



Action Plan 2019-2020

Introduction

The members of the Memphis Neighborhood Blight Elimination Steering Tea are proud to release the 2019-2020 Memphis Neighborhood Blight Elimination Action Plan. This is the third such plan in as many years. We remain committed to the shared vision and principles outlined in the Memphis Neighborhood Blight Elimination Charter in 2016, especially its guiding principle that “Every neighborhood in Memphis and in Shelby County has the right to be free from the negative impacts and influences caused by vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties.”

Past Action Plans led to successes such as:

1. Memphis Blighted Property Dashboard launched to track key blight indicators
2. Neighborhood Reports launched as a component of the Memphis Property Hub
3. Monthly community engagement sessions hosted for interested stakeholders
4. Pilot program created for neighborhood blight mitigation strategies
5. International Property Maintenance Code drafting completed
6. Amendments to Neighborhood Preservation Act passed by state legislature
7. Maps and data about “Top ten code violators” released quarterly
8. Plan to resolve top ten vacant properties completed
9. Small Developers Bootcamp launched with community partners
10. Toolkit of resources for BEST Roadshow presentations created

Collectively, we work hard to achieve agreed upon action items that will move the City of Memphis closer to a “blight-free” future where there are no vacant and abandoned properties and where communities do not suffer the financial and social costs of having blighted properties as neighbors. We undertake our work as a team to further our individual efforts to empower and improve neighborhoods.

Code Enforcement

- Action Item #1: Create and maintain contacts within key code enforcement agencies (housing code, county legal, city legal, Environmental Court, Assessor, Trustee, Construction Code Enforcement, Health Department) Timeline: April 2019
- Action Item #2: Finalize implementation of International Property Maintenance Code Timeline: November 2019
- Action Item #3: Draft and finalize implementation of a chronic nuisance & rental property registration ordinance Timeline: Q1 2019
- Action Item #4: Streamline and strengthen the vacant property registry and the commercial anti-neglect registry of dangerous vacant structures. Timeline: Q3 2020
- Action Item #5: Advocate for creation of one or more positions to inspect UDC required commercial landscapes in the city and county (based at Office of Construction Code Enforcement) Timeline: Q1 2020
- Action Item #6: Develop and share a playbook for citizens and violators about how code enforcement works, and the steps in the process. The playbook will include case studies with pictures, examples, and graphs. The playbook will also include “rolodex” of who to call about what (See Action item #1), criteria for compliance for contractors, and a simplified infographic describing the code enforcement process. Timeline: June 2019
- Action Item #7: Identify a pool of receivers to take over property that is abandoned and for which a court determines to appoint a receiver under the Neighborhood Preservation Act. The receivers must be trained and should be taught how to become certified. Also develop a pool of certified purchasers for receivership auctions. Timeline: September 2019
- Action Item #8: Develop a “How to” guide for using the “Existing Building Code.” Timeline: June 2019.

Community Engagement

- Action Item #1: Develop subject matter expertise Timeline: Q1 2019
- Action Item #2: Develop Training program to prepare Champions for Neighborhoods policies, programs, and projects Timeline: June 2019
- Action Item #3: Continue monthly stakeholder presentations and content development to educate on blight eliminating strategies and programs Timeline: Ongoing
- Action Item #4: Plan and implement a scalable community strategy that provides neighborhoods with a tailored approach to mitigate the issues that are most important to them. The strategy will also include implementable strategies and connecting neighborhoods to citywide resources and ongoing initiatives. September 2019

Data

- Action Item #1: Develop blight algorithm predictions through the application of machine learning and predictive analytics to the blighted property problem in Memphis. Timeline: Q2 2019
- Action Item #2: Deliver a model for recurring Bluff City Snapshot & execute Timeline: January 2020
- Action Item #3: Contribute to the BEST Playbook Timeline: June 2019
- Action Item #4: Deliver an Eviction Report Timeline: January 2020
- Action Item #5: Develop Rental Property Management Scorecard Timeline: Post Chronic Nuisance Ordinance Finalization

Reclaim and Reuse

- Action Item #1: Develop Memphis version of the successful Baltimore “Vacants to Value” Program Timeline: Website operational by Q2 2019, program implemented by Q4 2019
- Action Item #2: Support Emerging Small Developers Bootcamp. Timeline: Ongoing, Q4 of 2019
- Action Item #3: Support path to marketable insurable title. Timeline: June 2019

BEST Committee Collaboration

All four committees will collaborate in continuing to present the BEST Roadshow to interested public officials, PJA meetings, and neighborhood associations. Any parties interested in bringing the BEST Roadshow to their community should contact imani@npimemphis.org for more details. The committees will also collaborate on the execution of the BEST communications plan and in the creation and dispersal of the BEST Playbook.

For more information on any of the action items described above or information on progress towards completion, please contact Imani Jasper at imani@npimemphis.org.

If you are a citywide group workin in Memphis to eradicate property blight or support neighborhoods and you would like to become a member of the Blight Elimination Steering Team, please contact Imani Jasper regarding the membership process.

The following members of the Blight Elimination Steering Team agree to work collaboratively to achieve the goals and milestones described in the preceding sections.

BLDG Memphis

Chamber of Commerce

City of Memphis

Clean Memphis

Com Cap Partners

Community Redevelopment Agency

Downtown Memphis Commission

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis

High Ground News

Hyde Family Foundation

Innovate Memphis

Keep Tennessee Beautiful

Memphis City Beautiful Commission

Memphis Light, Gas, and Water

Neighborhood Preservation, Inc.

Shelby County

Tennessee Housing Development Agency

The Heights CDC

The Works, Inc.

United Housing

University of Memphis School of Law

University of Memphis Center for Applied Earth Sciences and Engineering Research