

Exhibit A. Executive Summary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MERIDEN

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Opportunities to achieve sustainable, transformational change that benefit all members of a community, particularly those most disadvantaged, are extremely rare. The Meriden Choice Neighborhood (CN) has been presented with such an opportunity. The Choice Neighborhood, six census tracts centered around the City’s historic downtown containing the targeted Mills public housing complex, exhibits the deepest needs but also the greatest concentration of community assets and agents for change. After years of planning and gathering of resources, the CN is ready to go-- to be transformed in the next five years from an area of aging housing and concentrations of poverty, to a safe, pedestrian friendly neighborhood of choice connected to educational and employment opportunities and re-connected back to the community as a whole.

The CN has seen an unprecedented amount of private, local, state and federal investment in the last three years and has begun to see the benefits of those efforts. Today, a 14-acre former brownfield site in the center of the city is a verdant park renamed the "Meriden Green" that provides floodwater detention and three acres for private development (site of "Meriden on the Green" development). A small, mostly unused Amtrak train station with six daily trains has been replaced with the new Meriden Transit Center that will support 56 daily commuter rail lines, Amtrak service to New York City and points north, and local and regional CT Transit bus service. Meriden is designated as a major stop on the \$500 million “Hartford Line,” connecting Meriden to regional economies spanning from Fairfield County’s “Gold Coast” to the Hartford/Springfield “Knowledge Corridor” – a commuter shed that contains over 600,000 jobs. The first of several planned new mixed-use, mixed income buildings located at 24 Colony Street includes 63 residential units (including 24 Mills replacement units), 11,000 SF of retail and a 273-space parking garage for residents and commuters was

completed in 2016. All residential units quickly leased in 2016, the parking garage is open to the public, and the retail space is ready to be rented. The Meriden Housing Authority and its procured developer, Pennrose Properties, have been awarded two 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit awards from the Connecticut Housing Finance Agency for a two-phased redevelopment on the target housing site. More than \$200 million has or will be invested in the CN. To maximize the impact of all of this leverage and to accelerate the pace of Transformation, the Meriden Housing Authority (Lead Applicant-MHA) and the City of Meriden (Co-Applicant) are requesting \$18 million of FY 2017 HUD Choice Neighborhoods funds. This grant will be matched by \$57.6 million in Housing leverage, \$9.28 million in People leverage (including \$3 million in new supportive services), and \$38.2 million in Neighborhood leverage. HUD funds and leveraged funds will be used to construct 293 new housing units, implement five critical community improvement (CCI) projects, provide health, education and employment related supportive services for over 3300 CN residents and 385 Mills residents, and provide improved education programs for over 2600 preschool and school aged children living in Meriden's Choice Neighborhood.

The proposed neighborhood boundary was the boundary for the FY 2013 HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning grant and, preceding it, the boundary for a FY 2011 US Department of Education Promise Neighborhoods plan. This area is marked by concentrations of poverty rates over 40%, a Part I Violent Crime rate (2016) 1.9 times that of the City as well as significantly poorer metrics in community health, education and high unemployment rates. Isolated within this neighborhood distress is the MHA's Mills Memorial Apartment complex – a 140 unit distressed public housing development deficient in design and structure sitting within the 100-year floodplain. Despite these adverse conditions, the mostly Hispanic tenant population of Mills has persevered, actively participated in, and

championed the Meriden Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan, completed in 2015, attending over 30 bilingual meetings.

The Meriden Choice Housing Plan will be led by a Joint Venture between the Meriden Housing Authority and Pennrose Properties (Housing Implementation Entity). Market studies demonstrate that there will be strong demand for new and rehabbed housing in Meriden as diverse households look for affordable, high-quality homes in an amenity-rich, transit-oriented downtown. MHA and Pennrose will develop 293 units of new and substantially rehabilitated housing on-site, off-site and outside the neighborhood boundary in an un-impacted area of which MHA working with other developers have or will construct 70 Mills replacement units in the Choice Neighborhood. Over 50% of the Housing program (147 units to be constructed by Housing Implementation Entity) consists of non-replacement units. 27% of the planned housing (80 units) are non-restricted market rate units. The Housing plan includes bedroom-for-bedroom, unit-for-unit replacement of Mills Memorial Apartments. All Mills tenants were relocated in 2017 and the Mills development is being readied for demolition. MHA has received demolition disposition approval from HUD SAC for all 140 units, and \$2 million has been secured from the CT Department of Economic and Community Development for demolition and hazardous building materials abatement in 2018. MHA is not requesting any tenant protection vouchers as part of this FY 2017 HUD Choice Implementation application.

The Meriden Choice People Plan will be led by the Meriden Wallingford United Way. The People plan is based on the FY 2013 Choice Planning Grant/Transformation Plan that included a needs assessment and consists of well-defined, highly leveraged strategies that address all of the high-priority needs identified among Mills households and the larger community and all of the required priority outcomes as per the FY 2017 CN NOFA. Examples include an expanded learning opportunities to be provided the Meriden Public Schools and

Meriden Children First and a unique program that incentivizes bi-lingual teachers to live and work in the Choice Neighborhood while administering the expanded learning programs. A Meriden Teen Center, modeled after Hartford and Chicago's YouMedia facility, will provide Mills and local youth a haven to become college and career ready. Meriden Children First (DOE Promise Neighborhood Awardee) in partnership with MPSD will deploy its staff of Neighborhood Connectors to work directly with Mills and community parents and students.

The Meriden Choice Neighborhood Plan will be led by the City of Meriden. Six neighborhood strategies were derived directly from the CN Transformation Plan. Corresponding Critical Community Improvement items are each leveraged with local dollars. (1) Wayfinding and signage will be implemented in the CN as part of a multimodal roadway improvement plan; (2) Gap financing for economic development will address vacant and abandoned properties in the TOD district; (3) Community arts initiative (comparable to NEA's Our Town) will be implemented as part of a larger Downtown Beautification Program; (4) Façade improvements through a competitive application process called "Meriden Match" (modeled after the successful "Motor City Match" program in Detroit, Michigan) for small business owners will advance economic development; (5) Expansion of the City's existing Neighborhood Preservation Program will preserve and rehabilitate existing aging housing stock; (6) HUD CCI dollars will be used to provide free wi-fi in the downtown in coordination with Meriden's recent designation as a HUD Connect HOME community. All of the team members, who have worked cooperatively with Mills and neighborhood residents and businesses through a joint planning committee to advance these plans, will continue to work together to transform the Meriden Choice Neighborhood into a neighborhood of choice.