



# Progress Report

SUMMER 2014

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Great news!

Something extraordinary is happening in affordable housing in Houston right now. I believe we are on the front edge of a development with potentially broad and significant national impact – something that has the chance to deeply and positively affect the lives of thousands in our city's low-income elderly and veteran homeowner population.

Before I continue, I want to thank you for your generous support of Rebuilding Together Houston because you have helped us arrive at this special place – a place where we have brought the stabilizing and life-affirming power of critical home repair to hundreds of our elderly neighbors. Indeed, over the last five years, RTH has averaged the completion of one house per calendar day – saving more of our at-risk seniors from being displaced from the homes they worked hard to buy, and where they raised their children. We are proud to have you partnering with us in this successful neighbor-helping-neighbor project all across Houston and Harris County.

### What's Extraordinary? Your RTH!

RTH has completed program work for the first six months of 2014 and I am pleased to report that we have, with the help of over 5,000 volunteer hours of service (for exterior repair) and our professional contractors (for interior repair), rebuilt 125 houses across Harris County. These rebuilt homes directly impacted the lives of their low-income owners, plus their immediate family members and neighbors.

Independent research shows Rebuilding Together Houston has a measureable, positive impact on the lives of those we serve. The restoration of an aging but treasured family home also restores hope and dignity to its occupants. Our repairs prevent falls, injuries and ill health, which offset the high cost of complicated surgeries and long hospital stays for these older Houstonians. At the same time, we help to revitalize a block, a neighborhood, a community, a city and region. Elderly and veteran homeowners are far less likely to experience depression, isolation and loneliness as a result of the work provided by our volunteers and contractors.

### The Need for RTH Services Grows

RTH has seen a remarkable increase in the number of homeowners requesting our services in the last six months. More than 500 calls with requests for repairs have been received since January, in addition to the 200-300 homes we have on our waiting list at any given time. As the baby boom generation continues its march into retirement, not all will be fortunate enough to hang on to the homes they worked hard to purchase for their families decades ago. Many are asking for our help. These next years will be prime moments for Rebuilding Together affiliates across the US. We are fortunate in Houston to have one of the largest Rebuilding Together affiliates, and we're poised to have an even greater impact in helping Houston's underserved elderly homeowners.

### Rewarding Volunteer Service

This past spring saw the return of many loyal corporate partners who supplied volunteer crews for our work days in March and April. Those bringing the largest number of crews included ExxonMobil, BP, Shell Oil and Second Baptist Church. Second Baptist just completed their 150th house with us since 2008! Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church completed their 50th! We welcomed new crews from Alley Theatre, Golden G Construction, Karsten Interior Services, and NRG, among others. Plus the Texas Exes and the OU Club set aside their rivalry and worked together to rebuild three houses. The UM Army (through their spring and summer camps) have completed more homes with RTH than any other organization or company. They were back with us this May to bring us more needed volunteer help.

### Your Support Is Vital

I am pleased to announce that support for the RTH mission and programs has increased during the first half of the year. New or significantly increased gifts have been received from Houston Housing Finance Corporation, Isla Carroll Turner Friendship Trust, Camden, BHP Billiton, David Weekley Homes, and the Texas Veterans Commission, among others. The RTH Board of Directors and Staff have generously increased their giving levels, with both groups reporting 100 percent commitment from their membership. We currently stand at \$446,000 at this midway point in our fiscal year and will require \$554,000 to finish out the year and help the large number of homeowners we have committed to assisting in 2014. Your help is greatly welcomed and appreciated!



ExxonMobil Corporation continues to bring among the largest number of employees to our Volunteer Home Repair Program work days in both the spring and fall.



Setting a high standard for quality on every job, BHP Billiton crews take on some of the toughest assignments for our neediest homeowners.

### A Brand-New Web Site

The exciting and informative new RTH web site has moved beyond the beta phase and is in full operation. Besides a comprehensive guide to who we are and what we do, we have added some lively and touching homeowner videos, enthusiastic crew videos, and will soon be including videos for crew leader training and volunteer recruitment. I invite you to spend a few minutes with our new web site and let me know what you think. [RebuildingHouston.org](http://RebuildingHouston.org)

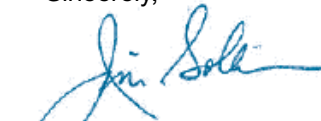
### RTH's "Front Edge" – Because There is so Much More to Do: SUPER IMPACT 17

In 2013, the RTH Board of Directors approved a new "Super Impact 17" initiative to nearly double our service impact to the city over the next three years. A strategic planning team is evaluating the key components and efforts to make this "Double Dream" become a reality. By the start of 2017, in tandem with the arrival of the next Super Bowl in Houston, we hope to be rebuilding more than 700 homes per year with help from 10,000 volunteers and partnership support from Houston's generous corporations, organizations and foundations. To meet this objective, we are building momentum and reaching out to many of our major corporate and foundation partners for support. Many have responded most favorably to our requests and we expect to hear from others in the weeks and months ahead.

### Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

I cannot thank you enough for your generous support of Rebuilding Together Houston. We would not be able to do what we do without your substantial support. Our program is built with the knowledge that the restoration of aging homes of low-income elderly, veterans and the disabled enhances their lives, restores their dignity and hope, revitalizes historic neighborhoods, and makes Houston a better place for all of us. Neighbor helping neighbor is especially powerful in this regard because of the inherent benefits of kindness, sharing, compassion and love for one another. It is our mission to bring critical home repair to as many of those in need as we have funds to accomplish it. I am grateful for what you have already done and what you may continue to do.

Sincerely,

  
James E. (Jim) Soller  
Executive Director  
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