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LHOP SELECTED AS NEW PROVIDER OF FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER AND HOUSING COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN YORK

York, PA – The City and County of York announced today the selection of the Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership (LHOP) to deliver first-time homebuyer and housing counseling services to income-eligible residents. At a press conference held today in which York City Mayor Kim Bracey and the York County Commissioners made the announcement, the need for assisting low to moderate income residents with purchasing their first home or even maintaining housing was highlighted.

LHOP has offered first-time home buyer classes and down payment and closing cost assistance in Lancaster City and County for nearly 23 years. “We are excited and honored to share with the people of York the valuable knowledge, experience and expertise we have gained over the past two decades in helping people achieve the dream of home ownership,” stated Ray D’Agostino, LHOP’s CEO.

The City and County of York’s Homebuyer’s Assistance Program provides income-eligible residents with the ability to achieve homeownership, with financial assistance towards their down payment and closing costs. The program is governed by Federal HUD regulations and requires interested individuals to attend homebuyer education and counseling classes.

“Continuing to offer opportunities that provide access for our residents to achieve the American Dream of homeownership, is the foundation for vibrant neighborhoods in The City of York,” stated Mayor Bracey.

In addition to providing services for first-time homebuyers, LHOP will provide housing counseling services. Topics covered will fall under the categories of pre-purchase / homebuyer education, preventing or resolving mortgage default or delinquency, and rental counseling and eviction prevention.

“In an extremely tight housing market such as we have in the south central PA region, it is important now more than ever to provide low-to-moderate income families with tools and resources to help them succeed in housing,” stated Miriam Soto, LHOP’s Home Ownership Center director. “Connecting lenders, Realtors, and others in the housing industry with working families is a partnership in which everyone wins,” Soto added.

The City and County of York decided earlier in the year to issue and Request for Proposals (RFP) for its homebuyer and housing counseling programs. “This is a natural fit and extension for our organization,” stated D’Agostino. In July of 2015, the organization launched the Local Housing Investment Fund & Trust (LHIFT) of South Central PA, a regional revolving loan fund to assist developers of affordable housing and mixed-use projects with flexible low cost financing.

LHOP will be opening an office in York City and hiring two additional staff members to undertake the new programs and services, as well as offer an opportunity to discuss the use of LHIFT in the York community. LHOP’s goal is to have operations open by July 1 of this year.

“By expanding our services geographically, we leverage our experience to expand our organization’s expertise and capabilities, benefiting more people, including those within our base of operations in Lancaster,” stated D’Agostino.

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