



## OUR HISTORY

### ***NEED FOR SENIOR'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING***

Forward Housing Association's (the Association) over 40 years of history began with the vision and drive of committed Calgarians to make a difference to the city's most vulnerable senior population. There was a growing need in the 1970s and '80s for affordable housing for seniors.

Visionaries in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary (RCD) formed The Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary Association for Senior Citizens (RCDASC) as a non-profit entity in May 1976. This organization assisted four independent Catholic men's groups under the Knights of Columbus to secure suitable lands and advance construction plans.

Lands were made available through lease arrangements with the RCD and the Government of Alberta (GOA), which purchased some properties through the Alberta Social Housing Corporation (ASHC). Funding was provided by the GOA, mainly through the Heritage Trust Fund, as well as federal funds through the CMHC. The properties were owned or leased by the ASHC, while management was the responsibility of the sponsoring organizations. By the mid-nineties, under the same government program, three additional Catholic parish sponsored projects were developed.

Driven by Alberta's deficit reduction policies in the mid-'90s, 400 housing management boards combined into 100. In return, the GOA granted the consolidated boards more authority over their operations. The four projects under the RCDASC organization, along with Columbus Manor, St. Paul's Villa, and Crossroads Court, were a natural fit to merge, given their shared history. On July 1, 1995, The GOA designated RCDASC as a Housing Management Body (HMB) with full authority over the management of the properties and governed through Ministerial Orders (currently under the Ministry of Seniors and Housing)

These seven properties make up what is now Forward Housing's low-income seniors' housing portfolio.



### **Carroll Place**

- 99 units in Brentwood
- Officially opened on June 8, 1980
- Named after the fourth bishop of the Calgary RC Diocese, Francis Carroll

### **Columbus Manor**

- 99 units in Bridgeland
- Officially opened on July 2, 1982
- Named after the Knights of Columbus

### **Francis Klein Centre**

- 104 units in Acadia
- Officially opened on June 24, 1983
- Named after the fifth bishop of the Calgary RC Diocese

### **St. James Court**

- 23 units in Lincoln Park
- Opened on September 23, 1983
- Named after the initial sponsorship by St. James Parish

### **Anthonian Court**

- 53 units in Windsor Park
- Officially opened on June 21, 1985
- Named after the initial support by St. Anthony's Parish

### **St. Paul's Villa**

- 50 units in Tuxedo
- Opened on September 12, 1993
- Named after the initial sponsorship by St. Paul's Parish

### **Crossroads Court**

- 50 units in Mayland Heights
- Officially opened on October 1, 1995
- Named after the original residential community name



The name changed to the Bishop O’Byrne Housing for Seniors Association (BOBHSA) in 2005. Acknowledging the Roman Catholic community's contribution and honouring the sixth bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary in 2005.

### ***A NEW DIRECTION***

Over the next few years, the Association became increasingly sensitive to the need in Calgary for affordable housing for other vulnerable populations, such as low-income families and those at risk of homelessness. In response, the Association's mandate evolved to providing affordable housing to those in need in our communities, regardless of age.

With land granted by the ASHC and GOA cash grants, BOBHSA was able to secure mortgage financing with federal support through the CMHC to start construction of Columbus Place in late 2011. The Association owns Columbus Place, which is subject to Alberta's low-income housing guidelines serving low-income adults, individuals with disabilities and small families. BOBHSA's name was further simplified in 2014 to Bishop O'Byrne Housing Association (BOBHA), acknowledging the change in direction by dropping the "for Seniors."

#### **Columbus Place**

- 70 one-bedroom, six two-bedroom units in Bridgeland
- Officially opened on January 1, 2013
- Named after the Knights of Columbus

The Association joined the RESOLVE Campaign in 2012 to raise money for the next project planned for an ASHC site adjacent to Columbus Place. Over the next six years, BOBHA was able to raise over \$4 million through RESOLVE.

With RESOLVE funds, grants from all three levels of government housing, a long term land lease from the ASHC and favourable mortgage funding under the CMHC's Rental Construction Financing Initiative, BOBHA broke ground on a new 104-unit building in mid-2019. This building will open in early 2021 and will house a broad spectrum of Calgary's vulnerable individuals and families.

#### **Columbus Court**

- 55 one-bedroom, 35 two-bedroom, 13 three-bedroom and 1 four-bedroom units in Bridgeland
- Opening early 2021



## ***MOVING FORWARD***

Calgary has a severe relative and absolute shortage of affordable housing. We are 15,000 units short of the national average. The Association is committed to being an active participant in solving this serious problem. To do so, we will need the support of the whole community and to be perceived as supporting the entire community. To that end, the Association made the difficult decision to change our name to one that does not imply formal ties to the RCD. From July 1, 2020, the Association will be operating as Forward Housing Association. A name change doesn't change our history - the building names will be unchanged and continue to reflect the strong historical relationship with the Calgary Roman Catholic community. A history of which our Association will always be very proud.