



Habitat for Humanity Expands to Serve Rock County, Wisconsin

Immediate Release

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Janesville, WI (August 11, 2025) — Habitat for Humanity of Waukesha & Jefferson Counties is thrilled to announce its expansion to serve Rock County, Wisconsin, marking a significant step forward in advancing Vision 2033, the affiliate's commitment to building 20 homes, completing 30 home repairs, and engaging three communities annually by the year 2033. The new Affiliate name is Habitat for Humanity Waukesha – Jefferson – Rock.

Habitat for Humanity's first Rock County build is being planned for Spring of 2026, with early efforts focused on exploring opportunities in Janesville. Habitat for Humanity and the City of Janesville are working to establish a partnership aimed at reinvesting in neighborhoods through the construction of affordable, owner-occupied homes. Together, Habitat and the City, are beginning to identify possible properties and build public support to help offset early construction and start-up costs.

"We're honored to be in conversations with the City of Janesville to help meet the urgent need for starter homes in Rock County," said Melissa Songco, CEO of Habitat for Humanity Waukesha – Jefferson – Rock. "Too many hardworking families are being priced out of homeownership. By building quality, new construction homes that families can afford to buy, we're creating opportunities for them to put down roots, build equity, and thrive."

Johnson Financial Group, a longtime supporter of Habitat for Humanity, is stepping up as a major sponsor of the Rock County expansion. With Janesville being a key market for the bank, their investment underscores a shared commitment to strengthening the local community through affordable homeownership.

“This expansion couldn’t come at a better time—we see the growing need for affordable housing every day in our work,” said Loren Fellows, SVP, Mortgage Production Manager at Johnson Financial Group. “We’re proud to support Habitat’s mission and help more Rock County families achieve the dream of homeownership.”

Habitat is also partnering with Next Generation Construction, a Rock County-based, family-owned firm, who is generously donating their construction management services to help launch the Affiliate expansion.

“As a family company, we believe in building more than homes—we’re building up the community by giving back in any way we can,” said Zach Knutson, Managing Partner of Next Generation Construction. “Partnering with Habitat is a natural fit for us. We’re proud to bring our expertise to a mission that aligns with our core values.”

Local business leaders have welcomed Habitat’s arrival as part of the broader effort to meet Janesville’s urgent housing needs.

"The work Forward Janesville is undertaking with its housing Strategic Initiative indicates a strong need for housing for all income levels in the Janesville/Rock County area. To meet this need of housing for all, strong public partnerships need to be developed to help solve this problem. Habitat's expansion to serve Rock County directly supports this need and our city's housing goals. This aligns with Forward Janesville's broader mission to improve economic vitality and quality of life in our region." Mick Gilbertson, Forward Janesville Board Chair and Chair of Forward Janesville's Housing Committee

Get Involved

Habitat is currently raising funds and recruiting volunteers to make the Janesville build a reality. Individuals, businesses, and civic organizations are encouraged to get involved through donations, sponsorships, or volunteer opportunities.

Families interested in purchasing a Habitat home in Rock County are encouraged to complete the online interest form at www.habitatwjr.org. Habitat’s affordable

homeownership program is designed for hardworking families who are ready to build stability and invest in their futures. The application cycle is now open.

To learn more or to get involved, contact:

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About Habitat for Humanity Waukesha – Jefferson – Rock

Since 1989, Habitat for Humanity Waukesha – Jefferson – Rock has been the leading provider of affordable homeownership opportunities in Waukesha County, building homes for families who cannot purchase a home through traditional methods. In October 2023, the organization expanded into Jefferson County and now proudly serves Rock County as well. Homeowners earn an affordable mortgage and obtain self-sufficiency while learning valuable skills. They contribute 200 hours of sweat equity (per adult) to constructing their homes, which serves as their down payment. Habitat Waukesha – Jefferson – Rock is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Equal Housing lender. More information is available at habitatwjrr.org