

## **City Donates Lot for Low-Cost “Green” Homes in Historic Downtown**

SANTA FE, October 13, 2022 – Last evening, the Governing Body approved the donation of City-owned property in downtown Santa Fe for the development of five low-priced housing units for sale to qualified homebuyers.

The donation of this site is intended to be the first of a series of dispositions of under-used City-owned property for the purpose of stimulating the creation of housing units on infill lots. Recognizing that land acquisition and other forms of site control are significant hurdles in the development process, and that developing affordable units is financially challenging, the City seeks to provide developable lots through real estate donation/disposition agreements.

The developers were selected through an RFP process. The project team that scored the highest was headed by Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity, which proposed building five homes, arranged in a traditional Santa Fe compound. The building materials are contemporary modular components provided through a partnership with a local design firm, B.Public. The objective is to reduce construction time and construction waste and maximize energy efficiency of the finished homes without sacrificing quality, affordability or design aesthetics.

The five homes will be made affordable through Habitat’s unique approach of using the future homeowner’s “sweat equity,” in addition to many volunteer laborers, donated materials, and self-financed 0% interest mortgages. Kurt Krahn, Executive Director of Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity, estimates that these homes will cost approximately \$225,000 to construct, with monthly housing payments of \$600-\$800.

“We are thrilled to pilot this approach with B.Public,” says Krahn. “The thermal envelope goes up in days rather than months, which simplifies framing, sheathing, and insulation into a single sequence, greatly reducing construction time and construction waste and resulting in a home with much lower energy use.”

The lot is located in a downtown historic district within easy walking and biking distance to the Plaza and the River and Rail Trails. Current zoning allows a multi-unit structure with at least five units on the lot. The final design and development plan requires approval by the Historic Design Review Board.

Mayor Alan Webber says: “This is the latest example where the City is using land it owns to make possible the development of quality affordable housing. Congratulations to Habitat for Humanity—we’re excited to have them as a partner on this project and eager to see them build good homes that Santa Fe’s working families can afford.”

Edie Dillman, CEO and Co-founder of Santa Fe-based B.PUBLIC Prefab, says: “We’re thrilled to be supporting Habitat Santa Fe in this development. For years, they

have been building to high standards. By building with our pre-insulated structural walls, the community will see the shell of this project complete in a matter of days. Our craftsman-built prefab is designed for 100-plus years of comfort and 80-90 percent energy savings. Now that is sustainability and housing stability!"