



Green Space Soon to Replace Blight on Biscoe Street

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A badly blighted section of the corridor that runs along Biscoe Street from the Mississippi River Bridge to historic downtown Helena will soon become a clean, well-maintained area for use by the community as a green space or community park. Ben Steinberg, President of Southern Financial Partners (the Helena-West Helena based non-profit affiliate of Southern Bancorp) announced today that Southern has recently acquired the Sibley Court apartment complex located on Biscoe Street in Helena and is in the process of razing all structures on the site.

The clean-up and beautification of Biscoe is among the economic development goals outlined in the Phillips County Strategic Community Plan (PCSCP). The PCSCP was created and adopted by a diverse cross-section of county residents last year and formally launched in August. Southern Financial Partners has been a strong backer of that plan.

“An improved physical image will be critical to our ability to attract both tourists and new businesses to the county,” stated Steinberg. “Southern believes the clean-up of Biscoe is a critical first step in the economic redevelopment process, and we are pleased to help make it happen.”

Cathy Cunningham, Community Development Coordinator for Southern Financial Partners, who spearheaded the acquisition of the property agrees. “For many Phillips County residents, the blight along Biscoe Street has been an enduring reminder of the economic struggles that have plagued the county for so long,” she stated. “Very soon, this long neglected area will stand as a symbol of better times to come.”

The announcement by Southern has been especially gratifying to Helena Mayor Robert Miller who has been a strong advocate for the clean-up of the area for many years. “This is why I ran for mayor 8 year ago,” he stated. “This raggedy strip is the first thing people see when they cross the bridge. It’s the last thing they see when they leave. We don’t want this eyesore to be what visitors remember about us. This announcement is very good news.”

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