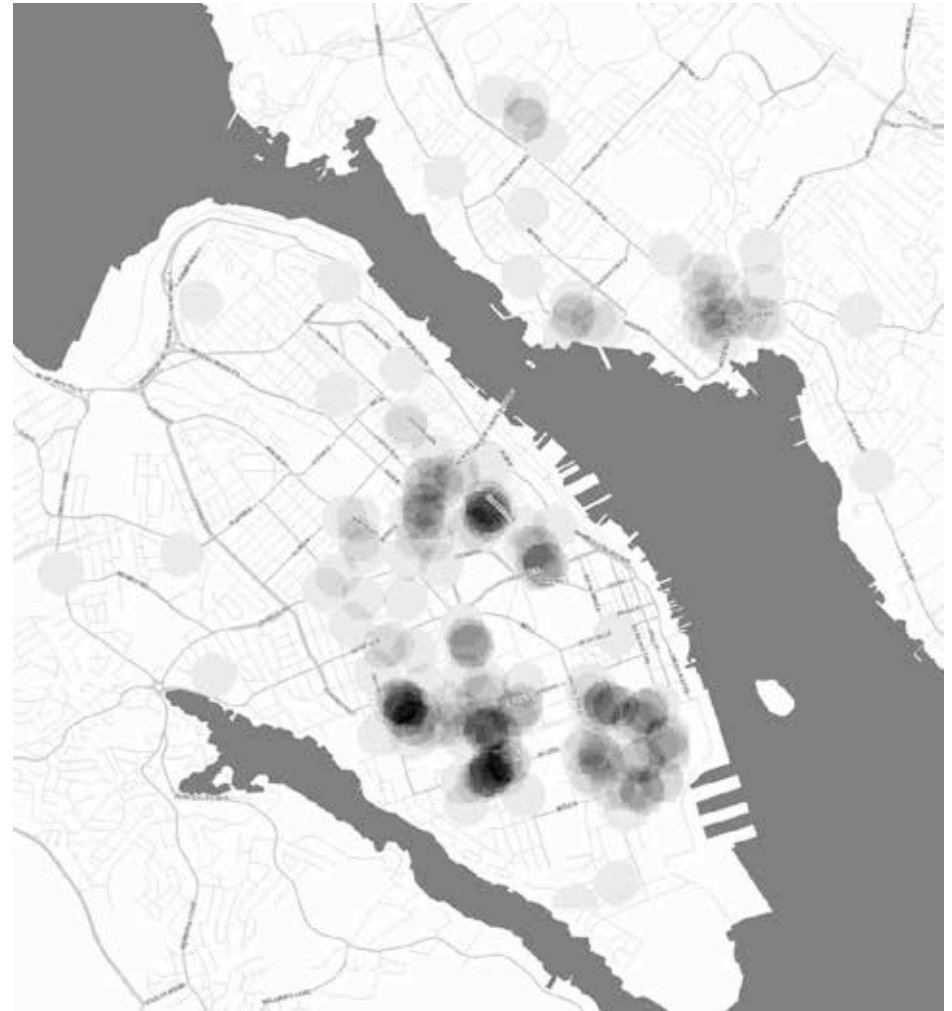
**OUT OF 151
ROOMING
HOUSES**

DENSITY MAP OF ARTICLES ON ROOMING HOUSES AND QUASI ROOMING HOUSES (1997-Present)



Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Uytaye Lee

DENSITY MAP OF ROOMING HOUSES AND QUASI ROOMING HOUSES (1995-Present)



Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Uytaye Lee

ZONING

- The majority of rooming houses (71%) are located in zones that do not permit them.
- 13 of the 17 licensed rooming houses are in zones that do not permit them.
- The overwhelming majority of quasi rooming houses (98%) are located in zones that do not permit a rooming house.

Zoning	RH	QRH
C-2	14	0
DB	11	0
DH	1	0
DH-1	2	0
DN	11	0
K	0	1
R-1	4	8
R-1M	4	0
R-2	59	41
R-2A	20	5
R-3	12	1
R-4	1	0
RC-3	6	0
U-1	2	1

ROOMING HOUSES AND THEIR ZONING

Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Janelle Derkson & Uytay Lee



Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Janelle Derkson & Uytae Lee



QUASI ROOMING HOUSES AND THEIR ZONING

Data Sources: HRM Geodatabase 2012,
Rooming House Database
Map by Janelle Derkson & Uytay Lee





CONCLUSIONS

Different Concentrations in Location

Rooming houses and quasi rooming houses are located in different concentrations across Halifax.

Rooming Houses Have Declined

The majority of rooming houses that existed in HRM over the last two decades have since closed. Many have been converted to more upscale forms of housing.

Currently Licensed Rooming Houses May be Disadvantaged

Slower property assessment growth for licensed rooming houses
Frequent, dramatic and not necessarily representative reporting in the media
The majority are located in zones that do not permit a rooming house

Quasi Rooming Houses are Predominantly Meeting Demand for SROs

Healthy property assessment growth
Not mentioned frequently in the media
Overwhelmingly located in zones that do not permit a rooming house
May not serve the same demographic as traditional rooming houses

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