

For Immediate Release:
September 8, 2009

Making Progress: Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness *Strong Start in First Quarter of Second Year*

Calgary, AB The Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) today released a report on the first quarter of 2009 showing continued progress on the implementation of [Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness](#).

The momentum built in the first year of the 10 Year Plan continued into the first three months of Fiscal 2009-2010 (April 1 – June 30). Highlights include:

- The Government of Alberta announced [\\$13.8 million](#) in new operating funds in support of Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.
- The City of Calgary granted the CHF [\\$5.96 million](#) for the creation of up to 90 units of affordable housing. The CHF acquired the first 30 units in mid-June.
- The Government of Alberta announced [\\$8.9 million](#) in funding for the CHF to create up to 80 units of affordable housing for homeless families.
- A [Youth Summit](#) was held to discuss opportunities to help homeless and at-risk youth obtain housing with the supports required to get off the streets. This summit was a critical step in the development of a plan to end youth homelessness in Calgary.
- A meeting of [Faith Communities](#) occurred on May 21. It was a half-day discussion where members of the faith communities learned more about the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness and discussed opportunities for the faith communities to help homeless and at-risk Calgarians.
- The fifth [Project Homeless Connect](#) was held on May 23. The Calgary community mobilised to provide 729 homeless and at-risk individuals access to services and support under one roof.
- [Alice Bissett Place](#) officially opened on June 25, 2009. The 114-unit affordable housing complex in Inglewood for homeless or at-risk seniors, families, the working poor, the brain injured and individuals with mental illness and physical disabilities started welcoming new tenants on July 1, 2009.
- [2009 Report to Community](#), showcasing achievements in the first year of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, debuted at the CHF's Annual Meeting, held on June 26.

"We've made solid progress in the first quarter of this year," said Tim Richter, CHF President and CEO.

"I'd be lying if I said it will be smooth sailing from here and homelessness is solved." Richter says. "We've all got some tough sloggng ahead – homeless numbers are up; winter is looming, and despite an improvement in the economy, more layoffs are expected which will put even more pressure on the system.

"But there is hope because the programs we've put in place are beginning to show results; the community is coming together like never before, and the provincial government's investment in affordable housing and Housing First programs are easing the strain."

All of the outcomes in the first year of Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness were met or exceeded. Details from the first fiscal year (April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009) are available in the CHF's [2009 Report to Community](#).

Here are a few highlights of our community's progress in ending homelessness from the start of the 10 Year Plan to July 31, 2009:

- The CHF raised approximately **\$3.3 million in multi-year commitments** from corporate Calgary which allows us to invest public funds directly into the community.
- The **City of Calgary** endorsed the 10 Year Plan, and the **Government of Alberta** announced its 10-year plan to end homelessness. The Government of Canada extended its **Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)** for two years, and the CHF became the "entity" for management of the Government of Canada's HPS funding in Calgary for fiscal 2009-2011.
- **Housing First programs are having an impact:** Pathways to Housing Calgary re-housed 65 people from program start date to July 31. The CUPS Rapid Exit Program for Singles (which started in January 2009), re-housed a total of 101 people.
- A total of 183 families have been re-housed through the **CUPS Rapid Exit for Families Program** from project start date to the end of July.
- Nearly 4,000 guests attended the five **Project Homeless Connect** events held to date. In addition to providing comfort items and services, the CHF has been able to help guests with their long-term needs.
- **891 affordable housing units** across the city were funded (mostly by the Province) or completed last year.

"The success of Calgary's plan belongs to the entire community. Calgary's 10 year plan is a partnership – a partnership of governments, agencies, foundations, private philanthropists, volunteers and our homeless neighbours," Richter said. "Furthermore, in our first year we have proven that the fundamentals, like Housing First, are effective."

Now well into the second quarter of the second year of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, the CHF continues to work with private sector, non-profit, government and Calgarians towards the goal of ending homelessness in Calgary by 2018.

The CHF's priorities for the current fiscal year are:

- Develop and implement **shelter diversion programs for individuals and families** at risk of homelessness.
- House and support **60** homeless individuals with complex mental health and addictions issues being discharged or diverted from the criminal justice system with **Pathways to Housing (Justice)**.
- Complete planning and secure funding and agency partners for a **24/7 Opportunity Centre** to be opened by year end 2010.
- Complete planning and secure funding and agency partners for a **Hospital Discharge (Respite Care) Facility** to be opened by year end 2010.
- Develop and implement a **medium / high intensity case management program** to re-house some of our city's most vulnerable homeless individuals.
- **Augment family re-housing programs** to house **120** homeless families
- **Augment domestic violence re-housing** programs to house **25 to 40** families fleeing violence
- **Work with emergency shelters and existing re-housing programs** accelerate re-housing programs prioritizing long-term homeless in shelters or those cycling in and out of shelter.
- **1,025 affordable housing units, supportive housing units &/or treatment beds** will be under development and/or funded in the city of Calgary (from all sources).

Calgarians wishing to contribute by making donations or volunteering are encouraged to visit the CHF websites: www.endinghomelessness.ca or www.calgaryhomeless.com.

Calgary Homeless Foundation

The Calgary Homeless Foundation leads the implementation of Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. Issued in January 2008, Calgary's 10 Year Plan was created by the Calgary Committee to End Homelessness, a community-based, multi-stakeholder, leadership group who issued the Plan and selected the Foundation to implement the Plan. The Foundation is moving forward on Calgary's 10 Year Plan in partnership with the many homeless serving agencies, the private sector, our government partners, the faith community, other foundations and all Calgarians to end homelessness in Calgary once and for all.

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For more information on the Calgary Homeless Foundation or the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, please visit www.endinghomelessness.ca or www.calgaryhomeless.com.

Two backgrounders attached:

1. [Calgary Homeless Foundation – First Quarter Fiscal 2009-2010 \(April 1 – June 30\) Accomplishments](#)
2. [Overcoming Homelessness: Success Stories](#)

Calgary Homeless Foundation
First Quarter Fiscal 2009-2010 (April 1 – June 30) Accomplishments

April 15, 2009

“Housing First” – Engaging Youth to Help End Homelessness

In April 2009, students from the Schulich School of Engineering at the University of Calgary showcased innovative, affordable approaches to housing, supporting the Calgary Homeless Foundation’s “Housing First” philosophy towards Calgary’s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

Fact: About 20% of the
homeless in Calgary
are under 24.

This project began last autumn when Calgary Homeless Foundation representatives shared information about homelessness and the need for affordable housing with engineering students enrolled in a compulsory first-year class in engineering design and communication. Through this collaboration, more than 650 engineering students developed 24 affordable housing prototypes while keeping cost, sustainability, client needs, and green building materials in mind.

Tim Richter, President and CEO of the Calgary Homeless Foundation, said, “Tapping into the minds of Calgary’s post-secondary students is a great way to develop creative, new ways of building affordable housing and help address challenges vulnerable Calgarians face.”

Update: The CHF and a representative from the Schulich School of Engineering hope to continue engaging Calgarians in creating affordable housing opportunities by hosting an “Affordable Housing Workshop” at the upcoming “engage NOW” conference. This workshop will be part of the optional pre-conference workshops on Service-Learning and civic engagement targeting youth, higher education and the not for profit sector. Keynote “engage NOW” speakers include His Holiness the Dalai Lama and F.W. de Klerk, 1993 Nobel Peace Prize winner known for bringing about the end of apartheid in South Africa.

Media Release from April 15, 2009:

<http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/files/pdf/U%20of%20C%20News%20Release%20-%20Engineering%20students%20design%20affordable%20housing.pdf>

Thursday May 7 and Friday May 8, 2009

Youth Summit 2009 – Engaging Youth and Community in Ending Youth Homelessness

The Calgary Homeless Foundation hosted a Youth Summit at the Dream Centre to discuss issues surrounding youth and homelessness – specifically to kick start a strategic and collective effort to prevent youth homelessness and move homeless youth into permanent housing with the supports necessary to sustain that housing.

More than 160 people attended, with representation from Calgary’s youth serving sector and community organizations, local and government officials from Calgary and visitors from agencies across Alberta and Canada. To ensure that Calgary’s homeless and at-risk youth had a say in ending youth homelessness, more than 25 youths actively participated in the Summit, with many instrumental in planning and developing the agenda.

The dialogue from this Summit will help form a 10 Year Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Calgary.

Discussion Paper - Setting the Course: A Blueprint to End Youth Homelessness in Calgary:

[http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/files/pdf/Youth%20Discussion%20Paper%20Draft%20\(May%206%202009\).pdf](http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/files/pdf/Youth%20Discussion%20Paper%20Draft%20(May%206%202009).pdf)Source:

Calgary Homeless Foundation
First Quarter Fiscal 2009-2010 (April 1 – June 30) Accomplishments

May 21, 2009

Faith Communities and Homelessness: How Might We Help Those Needing Homes

On May 21, leaders and members from faith communities throughout Calgary met to discuss opportunities to assist those who are homeless. They learned more about Calgary organizations serving those experiencing homelessness, thereby becoming empowered to help our homeless neighbours in tangible ways.

May 23, 2009

**Project Homeless Connect 5 –
Calgarians working together to make a difference in the lives of homeless or at-risk neighbours**

On May 23, the Foundation held its fifth Project Homeless Connect (PHC5), a one day event where 729 participants had immediate access to services and supports to end and prevent homelessness.

The majority of participants were single males between 40 and 64 years old, and the most popular services sought at PHC5 were clothing, identification, food and comfort kits (which include various items such as underwear, deodorant, hand sanitizer, soap, shampoo etc).

Participants in Calgary's PHC5 also had access to housing opportunities, medical treatments and information, mental health services, income support, employment counselling, educational opportunities, aboriginal affairs, addictions services and more.

PHC5 exemplifies how the community can mobilize and make a tangible difference in the lives of homeless or at-risk Calgarians. In addition to the strong support from our financial and in-kind sponsor Suncor Energy, as well as Brookfield Properties who provided the venue, there were 52 agencies and more than 260 volunteers and agency representatives at PHC5.

"Here we see private sector, non-profit, government and Calgarians stepping up to help our homeless neighbours," explained Richter, on the day of the event.

There are two more PHC events scheduled in 2009, one on September 19 the other on November 21. Both will occur at the Suncor Energy Centre.

The Calgary Homeless Foundation has organized and hosted five PHC events since 2008.

Media release from May 23, 2009: <http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/files/pdf/Media%20Release%20-%20May%2023-final.pdf>

**Fact: The number of
people experiencing
homelessness on any
given night has
quadrupled in the last
decade.**

Calgary Homeless Foundation
First Quarter Fiscal 2009-2010 (April 1 – June 30) Accomplishments

May 26, 2009

City of Calgary Grants \$5.96 million to the Calgary Homeless Foundation for Homeless and at Risk Calgarians

On May 26, the Calgary Homeless Foundation received \$5.96 million from The City of Calgary to create affordable housing units for Calgarians who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. This funding enables CHF to acquire and renovate and/or construct affordable housing for singles and couples. Located throughout the city, these buildings will have 'mixed rents' allowing rental costs to range from near market to deep subsidy.

Along with housing, the CHF will ensure appropriate supports are provided residents who requiring them. The CHF works in partnership with existing Calgary community agencies, including in-home support and case management, to ensure the housing is safe, stable and can be maintained by the residents.

Update – Using some of the funds granted through The City of Calgary, CHF purchased a lodging house in Sunalta on June 17, 2009. The property will be renovated by late fall. Although it is currently partially occupied, the lodging house will house 30 individuals once the renovations are complete.

CHF is continuing to look at various buildings throughout the city to acquire and renovate in order to provide singles and couples with affordable, permanent housing with necessary supports.

Media Release from May 26, 2009:

http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/files/pdf/May262009_CityDonation.pdf

June 5, 2009

'Housing first' initiative helps homeless families in Calgary: Provincial funding for up to 80 homes

Up to 80 affordable housing units for Calgary families will be acquired thanks to \$8.9 million in provincial funding announced in early June. This funding will help create homes for families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, including those leaving domestic violence situations. The units will have one, two or three bedrooms.

This provincial funding reinforces the Alberta government's commitment to end homelessness in 10 years.

"The Alberta government is delivering on its commitment to end homelessness in the province by taking a plan, putting it into action, and providing funding to make it happen," said Tim Richter, President and CEO of the Calgary Homeless Foundation. "Thanks to this financial support, homeless Calgary families will be able to move out of shelters and into affordable housing."

The funding came through an RFP process and is part of the Alberta government's five-year strategy to create more than 11,000 affordable housing units across the province by 2012.

Update – On September 8, 2009, the CHF will have possession of a property in Acadia consisting of 58 affordable housing units. The majority of these units will be for homeless or at-risk families, with a few for singles and couples.

Media release from June 5, 2009:

http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/files/pdf/Jun5_ProvinceAnnouncement_FamilyHousing.pdf

Calgary Homeless Foundation
First Quarter Fiscal 2009-2010 (April 1 – June 30) Accomplishments

June 25, 2009

Alice Bissett Place Official Opening and Dedication in Calgary
Providing affordable and supported housing for low-income Calgarians

On June 25, Alice Bissett Place officially opened. The residence is a 114 unit housing complex providing supported affordable homes for homeless and at risk Calgarians including very low-income seniors, individuals, couples and families, as well as people with physical disabilities, mental illness and brain-injuries. It was made possible through the combined efforts of Joint Venture Partners – Calgary Home Builders Foundation, Calgary Homeless Foundation and Horizon Housing Society – and funding and support from government, private and public sector organizations, individuals and volunteers.

The opening also featured the signing of an amendment to the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program Agreement, along with an announcement of \$386 million over the next two years. Minister Jim Prentice joined Alberta Minister Yvonne Fritz to make the announcement at today's official opening and dedication.

Media release from June 25, 2009:

http://www.endinghomelessness.ca/users/news_view.asp?FolderID=2932&NewsID=96

http://www.endinghomelessness.ca/users/news_view.asp?FolderID=2932&NewsID=97

Overcoming Homelessness: Success Stories

Ruth

Imagine being eight months pregnant, the mother of a toddler, suddenly single, and homeless. For Ruth¹, an immigrant in her twenties, this was her reality about a year ago.

After being in Canada for several months, Ruth's husband left her and their young son. Without her spouse's financial support, she was unable to afford rent. Her situation was further complicated by a language barrier: Ruth spoke no English. In June 2008, she was referred to the Aspen Integrated Services Assessment & Case Coordination (ISACC²) program.

With the assistance of a translator, ISACC worked with Ruth and various agencies to end her homelessness. Ruth was put in touch with the CUPS Rapid Exit program, and now lives in a comfortable duplex unit. Rapid Exit, along with Women in Need, helped furnish her new home. ISACC also coordinated Food Bank hampers for Ruth's young family, something she couldn't do without assistance from a translator. ISACC aided Ruth in applying for the Canada Child Tax Benefit, as well as accompanied her to the Calgary Health Region so that a nurse could check on the health of Ruth's new baby and provide advice to Ruth in her native tongue on feeding and caring for her baby. Additionally, ISACC has aided Ruth with the application for Direct Rent Subsidy through Calgary Housing.

Now that Ruth has financial, medical, and housing stability, ISACC has begun to aid Ruth in finding employment. ISACC has put Ruth in contact with immigrant services agencies that will help her make a successful transition into the work field.

Marilyn

One of the guiding and proven philosophies of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness is Housing First, which puts the highest priority on moving homeless people into permanent housing with the support necessary to sustain that housing. For Marilyn³, a mother of school-aged children, the combination of housing and support enabled her to overcome obstacles, rebuild her life and remain housed.

After having the courage to leave a very violent relationship, Marilyn went to a women's shelter. Then through CUPS Rapid Exit, Marilyn was able to find permanent housing. She also attended courses to upgrade her skills, so she could return to work.

Unfortunately, Marilyn experienced difficulties in making ends meet and fell behind on rent. She realised she required additional help to stay housed. After meeting with a case worker with the *Family Violence Housing First Case Management Project*⁴, they developed an action plan together to address her situation. Marilyn was able to work with Alberta Works to help pay her rent, and she returned to class to complete the follow-up career and job placement component of her program. Marilyn's case manager also helped her review budgeting basics and referred her to the milk program and food bank as an interim measure until Marilyn was able to get her finances under control.

Now that Marilyn has learned to budget more effectively, she has been paying her rent and no longer accesses the food bank. She continues to meet with her case worker.

¹ Not her real name

² ISACC is a tri-agency pilot project, consisting of Aspen Family and Community Network Society, Distress Centre and CUPS, that concentrates on the goals set out in Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

³ Not her real name

⁴ Discovery House