

2021
YEAR IN REVIEW

*Our
Road to
Purpose*



Calgary Homeless
FOUNDATION

“He who has a why
to live for can bear
almost any how.”

– Nietzsche

PATRICIA JONES, PRESIDENT & CEO

Despite the pandemic’s interruptions and the arrival of a new CEO in August of 2020, the work of Calgary Homeless Foundation has continued. Upon arrival, I learned of the tremendous work done in collaboration with community, ensuring those experiencing homelessness could safely self-isolate.

I was inspired to learn about community partners coming together in a crisis with a common goal to ensure no Calgarian would be left behind. From April to March, with community, we were able to house or divert 2,272 individuals, quickly distribute emergency funds to the community, and birth new relationships and collaborations.

These are just a few of many efforts towards our purpose to guide the fight against homelessness. It is a tribute to the dedication, expertise, and experience of the entire CHF team as they created ways to address the pandemic through innovation in partnership with community, either through housing and mental health supports, outreach, and most recently, vaccination support.

MENT'S

The pandemic tested our organization and our core values as courageous collaborators, catalytic leaders, evidence-inspired, and vision-dedicated. CHF and our partners adapted in a matter of days and remain agile in these turbulent times. We did not walk away from our vital work – we doubled down, extended partnerships, formed new ones, and reached out in support whenever we could.

In this report, you will read about the many efforts that were undertaken to confront one of the most unprecedented public health crises of our lifetime. I am enormously grateful to our partner agencies, shelter partners, housing partners, and government for their collaboration in the face of

incredible challenges.

I would like to acknowledge Gail Boehm, who performed the Acting CEO role prior to my arrival and supported my transition. I also want to thank Matt Nomura who has taught me so much about the 'homeless-serving system of care'; Coleen Hutton for her HR expertise; and our newest team member, Philippe Reicher who hit the ground running.

As we recover from the pandemic, there is hope, but uncertainty still lies ahead. I have never been more certain of the urgency of our purpose – to guide the fight against homelessness – and of our community's commitment that together we will support every Calgarian to find their way home.



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THE ROAD TO TRAVELLER



The road less travelled

OUR JOURNEY TO PURPOSE

When Patricia Jones joined Calgary Homeless Foundation as its new President and CEO, she set herself the task of meeting each member of staff to learn more about who they were and the purpose of CHF. What she discovered were people rich in passion, but struggling to consistently articulate why CHF existed. “When I asked staff and board members why Calgary Homeless Foundation existed, I heard so much passion to support everyone to have a home and to envision a future where homelessness simply does not exist,” Patricia says. “What was missing was a reason for the why we were here.”

That question kicked off a process known as our “purpose journey.”

One month after her arrival, Patricia and her leadership team began interviewing internal and external stakeholders to uncover the ‘why’ behind Calgary Homeless Foundation.

From October to November 2020, Calgary Homeless Foundation spoke to over 80 people in interviews. The process included staff and board members, and included 32 stakeholders from homeless-serving agencies, government funders, major donors, people with lived experience of homelessness, and members of the urban Indigenous community.

Out of this consultation arose our Purpose and Ambition statements.

According to Gerald Chipeur, Chair of Calgary Homeless Foundation’s Board of Directors, it is the first time the organization has been able to clearly articulate its story internally and externally, both of which are crucial to securing support and collaboration from government and community partners.

He says: “This is not a one-sentence platitude. It gets into the meat of why Calgary Homeless Foundation exists; why it’s essential that we are part of the homeless-serving sector, and why our absence would have a negative impact on government and the sector working together to serve those without a home.”

Guiding and Listening in Love

The purpose of Calgary Homeless Foundation is to guide the fight against homelessness.

“Guiding” has been in the organization’s DNA since Art Smith founded the foundation. More importantly, it evokes the importance of a collaborative approach that is critical to helping people find their way home.

In a system where multiple governments and agencies are responsible for addressing the myriad of factors that drive homelessness, there is no

“Love is the ability to walk in another person’s shoes. Our staff and leadership should be able to put themselves in the place of those being served and realize there is no difference.”

guide, and it becomes difficult to assess where the greatest needs lie – and for people to navigate their way out of homelessness.

“If we have 45 different organizations doing what they think is best, they might choose one thing to do and leave the other 44 areas unserved. There has to be a guide that ensures people are served efficiently and effectively,” says Gerald.

Thanks to its unique position between governments, agencies, and citizens, Calgary Homeless Foundation has the expertise to forge powerful connections between groups and to synchronize their efforts towards building an integrated system of care that allows people to find the help they need, when they need it, and how they need it.

Nevertheless, Calgary Homeless Foundation is not interested in being prescriptive. Gerald says, “It’s not about making demands or being the smartest one in the room. We don’t compete with other organizations; we inform them. We tell governments and the homeless-serving community about areas of focus and identify the best organizations to achieve those objectives.” Patricia agrees. “We don’t mandate integration; we want to influence integration through relationships. The distinction of guiding must be earned through building relationships and collaboration.”

Our unwavering belief in the power of collaboration is also reflected in our ambition. By 2025, Calgary Homeless Foundation aims to be recognized as the authoritative guide on how governments, service providers, and community leaders can leverage resources and programs in the unified fight against homelessness.

We have also identified four ambition statements, but the one that resonates most with Gerald is to promote the reconciliation necessary to break down barriers by giving, receiving, listening, and reaching out in love. This is very important to CHF as the urban Indigenous community is overrepresented in Calgary’s homeless population. Gerald says part of his passion arose from his experience working with Siksika Nation, where he learned that “listening is the most important part of the solution.”

As for love, he says: “In the context of Calgary Homeless Foundation, love is the ability to walk in another person’s shoes. Our staff and leadership should be able to put themselves in the place of those being served and realize there is no difference.”

He adds, “The more we can bring that reality to the community, the less likely it is that people will be without a home.”

Looking Ahead

Since the release of our Purpose and Ambition statements, the reaction

This is not about ‘doing for’ our government and community partners. It’s earning the right to do the work with them.

from community has been overwhelmingly positive. Over the next decade, what will Calgary Homeless Foundation’s purpose mean for agencies, governments, and ordinary Calgarians—especially those experiencing homelessness?

Patricia says she hopes the purpose will galvanize young people to join the fight. People aged 25-45 want to help, especially when they see their peers experiencing homelessness, and the word “guiding” shows them that the fight is “dynamic and actionable.”

She also envisions a future where agencies and governments co-create an integrated system of care where “navigation falls on the shoulders of the system, and not on the people we serve.”

“In the future my hope is that we will be working together in an integrated fashion to ensure that when somebody falls out of permanent housing, they are rehoused quickly and provided with the right supports,” she says.

This vision will require an unprecedented level of coordination among governments, businesses, the homeless-serving sector, the nonprofit community, and all Calgarians, but Patricia and Gerald say that Calgary Homeless Foundation is committed to working alongside its partners to achieve it.

“I’m very comfortable with failure,” Gerald says. “We need to be able to trust organizations in the community and to learn what

doesn’t work. Our success will come when we have high trust with community, and that together we all agree that a person needs support.”

Patricia adds: “This is not about ‘doing for’ our government and community partners. It’s earning the right to do the work with them to create a future where homelessness is a brief and non-recurring episode in someone’s life, but never its defining feature.”



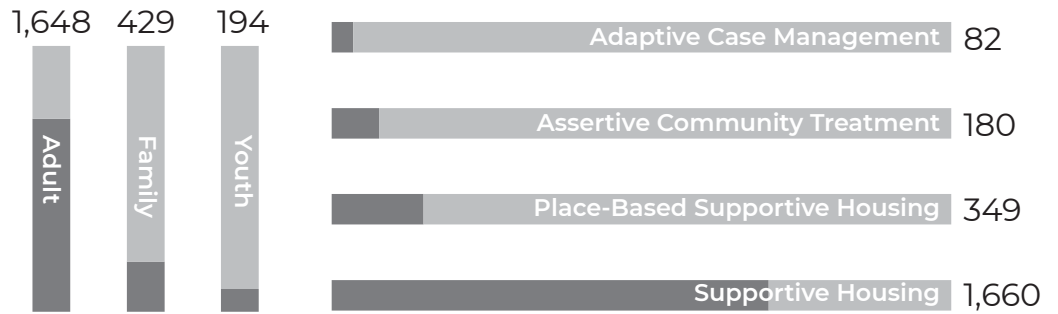
Our Impact

Calgary Homeless Foundation guides the fight to end homelessness in partnership with all orders of government, public systems, homeless-serving agencies, the private sector, faith-based communities, and all Calgarians.

With our data and research, we are co-creating a system-wide approach to serving people experiencing homelessness. We synchronize efforts and find innovative and evidence-based supportive housing solutions for people who are not securely housed.

While 2020 has presented unique challenges, we remain committed to ensuring that resources are allocated in a cost-effective manner to provide a full spectrum of services, solutions, and homes for all Calgarians.

2,271 HOUSING SPACES WITH SUPPORT



HOUSING STABILITY RATE: **92%**

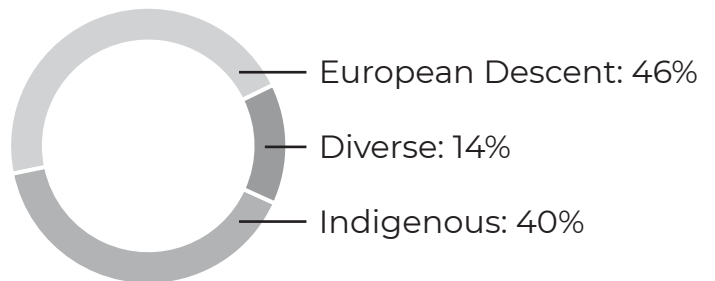
PUBLIC SYSTEM USAGE REDUCTION: **43%**

IN 2020/21 CHF FUNDED

88 PROGRAMS IN 28 AGENCIES

1,167

RESIDENTS PLACED IN HOUSING



PRIMARY RESIDENCE PRIOR TO INTAKE:

EMERGENCY SHELTER	31%
OTHER	50%
COUCH SURFING	9%
OUTSIDE	10%

GENDER:

FEMALE	36%
MALE	62%
SPECTRUM	2%

IMMIGRATION STATUS:

CANADIAN CITIZEN	94%
PERMANENT RESIDENT	5%
OTHER	2%



**A YEAR
OF
IMPACT**

“I’ll never forget what it felt like to read health guidelines that said, ‘six feet distance, exemption - shelters.’ How could we let ourselves have different standards for those without a home?”

**A YEAR LIKE
NEVER BEFORE**

A Year Like Never Before

The beginning

It was February 2020 when Gail Boehm, Acting CEO of Calgary Homeless Foundation, heard of a virus out of Wuhan. In a casual conversation with the leadership team, she mentioned it might be something to navigate in the future – potentially, a blip on our radar.

On March 12, The City of Calgary invoked the municipal emergency plan. The following day, staff were asked to work from home for a couple of weeks, never expecting it would be over a year before a return to the office. Staff set up laptops on their dining room tables, trying to figure out how to work in a virtual environment as Lysol and webcams flew off the shelves.

As news came out of Italy and New York about the large loss of lives, having a home became a matter of life and death. Each day, new headlines detailed paycheque losses leading to eviction notices, and our sector's ability to manage a potential large influx of new homeless individuals and families.

We were comparatively lucky: we had time on our side. It took two weeks from the beginning

of the media blitz in major European cities before the first case in Alberta, dismantling the element of surprise. Homelessness was top of the public mind again as people holed up in their homes and imagined those without. Was it possible to protect yourself from a pandemic without a home?

“While we were running around looking for toilet paper, they were looking for a mat to sleep on. I'll never forget what it felt like to read health guidelines that said, ‘six feet distance, exemption - shelters,’” reflects Britany Ardelli, Director, Projects and Change Management. “How could we let ourselves have different standards for those without a home?”

Forming a response

When the virus arrived in Alberta, the provincial government took leadership immediately and called us to coordinate the setup of an emergency isolation hotel. Matt Nomura, Vice President, Homeless-Serving System of Care, made his first call to one of CHF's key partners, Bernadette Majdell, CEO of HomeSpace Society.

Calgary Drop-In Centre rented the Telus Convention Centre for overflow; The Mustard Seed had First Alliance Church for overflow, and Calgary Alpha House Society resurrected an unused building to create space for social distancing in their emergency shelter.

“A true measure of our community’s values is how we respond to crisis. We definitely rose to the occasion,” says Gail.

From isolation to home

Everyone soon realized the emergency response had community benefits that needed to last beyond the pandemic.

“People were in a safe, warm, secure place of their own for 10 to 14 days,” says Britany, “and for some, the stability of the emergency isolation hotel, the hot shower whenever they wanted, was enough for them to accept help.”

The team organized a temporary housing facility where clients were discharged into a stable environment to receive support and guidance. Over 200 people were discharged from ASIS into housing.

The Future

Since April 2020, we’ve helped house or divert 2,272 people from homelessness – making it the most people housed and diverted in a year. We have all learned together that we can no longer ignore the need for a blended health and social support model, and solutions born during the pandemic will outlast its end.

“An emergency puts the mundane into perspective. When we’re shaken up, we can imagine a different way to put our world back together. You don’t really fear the unknown because you’re already living it,” says Matt.

Calgary Homeless Foundation will continue the momentum we gained when barriers were broken, strategies were implemented, and the right people were in the (virtual) room.

“Calgary Homeless Foundation is continuously uncovering the needs and addressing gaps in our city’s pursuit to ensure all Calgarians have a place to call home. The pandemic has only strengthened our collective resolve, and their leadership throughout the COVID-19 response made a noticeable difference in how the sector is getting through the pandemic together, leaving no one behind.”

*Bernadette Majdell,
CEO, HomeSpace Society*

“CHF provided focused support to the shelters and community agencies within our city in the development of a vulnerable populations COVID response, including the implementation of the Assisted Self Isolation Site. This enabled social serving agencies to provide a critical continuum of services for all clients impacted by COVID-19 that resulted in our ability to ensure the wellbeing of our clients and contain a serious and potentially deadly outbreak in the shelter systems.”

*Carlene Donnelly
Executive Director, CUPS*

“Through tremendous efforts of the front-line teams, ASIS opened within one week of receiving funding from the Government of Alberta. We immediately saw an incredible collaboration unfold across the city, as shelters and hospitals referred into the program. It’s a stellar example of not only system-wide collaboration, but the power of human kindness.”

*Joy Bowen-Eyre
CEO, The Alex*

CULTURE

Culture Shift

SHIFT

Calgary Homeless Foundation, together with the agencies that form Calgary's Homeless-Serving System of Care, have been co-creating a culture of evaluation and learning that will transform how we measure success, while promoting equality and collaboration within the system of care.

For most of our history, we have measured agency success through Key Performance Indicators, which hold its place and value. However, what we know is that as complexities grow, and expectations increase from all stakeholders, our ability to create value through shared measurement must also grow. This measurement process served its purpose with Calgary achieving a 32% reduction in homelessness per capita between 2008 and 2018. But while we were housing people, and could prove that they were staying housed, we wanted to link the reason "why" more explicitly.

Within a culture of evaluation and learning, we want to understand the cause and effect of every intervention so that people with complex physical and mental health challenges, compounded by trauma and system gaps,

are not only housed, but are getting better.

"If our expectation for the quality of life ends with a key to a door in people's hands, what does that say about our imagination for the life they could live?" says Matt Nomura, Vice President of Calgary's Homeless-Serving System of Care. "Everyone deserves a quality of life as decided by them. We have an opportunity to listen and support people in their trauma and rebuild their self-sufficiency."

Our focus on the rates at which people exit homelessness, rather than the why, has also cultivated a spirit of competition within the homeless-serving sector. Under that culture, agencies may not share the secrets to their success.

To dispel this competitiveness, we need to illustrate the

role that individual agency success plays within the entire system of care. We need new measurements that focus on creating a social learning system that clearly outlines mutual expectations, accountability, and progress towards impact in a transparent, recovery-orientated manner. This drive to reimagine measurements for success also changes the relationship Calgary Homeless Foundation has with its funded agencies.


For more than two decades, our organization has struggled to balance our role as a system planner that fosters collaboration within the sector, while advocating a standard of excellence as a funder. This resulting tension has created a power imbalance that has challenged the creation of a homeless-serving system that is rooted in teamwork.

“We had performance metrics for our funded agencies based on our accountabilities to our funders, but no opportunity for funded agencies to set expectations for us as a funder, and to be involved in creating those metrics, understanding their value, and interpreting their data,” says Matt.

Calgary Homeless Foundation has begun to redress this imbalance by co-creating three system effectiveness indicators with agencies in the sector: **quality of life, financial independence, and community integration.**

Within a culture of evaluation and learning, funders, agency staff, and front-line workers participate in the measurement and interpretation process for these indicators. Agencies can see others as colleagues, not competitors, and trust is built by listening to other voices before putting their thoughts into action through program design.

Under these indicators, success will mean that everyone’s experiences and interpretations will be represented in data points. We will better understand how programs impact lives, while preventing people from experiencing homelessness – or if they do, ensuring that they are not facing it alone. “We’re creating a culture of lifelong learners based on kindness and curiosity. It’s about removing the priority on who is best, and instead doing what’s best, together,” says Matt.



“It’s about removing the priority on who is best, and instead doing what’s best, together.”

Financial Report

A SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF CHF STEWARDSHIP

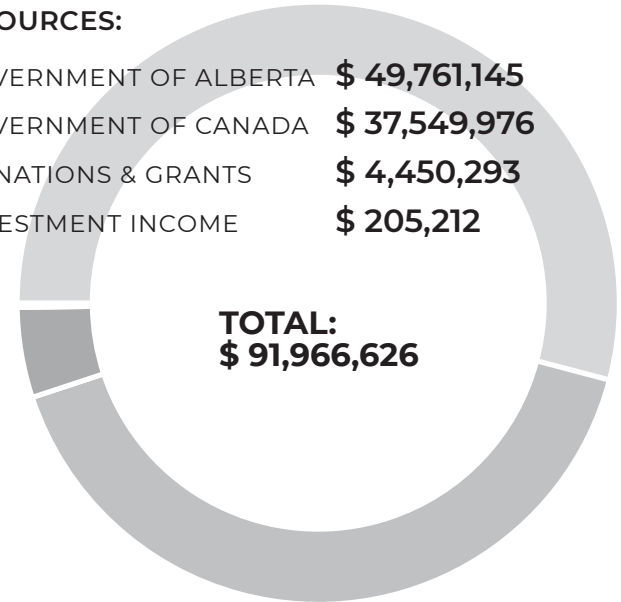
Ending March 31, 2021, revenues were almost \$92 million and expenses were \$81 million.

Surplus was generated due to the receipt of emergency response funds from the federal government that was not fully spent by year end. The surplus will be invested in areas of greatest need by September 2021.

Operating expenses were \$76.0 million in fiscal 2021, a 46% increase compared to \$52.1 million in fiscal 2020. In both years, operating expenses consisted of payments to agencies delivering front line services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Increased government funding for pandemic response enabled CHF to increase program expenditures in areas of greatest need.

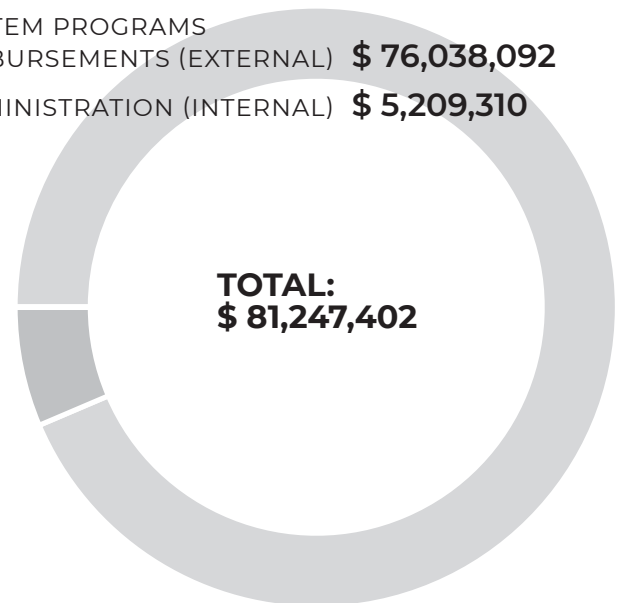
FUNDING SOURCES:

54%	GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA	\$ 49,761,145
41%	GOVERNMENT OF CANADA	\$ 37,549,976
5%	DONATIONS & GRANTS	\$ 4,450,293
0%	INVESTMENT INCOME	\$ 205,212



FUNDING USES:

	SYSTEM PROGRAMS	
94%	DISBURSEMENTS (EXTERNAL)	\$ 76,038,092
6%	ADMINISTRATION (INTERNAL)	\$ 5,209,310



The Bigger Picture: greengate Garden Centres

Since 2003, greengate Garden Centres has supported Calgary Homeless Foundation's work to guide the fight against homelessness. Over the past 18 years, greengate has raised more than \$66,500 for Calgary Homeless Foundation – a noteworthy feat for a small, family-owned business. Their longstanding, year-round support includes donating proceeds from their Hope for Humanity Roses, and a December holiday campaign.

Harington Telford, Vice-President of Marketing at greengate Garden Centres, says the business chose to work with Calgary Homeless

Foundation, because it “tackles broader issues” relating to homelessness.

“Homelessness affects all sorts of people in all age ranges and backgrounds. Helping a diverse range of people is something we value, and Calgary Homeless Foundation helps more than just one set of problems or people,” he says.

He notes the organization's broad approach resonates with greengate. “We too are just trying to do right by our community. We are in the nature business, but it's not just about flowers or trees—it's about recycling and the environment, looking at the

bigger picture, much like Calgary Homeless Foundation.”

Personal interactions with people who have found their way home, thanks to the homeless-serving sector, has solidified Harington's belief in the life-changing impact of our collective work.

“Calgary Homeless Foundation brings real value into our community by making positive changes in people's lives,” he said. “We are happy to support Calgary Homeless Foundation and are thankful for the efforts made to make Calgary a better place for everyone.”



**“The best way to
predict the future
is to create it.”**

OUR AMBITION

Our Ambition describes the desire for a certain achievement and the willingness to strive for its attainment. If Purpose gives us energy, then Ambition transforms that energy into positive outcomes.

By 2025 we will be recognized as the authoritative guide on how governments, service providers and community leaders, in our community and beyond, can best leverage their combined resources and programs in a unified fight against homelessness.

OUR
AMBITION

“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.”

– H.E. Luccock

A note on Collaboration

Homelessness is the result of complex factors, and addressing it requires a community-wide response. While intergovernmental and multi-agency cooperation has often addressed these factors, it is seldom consistent enough to achieve the progress we all aim for.

To deliver breakthrough outcomes, we need a stronger force than cooperation—we need collaboration. Collaboration is the principal energy source that will fuel the unified fight against homelessness.

Unlike cooperation, collaboration is dynamic: it implies directly working together towards a common goal and sharing ownership of the outcome.

While remarkable success has come from cooperating within the current Homeless-Serving System of Care, we now aim to raise the bar by sharing our expertise with—and incorporating the work of—other social service systems in the fight against homelessness.

Under our unified vision, we will integrate activities, and supercharge our collaborative efforts to create a system-wide approach to serving people experiencing homelessness. Through this integrated system of care, we will achieve better social outcomes, thoughtfully leveraging and allocating resources to achieve the highest impact to meet the holistic needs of those we serve.

Together, we can realize a future when homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring — perhaps an episode in someone’s life, but never a life-defining condition.

**Patricia Jones,
President & CEO**



Our Financial Supporters:

Philanthropic support for the Calgary Homeless Foundation has grown significantly over the past few years, with well over 1500 donors. We are so grateful for all your support and contributions. Here is a small slice of individuals and organizations who have chosen to support us in guiding the fight to end homelessness in our city:



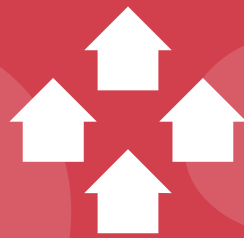
Jenny Belzberg
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 The Welty Family Foundation
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 Foundation
 The Calgary Foundation -
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2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



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CHF aims to provide all of our stakeholders with transparency and accountability. Any complaints or concerns with CHF can be anonymously reported through our external whistleblower line at 403.241.1821.

We also welcome your feedback on this report.