



City & Regional Planning

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Jared Darby
Administrator
Office of Sustainability & Resilience
City of Memphis & Shelby County
125 N. Main, Ste. 468 Memphis, TN 38103

RE: University of Memphis Department of City and Regional Planning commits to the *Mid-South Rapid Retrofits Project: Addressing Barriers to Residential Energy Efficiency in the Greater Memphis Area* project

Dear. Mr. Darby,

I am writing to express our commitment to the *Mid-South Rapid Retrofits Project: Addressing Barriers to Residential Energy Efficiency in the Greater Memphis Area* project, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the residential sector by expanding the availability of weatherization and energy retrofits in high-energy burden communities.

The Department of City and Regional Planning is one of four departments within the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy. Our 48-hour master's degree in City and Regional Planning prepares students for careers concerned with the physical development of communities, and the interaction of that development with the social, economic, and environmental well-being of communities. Our mission is to educate the next generation of inspired urban planners and scholars, conduct research that influences planning policy and knowledge, and engage in community partnerships to affect local change. Our degree program is fully accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board – and is the only accredited planning program in the region. You can view our most recent annual report here: <https://bit.ly/CRPannualreport23>. Our department values collaboration and interdisciplinarity. We seek partnerships both within and beyond the University to enhance our actions and our outcomes. We engage our community, not as a laboratory, but through reciprocal partnerships in an engaged scholarship model.

We are excited about this opportunity to partner with the Office of Sustainability and Resilience. The department will identify high quality graduate planning students who will serve on the project to support workforce development and interagency cooperation. Department faculty will provide support and internship supervision. The department has a long history of pairing students with local planning agencies through mutually beneficial internship opportunities. Our students are currently working for the Memphis Area Transit Authority, the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development, the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Comprehensive Planning, and the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Planning and Development.

The Department of City and Regional Planning is committed to the Mid-South Rapid Retrofits project because it will address the massive regional backlog in weatherization requests by providing workforce training to increase the availability of certified auditors and contractors. Residents of historically disadvantaged communities in the Greater Memphis Area contend with some of the highest energy burdens in the country, and this project will help residents to save money will also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Please give the Mid-South Rapid Retrofits application the highest consideration for funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charlie A. Santo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charlie Santo, PhD

Chair | Department of City and Regional Planning

Associate Director | School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy