



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY EAST BAY KICKS OFF ITS PARTICIPATION IN U.S. HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT'S (HUD) NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM**

### **REHABILITATION OF FORCLOSED PROPERTIES IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BEGINS IN BAY POINT ON FEBRUARY 4, 2010**

(Oakland, CA) – Habitat for Humanity East Bay (HEB) will renovate eight houses in Contra Costa County as part of the national recovery effort designed to address the recent foreclosure crisis.

HEB will kick off its work as part of the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) in Bay Point in partnership with the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development. The NSP is funded through the federal economic stimulus. The Contra Costa County agency awarded HEB \$1.5 million to help rehabilitate homes and address the abandoned and foreclosed residential properties that can be a source of blight in communities.

Habitat for Humanity East Bay will host a special community event to launch their participation in Contra Costa County's Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The event begins at 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 4 at HEB's first rehabilitation work-site at 32 Bayview Avenue in Bay Point, CA. In the next year, Habitat's teams of volunteers aim to rehabilitate at least eight homes in Bay Point.

Praised for its success in creating successful home ownership opportunities for families with limited incomes, HEB is one of the largest Habitat affiliates in the State of California. It has been creating sustainable housing and revitalizing neighborhoods for over 20 years, serving over 200 families throughout Alameda and Contra Costa County.

Habitat East Bay is one of the Bay Area's leading green affordable home builders. The Bay Point homes to be rehabilitated are modest in size and amenities. In general, homes will receive new roofs, old furnaces will be replaced, low VOC paints will be used, water efficient toilets and plumbing fixtures will be installed, and energy efficient light fixtures will be used in the homes.

"We are very happy to be playing a part in helping communities which have been hardest hit by America's foreclosure crisis," said Janice Jensen, President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity East Bay. "Our homeownership program includes the requirement of a "sweat equity" down payment, features a zero interest loan and a purchase price which reflects the work of volunteers and donors. This represents an opportunity to lift families, neighborhoods and communities out of economic turmoil. HUD's efforts in Bay Point and our partnership with the County will help stabilize and strengthen neighborhoods, build strong communities and add to the tax base."

Kara Douglas, Affordable Housing Program Manager for Contra Costa County commented, "NSP funds are being used to purchase and rehabilitate vacant and foreclosed homes. We are working with experienced non-profit developers and with this effort are helping to stabilize neighborhoods, prevent blight and decay and address the foreclosure crisis."

In speaking of the creation of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, HUD Secretary Donovan said, "Our goal is to help communities throughout California turn these houses into homes again. California is clearly struggling with a brutal foreclosure crisis and we must make every effort to help communities prevent these foreclosed properties from becoming a source of neighborhood blight."

To volunteer or be part of the rehabilitation effort in Contra Costa County or for more information on Habitat for Humanity East Bay visit [www.HabitatEB.org](http://www.HabitatEB.org) or call (510) 251-6304.

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