

## Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg and the Manitoba Metis Federation Form New Partnership to Address the Urgent Need for Affordable Housing in Winnipeg's Metis Community

**Ten homes to be built over the next two years with \$1,000,000 in funding from the Province of Manitoba**

**Winnipeg, Manitoba, November 21, 2008** – Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg (HFHW) will join forces with the Manitoba Metis Federation –Winnipeg Region (MMF), specifically its delivery arm the Winnipeg Metis Association, and construct 10 new energy efficient homes for low-income working Winnipeg Metis families. The 10 new homes will cost \$1.5 million to construct and the Province of Manitoba will be contributing \$1 million in funding towards the program. The remaining \$500,000 will be raised through various HFHW fundraising efforts. Five of the new Habitat homes will be built in 2009 with the remaining five in 2010.

“According to Statistics Canada’s 2006 Census, Manitoba’s population includes the largest number of Metis people per capita in Canada and the majority of them live in southern Manitoba including Winnipeg, “ says Sandy Hopkins, CEO of HFHW. “Within Winnipeg’s Metis community, there is unfortunately an urgent need for access to affordable housing. Through the Habitat homeownership model, these first 10 families will have a wonderful opportunity to purchase a home and begin building equity for the future. We feel that affordable homeownership is the solution to breaking the cycle of poverty that impacts so many low-income working families.”

Habitat homes are sold, at fair market value, to carefully selected families using a no money down, interest-free mortgage. Qualified families must also complete 350 to 500 hours of sweat equity with HFHW prior to taking possession of their new home. “Normally the mortgage payments we collect from our homeowners go into a fund that we use to purchase land for future Habitat builds. But in the case of the 10 Metis Habitat homes, we are going to transfer the money to a specific fund that will be used to build additional Metis Habitat homes after 2010. These first 10 homes will not only benefit the families who purchase them, but many more Metis families in the future,” says Hopkins.

The Manitoba Métis Federation - Winnipeg Region (MMF), specifically its delivery arm the Winnipeg Métis Association, is playing an important role in this unique program by helping communicate the availability of the new Habitat homes to its membership and the Métis community as a whole. “We’ve had very good feedback to the program and we are encouraging more low-income working Métis families to contact us to find out if they would qualify for these homes. Our people and community have strong family values and are eager to improve the lives of their children and grandchildren. These 10 Habitat homes will be great start to helping Métis families get ahead,” said Ron Chartrand, Vice-President, Winnipeg Region, Manitoba Métis Federation.

HFHW is the local affiliate of an international not-for-profit organization and since 1987 has built over 160 safe, decent, and affordable homes for low-income working families. For more information on HFHW please visit [www.habitat.mb.ca](http://www.habitat.mb.ca)

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