



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OF MEMPHIS RECIEVES NEARLY \$30 MILLION HUD CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS GRANT FOR FOOTE HOMES TRANSFORMATION

MEMPHIS, TN – Mayor AC Wharton, Jr. and Congressman Steve Cohen announced today that the City of Memphis is the recipient of a \$29,750,000 U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant. The South City Transformation Plan for the revitalization of the Foote Homes Public Housing Development was one of 32 applications submitted by communities nationwide.

“This major federal grant from President Obama’s Choice Neighborhoods program will help transform our city and position us for success,” said Congressman Cohen. “Our selection as a Choice Neighborhood is the result of several years of working closely with Mayor Wharton to present our city’s strong application to HUD Secretary Julian Castro. This infusion of government funds will stimulate additional private investment, a synergy which will prove even more beneficial for Memphis.”

This major federal award will provide significant financial leverage to rebuild the 75 – year old Foote Homes public housing development – the last remaining traditional housing project in the City of Memphis -- and the surrounding neighborhood immediately south of Downtown Memphis.

“We are super excited and grateful for the strong commitment from and collaboration with Congressman Cohen, Sec. Castro’s office and our lead applicant Memphis Housing Authority that led to our success in getting this nearly \$30 million award,” said Mayor Wharton. “This Choice Neighborhoods grant will be leveraged with other local and state, public and private funds for the South City Transformation Plan to revitalize the Foote Homes Public Housing Development – the last remaining traditional housing project in the City of Memphis.”

The success of the Memphis’ South City Transformation Plan was its inclusion of best practices gleaned from innovative programs from across the country and those pioneered in Memphis. It includes an asset based plan of action to create a new physical environment and deeper engagement of residents and community stakeholders. The plan includes a cultural tourism program that builds on the area’s rich African American history and heritage to create jobs, attract investments, and spark entrepreneurship.

South City Transformation Plan Details

The South City Plan will transform 420 distressed public housing units in Foote Homes into 712 senior and family apartments throughout the greater neighborhood. The project includes new infrastructure and amenities such as:

- Community space
- Fitness center
- Pocket parks
- Welcoming green space

Also, grant funds will be used to pilot Mayor Wharton's Blueprint for Prosperity that calls for a comprehensive case management delivery system to help lift residents out of poverty, close the income gap with proven employment programs, enhance educational and health outcomes, and other support programs.

Additionally, the grant will cover the cost of implementing strategies to create neighborhood assets including:

- A high quality, well-designed commercial building
- Grocery store and farmers' market
- An early educational center
- Upgraded public parks and green spaces and infrastructure
- Alternative and equitable transportation
- Blight removal programs
- Cultural and historic preservation initiatives
- Evidence-based public safety strategies to complement the new neighborhood

"By establishing "South City", the Memphis Housing Authority, the City and other critical partners will give it the attention and resources this community needs to preserve it as one of the City's most precious assets and make it a neighborhood of choice," Mayor Wharton said.

The diverse team responsible for implementing the South City Plan includes:

- Memphis Housing Authority— Lead Applicant
- The City of Memphis— Co-Applicant
- Neighborhood Component Implementation Lead—the City's Division of Housing & Community Development
- Housing Plan Component Implementation Lead—McCormack Baron Salazar
- People Component Implementation Lead—Urban Strategies, Inc.
- Principal Education Partner—Shelby County Schools
- Numerous local partners

HUD's support of the South City Neighborhood demonstrates that the plan is not only a local priority and has community support, but aligns with the national goals and approach of the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Initiative.

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Under the leadership of Mayor A C Wharton Jr. since 2009, Memphis is becoming a City of Choice by focusing on creating safe and vibrant neighborhoods, investing in young people, creating economic opportunities for all, and delivering excellence in government. Memphis is famous around the world for the convergence of creativity and innovation that produced its most famous exports – legendary music; the company that invented modern world commerce – FedEx, and the international leader in curing catastrophic childhood illnesses – St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. It has a celebrated entrepreneurial history, more Fortune 500 companies than any other Tennessee city, and it has been named one of the best cities in the U.S. for startups. It is famous as home for Elvis Presley’s Graceland, Sun Studios, Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Beale Street, the National Civil Rights Museum, and the most unspoiled riverfront on the Mississippi River. City of Memphis, which employs more than 6,000 people with an annual budget of approximately \$650 million, has developed and led programs that have dramatically reduced crime, increased jobs, improved Memphis’ quality of life, and attracted national attention and investments in the city. For more information visit www.memphistn.gov.