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NEWS RELEASE
THEFT CHARGES FILED AGAINST FORMER DAKOTA COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY EMPLOYEE

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom announced that **Vangyee Leng Yang**, age 39, of Fridley, has been charged* with 5 counts of Theft by Swindle (a felony) in connection with the disappearance of over \$270,000 of housing funds from April, 2016, to May 31, 2018, while he worked as an employee with the Dakota County Community Development Agency. Yang was terminated from employment on June 26, 2018. The facts alleged in the criminal complaint include:

In May of 2018, the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) discovered irregularities with checks which had been issued to two property management companies identified as: Mackey Prime Property LLC ("Mackey LLC") and Twin Cities Star Properties LLC ("Twin Cities LLC"). In reviewing payments made to these companies from April, 2016 to May, 2018, it was determined that they had received assistance checks for CDA clients who were deceased, no longer eligible for assistance, or who were not current CDA clients. In his position, as the CDA's software system coordinator, Yang had the ability to create these fraudulent client accounts.

The fraudulent diversion of these funds was reported to the Eagan Police Department on May 23, 2018. The investigation into this matter revealed that Yang had registered both Mackey LLC and Twin Cities LLC with the Minnesota Secretary of State on April 6, 2016, shortly before the issuance of unauthorized CDA checks began. Between April, 2016 to May, 2018, the fraudulent checks were sent to Yang's home address, a P.O. Box in Eagan (which was opened on April 6, 2016 under the name of "Sher Yang" and listed Yang's home address), and a mailbox at a UPS Store in Brooklyn Center (which was registered to Yang). The fraudulent checks issued to Mackey LLC and Twin Cities LLC were deposited into two separate TCF Bank small business checking accounts, both of which listed Yang as the account holder. The fraudulent checks issued from the CDA totaled \$271,325.

Additional facts pertaining to this case can be found in the criminal complaint, which is available online at: <http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/LawJustice/CriminalComplaint/Pages/default.aspx>. If in custody, a mug shot can be viewed at: <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/LawJustice/Jail/Pages/inmate-search.aspx>.

Backstrom commented: *"It is extremely disturbing any time the theft of public funds intended for those in need occurs. This is a major economic crime for which we intend to seek an aggravated sentence under Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines if a conviction is obtained."*

Backstrom thanked the Eagan Police Department for their thorough investigation of this incident. A warrant has been issued for Yang's arrest. Anyone who has information about his whereabouts should contact the Eagan Police Department at 651-675-5700.

If you have questions, contact James Backstrom at 651-438-4440.

**Criminal charges are not evidence of guilt. A defendant/suspect is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*