
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

August 2, 2011

Ald. Michael Murphy
(414) 286-2221

Bank of America Commits to Major Neighborhood Stabilization Effort in Milwaukee

Plan includes efforts to combat vacant and foreclosed properties, up to \$10 million in mortgage loans to qualified homebuyers citywide over four years

Bank of America has stepped forward to be part of a citywide effort aimed at stabilizing neighborhoods by preventing foreclosures and combating vacant and abandoned homes that are a collateral result of foreclosures, **Alderman Michael J. Murphy** said today.

Alderman Murphy, whose 10th Aldermanic District includes some of the Sherman Park neighborhood, said Bank of America's announcement yesterday that it would provide assistance citywide and specifically in Sherman Park as part of the **Milwaukee Rising Project** coordinated by **Common Ground**, is "great news for many Milwaukee neighborhoods."

Alderman Murphy said Bank of America joins Wells Fargo and Deutsche Bank in providing resources and assistance with Milwaukee's foreclosure crisis. "I want to thank Michael Murphy for his work in bringing these big banks to the table to address our foreclosure crisis," said **Bob Connolly** of Common Ground. Alderman Murphy cultivated strong coordination on the project, adding: "I am also happy to have had a role in making this happen."

Last year, Alderman Murphy, chair of the Common Council's Finance and Personnel Committee, called several of the big banks responsible for the majority of city properties in mortgage default to meetings at City Hall – asking that efforts be started to address the burgeoning number (in the thousands) of vacant and abandoned homes across the city. As a result, Wells Fargo and Deutsche Bank responded with committing resources and money to address the problem.

Alderman Murphy said he is hopeful that Chase Bank and U.S. Bank (formerly Firststar Bank) "will follow suit" and also commit resources to addressing the foreclosure crisis here.

-More-

Bank of America steps forward/ADD ONE

In a letter to Common Ground, a national Bank of America executive said the bank will partner with Common Ground to:

- Commit to \$10 million in market rate mortgage loans to qualified homebuyers over the next four years in the City of Milwaukee. In Sherman Park, the bank will designate a local mortgage loan representative to work with Common Ground and specifically homebuyers referred to the bank by Common Ground.
- Establish a Clean Slate program in Milwaukee using a \$100,000 grant from Enterprise Community Partners to Mercy Housing Lakefront. Clean Slate is a comprehensive property maintenance program for foreclosed homes in particularly hard-hit neighborhoods, and includes winterization, debris removal, and other measures.
- Contribute \$100,000 per year for three years through the Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC) to assist in neighborhood stabilization efforts citywide and as part of the Milwaukee Rising Project. The funds will be used for acquisition, rehabilitation, disposition, and rehab loans/grants.

Alderman Murphy said the Bank of America efforts and contributions are in addition to several other proactive measures and programs ongoing in the city to prevent foreclosures and to address the problems associated with vacant and abandoned homes.