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The Uptown Partnership

Home of Teenage Elvis Seeks Ideas for Use

Memphis, TN – January 22, 2004 -- The developers of the historic renovation of Lauderdale Courts, now Uptown Square, are soliciting ideas from the public on how to use the apartment where teenage Elvis Presley and his family once lived. Uptown Square is part of a historic renovation and community development endeavor called Uptown Memphis. Ideas can be submitted via the internet by visiting www.uptownmemphis.org/elvis.htm through March 31, 2004.

From 1949 to 1953, Elvis and his mother, Gladys and father, Vernon lived at 185 Winchester, Apt. 328. It was from here Elvis would wander to close-by Beale Street for inspiration by listening to the likes of B. B. King and Rufus Thomas. It was the architecturally designed communal courtyards that gave Elvis his first stage to perform before family and neighbors. He also would use the laundry room to practice his guitar.

On the National Register of Historic Places, Uptown Square was set for the wrecking ball before journalists, grass root preservationists and Elvis fans stepped in and called attention to the fate of the building. Built in the 1930's by a cadre of Memphis' finest architects as a Roosevelt era WPA housing development, Uptown Square consists of 66 buildings on a 22 acre lot of Downtown Memphis.

Developers The Uptown Partnership and the City of Memphis will be completing the first phase of the 347-unit, garden-style apartment community by end of January 2004. The Elvis unit is part of the third phase to be completed in spring 2004. This also coincides with Memphis' celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Rock 'n' Roll throughout 2004.

The Uptown Partnership, a Belz-Turley Community Development Company, and Elvis Presley Enterprises are working closely to make the unit special.

"While the rest of the apartments have wider floor plans, the Elvis unit and the two units above it will maintain its original floor plan," stated Henry Turley, managing partner for The Uptown Partnership. "We have some ideas of what to do, but thought this would be great to get the public to weigh in on this historic renovation."

"Uptown Square will be an exciting new neighborhood and a great place to live in downtown Memphis," said Jack Soden, President/CEO, Elvis Presley Enterprises. "Moreover, another early phase of Elvis' life will be preserved and remembered."

Uptown Memphis is the resurgent 100-block Downtown neighborhood, just east of Harbor Town in Memphis, Tennessee. The Uptown community covers 100 city blocks stretching roughly from the Mississippi River east to Ayers, and from Poplar Avenue north to Cedar and Chelsea Avenue. Uptown includes some of Memphis' oldest neighborhoods such as Greenlaw, the first planned "suburban" community in Memphis and the teenage home sites of Elvis Presley. Soon to feature 1,000 new homes and apartments, along with public improvements such as new parks and streetscapes, Uptown is the concerted public-private revitalization by Downtown Memphis pioneers Jack Belz and Henry Turley as master developers and the City of Memphis. For more information visit www.uptownmemphis.org.

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