

**Sylvan Lake Foundation**

**2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan**

**Our Mission**

**To provide seniors of modest means with affordable, secure, home-like living through our wellness program enhanced through community partnerships**

*Sylvan Lake Foundation*

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## Who we are

To meet the need of seniors housing, the Sylvan Lake Foundation was incorporated in March of 1965 by Ministerial Order of the Province of Alberta. Initially it was operated as a department of the Town of Sylvan Lake and governed by a Board of Directors comprised of elected officials of the Town.

In 1966 the Sylvan Lake Lodge was opened that housed forty senior citizens aged sixty-five and over that were of modest means. The addition of the twelve unit self-contained facility, the Sylvan Manor, was opened in 1967 and offered accommodation for needy seniors who wished to have a more independent lifestyle.

Over time the lodge would be upgraded and evolve. The U shaped lodge was replaced with a 40 unit living wing in 1990 and then in 2000 another wing was added to bring it up to the current 59 units. While the U lodge was demolished, the kitchen and dining areas were maintained from that building.

At this time the Lodge and the lands were purchased from the Province of Alberta. This was done as a nominal sum disposition for \$10. The Province did retain ownership of the Manor lands and building and continue to do so today.

In 1994 a new *Housing Act* was proclaimed by the Province. Under that Act the powers of a management body were updated and a new relationship between the province and the Foundation was initiated. In 1995 this resulted in a dramatic change in the governance of the Foundation. It moved from being directly controlled by the Town of Sylvan Lake Council to a governance board with 3 community representatives and 2 representatives of the Town. The basic structure stayed this way until 2017, when 2 more community representatives were added to the board.

In 2003 The Foundation then entered into a partnership with Bethany. In this unique partnership the Foundation leased land to Bethany for the construction of a 60 unit Supportive Living option. The Foundation provides housekeeping and meal services from the lodge to Bethany.

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## Environment

The social housing environment in Sylvan is dominated by seniors housing. Red Deer Housing Authority manages the Family and Community Housing in Sylvan Lake and currently (July 2018) four out of seven homes are occupied. As the chart below indicates the potential demand for housing is with seniors looking for apartment style living.

	Occupied	Total Units	Waitlist
Family and Community	4	7	0
Manor	12	12	7
Lodge	48	59	0

What is somewhat surprising is that the community itself is quite young. Only 8% of people in the 2016 Canada Census were over the age of 65. Contrasted with Red Deer where the same consensus indicated that 12% of citizens were over the age of 65.

Contrasted with this is that it was noted in the 2013 *Housing Needs Assessment Update* between the ages of 0 – 35 the Sylvan population is a larger percentage than the provincial average for those age groups. However, the older age groups are a larger percentage of the Sylvan Population than the provincial averages. This may a factor in the disproportionate share of social housing assigned to seniors in the community.

Current vacancy rates have exploded in the last few years. In 2015 CMHC reported that the average vacancy rate in Sylvan Lake was 8.3% (all suite sizes), by 2017 the average vacancy rate was 22.9%. It would be expected that the average rent would decrease in the community significantly. CMHC reports that the average rental rate in 2017 (all suite sizes) was \$891 per month a change from \$979 when rents peaked in the October 2015. So while vacancies are up 14.6% from 2015, rent is only down \$88 in that same period. This is likely due to the combined younger population and higher wage incomes within the Town. Conversely this could indicate that the lack of demand for non-seniors housing is due to a lack of low income families in the Town of Sylvan Lake.

Seniors income levels in Sylvan are also relatively high. The 2016 census reports that the median income is \$45,386. This speaks to the affluence of the community. However if we look at that more closely over we see that just under 5% of seniors are considered low income.

## Challenges

The current challenges faced by the Foundation are highlighted by the current vacancy rate, 16% in August of 2018. While new residents continue to move in, more residents move out. An ongoing reason for the increased vacancies is the increased capacity of AHS to provide Supportive Living and Long Term Care options in Red Deer. Many seniors who would have stayed in the lodge with their health issues managed through home care now get medically based housing earlier. In addition Home Care services have expanded dramatically I the last few years. Where the Lodge could position itself with things like the Medication Assistance Program these services are now available in the community.

Finally there are changing expectations of the residents. Consistently applicants remark on the size of the suites and how much they must down size to live in a standard lodge suite. The general studio or bachelor suite has been the norm in the Lodge program since its inception. While size of the suites has increased over time from the 150 sq.ft. Many lodges had to start with to over 300 sq.ft. of the modern lodge suite. Many people are coming from homes with double or triple that amount of space and feel with current home care supports would be more comfortable staying in their own home.

### **Mission and Vision**

The Board of Directors reviewed the mission and vision of the organization. While no changes were made to the mission, the vision was revised to:

*Sylvan Lake Foundation takes pride in creating innovative seniors living experiences and opportunities.*

### **Goals and Objectives**

The board participated in a day long facilitated planning session to identify key goals that are essential to move the organization forward. These goals are not presented in any priority and it is anticipated that as they are operationalized they will be prioritized.

**GOAL 1 -** Board of Directors engagement with stakeholders – That the organization develop a series of reportable plans that address key areas for the organization to be successful.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. The Board of Directors identifies the key strategic documents needed to advance the efforts of the Foundation and enhance its reputation within the community as an essential asset for housing.

**GOAL 2** Future housing development – the organization work with the community to identify appropriate housing options for seniors in Sylvan Lake.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Work with community to develop a comprehensive needs assessment for social and affordable housing in Sylvan Lake
2. Engage a consultant to evaluate the current lodge for re-development into an integrated seniors housing model.
3. Develop a housing development plan that will meet the needs of seniors in Sylvan for the next 10 years.

**GOAL 3** Human Resources – The organization develop a forward looking plan to address the staffing needs for housing provided by the Foundation

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Develop an effective Human Resources Strategy that positions the Foundation as an employer of choice in the seniors housing industry.

- GOAL 4** Community Engagement Plan – Develop a comprehensive plan to position the Sylvan Lake Foundation as an essential housing provider in Sylvan Lake.
1. Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan that includes engagement with residents, seniors in general, community and other stakeholders; through a variety of traditional and social media tools.
  2. Develop specific policies to enhance the Foundation’s communication efforts.

**APPENDIX A**

**Strategic Planning Session Goals**

**TOP GOALS:**

***More Information at Meetings***

The outcome ~ staffing, community Perception, new facility  
 Filtered through the CAO  
 From a Strategic Plan  
 Developed by the Board (CAO develop and report a series of plans that address the strategic needs of the organization)  
 For the Organization

Info for meetings ~ CAO develop & report plans that address the strategic needs of organizations  
 Ask specific questions  
 Contrast agenda items ~ out vision/values/strat goals  
 Structure a initiative reporting calendar ~ quarterly reports, OHS & Risk, Annual SWOT  
 Alignment with Best Practices ~ risk management, policies & procedures (internal)

***New Facility***

Evaluate current lodge ~ looking at max. existing opportunities, internal structural changes  
 Housing Study/Needs Assessment  
 Capital Asset Development Plan (Fund development plan, linked to communit perception identified,  
 Funding options ~ P3, funding partners)

***Staffing ~ HR Plan***

Communicate vision  
 Funding training opportunities  
 On-line opportunities?  
 ASCHA online?  
 Employee Engagement survey  
 Communicating to staff & other stakeholders  
 Ensuring staff feel supported/empowered/equipt to continue offering quality client services  
 Measurable:  
 Completion of survey ~ staff & residents (number of completed surveys)  
 Measurement of turnover ratios

Crafting of HR plan to outline measurable/expectations

***Community Perception***

New vision ~ then communicate

Empower with social media by policy ~ what to post, what not to post, when to post, when not to post

Empower community cooperation by policy

Empower communication by policy (community groups, specific message specific ask ie building fund

Crafting communication plan/strategy

    Awareness of regular events/happens

    Internal & external

    Engaging partners, strategy plan

Develop a policy to enhance community connections, relationships with existing & future programs & services

Craft communication plan



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APPENDIX B  
VISION NOTES

Final Version:

***Sylvan Lake Foundation takes pride in creating innovative seniors  
living experiences & opportunities.***

Original: To provide a basic level of housing accommodations for our senior clients.

Rough Notes:

SLF takes pride in creating an innovative

Innovative senior living opportunities

SLF promotes living that provides the leadership

In future needs in order to provide safe

In responding innovative to seniors living

Adapt/provide

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SLF provides quality, affordable housing for seniors.

Promotes health, happiness & well-being among our residents & fosters integration into our boarder community.

Notes:

Believes housing

Are innovators who seek to provide safe, quality

Senior centred

Promote living

**APPENDIX C**  
**INTERVIEW NOTES**

**Interview Responses ~ raw data:**

*Numbers in front are the numbers identified when data was on the wall and participants were asked to identify their top choices. Numbers in brackets were listed on the raw data sheets as how many times these items were mentioned during the interviews.*

**#1 What's working?**

- 6 Good staff, committed (6)
- 2 Building clean & well maintained (4)
- 1 Residents happy (2)
- High regard for Foundation (5)
- Board keeps vision & mission front & centre (3)
- Management ~ right direction (2)
- Board does a good job (2)
- Good programming
- Awesome CAO & assistant
- Town & Board on same page

**#2 What's NOT working?**

- 4 Community Perception (6)
  - Profile in community – perceived as one with Bethany (developing strong links/involvement with community & community services) (messaging to community to education/engage re: Foundation)
- 2 High vacancy rate (3)
  - Volatility rate
  - Not sure our suites are meeting the needs
- Product (8)
  - Type of housing model
  - Not meeting the needs of the community with product offered
- Service delivery (7)
  - Demographics dictate needs
- Facility – Capital replacement (4)
  - Reflecting warmer welcoming, secure operation
- Staff Support (4)
  - Training, support, security ~ violent, issues with clients

**#3 What should we do differently?**

- 4 New building facility
- 3 Have more information available to Board in order for decisions to be made
  - ~ employee engagement program
  - ~ evaluations/report card
- 2 More self contained units

- 1 Focus on more and tailored marketing of the SLF and SLL (7)
- Look at new partnerships (other lodges, other communities)
- Examine the future of lodge program
- Focus on a more diverse resident (cultural, ethnic)
- Changes look of lodge from institutional to a more home like environment
- Taking seniors on more trips

**#4 Wildest Dreams!**

- 8 New facility self-contained/condo style (8)
  - Inter-generational/daycare integrated
  - Community garden
  - Resident/income diversity
  - Diverse recreation (bowling, swimming, gardening, common room)
  - Community integration (services/facilities, community comes in, residents go out, link to manor/lodge)
  - Parking
  - Circular ~ joint central area
- 5 Staff
  - Training/advancement opp. (4)
  - Capable/confident
  - Motivated/caring
- Services
  - Age in place (4)
  - Home care, health check ins (4)
  - Bus/tour service – transit, excursions (3)
  - Animals/pet therapy
- BIG IDEAS:
  - Staff exchanges
  - Resident exchanges

