



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

April 6th, 2020

Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa Donates Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to Local Ottawa Health Care Providers

OTTAWA, ON (April 6th, 2020) – Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa’s ReStore has redirected much needed medical supplies including N95 masks, disposable gloves and protective suits to the Ottawa Hospital and COVID-19 testing centre at Brewer Park Arena.

Several provinces, including Ontario, put out a call for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) so that frontline healthcare workers are appropriately protected against COVID-19. Meanwhile, many workplaces are closed due to the pandemic and have stores of PPE that are not in immediate use. This was the case for Habitat Greater Ottawa’s ReStores, which in order to safeguard staff, customers and volunteers, made the difficult decision to close effective March 18, 2020.

“It was a difficult decision to close our ReStores,” says Allan Avis, Director of Ottawa’s ReStores. “They are integral to the organization’s social impact model in generating proceeds needed to support our operations and build affordable homes for local Ottawa families. In the meantime, we felt it was our responsibility to redistribute this essential protective equipment and make it available to health care workers.”

The organization has retained a core team of staff to continue the work of supporting Habitat Greater Ottawa families and immediate operational priorities. However, the charity anticipates significant and ongoing needs in the months to come.

“The current health crisis follows an affordable housing emergency declared by Ottawa’s City Council this past January,” explains Alexis Ashworth, CEO of Habitat Greater Ottawa. “While COVID-19 has changed the lives of many in Ottawa, it has not changed the day-to-day challenges for thousands of local families struggling to find affordable, appropriate and stable long-term housing. This was true before the pandemic, and it will be even more true after we get through the immediate impacts of this health crisis.”

A recent study conducted by the Boston Consulting Group shows that there are significant benefits to society as a result of Habitat families having access to affordable homeownership. On average, Habitat generates \$175,000 of benefits per home. These benefits come in the form of reduced reliance on social housing and food banks, better educational and employment outcomes and improved health.

Habitat Greater Ottawa is currently completing construction of 16 townhomes at Leacross Landing in Orléans, their largest build to date. Seven families have already moved into Phase I and II of the project. An additional nine homes are in process of being built, with families waiting to access this much-needed affordable housing. While construction continues in



compliance with provincial health regulations, all volunteer and non-essential work has been suspended. The health and safety of the team and community remain Habitat Greater Ottawa's top priority.

Habitat Greater Ottawa currently plans to break ground on its next build at Wateridge Village in late 2020. It will consist of an eight unit stacked townhome, including two accessible homes, centrally located on the former Rockcliffe Airbase, in a growing neighbourhood, close to amenities.

While the ReStores remain closed, Habitat Greater Ottawa is exploring alternative retail options. In the meantime, in lieu of household donations, we encourage our supporters to donate online at www.habitatgo.ca.

-30-

About Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa

With the help of local Habitat families, donors, community partners and volunteers, Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa builds affordable homes that provide a solid foundation for local families in which to thrive.

Habitat Greater Ottawa's homeownership program offers more than just housing; it sets families up to be successful homeowners who are invested in their homes and in their community. The benefits of owning a long-term stable Habitat home are many. They include reduced reliance on social housing and food banks, better educational, financial and employment outcomes and improved health and overall wellbeing for families.

With over 55,000 Ottawa households living on low income the need for affordable housing is only growing. Over the past three years, Habitat Greater Ottawa has transitioned from a builder of single-family homes to a developer of communities. By increasing the number of homes we build we can provide more families to build strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable homeownership.

Habitat Greater Ottawa does not provide free homes — the families who partner with us invest directly in their home's equity and commit volunteer hours to our organization. Families purchase their home at fair market value with no down payment and pay an affordable mortgage. Families who partner with Habitat Greater Ottawa understand that a home is a long-term commitment and an investment.

About Habitat for Humanity ReStores

Habitat for Humanity ReStores are home and building supply stores that accept and resell quality new and gently used building materials as well as furniture, appliances, home accessories, and much more, to the public. Shopping at a Habitat ReStore is a socially conscious decision, as the money generated is used to fund local Habitat for Humanity homebuilding projects and operations. It's also an environmentally friendly decision, as much of what is sold is product that is new, gently used or customer returns that might otherwise end up in a landfill.



For more information, please contact:

Kristen Holinsky

Director of Operations and Communications

Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa

kholinsky@habitatgo.com

Photos available upon request.