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Home-repair blitz targets Hamilton

Up to 80 homes in 2nd, 4th wards to be fixed up for free in July 2010.

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By Richard Wilson, Staff Writer

Updated 2:09 AM Sunday, June 7, 2009

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HAMILTON — The city has been selected by a national nonprofit group for a major effort to fix up dozens of homes next year.

Up to 80 homes in Hamilton's 2nd and 4th wards will be targeted for a home-repair blitz in July 2010, as provided by the Colorado-based Group Workcamps Foundation.

The program is being assisted by a three-way partnership — Supports to Encourage Low-income Families, Hamilton Community Council and the Hamilton City School District.

"The neat thing about this is the entire program doesn't cost the homeowner anything," said Butch Hubble, chairman of the community council.

The Group Workcamps Foundation, an organization that provides ecumenical mission trips for youths, will provide \$12,000 in supplies and the labor, which is performed by about 400 youths and adult supervisors. An additional \$19,000 must be raised by May 2010 and will be used only for supplies, Hubble said, adding that the resulting impact will be worth \$400,000.

The homes of elderly, low-income and disabled residents will benefit from the work, which may involve building wheelchair ramps, repairing or replacing porches, painting, drywall repairs and gutter fixes among other jobs.

This "massive effort" will require more than a year's worth of planning, but it will be worth it, said Jeffrey Diver, executive director of SELF.

"In one week next year, we will make a visible and measurable impact," Diver said.

Volunteers from the foundation will stay at Garfield Middle School, and the school district will be compensated for providing the housing.

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A committee will be formed to help select the homes for repairs and raise the money, Hubble said. The goal, he said, is to get local groups and residents involved and create a fun, community effort.

Contact this reporter at (513) 820-2122 or rwilson@coxohio.com.

How to help

Attend a local organizational committee meeting at 2 p.m. Monday, June 8, at SELF's offices, 1790 S. Erie Highway, in the Hamilton Crossings Shopping Center.

Contact Kim Weigel at kweigel@selfhelps.org or Butch Hubble at kemjak@aol.com.

Online: Find information on the homes in your area by visiting Journal-News.com/homes

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