



QNET Innovation Conference –  
May 26, 2010



# Agenda

1. Overview of Habitat: A History of Innovation
2. Habitat Winnipeg as Innovator:
  - a) Our business model
  - b) The way we build
  - c) The way we raise money and profile
  - d) The way we select families
  - e) Team building opportunities
  - f) Contribution to the community



# Overview of Habitat

## Mission

By mobilizing volunteers and community partners, Habitat for Humanity Winnipeg works with people from all walks of life to build safe, decent, affordable housing for purchase by low-income working families.



# Overview of Habitat

## Distinguishing Characteristics

- 100% of Sponsorship money is used in build program
- Absolute certainty of where the money is spent
- Visible end product
- Great team building opportunity
- The personal relationship
- We divert 1,500,000 pounds of material annually from landfill sites



# Overview of Habitat

## World Wide Organization

- 1976
- 100 countries
- Approaching 400,000 homes built
- Incorporated in Winnipeg in June 1987



# Overview of Habitat

## Build Characteristics in Winnipeg

- Greener
- More accessible
- Simple aesthetics
- Integrate into the neighbourhood where are building



# Overview of Habitat

## HFH Winnipeg “Firsts”- A History of Innovation

- First major city Habitat to incorporate in Canada
- Invented the ReStore
- Only Canadian Jimmy Carter build
- Invented Youth Build
- Only Canadian affiliate to:
  - Build main floors wheel chair accessible
  - Build only Power Smart Gold
  - Build LEED
  - Sign formal partnerships with aboriginal groups
  - Sign a major matching money (MLC) sponsor
- Most homes built – 179 – in any Canadian city
- 20 more underway this year



# Our Business Model

## We Do Not Give Homes Away!

- Sold at full market value
- Independent third party
- No down payment
- Zero interest mortgage
- Mortgage payments geared to income, not property value.



# Our Business Model

## Three Sources of Cash

- ReStore
- Fund Raising
- Mortgage payments
  - Every dollar donated becomes four dollars over a 50 year period
  - A donation to Habitat is a gift in perpetuity to providing affordable housing



# The Way We Build

## Sustainable Building

- 2005: Built a few homes to R2000 standards to test the process
- 2006: Started building exclusively to R2000
- 2009: Adopted LEED process – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design; switched from R2000 to Power Smart Gold

## Result

- The greenest affordable housing development in Canada



# The Way We Build

## Test Results

The first homes tested have exceeded expectations:

- Blower door tests of 0.63 to 1.1
- EnerGuide ratings of 84 and 85
- Third party provider estimate that all homes will be LEED Gold or Platinum



# The Way We Build

- Melding together volunteers of all skill levels, staff and professional trades
- Volunteers save us about \$20,000 per house
- “You can’t possibly do that”



# Communications: Money and Profile

HFHW has launched four highly innovative fund raising programs:

- Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Legacy Build Program
- The Métis Build Program
- The First Nations Build Program
- The Sustainable Build Program

Raising Profile:

- In 2009, we built a house in the yard of St. Mary's Cathedral
- In 2011, we hope to be at the Red River Ex



# The Way We Select Families

## Sophisticated Process

- Minimum Requirements:
  - Need for better housing
  - At least one adult working full time in Winnipeg for at least two years
  - Overall family income at or below LICO
  - Preference given to families with children
- In-depth review of finances, work history, etc.
- Interviews
- Sweat equity
- Low failure and high collection rates



# Team Building Opportunities

## Unique Opportunity

- Groups – colleagues, cross –divisional project teams, families, neighbours, friends
- A day or more – many volunteers come for a week



# Team Building Opportunities

## Blitz Build 2009

- 6 days - 11 houses brought to “lock-up stage”
- 27 crew and house leaders (not incl. staff)
- 1,313 volunteer days
- 571 volunteers
- 19 homeowners
- 270 people/day average including site and food volunteers and staff
- 9 businesses and 16 churches provided food
- Each day we went through (approximately):
  - 800 pcs of fruit, 1,350 bottles of water, 45 gallons of juice, 135 gallons of coffee, 1,000 lbs of food (breakfast/lunch)



# Team Building Opportunities

## 2010 Opportunities

- Volunteers on site from mid April to end of October
- 5,000 volunteer days
- Blitz Build will be 11 days long
- 2,200 volunteer days during that period



# Community Contribution

## Many Different Ways

- Financial footing for the family
- Impact on the children
- Adds to the city tax base
- Revitalizes neighbourhoods
- Increases property values
- Engages the community: each house has dozens of organizations and hundreds of people involved
- Diverts 1,500,000 lbs annually from land fill
- Provides low cost alternative for home renovation & home décor



# Conclusion

- 30 years on, the business model is still unique
- A donation lasts forever
- Affordable houses built to the quality levels of high end custom homes
- A leader, not just in Habitat circles, but in affordable house building nationally
- Pioneered many green building techniques
- Measurable improvement to the community
- Massive community engagement

