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City receives \$2.4 million for derelict structure removal

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (April 1, 2015) — The City of Spartanburg has received \$2.4 million in funding from the South Carolina Housing Finance and Development Authority through its Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) to fund the acquisition and removal of boarded-up, vacant, condemned and/or blighted structures and subsequent improvement of the parcels.

The funding will allow the City to significantly ramp up its efforts to eliminate blight through demolition and greening of blighted properties. The City typically budgets about \$150,000 annually for blighted property acquisition and demolition. During a two-year period, the City and five non-profit partners will acquire and demolish the property, then green and maintain the vacant lots until redevelopment or other uses are approved. The non-profit partners are Habitat for Humanity, Homes of Hope, Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation, Northside Development Group, and Upstate Housing Partnership.

The goal of NIP is to prevent foreclosures by stabilizing property values through the removal and greening of blighted properties in strategically targeted areas. NIP assists communities by stemming the decline of home values and acting as a catalyst to initiate redevelopment and revitalization in areas suffering from blight and decline. NIP is a joint venture of the South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority and the SC Housing Corp., a not-for-profit corporation. NIP is made possible by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

City staff has identified more than 300 properties citywide that could meet the criteria to be eligible for this program. The properties must be vacant, residential, and be blighted and/or home to criminal activity.

“We are very pleased to receive this funding, which will allow us to accelerate our efforts to address residential blight,” City of Spartanburg Community Services Director Mitch Kennedy said. “This funding will make a significant positive impact on several of our neighborhoods and will pave the way for future investment across the city.”

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