

**Five Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa families celebrate (virtually)
having a new safe and affordable place to call home**

INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE – PLEASE CONTACT TO SCHEDULE

When: Video release August 20, 2020
Interviews available week of August 24, 2020.

Where: On all Habitat Greater Ottawa social media platforms

Ottawa, ON (August 20, 2020) – Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa is thrilled to (virtually) celebrate the completion of five townhomes in Orléans. The dedication of these homes brings Habitat Greater Ottawa’s Leacross Landing build, a 16-unit townhome development in the city’s east end close to completion, with the final four homes to be built by the end of the year.

Like many public events around the City of Ottawa, COVID-19 disrupted plans to celebrate with Habitat families in person. In place of its usual celebratory dedication ceremony including the passing of the keys to the families, Habitat Greater Ottawa will instead release a [Virtual Key Ceremony video](#) welcoming its newest Habitat homeowners. The video features interviews with the new Habitat homeowners as well as Habitat Greater Ottawa staff, volunteers and dignitaries such as City of Ottawa Mayor, Jim Watson and Ottawa City Councillor for Orléans Ward, Matthew Luloff.

[Click here](#) for an exclusive preview of Habitat Greater Ottawa’s 2020 Virtual Key Ceremony.

“COVID-19 has shown us the critical need for safe and affordable housing here in Ottawa,” says Alexis Ashworth CEO, Habitat Greater Ottawa. “For many families in Ottawa, ‘sheltering in place’ is a difficult reality as they are living in unsafe or inadequate housing. By continuing to increase the number of homes Habitat builds, more local families will have access to safe, stable and affordable housing.”

“As Mayor of the City of Ottawa, I want to congratulate all the families that will be receiving the keys to their new home through Habitat Greater Ottawa at the virtual key ceremony,” says Mayor Jim Watson. “Now more than ever, as we continue to fight the spread of COVID-19 in our community, the benefits of living in a safe, affordable home are exponentially higher. It’s thanks to a strong partnership between the City and Habitat Greater Ottawa that individuals and families can become strong, stable and self-reliant through affordable home ownership.”

“Happy, healthy and safe communities start at home,” says Matthew Luloff, Ottawa City Councillor for Orléans Ward. “Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa makes an invaluable contribution to housing in our City by providing families with safe and affordable homes. Orléans is a place for everyone. I am so happy to be able to welcome five additional families to our community. I know these families will enjoy a lifetime of friendships and memories here.”

Hear from a few of our new Habitat homeowners:

“My family is so overjoyed at the opportunity to own our home,” says Said Naya, Habitat Homeowner. “My boys are so excited; they ask me every day when we are going to move into the new house! We can’t wait to feel safe when we are at home. I want a place where my children have room to play their sports and I want a place that we can proudly call our own.”

“I look forward to freeing myself from the stress that comes with living in our current neighborhood and all the maintenance problems in our home,” says Fadumo Ahmed, Habitat Homeowner. “Working with Habitat for Humanity will allow us to take control of our home and our lives. I am excited to work hard for a positive change and a fresh start for my family.”

“In the end, it all comes down to my son who is the most important person in the world to me,” says Isabelle McAusland, Habitat Homeowner. “I want him to have that feeling of growing up in a safe neighbourhood and the love of community where he can go out and play with friends and not have to worry about whether or not he’ll have a stable place to live.”

Full family profiles and photos are available at www.habitatgo.ca.

Habitat Greater Ottawa could not build without the support of the community, volunteers and sponsors. Thank you to the **Leacross Foundation, City of Ottawa, Red Roof Foundation, Urbandale Corporation** and **Exit Realty** for their generous sponsorship of this development.

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For more information, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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About us:

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.

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, and with a 5-year average wait time to access social housing in our city, 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 with the opportunity to thrive.

Learn more at www.habitatgo.ca.