

Media Release

74 new affordable homes open for vulnerable Calgarians in Downtown West

February 16, 2021, Calgary, AB – A nine-storey affordable housing development officially opened today in Calgary's Downtown West community. The building, named Legacy on 5th, will provide new homes for 74 vulnerable Calgarians, who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, including individuals with autism or cognitive challenges and vulnerable seniors.

Legacy on 5th was made possible through a joint effort between HomeSpace Society, Calgary Homeless Foundation, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), City of Calgary, and the generous commitment of RESOLVE Campaign donors including philanthropists David and Leslie Bissett, who donated nearly \$8 million towards the affordable housing tower.

"The RESOLVE Campaign represented a community wide response to a serious community deficit," says David Bissett on Calgary's affordable housing crisis. "We had a great team effort on this building. Legacy on 5th is a very impressive building and we're looking forward to seeing people move in and fulfilling a need in the community."

24-year-old Liam Gossen, who lives with autism, moved out of his family's house and into Legacy on 5th earlier this month. This is the first time he has lived independently with community supports.

"We wanted to make sure Liam had as many opportunities to have challenges and to reach goals as he could," says Liam's mother, Lindamarie Gossen. "We kept thinking one day Liam will move out. When we heard of a housing opportunity [at Legacy on 5th], we presented it to Liam, and Liam was more than ready."

Liam is one of more than 20,000 Calgarians who have autism or a related disability. An estimated 87 percent live at home with parents and 85 percent are unemployed and cannot afford market housing. With aging parents who cannot look after them indefinitely, these individuals are at high risk of becoming homeless. Legacy on 5th helps to curb an urgent housing crisis that is putting the well-being of many Calgary families at risk.

The tower marks HomeSpace's tenth newly constructed building in just five years in collaboration with Calgary Homeless Foundation through the RESOLVE Campaign. These properties have meant affordable apartments, with supports, for more than 320 Calgarians experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

"Collaboration with private and public sectors is critical for the work HomeSpace does in developing, owning and managing affordable housing to address the urgent needs of our city," says Bernadette Majdell, CEO, HomeSpace. "We are grateful to our partners for working together to bring to life our largest building to date, Legacy on 5th. We know that providing housing with supports creates safety, stability and dignity for individuals and families in need and also creates a massive community savings for our public systems."



HomeSpace partnered with several social-service agencies, including Calgary Seniors' Resource Society, Autism Calgary and New Age Services, to ensure the residents living at the building receive the supports and resources they require to thrive in their new community.

"The residents of Legacy on 5th will contribute to the vibrant community of downtown Calgary, bringing their stories, gifts and talents to our neighbourhood," said Patricia Jones, President and CEO, Calgary Homeless Foundation. "This inspiring collaboration is a testament that homelessness can end when we intentionally choose to work together."

Calgary has nearly 3,000 Calgarians experiencing homelessness on any given night, and 100,000 households are projected to be in core housing need, or overpaying for housing, by 2025.

"Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home," says the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister responsible for CMHC. "Our Government is pleased to support this project with a \$9.7 million investment through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund. Congratulations to everyone involved in making this project a reality."

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Interview and Tours

On-site interviews and media tours are available upon request:

When: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 between 9-10:30 a.m.

Where: Legacy on 5th, located at 933 5 Ave SW in Downtown West

Spokespeople: Bernadette Majdell, CEO, HomeSpace Society

Patricia Jones, President & CEO, Calgary Homeless Foundation

Liam Gossen, new resident of Legacy on 5th, lives with autism

Alan Norris, Chair, RESOLVE Campaign and CEO, Brookfield Residential Properties (Alan is only available for phone interviews)

Website: Virtual celebration videos and information at homespace.org/our-portfolio/legacy/

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About HomeSpace Society

HomeSpace is a charitable real estate developer, rental housing owner and property manager. We provide supportive and affordable housing for the most vulnerable Calgarians and own a portfolio of nearly 700 units throughout Calgary. We partner with social serving community agencies to provide supports to the more than 750 residents in our buildings. We have completed construction on ten buildings in the last five years and currently have three more buildings in various stages of development. We are committed to continue adding affordable housing in our city. For more information, visit HomeSpace.org

About the RESOLVE Campaign

RESOLVE was a first-of-its-kind collaboration of nine Partner agencies, working together with a common goal — to create affordable rental housing with support services for up to 3,000 vulnerable and homeless Calgarians. The nine respected and established agencies partnered with government, business and community leaders, all resolving to make Calgary a better home – for everyone. At the conclusion of the Campaign's active fundraising period on March 31, 2018, enough capital was raised to provide 1,850 homeless and vulnerable Calgarians with a key to an affordable rental home with the supports they need to thrive. While the Campaign itself has sunset, the Partners will continue to open doors to additional urgently needed affordable homes in our city. The tangible difference the Campaign has made in our city will be seen for years to come, as more buildings are constructed and Calgarians move from a place of homelessness and instability to the safety and security of a home. The RESOLVE Partners are: Accessible Housing; Forward Housing (formerly Bishop O'Byrne Housing Association); Calgary Alpha House Society; Calgary Homeless Foundation; Calgary John Howard Society; Horizon Housing Society; Silvera for Seniors; The Mustard Seed; and Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta.

About Calgary Homeless Foundation

Calgary Homeless Foundation serves as the centralized planner for 27 homeless-serving agencies in Calgary. As an accountable steward of government and private funding, we find innovative and evidence-based solutions for Albertans at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Through system coordination, research and data, accountability and responsible funding allocation, we address gaps and define best practices, and have housed over 10,000 people in Calgary since 2008. Our collaborative model involves partnerships with all orders of government, public systems, homeless-serving agencies, the private sector, faith-based communities, foundations, and Calgarians. Grounded in fiscal responsibility, our solution-focused, one-of-a-kind approach ensures that Calgary's resources are allocated in a cost-effective manner to provide a full spectrum of services, solutions, and permanent housing for all Calgarians. For more information, visit calgaryhomeless.com