

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
November 30, 2022

Habitat for Humanity Coalition Seeks Innovative Solutions to Affordable Housing Crisis in the North



Pictured Back left to right: Laura Lapinskie – Office of John Yakabuski, MPP Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Eric Lalonde – 3 rd Line Studio, Mike Ladyk – 3 rd Line Studio, Mario D'Angelo – Soublière Constructors, Karsh Singh - Soublière Constructors, Tony Marcantonio – MetaLigna, Adrian Schut – Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa, Patrick Renshaw – MetaLigna, Marc Despatie – Collège Boréal, Michael Cullen – Habitat for Humanity Ontario Gateway North, Matt Baker - Soublière Constructors, Domenic Idone – MetaLigna, Sean Barrette – Big Mouth Consulting & Creative Services
Front left to right: Robin Paquette – Town of Arnprior, Angele Dmytruk – 3 rd Line Studio, Liesel Franklin – City of Greater Sudbury, Anik Gareau Singh - Soublière Constructors, Kimberley Woodcock - Habitat for Humanity Ontario Gateway North, Jennifer Huard – Royal Canadian Legion Lockerby Branch 564, Carmen McMurray – Veteran, Canadian Forces

Arnprior, ON – With a vision to provide as much affordable housing to as many people as possible in the City of Greater Sudbury and beyond, on November 23rd, 2022, the *Our House | Notre Maison Coalition* of private and public sector partners, led by Habitat for Humanity Ontario Gateway North (OGN) and Soublière Constructors, were welcomed by the team at the MetaLigna Modular Home factory in Arnprior, ON.

“We are investigating options that will allow us to move beyond the traditional Habitat model of building one or two homes at a time, toward a model that builds as many homes as we can in as short

a timeframe as possible. This will help us address the needs of marginalized groups while also being part of the solution to the affordable housing crisis overall,” says Habitat OGN CEO, Kimberley Woodcock.

Habitat Director of Community Partnerships, Michael Cullen, has been working with Soublière Constructors President Karsh Singh over the past several months to build the coalition that now includes experts from construction, architecture, finance, economic development, all levels of government, not-for-profits from various sectors, and representatives from the many agencies and groups that could be the ultimate beneficiaries of Habitat for Humanity homes.

“We’ve been given a mandate to innovate, starting in the City of Greater Sudbury. This is an exciting time, and the energy in the room was crackling with ideas and possibilities,” says Habitat Director of Community Partnerships, Michael Cullen.

“We knew going in that this initiative would require broad, nonpartisan support and a commitment to a common goal with Habitat for Humanity as our ‘glue’,” affirms Soublière President Singh. “The talent and commitment around the table is a recipe for action that is growing by the day.”

The MetaLinga Modular facility in Arnprior specializes in multi-storey commercial and residential building systems, park models, and Health Canada approved rapid deployment emergency care and clinics, and will soon feature Accessory Dwelling Units including coach homes, laneway homes, and modular homes.

According to Ms. Woodcock, some of the questions currently before the coalition include:

- How might we build more quickly and efficiently?
- Could we, in partnership with a company like MetaLinga, develop a local space to assemble the homes, and provide skills training, apprenticeship, and employment opportunities?
- How do we involve local subcontractors?
- How many homes are possible with the right land in the right location?

We are still putting the elements in place, but the goal is to implement a business model that is sustainable for years to come,” concludes Habitat OGN’s Michael Cullen.

Ms. Woodcock adds, “We’re dreaming big, and discovering that, with the right partners, the distance from dream to reality may not be such a leap.”

Organizations looking to become involved may contact Michael Cullen directly at mcullen@habitatgatewaynorth.com or 705-929-9892

About Habitat for Humanity Ontario Gateway North

Amalgamated in 2016, Habitat for Humanity Ontario Gateway North is a not-for-profit organization working toward a world where everyone has a safe, suitable, and affordable place to call home.

Habitat for Humanity brings communities together to help families build strength, stability, and independence through affordable housing.

With the help of government organizations, charitable foundations, local businesses, individual community members, volunteers, and other Habitat partners we provide a solid foundation for better, healthier lives in our service area, in Canada, and around the world. Our region serves communities across central and northern Ontario, including North Simcoe County, Muskoka, Parry Sound, Nipissing, Greater Sudbury, and Cochrane. Habitat for Humanity Ontario Gateway North is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity Canada, which was established in 1985.

To date, across Canada, Habitat for Humanity has helped thousands of families in need of a hand up. Across the globe, Habitat for Humanity has grown to become a leading global not-for-profit working in more than 70 countries. For more information visit www.habitatgatewaynorth.com and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

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