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PRESS RELEASE

Waste Not Want Not Breaks Ground on Facility Expansion, Bringing More Capacity to Fight Hunger in Northeast Florida

JACKSONVILLE, FL – Waste Not Want Not, the Northeast Florida nonprofit that has rescued and redistributed surplus food for **over 35 years**, has **broken ground** on **a significant expansion** of its flagship facility – fondly referred to by staff and volunteers as the **“Castle.”**

The project, approved by the Town of Orange Park, will modernize and expand the organization’s operational food rescue hub, creating **greater capacity** to rescue and supply food to partner organizations that serve hundreds of thousands of individuals **across 14 counties**.

The expansion builds on decades of progress, **strengthening the systems** and **infrastructure** that allow **rescued food** to move efficiently from donors to community partners across our community.

This upgrade is made possible in part by the organization’s largest single monetary gift to date – a **\$125,000** donation from a private family foundation – combined with a significant grant **from Baptist Health**. Together, these transformational investments are funding **critical infrastructure upgrades** including a modernized electrical system, commercial-grade refrigeration, a new air conditioning system, updated fencing, and a small addition to accommodate the rapid growth the organization has experienced as demand for its programs continues to climb.

To ensure the work proceeds with the same care and accountability the organization brings to its mission, the board of directors appointed a dedicated construction steering committee. The committee is chaired by board member **Tillery Durbin**, a commercial lender with **VyStar Credit Union** whose extensive background in commercial construction makes her ideally suited to guide the project from concept to completion.

During construction, Waste Not Want Not has temporarily relocated its operations to maintain uninterrupted service to its partner agencies and the neighbors they serve. As Executive Director

Kathleen Spears, put it plainly in her message to partners: “While the temporary relocation process may be bumpy, we will not skip a beat.” The families, seniors, veterans, and children who rely on Waste Not Want Not every week will not feel the disruption – that is a commitment the organization has made and intends to keep.

The expansion reflects not only the organization’s growth, but its **deepening roots in the community**. Waste Not Want Not has operated in Orange Park for decades, and the groundbreaking marks **a new chapter** in its commitment to the region.

About Waste Not Want Not

Waste Not Want Not is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting hunger and poverty and to reducing food waste across 14 counties in Northeast Florida. As the region’s only hunger alleviation organization solely committed to food rescue, *Waste Not Want Not* does not purchase food or operate as a traditional food bank. Instead, *Waste Not* bridges the gap between surplus food and hungry people – recovering high-quality, excess food from retailers, distributors, and other partners and redirecting it to nonprofit agencies serving individuals and families facing food insecurity.

Powered by hundreds of dedicated volunteers and supported by generous food donors and community partners, *Waste Not Want Not* ensures that wholesome food feeds people—not landfills. Each week, as a result of *Waste Not*’s efforts, more than 15,000 neighbors receive nourishment made possible through rescued food that would otherwise go to waste.

To learn more, volunteer, or support the mission, visit www.wastenotflorida.org.

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