

# A VOICE FOR THE REDUCTION OF POVERTY

## ***NASHVILLE RISING: WORK, WAGES, AND THE FUTURE OF NASHVILLE***

***A VOICE for the Reduction of Poverty in Nashville*** (a broad and diverse coalition of Nashville community members, clergy, civic and business leaders, and advocates) believes that all Nashvillians should have the opportunity to participate in Nashville's economic growth. We believe our city should have a clear identity and set of core principles that serve as the foundation for public policy and business practices, and that will result in greater prosperity and a more equitable city for all Nashvillians. We recommend that Nashville's elected officials, business leaders, civic leaders, and citizens adopt the Community Covenant detailed below.

### ***A COMMUNITY COVENANT FOR NASHVILLE***

#### **WE BELIEVE IN:**

**Equitable Growth** that gives all Nashvillians the opportunity to participate in and benefit from Nashville's growing economy. Therefore:

- **We recommend** the Mayor's office, Metro Council, and Metro agencies implement an Equity Lens (a policy tool for guiding the equitable distribution of resources) when making public investments, allocating resources, choosing service vendors and contractors, and drafting budgets.

**Diversity and Equity** that is reflected in all Metro agencies, nonprofits, and businesses. Therefore:

- **We recommend** employers partner with local nonprofits, colleges and universities, and technical colleges to identify, recruit, and hire candidates from diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Living Wages and Family-Friendly Benefits** (including healthcare, family leave, and childcare) that support and advance upward economic mobility, financial independence, and family stability. Therefore:

- **We recommend** any entity that does business in Metropolitan Nashville or with Metro agencies, especially those that receive public subsidies, should agree to pay living wages, provide quality affordable healthcare, and offer family-friendly benefits.

**Access to Affordable Housing** that promotes stability, community development, and prevents displacement. Therefore:

- **We recommend** Metro government establish robust dedicated funding for the Barnes Housing Trust fund, along with the creation of a comprehensive plan developed with community input that will address our affordable housing crisis.

**Public Transportation** that connects home to work, and neighborhood to neighborhood. Therefore:

- **We recommend** Metro government employ a community-driven planning approach to develop and implement a plan to address Nashville's transportation crisis.

**Workforce Development** that connects unemployed and underemployed residents to meaningful job opportunities. Therefore:

- **We recommend** Metro government partner with Nashville's community colleges, businesses, registered apprenticeship programs, and non-profits to connect job seekers with employers and to equip job seekers with the necessary workplace skills to succeed.

#### **WE BELIEVE THAT:**

**A communal ethos is needed in order to drive and define public policy that is centered around the principles in this covenant. To this end:**

- **We recommend** that the principles of this covenant be contained in the form of a non-binding resolution adopted by the Mayor's Office and Metro Council.
- **We recommend** Metro Government, Metro Public Schools, Metro Transit, and Metro Emergency Management Services set a standard for others to follow by adopting and implementing this covenant.
- **We recommend** that in order to implement this covenant the Mayor, together with other Tennessee mayors, advocate for giving local governments the freedom to make decisions on behalf of their constituents.