



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Apartments made available, new initiative launched to impact homelessness

MEMPHIS, TN - On the second anniversary of the Memphis and Shelby County Action Plan to End Homelessness, significant progress is announced today by Memphis Mayor A C Wharton, Jr. and County Mayor Mark H. Luttrell, Jr. due to two major efforts.

1. An expanded Memphis Homeless Prevention Rapid Rehousing program
2. The launch of Memphis Strong Families Initiative, an \$8.1million collaboration among the city, county and federal governments, the Community Alliance for the Homeless, MIFA, North Memphis Community Development Corporation, Tennessee Community Services Agency, the Plough Foundation and six other local nonprofits

These efforts will propel the Mayors' Action Plan to End Homelessness forward producing the following results over the next four years:

- 800 homeless families will receive short-term financial assistance and home-based support
- 100 highly vulnerable, homeless families will receive long-term housing and intensive support

MIFA is repurposing its 73 apartments in the Midtown area, previously used for transitional housing as it refocuses its housing program exclusively to Rapid Rehousing and permanent residency. The apartments will house families served by the Memphis Strong Families Initiative.

“We are all grateful to MIFA for its willingness to donate its apartments to this important initiative and re-structure its homeless program to increase services through Rapid Rehousing. MIFA’s vision for improving the community continues its legacy of helping our neighbors in need,” Mayor Wharton stated. “We appreciate the collaboration between public and private entities making it possible for us to more rapidly move forward with our plans to end homelessness in this community in the next 5 years.”

“The synergy of these efforts marks monumental progress in our work,” said Mayor Luttrell. “We are proud to lend support to these important efforts to end homelessness in our community.”

Memphis’s Rapid Rehousing program, operated by a community partnership including MIFA, is nationally recognized for its best practices.

“Of the families already assisted by Rapid Rehousing, over 90% are still in stable housing,” explained Sally Jones Heinz, MIFA executive director. “Homeless prevention has been part of MIFA’s focus for 30 years, and we are pleased to expand our contribution to meet the greatest needs in our community.”

Public, Private Collaboration Supports Strong Families Initiative

The Memphis Strong Families Initiative’s goal is to improve the safety, permanency and wellbeing of Memphis’ most vulnerable children and families through inter-agency communication, collaboration and coordinated service delivery. It is one of five demonstrations in the nation to learn whether permanent supportive housing can save families from dissolution and foster care.

The 73 apartments donated by MIFA will be managed by the North Memphis Community Development Corporation (NMCD), a 13-year-old nonprofit devoted to quality of life enhancement through affordable housing.

A grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Children’s Bureau of \$5 million over five years has been awarded to the Memphis and Shelby County Community Alliance for the Homeless to oversee and coordinate services provided by the Memphis Strong Families Initiative.

Other funding for the Memphis Strong Families Initiative includes:

- City of Memphis -- \$392,000 - \$100,000 for operating support and \$292,000 for capital improvements
- Shelby County -- \$200,000 for capital renovations
- The Plough Foundation -- \$110,000 for start-up expenses

“Ending homelessness can only happen when federal, state and local government align with nonprofits, philanthropies under the umbrella of a comprehensive strategic plan such as this,” said Katie Kitchin, executive director of the Community Alliance to End Homelessness.

“Homelessness is already down 13% in our community and with these two projects, we can expect even further reductions to come.”

For more information about the various entities involved in this partnership, please contact:

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