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Old South Baton Rouge Homes Receive Fresh Coat of Paint

Homeowners and a business receive assistance with home repairs from CPEX, LSU and community volunteers on MLK Day.

BATON ROUGE (January 18, 2010)— On Monday, January 18 from 9am-4pm two Old South Baton Rouge (OSBR) residences and one business will receive a fresh coat of paint as part of the OSBR Home Rehabilitation Grant program and OSBR Commercial Façade Improvement Grant program. The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) will partner with Louisiana State University Community University Partnership and LSU Office of Multicultural Affairs to paint the exterior of the homes and business located on Thomas Delpit Drive as part of the third round of CPEX's Home Rehab program. The event is also in honor of Martin Luther King Day and one of four events taking place to celebrate LSU's Sesquicentennial Celebration.

The first two rounds of the Home Rehab program successfully repaired three homes within the community. After an overwhelming number of applications, seven homes were selected to receive renovations for this round. This competitive grant program is part of a continuing project started by CPEX to bring reinvestment to OSBR, the historic community between LSU and downtown.

Boo Thomas, Executive Director for CPEX stated, "It is a great opportunity for the Home Rehab Program to help repair existing owner-occupied homes on Martin Luther King Day and recognize the pride of this historic community." The Home Rehab grants are funded by NeighborWorks America, the East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority, Capital One, Chase, and Entergy.

The Commercial Façade Improvement Grant program improved the exterior of six businesses in rounds one and two, and is currently working with four businesses to improve their exterior facades. Round three businesses include: Mable's Flower Shop,

Highland Terrace, Accounting Solutions & Services, and the Lincoln II building. Volunteers will help paint the exterior of Mable's Flower Shop on the 18th, helping to reduce the overall cost of the shop's improvements. Evonne Thomas of Mable's Flower Shop said, "It's a great joy to have these improvements happening in Old South Baton Rouge". The Commercial Façade Improvement grants are funded by NeighborWorks America, the East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority, Capital One, Chase, and Regions.

These grant programs were initiated in 2005 following the creation of a master plan for the neighborhood. As a part of the *OSBR Neighborhood and Economic Revitalization Strategy*, CPEX focuses on revitalizing existing housing and businesses, while integrating mixed-income housing and multi-use development into the area. The Home Rehab and Commercial Façade Improvement grant applications are available online at www.planningexcellence.org or by calling (225) 267-6300. To volunteer, please call Kelly at (225) 267-6300.

About CPEX

The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) is a non-profit organization that coordinates urban, rural and regional planning efforts in Louisiana. We provide best-practice planning models, innovative policy ideas, and technical assistance to individual communities that wish to create and enact master plans dealing with transportation and infrastructure needs, equitable housing opportunities, environmental issues, and quality design for the built environment. CPEX brings community members and leaders together and provides guidance as they work toward a shared vision for future growth and development.

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