

CITY OF MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

ESSENTIAL HOUSING PROGRAM

2026-27



BINGHAMPTON
AND UPTOWN
REDEVELOPMENT
AREAS

DEVELOPERS,



We're breaking ground on new housing in Memphis!

The CRA created the Essential Housing Program to support developers committed to home building that expands access to affordable housing while strengthening neighborhood stability and growth. Through this program, we partner with developers, providing guidance, technical assistance, and development incentives to move projects from concept to completion.

In 2025, over \$1.2 million was committed to support 14 emerging and small-scale developers for the construction of over 60 housing units. Developers have begun building a variety of housing types, including single-family, duplexes, accessory dwelling units, and quadplexes. This year, we're seeking to increase our pool of developer partners.

As you flip through the pages of this booklet, you will learn about the program goals and expectations, affordability compliance, and our review and selection process. When you feel inspired to apply, browse the available lots and fill out the development interest form at cramemphis.org. Our team will follow up regarding next steps and potential opportunities for collaboration.

The CRA is excited to build new partnerships to expand essential housing in Memphis.

Charia Jackson,
Director of Neighborhood Planning and Essential Housing

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The urban core of Memphis faces a growing need for new, affordable housing. In 2025, the first year of the Essential Housing Program, the CRA partnered with 14 emerging developers to restore neighborhoods. Take a look at the program's first-year impact.



43

VACANT LOTS WERE AWARDED



\$1.2M

WAS RESERVED FOR DEVELOPERS



67

AFFORDABLE UNITS PROPOSED TO BE BUILT

HOME OWNERSHIP VS. RENTAL UNITS



A photograph of a worker in a black shirt, blue jeans, and a high-visibility yellow vest using a backpack blower to clear a sidewalk. The worker is walking away from the camera, and the blower is blowing debris onto the ground. In the background, there are trees and a utility pole. The scene is outdoors on a sunny day.

ABOUT THE CRA

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) participates in innovative partnerships to ensure every neighborhood in the City of Memphis and Shelby County provides its residents with a healthy and safe environment, economic opportunity, affordable housing, and excellent quality of life.

The CRA's work is directed by various community plans, including the Uptown Community Plan and the Binghampton TIF Implementation Strategy Report. While these plans focus on different areas of the city, both recommend investing in essential and affordable infill housing that meets the needs of existing residents, encourages working professionals and families to move into the neighborhood, and boosts community pride, identity, and safety.

The CRA's Essential Housing program makes vacant lots available to home builders in the Uptown and Binghampton Redevelopment Areas. This program is an important opportunity to bring additional housing to these neighborhoods. We look forward to partnering with development teams with an interest in new, innovative approaches to affordable housing to bring this vision to reality.



Uptown Redevelopment Area

The Uptown Redevelopment Area is located immediately adjacent to the northern edge of Downtown Memphis and encompasses a number of different neighborhoods in North Memphis, including: Bearwater, Bickford, Greenlaw, Harbor Town, Medical District, Mud Island, New Chicago, North Parkway, The Pinch, Scutterfield, and Smokey City.

The purpose of the Uptown Redevelopment Area is to support affordable housing construction, building preservation, building demolition and/or site preparation, and infrastructure improvements that will create and ensure the continued economic vitality of these neighborhoods. Over the last 20+ years, the CRA has been instrumental in the ongoing revitalization of the Uptown area, with over 1,300 homes and apartments built, 300 homes rehabilitated, and 30,000 square feet of roads, sidewalks, and alleyways improved. The CRA uses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – the increase in real property tax revenue in the area – to fuel this community-driven change.



Binghampton Redevelopment Area

The Binghampton Redevelopment Area is centrally located in the Memphis urban core. In partnership with the Binghampton Development Corporation and the community, the CRA is focused on implementing the following community priorities:

- Strong community spaces, which support increased community activities as well as more recreational and employment opportunities for youth.
- Clean, activated, and attractive neighborhood, beautified through gardens, art, and community clean-ups.
- Affordable opportunities, affordable housing, and affordable commercial space.
- Safe and connected neighborhood with new pathways and improved transportation infrastructure.

In support of these priorities, the CRA has invested in the redevelopment of Tillman Cove into new, affordable multi-family apartments and implemented the Single Family Rehabilitation Program which has rehabilitated over 50 homes for low-income homeowners since 2023.

Project Overview and Goals

The CRA believes that housing at attainable price points enables people, places, and economies to reach their full potential. Such housing must be affordable, well-designed, built with quality construction, energy-efficient, and environmentally sustainable.

The CRA is seeking developers and builders to execute innovative, well-designed “essential housing” (low-income housing, affordable housing, missing middle housing, workforce housing, transitional housing) on scattered lots throughout the Binghampton and Uptown Redevelopment Areas.

The Essential Housing Program is a vehicle to build capacity and support small, local developers and builders. While experience in home-building, development, and/or architectural design and site planning is desired, the CRA will consider interested parties with varying levels of experience.

Homes must be affordable, well-designed, built with quality construction, energy-efficient, and environmentally sustainable.



Single Family homes along Mill Avenue in Uptown.



Mayor Paul Young joined Andre Harris of Nuewill Construction at the Essential Housing Taking Shape celebration on March 29, 2026.

OPPORTUNITY



Property Information

The CRA owns and manages more than 300 lots in Uptown. A majority of these are located in New Chicago, Scutterfield, and Smokey City.

Details for each lot, including zoning, dimensions, size, and photos, are on the Essential Housing webpage. The map updates monthly. Lots are offered first-come, first-served.

The CRA encourages proposals for all housing types and sizes. When applying, consider zoning rules, lot size, design, the surrounding area, the Uptown or Binghampton Community Plan, and affordability. Homeownership projects are the main priority.



VIEW LOTS AVAILABLE

BY SCANNING THE QR CODE

Housing Development and Affordability Requirements

Housing for these lots may be a for-sale, owner-occupied product or a rental product. Priority is for-sale.

Housing proposed under this program should be affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Affordability is defined as housing costs that do not exceed 30% of household income. Low-income households are defined as households earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI). Moderate-income households are defined as households earning between 80% and 120% of AMI. Income limits also take into account family size. The 2026 income limits for the Memphis metropolitan area are listed below:

2026 ANNUAL INCOME LIMITS	FAMILY SIZE					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
80%	51,950	59,350	66,750	74,150	80,100	86,050
100%	70,500	77,900	85,300	92,700	98,650	104,600
120%	77,850	89,000	100,100	111,250	120,150	129,050

While the CRA is interested in housing products for moderate-income households (up to 120% AMI), this program will prioritize teams focused on products affordable to low-income households earning 80% AMI or less.

Home Sales and Rent Rates

The Essential Housing Program supports the development and sale of quality homes that meet HUD affordability standards, with **sale prices capped at no more than 95% of the area’s median sales price**. This pricing framework helps developers deliver market-responsive homes that remain attainable for working families while advancing the program’s affordability goals.

HUD Fair Market Rents provide a trusted benchmark for establishing reasonable rental rates based on local market conditions and unit size. By using these annually updated standards, the Essential Housing Program helps developers align rental pricing with affordability goals while ensuring access to quality housing for working families.

2026 RENT LIMITS	
Studio	1,060
1 BR	1,154
2 BR	1,274
3 BR	1,683
4 BR	1,959

Housing must serve a low-moderate income population as determined by HUD.



A buildable lot at 660 North Manassas Street is one example of the lots offered through this program.

Incentives

The CRA provides critical gap funding to help create affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents. The table below shows examples of costs this funding can cover. Developers must show why this support is necessary for their project to work.

PRE-DEVELOPMENT	CONSTRUCTION	POST-CONSTRUCTION/ DISPOSITION
Infrastructure Environmental assessment Land use entitlements/legal Design and architectural plans	Materials Labor Utilities	Legal/transfer/closing costs

Property Transfer

The CRA will execute a redevelopment agreement with the selected developer, with a set timeframe for the developer to exercise due diligence and convey the property to the developer. The purchase price for each participating parcel is typically \$1,000.

Upon conveyance of the property, the CRA will execute a special warranty deed. To maintain affordability for low- and moderate-income households, the CRA will record a deed restriction/ restrictive covenant that limits future sales or rentals to eligible buyers or renters for 15 years.

The purchase price for each participating parcel is typically \$1,000.



Framers work on a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home for Moody CDC at 564 Manassas Street.



Home plans for the Essential Housing Program are spread out on a desk.

DESIGN

Another key goal of this project is to encourage innovative design in affordable housing. Developers should include thoughtful features that make people feel proud of their homes. Too often, affordable housing looks generic and uses low-quality materials that do not fit the neighborhood. The CRA sees affordability as more than just whether a family can pay the rent or mortgage. It also means making sure families are protected from unexpected problems that could hurt their finances. Are families safe from the weather? High utility bills, mold from moisture, leaks, pests, and rodents can all put families at risk.

The CRA wants to see excellent design that also uses simple shapes and fits in with the local area. Developers are encouraged to build homes that are efficient, durable, and resilient. Homes should be sustainable for the long term and provide a healthy place for people to live.



The following resources provide more information on

Best Practices for Design

AIA Framework for Design Excellence

<https://www.aia.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/aia-2023-infographic-08-24-23.pdf>

Discovering and Developing Missing Middle Housing

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2020/missing-middle-housing/>

Healthy Materials Lab

<https://healthymaterialslab.org/>

Memphis Medical District Real Estate Form Book

<https://www.memphismedicaldistrict.org/mmdc-form-book>

MLGW's EcoBUILD

<https://www.mlgw.com/residential/ecobuildresidential>

Whole Building Design Guide

<https://www.wbdg.org/resources/green-principles-residential-design>

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for one or more properties, interested developers must complete the online development interest form. This form asks basic questions about the proposed housing product, developer experience, conceptual building renderings and site plans, and initial project costs and timeline.

After submitting the form, the CRA will set up a meeting with the developer to discuss the project, request additional details, and provide technical assistance or recommend resources to improve the submittal.

After the meeting, the developer will submit a official proposal that incorporates CRA staff feedback. Development team selections will be based on the following criteria:

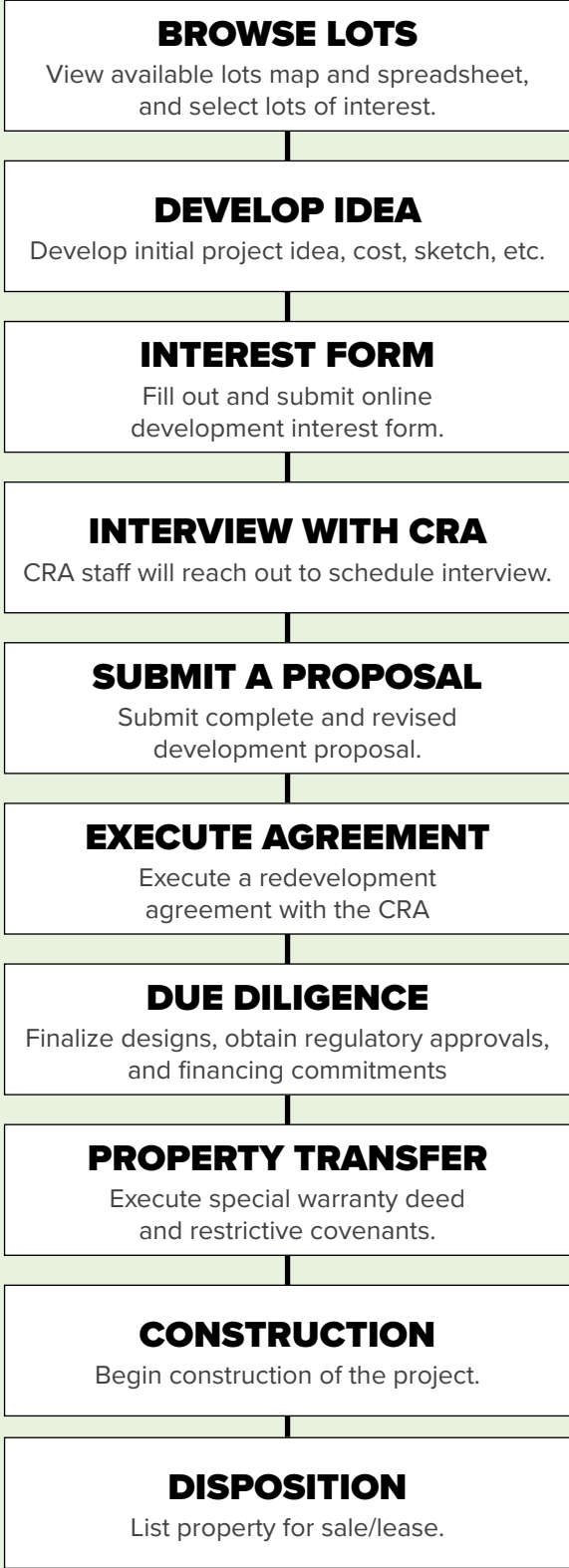
- **Quality of development concept and alignment with RFI and community goals**
- **Project feasibility**
- **Developer capacity and experience**
 A track record of delivering high-quality residential infill projects is a plus, but the CRA also seeks emerging local developers who want to learn and gain experience in affordable housing.
- **Economic and community inclusion**

Are your ready to partner with us?



Scan QR code to fill out development interest form.
cramemphis.org/essential

DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE





850 N. MANASSAS STREET
GOULD COTTAGE
MEMPHIS, TN 38107
901.435.6992
CRAMEMPHIS.ORG

ABOUT THE CRA

The CRA was established as a catalyst for the restoration of communities by removing blight and providing affordable housing. The CRA serves as a joint agency of Shelby County and the City of Memphis, established in 2017. Our community-based approach to neighborhood redevelopment through reinvestment leverages Tax Increment Financing (TIF), grants, and partnerships as important and strategic tools for implementing the agency's goals. We envision every neighborhood in the City of Memphis and Shelby County providing its residents with a healthy, safe environment, economic opportunity, affordable housing, and an excellent quality of life.



Scan to access the digital report,
available lots, interest form, and more.

cramemphis.org/memphis-essential-housing