



News Release

Contact:
Dan Weinbach
The Weinbach Group, Inc.
305-668-0070
dweinbach@weinbachgroup.com

FIFTH THIRD BANK TAKES STEPS TO MEET AREA'S LOW-INCOME HOUSING SHORTAGE

Bank's Investment In CRA Qualified Investment Fund Helps Finance Collier County Affordable Housing Complex

FT. LAUDERDALE, FL – October 27, 2004 - While Collier County can boast more retail square footage per capita than anywhere else in the country, the region also suffers a major shortage of affordable housing. Fortunately, Fifth Third Bank (NASDAQ: FITB) has stepped up as a concerned corporate citizen and taken steps to solve Collier County's housing troubles.

The Ohio-based financial institution recently announced plans to acquire First National Bankshares of Florida's \$5.3 billion in assets and 77 southwest Florida branches. However, it has already demonstrated a significant commitment to the communities of Collier County with an investment in the CRA Qualified Investment Fund (CRAIX), a mutual fund that invests in fixed-income securities that support community development activities. The Fund has used a portion of Fifth Third's investment to purchase a bond that will finance the Brittany Bay Apartments Project, a 184-unit, rental housing complex that will keep rents for all of the complex' units affordable enough to accommodate low- and moderate-income families.

"While our purchase of First National Bankshares of Florida certainly cements our place in southwest Florida, we have been here since 1989, and we're committed to making the area a great place to live for everyone who calls Collier County home," said Colleen M. Kvetko, President & CEO, Fifth Third Bank, Florida.

Construction and real estate development have significantly contributed to Collier County's economy; however, much of that development has taken the shape of retail space, resort development, and high-end residential communities, instead of affordable housing. As a result, rents are high and increasingly driven by the low supply of inexpensive housing options.

"Many banks have targeted southwest Florida for growth. However, Fifth Third has really demonstrated itself as leader with its determination to meet the capital needs of the entire population," said Barbara VanScoy, portfolio manager for the CRA Qualified Investment Fund. "Its investment in our fund says that this bank is committed to the communities it serves."

Fifth Third Bancorp is a diversified financial services company headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Company has \$98.3 billion in assets, operates 17 affiliates with 1,005 full-service Banking Centers, and when the acquisition of First Financial Bankshares of Florida is complete, will have over 90 Banking Centers and over \$6 billion in managed assets in Florida.

The CRA Qualified Investment Fund is the largest community development vehicle in the nation, having invested nearly \$1 billion toward job creation, affordable housing, healthcare, and neighborhood



revitalization. CRAFund Advisors, registered investment advisor to the Fund, manages its \$500 million in assets on behalf of 265 of the nation's leading financial institutions with combined assets of \$1.8 trillion.

The Fund invests in market rate, high credit quality (A-rated or better) community development-oriented securities. This positive social thrust has allowed every one of the Fund's bank shareholder that have undergone Community Reinvestment Act exams to earn regulatory credit under the guidelines of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), hence the name "CRA Qualified Investment Fund."

In addition, the Fund recently became available to individual investors through Charles Schwab's mutual fund OneSource®. Providing both "social dividends" and competitive financial performance, the Fund is a Lipper Leader for Total Returns and Consistent Returns.

For more information about the CRA Qualified Investment Fund, call 877-CRA-1977.

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As of 9/30/04, performance for the 1-year, 3-year and since inception periods (inception date August 30, 1999) are 2.89%, 5.13%, and 6.45%, respectively. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Performance reflects fee waivers and expense limitations in effect. In their absence performance would be reduced. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. To obtain the most recent month-end standardized performance, or to obtain a free copy of the prospectus, call 1-877-CRA-1977. The prospectus contains more complete information about the fund, including investment objectives, style, risks, advisory fees, distribution charges and other expenses. You should read the prospectus carefully before investing or sending money. The investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate, so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Holdings subject to change. The Fund is a no load fund distributed by Citco Mutual Fund Distributors, Inc. (Member NASD).

Lipper, Inc. 9/30/2004. For the Consistent Return category, Lipper scores funds each month in their broad asset categories and peer groups, based on two characteristics: consistency, or the strength of a fund's performance trend, and effective return, meaning the fund's total return adjusted for its historical downside risk over a 36-month period. Lipper scores for Total Return reflect funds' historical total return performance relative to peers. The overall calculation is based on an equal-weighted average of percentile ranks for the Total Return metrics over three-, five-, and ten-year periods (if applicable). For each category, each fund receives a numerical score ranging from 1 (highest) to 5 (lowest), and all funds with a category score 1 are designated Lipper Leaders for Consistent Return or for Total Return in their respective Lipper category. Lipper Leader designations do not imply that a fund had the best performance within its fund category, and neither that designation nor the fund's past performance is a guarantee of future results.