



## Highlights 2011

### Airdrie Housing adds six new condo units...

In 2011, Airdrie Housing Limited was able to add six new condominiums to its housing portfolio for a total of 44 units. Five of the latest additions are located in Phase 2 of The Courtyards of King's Heights and consist of four 1-bedroom units and one 2-bedroom unit. The sixth unit is located in Phase One of The Edge and is a partially wheelchair accessible suite. Affordable units rent at 10% below market rate and tenants who qualify may also receive a rent supplement.



Five of six new units purchased in 2011 are located in the Courtyards of King's Heights. Thanks to a \$50,000 donation from the Rotary Club of Airdrie, Airdrie Housing Limited was able to obtain its first 'mortgage-free unit'.

### RentPlus continues to meet needs...

Airdrie Housing Limited's RentPlus supplement program continued to garner new clients in 2011 going from 63 families at the end of December 2010 to almost 100 at the end of 2011 and constituting over \$230,000 in payments.

"There is no denying that this program continues to fill a need in our community", commented Airdrie Housing's Assessment Coordinator Karen Lazaruk. "We've been told time and time again how this monthly supplement can make the difference between food and no food for a low income

renter".

Launched in 2009 as part of the Affordable Housing Program supported through Municipal Block Funding, the RentPlus supplement and its counterpart, the Bridge Fund, have helped over 450 people in Airdrie meet their monthly rental needs.

"While vacancy rates may have relaxed somewhat in our community since the recession, rental rates have decreased very little and in many cases, not at all", stated Shelley Sweet, Airdrie Housing's Managing Director. "For

those who qualify, the supplement can assist in reducing the level of anxiety often experienced by those living beyond their rental capacity due to a lower income".

Clients who access the supplement programs vary in their life situations and can encompass single people, one-parent families, two-parent families and persons with disabilities. All approved applicants must fall within the province's Core Needs Income Threshold for Airdrie. The maximum supplement is \$300.

#### Mission:

*To facilitate and manage affordable housing to meet the diverse needs of our community.*

#### Capital Purchases:

- Five new condominiums purchased at The Courtyards. 4 one-bedroom and 1 two-bedroom.
- One two-bedroom accessible condominium purchased at The Edge.
- Early stages of approval for a new development embracing the concept of a mixed-use building.

Total number of rental units held by Airdrie Housing Limited: 44

#### Client Snapshots:

- ⇒ "Airdrie Housing has made a significant difference in my life. It has eased the burden of finances and helped me to take control of what I thought was a difficult situation. I am forever grateful in what I have received and hope that one day I will be able to repay in some way..." *RentPlus client*
- ⇒ "Without Airdrie Housing I would be unable to live on my own. It is a great help to many people with low income jobs." *Airdrie Housing tenant and RentPlus client.*
- ⇒ "Airdrie Housing has made a huge impact in my life. Between providing low cost housing and subsidizing my rent, I am able to live an independent, safe and healthy life." *Affordable housing tenant and AISH recipient.*
- ⇒ "...You gave me the opportunity to regain control over my life without the pressure of a time limit. There is certainly more need for this type of housing to be available." *3rd Stage survivor of domestic abuse.*



## Inclusive housing...

In 2011, Airdrie Housing took possession of a partially accessible suite designed to house someone with a mobility impairment. This main floor suite at The Edge has wider doors, a walk in shower and enough of a turning radius in the bathroom and kitchen to accommodate a wheelchair. The kitchen also has space under the counters for a chair and the washer/dryer, closet racks and windows are all appropriate for someone to reach in a sitting position. The current tenant uses a wheel chair most of time and is very happy to have found housing that can accommodate her needs. She had been searching in the Airdrie area for well over a year. We were also able to advocate to the Condo Board on her behalf for a permanently assigned handicapped parking stall at the building and worked with the developer to install

accessible doors at the front of the building. Recognizing the diverse needs of clients and in particular recognizing the advance of an aging population, reinforces the need to provide units that incorporate barrier free principles.



## What we know for sure...affordable housing matters.

by Shelley Sweet, Managing Director

Every day I know this to be true. I see the client testimonials, I hear the stories of those we have helped and I know that we are contributing to the fundamental well-being of individuals, families and the community. As a fast growing and thriving community, we must ensure that we are inclusive and embrace all of our citizens with an open heart and respect for their life stories.

While Airdrie Housing Limited was created to 'facilitate and manage affordable housing to meet the diverse needs of our community', it has only

been through operating the last three years that we have come to realize exactly how diverse our community is. The common denominator is that everyone on our programs struggles to maintain housing on a low to moderate income.

Our clientele includes:

- ⇒ Families of all types—lone parent, immigrant, traditional
- ⇒ Persons with health issues—physical disabilities, developmental, AISH
- ⇒ Seniors & Single Adults

Of these, 41% of our clients are on AISH, receive income support or some other form of fixed income. A large portion of clients are women who are single, divorced, separated or widowed. Many have children and some have fled family violence.

Designing programs and services to assist vulnerable citizens address the very basic need for shelter recognizes the diversity and complexity of our community. The continued support of Airdrie Housing Limited is a true testament to the spirit of Airdrie.