

## Comprehensive Revitalization of the Uptown Neighborhood

### The Background

Just north of thriving downtown Memphis, the Uptown neighborhood has long suffered from disinvestment. Hurt Village and Lauderdale Courts, two distressed public housing properties totaling 900 units, were key contributors to the neighborhood's decline. In 2000, MHA contracted with Abt Associates to develop a comprehensive revitalization plan and prepare a HOPE VI application. MHA was awarded the \$35 million HOPE VI grant, which leverages an ambitious \$150 million redevelopment effort. Abt Associates currently assists the Housing Authority in the implementation of this comprehensive Uptown neighborhood plan.



### The Approach

The Uptown project entails the revitalization of a 100-block area in North Memphis, including the demolition or rehabilitation of 900 severely distressed public housing units at Hurt Village and Lauderdale Courts. The 450 units at Hurt Village were demolished in 2002, and construction started on Phase I of the 226 new rental and homeownership units on the site by the end of 2003. The revitalization plan also makes a substantial impact on the Uptown neighborhood through the off-site development of 307 new construction rental units and 270 new construction homeownership units. These units will serve a broad range of incomes.

Increased tax revenues raised through revitalization will be returned to the area through the Tax Increment Finance district approved by the City Council.

### Results to Date

Since the award of the HOPE VI grant in 2000, the Uptown implementation team has secured three tax credit awards, finished construction of two phases, acquired vacant parcels throughout the neighborhood, and started construction of single family homes.

**Historic Rental** - funded by historic tax credits, PHA Capital Funds and private funds, the former Lauderdale Courts was renovated in 2003. The 376 unit development, now occupied by market-rate and subsidized tenants, includes 76 public housing units. The development boasts amenities such as a pool, verandas, and restored original architectural features.

**New Construction Rental** - families have moved into the 88 unit low-income tax credit/public housing development that is a stone's throw from the Memphis Grizzlies' stadium.

**Demonstration Block** - launching the ambitious 577 unit in-fill construction plan, the first seven homes have been completed at two blocks in the heart of Uptown. Three of the seven homes will serve as models for prospective homeowners.

**Former Public Housing Site** - Hurt Village has been demolished and construction is underway. The new 22 acre development surrounds a new park, and the street grid is restored, reconnecting the site to the neighborhood.

### Expert Services that Make the Difference

Abt Associates has worked with the Memphis Housing Authority since the early planning stages of this revitalization effort. Abt's services include:

- Preparing the successful HOPE VI application and the Revitalization Plan
- Assisting with the land acquisition process
- Advising MHA on development budgets, Master Developer Agreement, Low Income Housing Tax Credit applications, Scattered Site Land Acquisition Agreement, and Tax Increment Finance returns
- Providing assistance with the CSS component of the HOPE VI grant, including preparation of the CSS Workplan and the relocation plan, negotiating with service providers on performance-based contracts, and public housing tenant reoccupancy contract
- Reviewing and advising on development documents, including construction drawing, predevelopment loan agreements, developer agreements and mixed-finance proposals
- Monitoring construction and the developer's compliance with Section 3 and MBE/WBE requirements



**Abt Associates thinks strategically about neighborhood revitalization. We offer expertise in coordinating physical, economic, and human capital development initiatives to maximize impact on quality of life at the community level.**



Abt Associates Inc.