



The Evergreens Foundation

BUSINESS PLAN

2019-2021

Alberta  Seniors and Housing

June 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Evergreens Foundation was first created as a Corporate Body April 11, 1960, by order of the Lieutenant Governor and was recognized as a Management Body under the Alberta Housing Act on January 1, 1995. Over these past 60 years, the Foundation has continued to grow and evolve in response to our society's changing needs and demands.

In accordance with our mission statement, ***“The Evergreens Foundation will provide, in a respectful and supportive manner, a continuum of housing options that promote quality of life and independence,”*** we provide housing to a broad spectrum of the population. Services are offered through the Lodge Program which encompasses Supportive Living Level 2 (SL2) up to SL4. Independent seniors of modest income also have access to self-contained apartments. Low-income families, singles and AISH clients are supported through provincially or municipally owned housing units, or by the Provincial Rent Supplement Programs that The Evergreens Foundation administers.

The Evergreens Foundation Board of Directors historically has chosen not to actively pursue the avenue of Affordable Housing. Our exception is Whispering Pines Lodge in Grande Cache, which was constructed with the assistance of an Affordable Housing Grant. This lodge is a meld of Affordable Housing and the more typical Lodge Program. Private developers have built Affordable Housing units in Hinton, Edson and Jasper, presently relieving The Evergreens Foundation of the responsibility to build and maintain such units themselves. As noted in this year's Strategic Plan, we will be reaching out to the Municipalities and revisiting the Affordable Housing existing in our communities. Many of the private Affordable Housing grants are half way through their 20 year grant terms. At the end of these agreements we could be left with with the potential of no Affordable Housing in these communities.

In keeping with our Vision, ***“A community-based Foundation providing great places to live,”*** The Evergreens Foundation has broadened its scope by partnering with Alberta Health Services (AHS) at three of our five lodges. This partnership allows our Foundation to continue to offer high quality housing, while permitting AHS to supply the necessary health supports to our residents. Currently, The Evergreens Foundation manages 16 Designated Assisted Living (SL4) units at Alpine Summit Seniors Lodge, Jasper. Further, AHS contracts 15 Designated Access Spaces (SL3-4) at Whispering Pines Lodge, Grande Cache, and 10 SL3 Designated Access Spaces at Parkland Lodge, Edson. We also wish to explore the opportunity for memory care spaces or SL4D, which would be a new capacity for the Foundation.

The Board of Directors has been actively participating in the Parkland Lodge construction project. Although not successful for ASLI funding, Parkland Lodge did obtain approval for a Lodge Renewal Fund grant in the amount of approximately \$12.2M. We were then awarded an additional 5.4 M in December 2016. The project has been awarded to Scott Builders. We are anticipating a 24 month construction period at which time we will open our 105 unit facility. Construction is well underway and we have two board members sit on the building committee as well as the CAO and a community member.

The Board has approved the expansion of Pine Valley Lodge in Hinton in order to meet the growing demand of seniors in the community and the surrounding Yellowhead County area. We will be working with Colliers Project Leaders on advancing the Pine Valley Lodge construction plans. The original Pine Valley Lodge expansion plans were submitted to Alberta Seniors and Housing in 2016 and 2017 for funding consideration. Although not initially successful, we will continue to lobby the province for any funding available to offset costs on this construction. We are currently assessing our options to maximize the usage of our existing land and meet the broad and changing needs of our community.

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

*“The business plan was prepared under the Board’s direction in accordance with legislation and associated ministerial guidelines, and in consideration of all policy decisions and material, economic, or fiscal implications of which the Board is aware”.
Approved by the Board, June 27, 2018, Motion #064-18.*

PORTFOLIO PROFILE

The Evergreens Foundation manages housing throughout Yellowhead County, the Town and Improvement District of Jasper, a section of the M.D. of Greenview #16 and the towns of Hinton, Grande Cache and Edson. In recent years, we have expanded into Parkland County, from Highway 759 to the eastern border of Yellowhead County. Residents in that area of Parkland County primarily access our Sunshine Place Lodge in Evansburg.

The Town of Jasper lays claim to our newest lodge, Alpine Summit (37 units), which opened in 2008, and Pine Grove Manor, (33-unit seniors self-contained apartment). Moving 90 km east, Hinton's housing is composed of Pine Valley Lodge (30 units), Lion's Sunset Manor (32 units, seniors' self-contained), a special needs house and 12 low-income family dwellings. Grande Cache offers the beautiful Whispering Pines Lodge, a 30 unit facility which is conveniently attached to the Healthcare Centre. The Town of Edson, where construction is taking place, has the oldest and largest of our lodges, Parkland Lodge, which had 55 units prior to construction, increasing to 105 when complete. This property is beautifully enhanced by gardens and gazebos developed by the Parkland Lodge Auxiliary with the support of many charitable donations and volunteer workers. We are currently temporarily housed in the former Edson Healthcare Centre. This facility has enabled us to house up to 64 residents while awaiting our new facility. Edson also accommodates low-income seniors in Heritage Court and Heatherwood Manor. An additional 7 townhouse units are located here for the benefit of families in need of assistance. Finally, Evansburg houses over 30 seniors in Sunshine Place Lodge, which is attached to Pembina Village, a long-term care/dementia cottages facility. The entire building, including our lodge, is staffed by The Good Samaritan Society.

In addition to the foregoing, The Evergreens Foundation administers Rent Supplement Programs throughout its entire jurisdiction on behalf of the Government of Alberta.

Please see Appendix B for a full listing of The Evergreens Foundation's housing portfolio.

Services or Products

Rating criteria for all prospective residents is established in accordance with the Alberta Housing Act. Seniors within our Lodge program may avail themselves of many supportive services, such as meals, housekeeping and activities. Our lodges have 24 hour staffing to provide necessary supports and security to our residents. Home Care provides services, including the Medication Assistance Program (MAP), to their clients living within the lodges. Access to transportation, regular exercise programs and personal care services are also available at our Lodges. Families, singles and seniors who live in our Manors, townhouses or houses are provided with safe and affordable housing. Any other necessary supports must be obtained through other government agencies, such as Social Assistance. Ever mindful of the needs of our senior citizens, The Evergreens Foundation continues to offer more and more healthcare services in partnership with Alberta Health Services. In an effort to make the public aware of the services we provide to families and individuals, The Evergreens Foundation

maintains a website: www.evergreensfoundation.com. We can also be accessed through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Clients

Presently, The Evergreens Foundation serves more than 200 seniors through the lodge program, with over 100 currently on the waitlist (76% of waitlist is in Hinton and Edson.)

Waitlist averages in Edson have grown consecutively from 15 in 2011, 23 in 2012, 30 in 2013, 42 in 2014, 40 in 2015 and 2016, 43 in 2017 and 45 in 2018. The current lodge has 64 rooms. The current housing situation at the interim housing site made it possible to provide 9 extra rooms while awaiting construction completion.

Hinton averages are 23 in 2011, 29 in 2014, 36 in 2015, 26 in 2016, 31 in 2017 and 2018. The current lodge has 30 bachelor style suites.

There is an average of 120 seniors living in the self-contained apartments, with a modest, lightly-fluctuating waitlist. Twenty-one families are dwelling in our housing units and nearly 160 are assisted through the Rent Supplement programs (waitlist averages 30-50.) The implementation of the new Provincial Housing Strategy saw changes to scoring and asset levels in the 2018 Social housing program, which impacted our waitlists and scoring dramatically.

Please see section, “Environmental Scan” for further details.

Community Based Organizations

The Evergreens Foundation works closely with various groups within the communities it serves. Volunteer-based “auxiliaries” or resident-based groups are active at each lodge location. These groups work with the local Activity Co-coordinator in hosting fund-raising activities and organizing special events for the seniors and visitors from the community. Other groups include bus societies, other senior groups and the Hinton Resident Care Foundation. The managers of our Social Housing portfolio work closely with Alberta Human Services, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and the Yellowhead Emergency Shelter for women. It takes many great organizations and hard-working people to provide all the necessary supports to the community!

Competition

The Evergreens Foundation was happy to see the addition of Affordable Housing units in various communities throughout our region in the last decade. These units are of particular benefit to the individuals and couples who work in the service industry for minimum wage.

The Good Samaritan Society (GSS) and the Pembina Housing Authority are the only other housing authorities that work within our boundaries; both groups operate in Evansburg (for a total of 3 housing organizations). Recently, Alberta Health Services purchased the Mountainview Centre in Hinton from the Good Samaritan Society stabilizing the level 4, 4D and long term care in the community. We were pleased with this transition and the benefits it will provide to the town of Hinton.

Due to very limited housing supports in our entire area for non-seniors with mental or physical disabilities, pressure is often placed on The Evergreens Foundation to accommodate such individuals within our lodge program. Offering such supports is not generally embraced by the Foundation for a variety of reasons: (1) we may not have appropriately trained staff, (2) we generally don't have the availability, (3) the culture and activities within the lodges are geared to seniors and (4) by accommodating non-seniors we may deny qualifying seniors of housing. We are interested to see how the addition of a tenant support staff worker as outlined in the Provincial Housing Strategy may change that position going forward.

Associations

The Evergreens Foundation holds membership in the Alberta Seniors Communities Housing Association (ASCHA), Alberta Public Housing Administrators' Association (APHAA), Alberta Managers Society (AMS), and the Lodge Activity Coordinators Association of Alberta (LACAA). These associations engender province-wide support, training and advocacy among the many housing authority members.

ASCHA strives to be, "The voice and champion for seniors housing." ASCHA primarily accomplishes this through advocacy with government agencies. This group is fully supported by our Board of Directors. ASCHA also sponsors accredited classes at Red Deer College (RDC) which have been utilized successfully by many of our senior management. In 2016 and 2018 two of our employees received the Laura Crawford Scholarship, which is offered by ASCHA to one student each year enrolled in the ASCHA/RDC Certificate Program.

APHAA is proving to be an integral avenue for training new Chief Administrative Officers. In 2009, APHAA released its Education Modules through which all CAO's are able to receive certification. Recently, APHAA sponsored Leadership Training at the Banff Conference Centre. APHAA also manages a member's only email network which is well utilized by the directors of the many housing organizations throughout the province.

The **AMS and LACAA** offer support to both the Lodge Managers and the Activity Coordinators throughout the province. These groups offer biannual conventions and networking opportunities for members.

Accountability

The Evergreens Foundation is accountable to its many stakeholders. Although the Ministry to which the Foundation reports may change from time to time (currently, the Seniors Ministry),

our actions are always governed by Ministerial Order and *The Alberta Housing Act and Regulations*. Pursuant to these documents, the Foundation is led by a Board of Directors, each appointed by one of the member municipalities or towns ([see Appendix A](#)).

Board meeting minutes are dispensed to the member municipalities and made available to the public. All properties receive regular inspections from the Public Health Inspector, local Fire Departments, the Supportive Living Accommodations Licensing department and Alberta Health. The Evergreens Foundation holds a Certificate of Recognition in Partnerships in Injury Reduction (PIR). Our goal is always to exceed the expectations.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

People often are unaware of The Evergreens Foundation – until they need us. We assist as many as possible with the funding and accommodations that are available. With the help of our Housing Advisor and Alberta Seniors and Housing staff, we have been able to manage our Rent Supplement and Social Housing budgets efficiently to allocate funding to as many low income individuals and families as we can.

This year, we will investigate Affordable housing needs and program feasibility within our communities. This may mean partnering with our Municipalities and potentially other non-profit housing providers. We are concerned; however, that the Affordable Housing criteria of 10% below-market rent, doesn't provide the level of subsidy required for many families in hardship. It can be difficult to have rural waitlist numbers high enough to support a self-sustaining facility that justifies the capital investment, and does not negatively impact local for-profit rental sites. We feel that maintaining and increasing the Rent Supplement Program budget is a key solution for our area. Many of our communities have ample rental availability but rents are too high for anyone living under the Alberta Income Threshold. We would like to subsidize those on our waitlist within their current homes when at all possible.

Times are changing with our senior population: the statistics are there – a senior BOOM has arrived. Currently, one in ten people are over the age of 65, by 2030 the senior population is expected to be one in six. We are preparing to accommodate, not only the seniors of today, but the seniors in decades to come. It is well-recognized that seniors are staying at home longer - wonderful if they are enjoying quality life in a safe setting – but the reality is that many seniors are living at risk in the rural communities. At the juncture when they realize they need assistance, they are often far past the once-typical lodge level of care. Healthcare support is a critical component in the lodge program today. Our Foundation has worked hard to develop a strong, open relationship with AHS, recognizing them as an essential component in providing quality care to our seniors. We are thrilled with the Community Care Initiatives and the Dementia Care Strategy implemented by Alberta Health and AHS, which helps us to better serve our seniors in home and lodge settings with expanded healthcare supports.

There are certainly those within our area who champion senior's rights. The Resident Care Society in Hinton works diligently at their fund-raising campaigns to provide enhanced care to our citizens. They are waiting for the word, "Go!" from The Evergreens Foundation to promote our expansion project and fundraise to help furnish it. The local Pine Valley Lodge Seniors Society will work hand-in-hand with them to achieve this goal. The Parkland Lodge Auxiliary members have also formed a fundraising committee and are nearly half way to their goal. These funds will be used towards the furniture of the new Parkland Lodge building.

In recent years, we have seen the push for housing on the east end of Yellowhead County. This area has a large ageing demographic and very little to no housing options in the hamlets and County area. Yellowhead County councillors and community advocates have been hosting meetings and reaching out to their citizens to determine what strategies may work and what role they can play. The Evergreens Foundation may also be a major contributor in assisting with this demand. We plan to meet with the Pembina Housing Authority to see how

we may partner to address these needs going forward or explore opportunities to expand our operations.

A new focus in this years' strategic planning is addressing the needs for an Indigenous Seniors Lodge facility in Grande Cache and MD of Greenview area. There are currently many barriers for the indigenous elders to successfully transition from their land into appropriate seniors care.

Using land available on our existing site, we believe that a small expansion designed to better meet the needs of the Indigenous Elders is an exciting opportunity for us.

We will be exploring design and programming options, as well as any funding available for indigenous specific housing through the Provincial and Federal Governments or CMHC and First Nations groups.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Board of Directors is engaged in setting the direction of our Foundation. They have ensured that the plans for The Evergreens Foundation is aligned with the 2018-2021 Government of Alberta Seniors and Housing Business Plan, the primary focus for our Foundation being Strategic Outcome One: “Seniors have access to programs, services and supports that help them live safely and independently in their chosen communities”. Further, the 2018-2021 Seniors and Housing Business Plan Outcome Two highlights the need for “all Albertans to have access to appropriate housing and integrated housing supports”. In the rural setting, our Board is keenly aware of the importance of linking both housing and services in all aspects of our housing portfolio. The Seniors and Housing Business Plan also acknowledges that “as of January 2018, there were about 570,000 Albertans age 65 and over, comprising approximately 13 percent of the population. The population of seniors is expected to almost double to one million by 2035”. Seniors are more diverse, are living at home longer and have higher demands than the previous generation. We must strive to meet the needs and wants of today’s seniors in order to provide them with the high quality of life that they have earned and deserve.

The *2012-13 Annual Report of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta* noted that, “the cost of accommodation has increased in many communities and affordable accommodation options have narrowed”. The *2018 Canadian Rental Housing Index Report* released in May of this year verifies that the statement above still holds true. It states that “Alberta currently has the highest rental cost in the country while only having the third highest average incomes”. The private, not for profit and public sectors all have important roles to play in the community to ensure seniors have access to safe, affordable and appropriate accommodation. The Environmental Scan will show how our communities measure up to the provincial trend.

The Evergreens Foundation’s Board of Directors are members of the supporting municipal and county councils; in fact, we have been privileged to have many Mayors sit on the board throughout the years. These devoted public representatives are eager to meet the needs of their communities - not only today’s needs, but those of the future. Most of the communities have entered into partnerships with other groups or the private sector to supply Affordable Housing in their area, which allows The Evergreens Foundation to concentrate on expanding seniors housing and supports.

Historically, The Evergreens Foundation has not conducted its own Housing Studies primarily because we support seven towns/municipalities and do not have the resources to effectively carry out such a vast task. Instead, Housing Studies have been conducted by the supporting communities when and as necessary. This year, we undertook a small “gaps analysis” to supplement the data supplied by the supporting communities. This data strongly supports our Strategic Plan and the direction of the Foundation. The report, completed by Berry Architecture and Associates (See full report in Appendix F), showed that “in the West Yellowhead area the overall population of 55+ has doubled since 1996 and is expected to double again by 2031”. The Board of Directors has worked together effectively in using this data to determine the areas in greatest need and how each could best be assisted.

Annually, the Management and Board meet to update our Strategic Plan and to provide direction on any needed revisions to the Business Plan. Input from all Board representatives are considered. Further, the frontline management team meets quarterly, including one annual meeting with the Board and Administration team, to discuss any issues, voids and successes. We have recently added meeting requirements to our Activity Coordinators and Maintenance Supervisors who now meet twice a year. Resident surveys and related action plans are developed and reviewed by the Operations Manager, then presented to the Board prior to implementation by the managers.

Regular consultations have continued between the AHS Capacity Planning Department and the CAO regarding any healthcare-related deficiencies in our area. Conversations are encouraged between AHS and The Evergreens Foundation team members, at all levels. Our mutual goal is to house our residents with the most appropriate levels of care and supports. We have struggled with the inability to sign more Designated Access Space contracts with AHS in Hinton due to the “C” building code, but have been recently successful in extending home care hours at that site. Again, the Board is in full support of our contracts with AHS and any partnerships we can develop.

The Evergreens Foundation’s CAO has made council presentations when requested, and has been interacting with community groups to raise awareness of The Foundation and its role in the community. She has been in contact with the Seniors Ministry and Alberta Health Services for the Hinton expansion project, and the work required in the east end of Yellowhead County.

ALL preceding methods of communication and reports provide valuable input into the strategies and overall Business Plan of the Foundation.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The Board has recognized these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/challenges to The Evergreens Foundation (EGF):

Strengths:

- The Board of Directors
- Cohesive, engaged and adaptable group
- Supportive of the EGF mission and EGF communities as a whole
- Empower their Administrative management team to successfully lead the Foundation towards its goals
- Solid Lodge Program
- Financially supported through requisition
- Well-maintained, properly staffed lodges
- Good distribution of facilities
- Meets all supportive needs of residents, including healthcare
- Strong management team, led by the CAO and inclusive of Operations Manager, Human Resources Manager, Finance Manager, Payroll and Benefits Coordinator, Executive Assistant and Administrative Assistant
- Volunteers/auxiliary groups working at each lodge

Weaknesses:

- Large geographic area
- Excessive costs related to travel, including shipping, contractor costs
- Small lodges and apartments make for inefficient operational costs
- Remote communities have higher cost of living
- Waitlist numbers increasing in 4 out of 5 lodge sites
- High cost of living in area and generally above-average wages impact budget
- Diminutive skilled labour-pool to access in smaller communities
- Limited community housing units, and those we have are designed for families, not singles
- Limited Rent Supplement funding

Opportunities:

- Can assist rural residents to age in place
- Have our own land on which to expand our lodges
- Could expand contracts with AHS Designated Access Spaces
- Current mindset of Board, Councils and Ministries of both Seniors and Health to expand senior services and form partnerships
- Explore Affordable Housing options
- Access more Rent Supplement funding to assist people where they live

Challenges (Threats):

- Ability to build long term sustainable and adaptable housing to take us through the baby boomer generation, but also for succeeding decades.
- Seniors' incomes don't increase at the same rate as our operational costs, thus requisitions must increase or alternate sources of revenue must be developed
- Change in governments and staffing create lack of continuity
- Seniors have higher expectations for housing services
- Stagnant funding in the Rent Supplement Program fails to meet the required needs of our growing waitlist
- Growing administrative pressures originating from a variety of duplicated Provincial reporting requests can take up valuable staff time

- **GOALS, STRATEGIC PRIORITY INITIATIVES, EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES**
- **See Appendix E Strategic Plan**

FINANCIAL PLAN AND FORECASTS

Per the Business Plan Guidelines provided by the Housing Division, Alberta Seniors, please note the following assumptions made in the preparation of these financial plans.

We have assumed that our current funding levels are maintained for Social Housing as these are sufficient to meet our needs. Our Capital Renewal and Maintenance budget reflects only new requests. We have also assumed there will be minimal changes to the Lodge Accommodation Program (LAP) funding. Any increases shown are due to additional spaces being opened after construction, not on an increase in “per eligible resident” funding. However, Administration costs, Human Resources budgets, contractor fees and utility prices will continue to rise according to the cost of living and market fluctuations. Therefore, all shortfalls can only be (1) added to our residents’ rents, (2) be offset by reducing our maintenance budgets, and/or (3) be added to the Municipal Requisitions.

CAPITAL PLANNING STRATEGY

Capital planning has always been a forefront issue with The Evergreens Foundation Board of Directors. The early goal was to have a lodge built in each community. Once reaching that goal with the opening of the Alpine Summit Seniors Lodge in Jasper in 2008, the Board started to look at regeneration of existing facilities.

Our strategy has been to combine information sourced from a variety of places. One source is using the lifecycle replacement information contained in the facility reports that are prepared by Alberta Infrastructure. We then pair that with our own maintenance records and expenses, followed by a review of the demographic needs of the area. The housing studies completed by the town of Hinton in 2013 and Yellowhead County in 2014, along with our study in 2018, help us set our strategic capital goals. We know that it is of the utmost importance that capital projects meet not only the current needs of the community, but also those of the future.

While we are hopeful that the province will see the growing need in our area; unfortunately, we are not in a position to wait until a Provincial funding announcement is made to take steps towards our construction. Based on this and the above criteria, the Board has recognized the Hinton Pine Valley Lodge as the next capital project and has started to requisition for this. In our fall Strategic Planning session, we will further develop plans appropriate for the project in the east end of Yellowhead County. Capital Planning will always be an annual discussion and our Board is very engaged in having appropriate housing available.

CONCLUSION: As demonstrated through this Business Plan, including the Strategic Plan and Capital Plan, The Evergreens Foundation is poised and prepared to address the senior boom in our area. In 2005 and 2008 we opened new lodges in Grande Cache and Jasper, respectively. Both of these lodges have filled a void in their communities by supplying affordable, safe, home-like housing for seniors. We have just begun construction of Parkland Lodge in order to provide more appropriate housing to the seniors of Edson and Yellowhead County. With the addition of 1-bedroom lodge suites, we will provide assistance to the moderate income seniors who are in need of supportive housing. The affordable studio-style suites will benefit the modest-income senior and a contract with Alberta Health Services, will help all those in need of enhanced healthcare. Our Board has reaffirmed our Foundation's commitment to a lodge expansion in Hinton while simultaneously planning an expansion into the East end of Yellowhead County. We will continue to support our seniors where and as they need it so they may enjoy happy and fulfilling 'twilight years.' Our Foundation truly is in tune with the needs of our seniors and agree with and support the goals of Alberta's Seniors and Housing Ministry and our Premier.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - HMB CORPORATE PROFILE

APPENDIX B - PROPERTY PROFILE

APPENDIX C - FINANCIAL BUDGET AND FORECASTS

APPENDIX D - CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND RENEWAL

APPENDIX E – STRATEGIC PLAN

APPENDIX F – THE EVERGREENS FOUNDATION HOUSING NEEDS STUDY