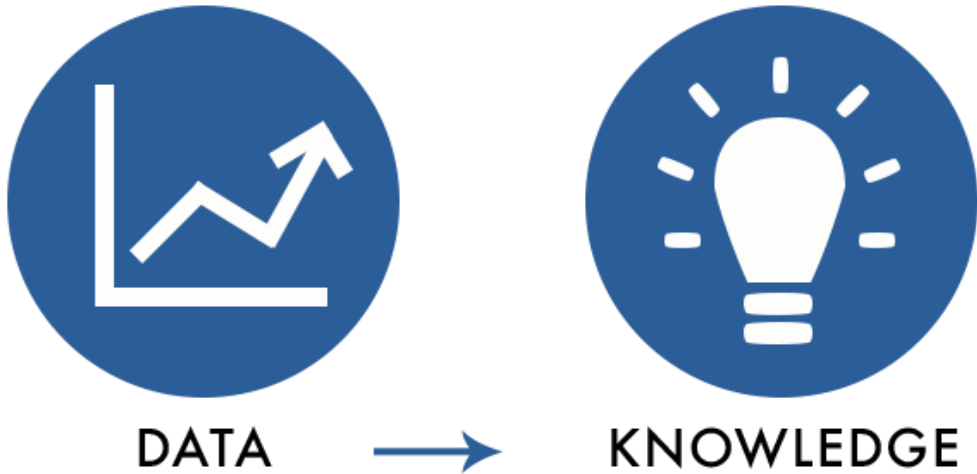


BLIGHT ELIMINATION STEERING TEAM (BEST) 2017-2018 Action Plan



Neighborhood
Preservation,
Inc.

STRATEGY # 1



Use Data and Information Systems to Catalogue, Understand and Monitor Blighted Property in Memphis.

CORE WORKING GROUP

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Use Data and Information Systems to Catalogue, Understand and Monitor Blighted Property in Memphis.

GOAL:

Adopt Standard Indicators of Blighted Property. Compile, update, and broadly use best available data to more accurately document, measure, and track trends about different types of blighted properties in Memphis and Shelby County.

Use Data and Information Systems to Catalogue, Understand and Monitor Blighted Property in Memphis.

ACTION ITEM 1:

By December 2017, and at least every two years after that, complete a comprehensive inventory of property conditions city-wide, building on the *Bluff City Snapshot* completed in 2015.

Use Data and Information Systems to Catalogue, Understand and Monitor Blighted Property in Memphis.

ACTION ITEM 2:

Standardize study areas to facilitate meaningful analysis and targeting of services to match strategies to needs. Utilize Clean Memphis Neighborhood Zones Map and City Council Districts as a starting point. By March 2018 launch the *Blighted Property Dashboard* to track Blighted Property Indicators over time; specifically, economic “costs of blight” to government, businesses, and residents should be calculated and monitored over time.

Use Data and Information Systems to Catalogue, Understand and Monitor Blighted Property in Memphis.

ACTION ITEM 3:

By June 2018, expand the Data Committee to a more formal meeting of data providers and users. The format of the meetings will be annual meetings with quarterly working sessions to link all sources to portals where data points can be collated and disseminated to provide on-going data availability for tracking community development activities. Create ongoing expansion and automation of data sharing including interface that is easily accessible by the community.

Use Data and Information Systems to Catalogue, Understand and Monitor Blighted Property in Memphis.

ACTION ITEM 4:

By December 2018, support and incorporate the Metro Lab project by University of Memphis and City of Memphis Division of Information Services charged with development of a “Blight Algorithm” that could track and predict blight.

STRATEGY # 2



Engage Neighborhood Residents, Businesses and Community Groups as Essential Partners to Resolve Blighted Properties.

CORE WORKING GROUP

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Engage Neighborhood Residents, Businesses and Community Groups as Essential Partners to Resolve Blighted Properties.

GOAL:

Develop and administer blighted property elimination programs and policies in close collaboration with neighborhood residents, businesses and organizations, then connect programs to neighborhood values, circumstances, needs, and priorities. Improve communication and awareness about resources available. Improve sensitivity of all involved to historic preservation, neighborhood planning, and racial and economic disparities across neighborhoods.

Engage Neighborhood Residents, Businesses and Community Groups as Essential Partners to Resolve Blighted Properties.

ACTION ITEM 1:

Average at least one monthly presentation of the *blighted property awareness “roadshow”* to educate policy makers, civic, neighborhood and business leaders, citizens and community organization leaders about the complexities of blighted properties. Utilize this “roadshow” in orientation sessions for all local government, civic, and community leaders. “Roadshow” is defined as a set of presentations and materials to be discussed and distributed in meetings, mailings, online, and in other manners that spread the word about the challenge of blighted property in Memphis. Develop programs, social media awareness campaigns, and other platforms to clarify the causes, impacts, and interventions required to address blighted properties.



Engage Neighborhood Residents, Businesses and Community Groups as Essential Partners to Resolve Blighted Properties.

ACTION ITEM 2:

By December 2017, **establish networks and regular communication forum** within each geographic area on the *Memphis Neighborhoods Engagement Map*.

Engage Neighborhood Residents, Businesses and Community Groups as Essential Partners to Resolve Blighted Properties.

ACTION ITEM 3:

By June 2018, create a training program to prepare the next generation of champions for Memphis and beyond. This training program will be customized for public and private-sector leaders of all ages and backgrounds interested or already involved in anti-blight policies, programs and projects.

Engage Neighborhood Residents, Businesses and Community Groups as Essential Partners to Resolve Blighted Properties.

ACTION ITEM 4:

By December 2018, complete a pilot program, with two to three target neighborhoods, that creates a tailored blight mitigation strategy using information, engagement, inspiration, and innovation.

STRATEGY # 3



**Improve Efficiency,
Effectiveness and
Coordination of Code
Enforcement and
“Neighborhood
Maintenance”
Policies and Efforts.**

CORE WORKING GROUP

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Improve Efficiency, Effectiveness and Coordination of Code Enforcement and “Neighborhood Maintenance” Policies and Efforts.

GOAL:

Focus code enforcement and anti-blight interventions and coordinate with public and private-sector neighborhood maintenance and community development efforts and investments. Develop a **streamlined, effective, and sustainable neighborhood maintenance system** that encourages collaboration and coordination. Deploy compatible blight fighting tools, strategies, and initiatives across different departments, agencies and in concert with nonprofit, civic and business partners.

Improve Efficiency, Effectiveness and Coordination of Code Enforcement and “Neighborhood Maintenance” Policies and Efforts.

ACTION ITEM 1:

By December 2017, finalize a draft for Memphis of the International Property Maintenance Code. Include in the draft a concept of a full cost recovery ordinance or statute for costs of code enforcement, a concept for a property owner point of contact ordinance, which requires every property owner of non-owner occupied property in Memphis to register a real person, with an address and driver’s license number, as a point of contact for property maintenance issues at real estate parcels held in their name, and present to City Council for adoption.

Improve Efficiency, Effectiveness and Coordination of Code Enforcement and “Neighborhood Maintenance” Policies and Efforts.

ACTION ITEM 2:

By February 2018, present to state legislature amendments to the Neighborhood Preservation Act, according to the recommendations by Center for Community Progress and the Technical Assistance Program.

Improve Efficiency, Effectiveness and Coordination of Code Enforcement and “Neighborhood Maintenance” Policies and Efforts.

ACTION ITEM 3:

Beginning March 2018, determine and report monthly the top ten code violators by volume in the City. Provide monthly updates showing resolution where appropriate.

Improve Efficiency, Effectiveness and Coordination of Code Enforcement and “Neighborhood Maintenance” Policies and Efforts.

ACTION ITEM 4:

By July 2018, establish a fund for homeowner occupants who cannot afford to make repairs to their properties, but who have been found out of compliance with local ordinances. **Develop and distribute broadly a directory of all public, private, and nonprofit resources that can help eligible homeowners who are experiencing hardship with limited resources to repair and rehabilitate their occupied homes.**

Improve the efficiency of the delivery system for rehabilitation resources such that any time resources become available for such programs they are immediately deployable, and so that people in need of the program have real access to them. Consider available resources to replenish fund regularly.

Improve Efficiency, Effectiveness and Coordination of Code Enforcement and “Neighborhood Maintenance” Policies and Efforts.

ACTION ITEM 5:

By December 2018, evaluate and recommend ordinance requiring registration and inspection at all chronic nuisance residential rental units. As a part of this launch quarterly property maintenance training course for owners/managers, which can be used as a compliance enforcement tool (Court could send someone to “property managers school”). Be sure to have a small house track and a multifamily / larger building track in the training.

STRATEGY # 4



**Reclaim and Reuse Vacant
Land and Buildings.**

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Dane Forlines
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Reclaim and Reuse Vacant Land and Buildings.

GOAL:

Encourage and incentivize *productive reuse of vacant and abandoned properties*, including repurposing vacant land and buildings, increased demolition of useless structures when appropriate, urban greening and other nontraditional land uses. Promote a culture across Memphis that when it comes to vacant and abandoned property, **“Doing Nothing is Not an Option.”**

Reclaim and Reuse Vacant Land and Buildings.

ACTION ITEM 1:

By October 2017 research national strategies and collect ideas that will empower the redevelopment of vacant lots by developing several alternative, low cost strategies that neighborhood groups can use to reactivate or to decommission Memphis' inventory of vacant lots. Utilize results of Resilience Project study and applicable national best practices.

By February 2018 create a toolkit to share with community groups along with a communication piece and roadshow for presentations.

By July 2018 work with BEST Community Engagement committee and meet with community groups to help empower these groups to create alternative uses for vacant lots.



Reclaim and Reuse Vacant Land and Buildings.

ACTION ITEM 2:

By May 2018 remove a major stumbling block for redevelopment of urban property by creating a path to obtain marketable, insurable title for (a) properties that previously have gone through tax sale; and (b) properties currently going through the tax sale process. In partnership with other groups working on this issue, convene a focus group that includes national title insurance experts to explore how others have solved this problem.

Reclaim and Reuse Vacant Land and Buildings.

ACTION ITEM 3:

By December 2018, using the Baltimore model, create a Vacants to Values program to educate and encourage investment in vacant and abandoned properties. As available, engage with the BEST Data committee to map available properties and using resources created by the Small Developer Bootcamp, identify resources available for interested developers.

Reclaim and Reuse Vacant Land and Buildings.

ACTION ITEM 4:

Continue to support the participants and graduates of BEST's Small Developer Boot Camp by hosting regular gatherings where graduates can share their successes, identify roadblocks they have encountered, and brainstorm about how to further the group's redevelopment efforts.

Reclaim and Reuse Vacant Land and Buildings.

ACTION ITEM 5:

Continue to update the plan and timeline to **identify and resolve the “Top Ten” large, uninhabitable, vacant and abandoned multi-family housing complexes in Memphis.** As appropriate engage with the property owners, Code Enforcement and Environmental Court to push for rehabilitation, redevelopment and/or demolition with proposed re-use and estimated timeframe for completion.

Thanks to All Partners

- City of Memphis, Division of Housing & Community Development
- City of Memphis, Division of Public Works and Neighborhood Improvement
- The Works, Inc.
- Hnedak Bobo Group, Inc.
- Shelby County Environmental Court
- Downtown Memphis Commission
- Shelby County Trustee's Office
- Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis – Memphis Branch
- Greater Memphis Chamber, Chairman's Circle
- Community Capital
- Innovate Memphis
- Clean Memphis
- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
- Keep Tennessee Beautiful
- Uptown Partnership
- Memphis Medical District Collaborative
- University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law
- Shelby County Attorney's Office
- Habitat for Humanity
- BLDG Memphis
- Memphis City Beautiful
- The University of Tennessee Health Science Center
- IOBY
- Blight Authority of Memphis
- Community Foundation of Greater Memphis
- Memphis Light Gas and Water