



## Perris Press Release

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### Second Habitat Home Nearly Ready for Perris Family

Hugo and Laura Gomez took a day off recently from their regular warehouse jobs to work on a project near and dear to their hearts—building their first home in Perris.

The couple won a lottery of sorts and soon will move into a new three bedroom, two-bath home in the City's Downtown district built by Habitat for Humanity in partnership with the City of Perris.

The Gomez family--mom, dad and their two children—were selected after passing a grueling six-month process that included credit and background checks, employment history and a willingness to put in 500-hours of "sweat equity" on their Eleventh Street residence. More than 150 families expressed interest in taking part in the Habitat for Humanity Project, the second one in two years the non-profit agency has undertaken in the City of Perris.



Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez, City Councilman Julio Rodriguez, Liz Bibb from Habitat for Humanity, Laura Gomez and Hugo Gomez in front of the home under construction in Perris.

Hugo and Laura Gomez joined



Hugo Gomez and his wife, Laura, paint the exterior walls of their new home, built as a result of a partnership between the City of Perris and Habitat for Humanity.

volunteers from the City of Perris, Perris police and fire departments and the City's Code Enforcement team to work on their future home, which they hope to occupy by mid-May. The couple grabbed rollers and brushes and painted the exterior of the home.

Laura Gomez, 36, found it difficult to express in words the feelings she felt inside and finally becoming a homeowner. But her smile said a lot.

"Can't you tell?" she said when a visitor to the job site asked. "I am very grateful. I never thought our family would live to see this day."

Hugo Gomez, 42, thanked the City of Perris for teaming up with Habitat for Humanity to make the family home a reality. "It's very nice to have this opportunity," he said. "Everybody wants to own a home at some point in their lives."

The family has lived in Perris for 10 years. Their current residence is a one-bedroom apartment. Their new 1,088-square-foot home means a separate bedroom for Hugo and Laura as well for their son, Fabian, 8, and daughter, Victoria, 5. Fabian already is looking to fill his light-blue bedroom with Legos. Victoria's pink room will provide space for her music and dancing.

"We'll be able to have the cousins over for a visit," Hugo Gomez said.

City of Perris volunteers from all departments donated their time to paint and install doors at the residence while others dropped in to give the Gomez family their best wishes. Perris volunteers and visitors included City Councilman Julio Rodriguez, City Manager Richard Belmudez, Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin and Public Safety Commissioner Shawn Haughney.

Housing Manager Sabrina Chavez rolled paint as well.

"It's great to be able to come together and help out on such a great project and a great cause," Chavez said. "It's neat to give something back to our residents."

Finance department worker Adrienne Morales voiced similar sentiments.

"It's great to give back to the community one family at a time," she said.

Recreation department employee Juan Rodriguez called it a "no-brainer" to donate a morning of his time on the project.

"I heard of Habitat for Humanity but never had the chance to help out before," Rodriguez said. "I'm glad I took the opportunity."

Habitat for Humanity officials say they enjoy working with the City of Perris. The City used federal funds to purchase the Eleventh Street lot and turned it over to the non-profit, who selected the family and constructed the residence. Habitat lent the Gomez family money to purchase the home under a 30-year no-interest mortgage.

To qualify for the residence, the family had to earn \$32,000 a year or less. As part of the City's ongoing commitment to sustainable energy, the residence will have energy-efficient windows and appliances, ceiling fans and a "whole-house fan" installed in the attic that will vent hot air through the roof of the residence. Solar panels likely will be added at a later time.

City Councilman Julio Rodriguez said projects like the Gomez-family home reinforce the "City's commitment to the betterment of our community."

"It is a real honor to be part of a City Council that is partnering with another agency to make Perris a better place," he said. "We need more partnerships like that."

Tammy Marine, executive director of Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley, said the agency "loves working with the City of Perris." The two agencies teamed up on another home in Downtown Perris that was completed in 2011 as part of the City's centennial celebration.

"The City of Perris shares the same vision we do—to make the Perris a better place by providing quality, affordable housing to people in need," Marine said. "It is an honor to work with them."



Perris City employee Adrienne Morales rolls paint at the Gomez residence on Eleventh Street in the City's historical Downtown area.