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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Erie County & Lackawanna Officials Celebrate Newly Completed Habitat Buffalo Home in Lackawanna

Lackawanna, New York (April 15, 2023) — On April 15, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., Erie County and City of Lackawanna Officials joined representatives from Habitat for Humanity Buffalo to dedicate a home located at 116 Center Street in Lackawanna. This is the second of two single-family homes built in partnership with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, the City of Lackawanna, and the Lackawanna Housing Development Corporation (LHDC).

The house is situated on a property that was previously a vacant lot. The City of Lackawanna partnered with Habitat Buffalo to construct a new, 1,355 square foot, four-bedroom home on the site. Construction funding was provided by Erie County's federal Home Investment Partnership (HOME) grant.

"The funding of these projects exemplifies the commitment of Erie County to work with our neighborhood partners in a time of great need to increase affordable housing opportunities for our residents and to also help stabilize the First and Second Ward neighborhoods of the City of Lackawanna," said Erie County Executive, Mark C. Poloncarz. "These federal HOME funds that come to Erie County for the purpose of increasing affordable housing units are more vital now than ever. We are pleased to be able to work with both Habitat for Humanity Buffalo, an agency with a long history of assisting low-income households to achieve homeownership, and the Lackawanna Housing Development Corporation."

"These new residential homes constructed by Habitat Buffalo compliment my administration's multi-million dollar plan for redeveloping the entire Ridge Road/Center Street corridor in phases over the next two years," said Lackawanna Mayor Annette Iafallo. "This effort will include a new residential-commercial complex at 539 Ridge Road constructed by Douglas Development, a curb-to-curb reconstruction of Center Street in partnership with the Erie County Water and Sewer Authorities, and a new grant-funded splash park and recreation facility at nearby Franklin Playground – all with the goal of restoring community vibrancy to this proud Lackawanna neighborhood."

This is the second project made possible through the partnership between Habitat Buffalo, LHDC, the City of Lackawanna, and the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. Construction was completed on another home directly across the street at 117 Center Street in October 2022. As part of the ongoing partnership, two additional projects are planned for completion in 2023/2024. This partnership supports Habitat Buffalo in responding to the urgent need for affordable housing in Erie County. Now complete, the house at 116 Center Street will be purchased by a local family who has completed more than 400 hours of sweat-equity, attended homeownership classes, and will repay an affordable mortgage through Habitat Buffalo's Homebuyer Program.

"The partnership we have built with Erie County, LHDC, and the City of Lackawanna has allowed Habitat Buffalo to expand our impact and commitment to creating more options for affordable homeownership in Erie County," said Christopher Kennedy, Executive Director of Habitat Buffalo. "Owning a home is a family's greatest investment and asset, and providing a pathway for families in our community to achieve this significant milestone is an important piece of addressing the housing challenges we are facing."

The dedication was attended by the homebuyers, County Executive Poloncarz, Lackawanna Mayor Annette Iafallo, county and Lackawanna officials, and Habitat Buffalo staff and volunteers.

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About Habitat for Humanity Buffalo: Habitat for Humanity Buffalo works to build strength, stability, and self-reliance through homeownership. Habitat Buffalo was established by a group of dedicated volunteers, concerned about the lack of affordable homes in the City of Buffalo. Seeking to create homeownership opportunities for low-income families, Habitat Buffalo subsidizes the cost of homes through donations (both, monetary and materials) and volunteer labor. Families that purchase homes through our program are required to first contribute at least 300 hours of “sweat equity”, working alongside community volunteers to construct their home and the houses of other families in the program. Once approved, families purchase their homes from Habitat Buffalo by paying a low-interest, affordable monthly mortgage. For more information, visit www.habitatbuffalo.org.

