



**Balanced  
Supply  
of Housing**

Academic / Community Partnership

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Feb 2023

What do you know  
about **Africville**?





## **What is "Africville"?**

Africville was a close-knit Black community that emerged just outside of Halifax, Nova Scotia, around the mid-19th century. Racism and segregation forced Black settlers to find homes in inhospitable, undesirable land; despite this, Africville was a neighbourhood rich in culture, community, and acceptance.

Africville was a largely self-sufficient community, with its own fishing businesses, storefronts, a church, and a school. Black settlers were able to find solace in this community where, unlike Halifax, they were not discriminated against.



## **What happened to Africville?**

Africville residents paid taxes to the city of Halifax but were denied even the most basic services. Africville did not have paved roads, garbage disposal, clean water, or sewers. Anti-Black racism by the Halifax city council led to the establishment of many undesirable services in Africville, like an infectious disease hospital, a prison, a slaughterhouse, and a dump.

In the mid-1900s, under the guise of "Urban Renewal," everything in Africville was demolished and expropriated— residents were forced to relocate with no notice or warning. Even the church was destroyed.



## **Where is Africville now?**

The Africville Genealogy Society was formed in 1980 to seek compensation for the Africville residents and to revitalize a sense of community and belonging for Black Canadians. Through this society, former residents gather at the site of Africville and host various events like picnics and church services.

After an apology from the city of Halifax, the Seaview Church that was demolished was rebuilt in 2012. Today, the church functions as a museum that upholds the legacy of Africville, and highlights the inequity and injustice that occurred against Black residents.



## **What's happening today?**

When Africville residents were relocated, they were not compensated enough to buy homes in Halifax, and could hardly afford short-term rentals. As identified by Balanced Supply of Housing researcher Nemoy Lewis, the displacement of Black Canadians due to the anti-Black nature of financialized landlords' operating and business practices continues to occur.

Dr. Lewis' research explores the adverse impact of financialized landlords on Black renters and communities in Toronto. His work also identifies policies that can help limit financialization and secure the right to housing.



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## **What can we do?**

Balanced Supply of Housing Community Partner Cheryll Case of Partna Housing suggests best practices for confronting inequality within the housing sphere. The Partna Housing project is designed to acknowledge and address the structural inequality, racism, and ongoing colonial practices embedded within our housing systems.

The Partna Housing project explores a scattered housing trust model, by providing financing and planning to homeowners to create affordable housing on their land.



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## **LEARN MORE ABOUT AFRICVILLE HISTORY**

### **VISIT:**

**website:** <https://bit.ly/41wBPxl>

**website:** <https://bit.ly/20blc4M>

**video:** <https://bit.ly/3Z6sDha>

## **LEARN MORE ABOUT RACIALIZED HOUSING MARKETS**

### **VISIT:**

**report:** <https://bit.ly/3YSZK82>

## **LEARN MORE ABOUT BETTER HOUSING PRACTICES**

### **VISIT:**

**website:** [partnahousing.ca](http://partnahousing.ca)

**website:** [pplanning.ca](http://pplanning.ca)

**podcast:** <https://bit.ly/3xvS3sF>