

MEMPHIS, TN – The leadership of some of Memphis’ most significant healthcare and higher education institutions, as well as community leaders from the Edge District and Victorian Village, have launched a new organization to direct the future development of the Memphis medical district. The **Medical District Collaborative (MDC)** will now be responsible for a series of strategic programs to make the district, more vibrant, economically prosperous, clean, and safe.

“The time is right for us to work together in a more focused way around a common vision for the area’s future.” says Gary Shorb, Chairman of MDC Board of Directors and CEO of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare. “There are some immediate steps we can take to improve the district’s livability and safety, and some longer-term actions that will require sustained investment and focus. Our challenge ultimately is to connect to the development happening throughout Midtown and Downtown while improving the vibrancy within the larger Medical District.”

Tommy Pacello, president of MDC, is building a team to implement the “anchor strategy” developed by Collaborative partners, local philanthropy and the consulting firm U3 Advisors. Anchor strategies leverage the assets of major institutions to attract development to the communities surrounding them. U3 Advisors, has successfully led similar redevelopment strategies for University City in Philadelphia and Midtown Detroit.

“There is good momentum in Midtown and Downtown right now, and the Medical District is the link between the two,” says Pacello. “The district is the one of the regions largest economic engines, and we’re looking forward to focusing some of that energy toward the redevelopment between the campuses.”

Pacello previously worked with the Innovation Delivery Team (now known as Innovate Memphis), where the team developed and implemented initiatives focused on generating neighborhood economic activity in some of the city’s oldest neighborhoods. Pacello is an attorney and city planner.

In addition to coordinating many of the redevelopment efforts MDC will also focus on four key areas: **maintaining and improving the public realm, increasing safety and security, programming and marketing of the district, and community development.** MDC will also launch a series of programs — **Live Local, Buy Local, and Hire Local** – aimed at increasing the number of employees and students living in the district, growing local purchasing of goods and services, and connecting community residents to job opportunities at the institutions.

“The Medical District employs more than 16,000 people and has more than 8,000 students, many of who commute into the district. The district is also responsible for more than \$1.2 billion dollars in purchasing and procurement, and we have lots of opportunities to keep those dollars recirculating within the district,” says Pacello. “If we can work with the institutions to design strategies to buy local, live local, and hire local in a more intentional way, we can boost property values and create more opportunities for locally owned businesses. That benefits the entire city.”

Other members of the Medical District Collaborative board include:

Chair: Mr. Gary Shorb, CEO of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare

Vice-Chair: Dr. Kennard Brown, Executive Vice-Chancellor, University of Tennessee Health Science Center

Treasurer: Dr. Betty Sue McGarvey, President, Baptist College of Health Sciences

Secretary: Dr. Lewis Reich, President, Southern College of Optometry

Board Member: Mr. Richard Shadyac Jr., President and CEO of ALSAC

Board Member: Dr. Reginald Coopwood, President and CEO of Regional One Health

Board Member: Dr. Tracy Hall, President, Southwest Tennessee Community College

Board Member: Dr. Steve Bares, Executive Director, Memphis Bioworks Foundation

Board Member: Mr. Pitt Hyde, Trustee, Hyde Family Foundations

Board Member: Mr. Doug McGowen, COO, City of Memphis

Board Member: Mr. Terence Patterson, President, Downtown Memphis Commission

Board Member: Mr. Scott Blake, President, Victorian Village Inc. Community Development Corporation
Board Member: Mr. Mike Todd, President, Edge Neighborhood Association

The formation of MDC comes at a critical time for the district, which will be the site of some \$3 billion in public and private investment in the coming years, thanks to ambitious new campus development plans by St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare, University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, and others.

This effort began in 2014 when U3 Advisors was engaged to identify opportunities to leverage the economic impact of the district's anchor institutions. U3's work, lead by Omar Blaik, CEO of U3 Advisors, and Alex Feldman, Vice President at U3 Advisors, found that despite the significant size of these anchors, their potential impact within the Medical District has not been fully realized. The analysis found that less than 3% of institutional employees and 6% of institutional students lived within the boundaries of the Medical Center while only \$50M of institutional procurement spend was captured in Memphis. The district is also dominated by surface parking lots and auto oriented uses with roughly 270 acres dedicated to parking.

By working together, these anchor institutions and their neighborhood partners have the potential to significantly increase the district's economic impact, attract more residents, increase local spending, and develop a dense, vibrant, walk-able neighborhood.

For more information, please visit MDCOLLABORATIVE.org.

U3 Advisors is a nationally recognized consulting firm that provides real estate and economic development solutions to communities and anchor institutions—colleges and universities, medical centers, foundations, and nonprofit and civic organizations. With a growing staff of 20 professionals, U3 Advisors currently has offices in New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Memphis. U3 Advisors developed and implemented the successful Midtown Detroit Anchor Strategy, which directed more than \$300M of real estate development investment into Midtown Detroit since 2011 and attracted more than 1,500 institutional employees to move into the neighborhood through housing incentives. Omar Blaik, CEO of U3 Advisors, served as the former Senior Vice President for Real Estate Development at the University of Pennsylvania and lead efforts to revitalize Penn's neighborhood.

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