



Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg recognizes National Housing Day with regional expansion plans

Twelve years ago today, the mayors of Canada's largest cities declared homelessness a national disaster and called on Ottawa and the provinces to develop an affordable housing strategy.

To commemorate the day, anti-poverty advocates set aside Nov. 22 each year as National Housing Day. Unfortunately, the day is not a celebration but rather a grim reminder of the lack of progress in the years since the declaration, with homelessness and lack of affordable housing becoming much worse.

Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg (HFHW) continues through its many programs to help raise the profile of this social justice issue. Taking their commitment one step further, Habitat Winnipeg is expanding its program to help build affordable new homes throughout Manitoba (with the exception of Brandon) and Northwestern Ontario, as far east as Kenora. HFHW presently serves the City of Winnipeg and immediate surrounding areas such as East and West St. Paul with established satellite operations known as Chapters in Selkirk, Portage and Steinbach, which have built a combined total of 17 homes.

Several communities in Manitoba have already expressed an interest in becoming part of the Habitat program which requires a demonstrated interest of showing support from community institutions such as the town council, chamber of commerce, and also establishing a volunteer committee with strong leadership.

Habitat Winnipeg provides considerable assistance to any community that joins the program. The list includes administrative and accounting support, construction advice and build plans, recruitment techniques and safety training for volunteers, along with family selection support, fundraising skill, and construction funding assistance through our partners at Manitoba Lotteries and Manitoba Housing. All existing and new chapters will continue to have their local donations go to their communities while receiving tax receipts administered from the HFHW office.

Each year HFHW increases the amount of safe, decent and affordable homes it builds for low-income families to purchase. Through home ownership, these families thrive and communities prosper while creating a better foundation for the overall well being of our city. Now through regional expansion that number will increase exponentially by benefiting communities throughout the province and more.

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