



November 22, 2017

National Housing Strategy builds a solid foundation to provide more safe and affordable homes for Canadians

Toronto, ON. - The release of a National Housing Strategy this afternoon represents a significant step forward for the federal government in beginning to address the affordable housing and homelessness crisis in Canada. In Habitat for Humanity Canada's consultations with the federal government for the National Housing Strategy, Habitat Canada was clear that affordable homeownership is one of the solutions to improve housing conditions for low-income families and Indigenous communities. Affordable homeownership is an important housing option that is proven to have a long-term, positive impact on Canadians, providing a bridge to a more secure future. Habitat Canada commends the federal government in making historic investments in housing through the first ever Canadian National Housing Strategy.

We are pleased that the federal government is committed to working more closely, and collaboratively, with municipalities as well as the private and non-profit sectors. The Habitat for Humanity model is based on a partnership between the family, the community, volunteers, the private sector and contributions from different orders of governments. The National Housing Co-Investment Fund represents an excellent opportunity to leverage public/private partnerships in order to achieve the National Housing Strategy goals of creating more safe and affordable homes for Canadians, with a \$15.9 billion investment that will include a focus on new construction and home repair and low-cost financing. Access to affordable land to build affordable Habitat homes is a significant barrier facing local Habitats across Canada. The freeing of up to \$200 million worth of federal lands is a positive step forward in removing some of that barrier.

"A strategy cannot be successful without an investment of money to help move that plan forward. The fact that federal government has already announced a significant investment into the implementation of this National Housing Strategy makes me optimistic that this strategy has the teeth it needs to succeed," says Mark Rodgers, Habitat for Humanity Canada's President & CEO. "We look forward to continuing our work with the federal government to provide more affordable homeownership opportunities for Canadians."

Habitat's model of affordable homeownership has long-term benefits for the larger community, with every Habitat home generating \$175,000 in social benefits. Last year, Habitat homes provided almost \$50 million dollars in social benefits to the country. Affordable homeownership also helps free up much-needed social housing as 39 percent of Habitat families that buy their home were formerly in social housing.

For a National Housing Strategy to be successful, a multi-faceted approach that recognizes the importance of the entire housing continuum is important. Habitat Canada is encouraged to see the federal government commit to continuing its important work collaborating with First Nations, Inuit and Métis to create and implement an Indigenous Housing Strategy that addresses the issues that are contributing to the Indigenous housing crisis in Canada, along with a key goal to improve access to affordable homeownership for the Métis Nation. There are also unique barriers to accessing safe and affordable homes in the North, including Indigenous communities, which the federal government has identified as a particular focus.

There is much work still to be done to ensure everyone in Canada has a decent and affordable place to live. As details of how National Housing Strategy will be implemented are finalized, Habitat Canada looks

forward to continuing its work with the federal government and other partners in increasing the supply of affordable housing through Habitat's affordable homeownership model.

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About Habitat for Humanity Canada

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national, nonprofit organization working toward a world where everyone has a decent and affordable place to call home. Habitat for Humanity brings communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable homeownership. With the help of volunteers, Habitat homeowners and 56 local Habitats working in every province and territory, we provide a solid foundation for better, healthier lives in Canada and around the world. Habitat for Humanity Canada is a member of Habitat for Humanity International, which was established in 1976 and has grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in more than 70 countries. For more information, please visit www.habitat.ca.

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