

## **March 18, 2011 - Shreveport Wins \$250,000 First Choice Neighborhood Grant**

Shreveport is receiving a \$250,000 grant from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development department to create a comprehensive plan to transform Allendale and Ledbetter Heights into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods.

The City partnered with the Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments and MHSM Architects to apply for the grant through HUD's new Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, a centerpiece of the Obama Administration's interagency program to support efforts by local leaders from the public and private sectors to transform distressed neighborhoods. Seventeen cities will share a total of \$4 million in the program's first year.

"This is an opportunity to reinvest in extremely depressed neighborhoods by developing neighborhood-based strategies that support growth and sustainability," said Bonnie Moore, director of Community Development. "The grant will align and build upon the existing planning and revitalization efforts in the Allendale and Ledbetter Heights neighborhoods."

Allendale and Ledbetter Heights have long been marked by high abandonment, urban decay, severe poverty, high crime and unemployment. More than 43 percent of the neighborhoods' residents are living in poverty. The neighborhoods are linked by the former Jackson Heights public housing development, which was demolished in 2006 due to severe deterioration. So far, those 270 vanquished units have not been replaced.

"This is wonderful news for the city and particularly these two historic neighborhoods," Mayor Cedric Glover said today. "It is critical for us to continue to find creative ways to restore our neighborhoods and elevate the quality of life for all our citizens."

The two neighborhoods, along with the Galilee Majestic Arms development, will be included in the planning process. Galilee Majestic Arms is a dilapidated 75-unit building that houses 74 elderly and disabled residents. Part of the plan also includes an effort by the Northwest Louisiana Council of Government and the City of Shreveport to strengthen connections with neighborhood social service providers and schools.

"This will lead to a comprehensive plan that is publicly lead and privately supported," Moore said.

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