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**DEKALB COUNTY**  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CEO Ellis, APD Solutions and First Guaranty Launch “*Get Home Now*” to Revitalize DeKalb with Affordable Homeownership**

*\$20 Million Effort Promotes Flexible Credit, Affordable Renovation in Key Neighborhoods*

**DECATUR** – DeKalb County Chief Executive Officer Burrell Ellis announced today that the number of vacant homes is expected to decrease as newly renovated homes will rise in DeKalb County neighborhoods thanks to the new *Get Home Now!* campaign launched by a coalition including DeKalb County; First Guaranty Mortgage Corporation; several community development groups; and APD Solutions, one of the nation’s most influential neighborhood revitalization firms, and supported by The Home Depot.

*Get Home Now!* will combine new mortgage capital and home renovation products with flexible credit requirements to stimulate affordable vacant home buying, rehabilitation of distressed homes, and home sales in a county-wide outreach effort. To fuel this endeavor, a \$20 million commitment of new capital for mortgages and home repairs will be made available exclusively for DeKalb County. This is enough capital to potentially help up to 230 families. *Get Home Now!* is designed to help reduce the number of vacant homes, stabilize real estate values and strengthen the local tax-base by adding more investment.

“Responding to our fiscal needs and promoting homeownership across the board are among my top priorities for this county,” said CEO Ellis. “Homeownership stabilizes families and neighborhoods and enhances financial health. It is also the cornerstone of our tax base and this program should help us turn this crisis around. I’m delighted to work with APD Solutions, The Home Depot and our other allies in this worthy undertaking.”

“We are pleased to launch *Get Home Now!* in DeKalb because APD Solutions puts its mission to Restore, Rebuild and Renew communities at the forefront. *Get Home Now!* is an exciting and far-reaching initiative that will take a bricks and mortar approach to revitalizing DeKalb’s neighborhoods,” said Vaughn D. Irons, APD Solutions’ Chief Executive Officer. “APD Solutions is proud to join CEO Ellis, The Home Depot, First Guaranty, and an impressive network of dedicated community leaders to help more families become or remain homeowners and enhance their willingness to make a long-term investment in these communities.”

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*Get Home Now!* is a component of APD Solutions’ efforts to revitalize communities across the nation. *Get Home Now!* builds on APD Solutions’ efforts to expand homeownership opportunities in the Metro Atlanta area, which has included the implementation of several Neighborhood Stabilization Programs and a local investment impact of nearly \$30 million of redevelopment capital since 2009.

### ***Financing for Credit Challenged and New Homes Rehabilitation***

The centerpiece of *Get Home Now!* is a flexible package of mortgage products and development oversight designed to encourage the rehabilitation of vacant affordable homes while making the community’s stock of existing homes more valuable. This financial toolkit can help new buyers and existing residents rehabilitate homes with affordable mortgages that let owners borrow up to 110 percent of the home value to finance repairs, renovation, acquisition or existing debt.

First Guaranty Mortgage Corporation will provide credit enhanced FHA mortgage products that offer low down payment requirements and flexible credit options. Qualified families can obtain a mortgage by having a minimum credit score of 580 and a willingness to participate in a local pre-purchase homebuyer training program. For Police Officers, Firefighters or the Military a lower credit score of 550 will be accepted. In addition, DeKalb County will provide qualified low- and moderate-income borrowers with federally funded grants up to \$25,000 to defray down payment and closing costs or reduce the principal.

“On behalf of First Guaranty, I’m very proud that we are a part of this very important revitalization effort,” said Andrew Peters, senior vice president. “We’re excited to join our partners – APD Solutions, The Home Depot, DeKalb County, and such a broad coalition of community development groups – to help in the restoration of vital Atlanta area neighborhoods like the ones in DeKalb County. This initiative is right in line with our duty, which is all about rebuilding the dream through access to homeownership.”

Because of this new program, families will no longer need to turn away from properties that are less than ideal. The Home Depot’s Renovation Services group will provide all home repairs and otherwise assist families with transforming that home into the perfect place. The professionals at The Home Depot will work with APD Solutions to coordinate everything from painting, flooring, plumbing, energy efficient upgrades, appliances, heating and air installation. Only highly skilled, licensed, and fully insured craftsman will work on *Get Home Now!* homes. Each family will also receive a one-year warranty on workmanship backed by The Home Depot on all renovation work completed.

“The American dream of home ownership has become more elusive and exclusive,” said Rep. Hank Johnson, D-GA. “The *Get Home Now!* Initiative is making the dream more of a reality for everyone. I’m pleased to support this initiative – my hats off to the partnership between APD Solutions and Home Depot, who are coming together to make home ownership a reality.”

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### ***Community Support is Key***

The *Get Home Now!* coalition of non-profit organizations include the Green Forest Community Development Corporation (CDC), NID Counseling, and D&E Group. In addition, The Empire Board of Realtists, a minority-real estate trade association, will provide additional project support including providing real estate services for buyers who need help identifying homes they can afford and keep.

Applicants must call the Get Home Now! Hotline in order to take advantage of *Get Home Now!*'s various opportunities. Proper guidance and hand-holding is critical to successfully expanding affordable homeownership and stabilizing neighborhoods. For more information about *Get Home Now!* contact the Get Home Now! Hotline at (877) Gt-Hm-NOW [877-484-6669] or on the web at [www.HomeByRequest.com/gethomenow](http://www.HomeByRequest.com/gethomenow).



CEO Ellis joined by (L-R front row) HUD Regional Administrator Ed Jennings, and DeKalb County Commissioners Stan Watson and Larry Johnson, (L-R back row) DeKalb County Deputy COO/Development Jonathan Weintraub, First Guaranty Sr. Vice President Andrew Peters and APD Solutions CEO Vaughn Irons.



CEO Burrell Ellis



APD Solutions CEO Vaughn Irons



First Guaranty Sr. Vice President Andrew Peters



HUD Regional Administrator Ed Jennings



CEO Ellis congratulating Charles Johnson who will be one of the first to purchase a home through the Get Home Now! program



**About APD Solutions:**

APD Solutions, LLC is a national Neighborhood Revitalization Firm created to provide community development consulting and comprehensive real estate services to public and private sector clients. Our goal is to **Restore** credibility in the housing industry, **Rebuild** challenged neighborhoods and **Renew** the lives of impacted families. APD Solutions has a talented staff with over 200 years of combined relevant housing industry and real estate experience. We have offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Jacksonville and San Francisco. For more information, visit [www.APDSolutions.com](http://www.APDSolutions.com).

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