

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Newly-formed Habitat for Humanity Saskatchewan will help 21 families in 2021 Conexus Credit Union pledges support with \$1 million donation**

Twenty-one families across Saskatchewan will have their homeownership dreams realized this year as the province's Habitat for Humanity organizations, located in Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Regina, merge to create Habitat for Humanity Saskatchewan. And more families will be selected for home ownership in the future, as a total of 31 construction projects are underway.

The mission of Habitat is to bring communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable housing. Habitat for Humanity knows that a safe, decent, affordable home is fundamental to a family forging a path out of poverty. In a Habitat house, families find better health, more financial freedom, independence, and a stability and security that far too many families simply can't achieve without a helping hand. Habitat Saskatchewan believes this merger will allow the organization to provide that helping hand to more families in need.

"This merger aligns with our mission of bringing together the collective strengths of our organizations," says Bruce Anderson, inaugural Board Chair for Habitat for Humanity Saskatchewan. "We will be creating a new operational structure and model that will standardize the work of all Habitat offices in the province, creating efficiencies in the areas of IT and finance, Habitat ReStore operations, construction, and fundraising that will bring strength and stability to our organization, which will result in our being able to serve more Saskatchewan families."

Conexus Credit Union supports a provincial focus and has pledged one million dollars to build 80 homes across the province over four years. The mission of Conexus Credit Union is to improve the financial well-being of their members and communities. There is a natural alignment with Habitat Saskatchewan's mission of promoting homeownership as a means to breaking the cycle of poverty.

"This transformational gift from Conexus will help us lay a foundation of strength and stability which will be amplified through this provincial merger, and we are so thankful for our partnership," says Anderson.

"Being connected to our communities across Saskatchewan is a commitment we have upheld for over 80 years. Together with Habitat for Humanity, we recognize it is only when someone's basic human needs are met can the lives of these hardworking families be transformed, helping them take control and improve their financial well-being," says Eric Dillion, Chief Executive Officer, Conexus Credit Union. "We are honoured to partner with Habitat for Humanity, and contribute \$1 million for its youth work experience program, helping 80 families from across our province benefit from home ownership."

The move to a provincially based Habitat organization is not new. In Canada, Habitat organizations have merged to form regional operations in Alberta, Ontario and Manitoba.

Habitat Canada President & CEO Julia Deans says that, as the world changes and business environments change, non-profits worldwide need to adapt to adjust to flourish, and she believes Habitat Saskatchewan will indeed be successful.

“In today’s economic climate, success will come to organizations that recognize the importance of innovation and collaboration as a means to achieving greater impact. Our colleagues in Saskatchewan have seized on this incredible opportunity to work together in new and better ways and all of us at Habitat for Humanity Canada support and applaud their efforts.”

In terms of day-to-day operations, both Saskatoon and Prince Albert will continue to have administrative offices, with the organization’s head office located in Regina. The Habitat ReStore operations, which generate revenue to offset administrative costs by pricing and selling donated items competitively in the second-hand market, will remain in all three communities under the purview of one director, with common point of sale systems and work practices being implemented to make operations more efficient.

“Each location brings something unique to the table,” says Anderson. “Saskatoon’s ReStore operations were recently upgraded, Regina’s Haultain Crossing is the one of the largest Habitat projects in Canada, and Prince Albert’s rich history are just a few examples of strengths that we can now build on collectively to operate as a new Habitat Saskatchewan team. Combining these operational strengths will not only have positive effects in terms of the number of families we can serve but will also result in growth opportunities for our staff.”

The Provincial organization was officially incorporated effective January 1, 2021. The three boards have come together to form a provincial Board of Directors, and an Interim CEO, past Habitat Regina leader Kelly Holmes-Binns, has been appointed while the search for a permanent CEO begins.

“Over the coming months, we’ll be engaging staff to examine existing operations across the province to identify strengths, as well as areas where the organization can improve, and from there, develop a merger work plan,” says Holmes-Binns. “We expect the work plan will be implemented over a period of at least one year. In the meantime, it will be business as usual as staff, volunteers and families work together to build homes for Saskatchewan families in need.”

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### **About Habitat for Humanity Saskatchewan**

Habitat for Humanity is a global organization committed to bringing communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable housing. For more information on Habitat Saskatchewan and its Habitat ReStore operations, visit [www.habitatsaskatchewan.ca](http://www.habitatsaskatchewan.ca).

Please see the attached backgrounder for more details on the merger, and the merger process and timeline.

### **About Conexus Credit Union**

Conexus is a forward-thinking credit union committed to our members and their financial well-being. Reinvesting in our community is in our DNA and rooted in our co-operative principles. In 2019, we supported 151 initiatives and invested \$3.1 million through our Community Investment program. Located across Saskatchewan, we are Saskatchewan’s largest credit union. Visit [conexus.ca](http://conexus.ca) for more information



We build strength, stability and self-reliance.

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