



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2012

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mary Cashiola

mary.cashiola@memphistn.gov | (901) 576-6032

**FORMER COUNTY COMMISSIONER MIKE CARPENTER TO MANAGE HARAHAH PROJECT,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR CITY**

Memphis Mayor A C Wharton, Jr. announced today that former Shelby County Commissioner Mike Carpenter will contract with the City to lead its Office of Intergovernmental Relations. In addition, Carpenter has been tapped to serve as project manager for the Main Street to Main Street Multimodal Connector that includes the Harahan Bridge.

"I am grateful to have Mike Carpenter returning to Memphis to be our liaison to the local, state, and federal governments. He is knowledgeable about the unique challenges faced by cities and understands how essential it is to have the support of our government partners to grow our city and improve the quality of life of our citizens," said Wharton. "Having been a local elected official, lobbyist, and administrator, Mike has an uncommon skill set suited to effectively serve Memphis."

Carpenter's most immediate responsibility will be oversight of the TIGER IV federal grant that will fund more than half of the Main Street to Main Street Multimodal project. In that role, Carpenter will ensure compliance with federal grant requirements, guide the project through the various required governmental approvals, provide leadership to the project team and work to deliver the project on-time and within budget.

"The Main Street to Main Street project is unusually complex because of the number of grant partners, the fact that it crosses state lines, utilizes local, state, and federal funds and includes support from private sources," said Paul Morris, president of the Downtown Memphis Commission, which is a partner in the grant. "We needed someone who had the ability to navigate the maze of governmental approvals required and to do so efficiently and in a way that maintains public confidence in the project."

In fulfilling those responsibilities, Carpenter will contract with the City for intergovernmental relations services and with the Downtown Memphis Commission for project management of the TIGER IV grant. Carpenter will not be a city employee or receive city insurance or retirement benefits.

Carpenter will be returning to Memphis from the Nashville-area where he is serving as state director for StudentsFirst, an education reform advocacy organization founded by Michelle Rhee, former chancellor of the D.C. Public Schools System. Prior to his role with StudentsFirst, Carpenter was twice elected to the Shelby County Commission. In 2009, following Mayor Wharton's election as City Mayor, Carpenter co-chaired the Mayor's transition team. Carpenter's career experience includes a long history of association management and public affairs work throughout the region.

"I am so thankful to be able to return and be a part of helping the City reach its potential," said Carpenter. "I appreciate Mayor Wharton's confidence in me and the trust of Congressman Cohen, Mayor Luttrell, Paul Morris and the leadership of the Downtown Memphis Commission and the other Main Street to Main Street partners. I am anxious to get started and continue my service to the City."

###