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Contacts: Christine Walker, Executive Director
Teton County Housing Authority
(307) 732-0867
cwalker@tetonwyo.org

Terri Marino, Executive Director
Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Teton Area
(307) 734-0828
terri@tetonhabitat.org

Housing Organizations Partner to Build Workforce Housing in East Jackson

July 1, 2010 – Jackson Hole, Wyoming – The Teton County Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Teton Area have entered into an unprecedented partnership to build 12 affordable homes on Hall Street in East Jackson. While the Housing Authority has previously provided Habitat with land, this endeavor marks the first time the organizations will develop a neighborhood together.

“The Housing Authority has made it possible for Habitat to thrive in Jackson,” said Terri Marino, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity. “We are excited about taking our work with them to the next level. This will be our first foray into development work, and we are fortunate to be working alongside an experienced and trusted partner.”

The organizations are in the planning stages of the development and will begin construction in Spring 2011. The new homes will span four lots on Hall Avenue, near the cul-de-sac ending at Mike Yokel Park.

Special Purpose Excise Tax (SPET) funds were used to purchase the land in 2005. The two groups began discussions last year about creative ways to partner saving taxpayer dollars and getting workforce housing in the ground. Habitat will subsidize the construction of five of the 12 homes, which is a large savings to the taxpayers. The Housing Authority is providing the land and constructing 7 of the homes.

“Habitat’s involvement in the Hall Street neighborhood enables the Housing Authority to leverage taxpayer dollars invested. This collaboration is a perfect example of an effective public/private partnership,” said Christine Walker, Executive Director of the Housing Authority.

The Housing Authority has found that there is demand for workforce housing, regardless of recent changes in the housing market. The proposal for Hall Street will support its mission, and as an added bonus, bolster the local economy.

“Despite the drop in housing prices, homeownership is still not within reach for most of our working families,” Walker said. “Thanks to our partnership with Habitat, we expect to be able to build this neighborhood with minimal public subsidy while also putting some of our local construction professionals to work.”

Additionally, the partnership will allow Habitat to expand the scope of its program. Over the past decade, the Housing Authority has provided Habitat with 18 lots, which accounts for all of the land in Habitat’s program. However, this pursuit is the first time that the organizations will collaborate earlier on in the development process.

Habitat for Humanity builds and repairs homes with those in need in Teton County. Homes are built by volunteers and sold at no profit to pre-selected partner families with an interest free loan to ensure affordable monthly payments. Homeowners are required to contribute at least 500 hours of “sweat equity,” save at least \$1,500, and take a series of

homeowner education classes in order to purchase the home. Habitat also runs the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, which sells donated building supplies, home furnishings and appliances to help fund Habitat's program. For more information, visit www.tetonhabitat.org.

The Teton County Housing Authority enables diverse opportunities for essential housing throughout the County. The Authority provides education to the community, facilitates potential solutions, develops housing where necessary, and creates multiple layers of partnership, all of which are designed to create housing essential to the future viability of the community. For more information, visit www.tetonwyo.org/housing.

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