EPA Effective Blight Elimination Communications Webinar



Vacancy Reduction

Collaborations & Communications
in the City of St. Louis

Laura Ginn, Vacancy Strategist

St. Louis Development Corporation & Land Reutilization Authority (LRA)

VACANCY IN ST. LOUIS

1950s Population: 850,000

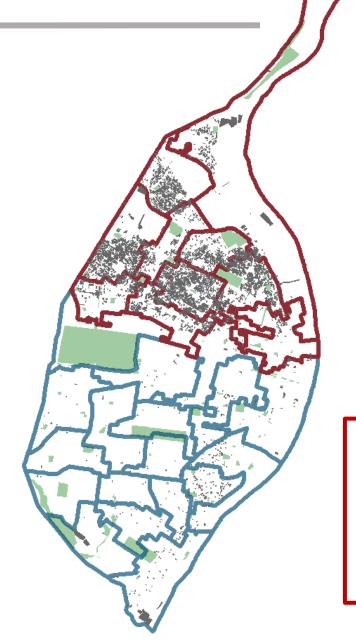
2010s Population: 315,000

Inventory by Owner

LRA – land bank 2,000 buildings 9,000 lots **Privately-Owned** 4,000 buildings 10,000 lots

TOTALS

~ 25,000 parcels ~ 2,500 acres or nearly 2,000 football fields





LRA
properties
comprise
42%
of all vacant
properties

Vacancy Collaborations & Communications in St. Louis





Why Collaborate?

- Vacancy / blight is complicated and touches all facets of everyday life
- Vacancy is both a result and cause of systemic racism, and disproportionately impacts residents of color
- Reducing vacancy requires multiple departments, organizations, funding mechanisms, etc.
- Collaboration IS a form of communication and allows for a richer understanding of the issues and the solutions

Why Communicate?

- Government funding and resources should be accessible and understandable by residents
- High vacancy neighborhoods are also those with the lowest civic engagement and trust in government
- Historically, residents have felt left out of the conversation and the solutions
- Building a common language and reinvestment culture

COLLABORATIONS







The Vacancy Collaborative is a coalition of partners committed to the reduction of vacant property as a top priority in St. Louis.

- Not a stand-alone entity
 - + city departments
 - + nonprofits
 - + academia
 - + CDCs
 - + neighbors
- Guided by foundational documents & studies
- Official launch: July 2017
- 200 participants identified key issue areas
- Working groups designed around the issue areas and working from an 18-month work plan



COLLABORATIONS



Community Economic Development Neighborhood Vacancy Initiative



The Neighborhood Vacancy Initiative helps local residents and community-based organizations reduce the problem of vacant, abandoned, and blighted housing in City of St. Louis.

This program will help stabilize neighborhoods and create more affordable housing.

Services provided

Vacancy prevention

Help low-income residents with title issues and older homeowners to transfer their homes through beneficiary deeds to prevent vacancy.

Title clearance

Assist City agencies and nonprofits to clear land titles for development that creates affordable housing.

· Problem property issues

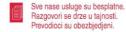
Represent community groups and neighborhood associations to file lawsuits against the owners of vacant, run-down properties, to force them to sell or repair their property.

Community assistance

Educate community groups about the legal tools available to prevent and reduce vacancy, and to assist them with legal organization and nonprofit incorporation through the Microenterprise Program

Community Economic Development Neighborhood Vacancy Initiative





Los servicios son gratuitos.
Todas las comunicaciones son confidenciales.
Intérpreters disponible.

Services currently available only in the City of St. Louis

This initiative is supported by the St. Louis Development Corporation and the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis.

Our Mission

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri advances justice through legal representation, education and supportive services. We partner with the community to improve lives, promote fairness and create opportunities for those in need.

Contact us at: 314.256.8744 nvi@lsem.org www.lsem.org











Neighborhood Vacancy Initiative

- Funded by Missouri Bar, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, St. Louis Development Corporation, and additional grants
- 4 attorneys providing free legal services
 - Acquiring vacant buildings
 - Beneficiary Deeds
 - and more

Strategic Code Enforcement

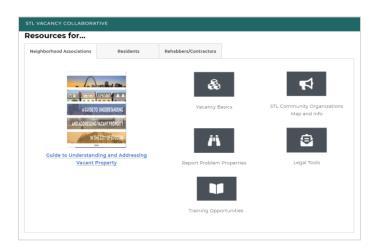
- Strategic Code Enforcement
 Management Academy participation
- Cross-departmental coordination (Strategic Code Enforcement Subgroup)
- NEW! funding for process mapping

COMMUNICATIONS

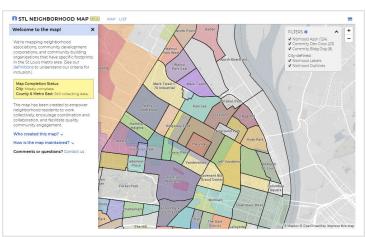
Stlvacancy COLLABORATIVE



MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

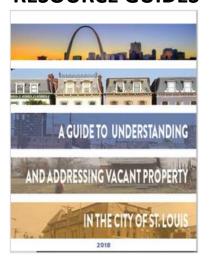


WEB RESOURCES & INTERACTIVE MAPS





RESOURCE GUIDES



PUBLIC MEETINGS



COMMUNICATIONS



Neighborhood Associations

Resource Providers

Ward Meetings

Town Halls / Open Houses





VACANT PROPERTY BLOCK SURVEY PILOT

WHAT? A survey form for providing property-level information about the needs on your block.

WHY? Because no one knows your block better than you do.

Follow the directions, be as detailed as possible, and email your completed survey to ginnl@stlouis-mo.gov,

text photos of your completed forms to (636) 358-3022, or drop off at SLDC, Attn: Laura Ginn, 1520 Market.

THEN WHAT? City and LRA staff will review your recommendations and report back regarding:

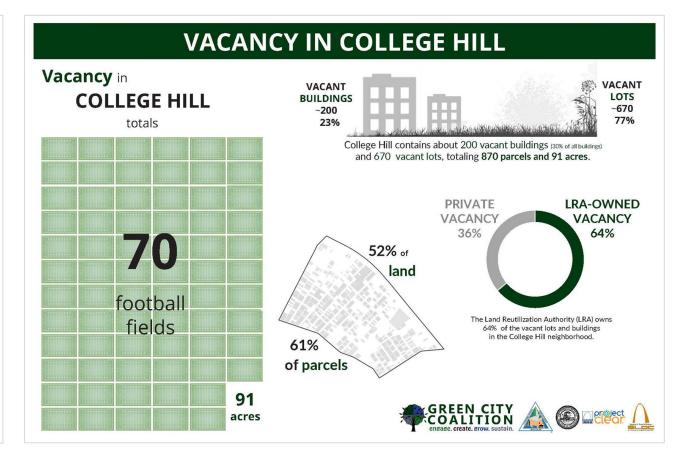
- 1. What resources ARE available to accomplish your requested actions.
- 2. An expected timeline to complete the actions for which resources are available.
- 3. What resources ARE NOT available at this time.

WHAT IS POSSIBLE?

HOW?

Potential Actions	Description	Funding?	If LRA property	If privately-owned property		
Board-Up Building	Board up of first floor openings only	Yes	A work ticket will be created for the LRA maintenance team to complete.	Private building owners must first be cited and provided time to board up themselves. If they do not follow through, Building Division can board the property and fine the owner.		
Stabilize Building	Stabilization and weatherization to prevent building deterioration	Yes, but the program is still in its pilot phase	You will be provided with Proposition NS nomination forms and more information about the program. Nominations are reviewed by a Stabilization Advisory Committee.	bout the program. owned vacant and abandoned properties.		
Demolish Building			LRA staff will visit the property to assess the conditions and take photos. Eligibility for demolition funding is dependent on the extent of health and safety risks posed to neighbors.	if the building iS structurally condemned, the owner will be notified of the intent for demolition and given 10 days to respond. With no response, demolition can be pursued. If the building is NOT condemned, a building inspection will be requested, and the building will be reviewed with the same process as an LRA building ←.		
Clean & Clear Property (Lot or Building)	lear concrete, and debris; roperty removal of dead, dying, or hazardous trees; removal of		LRA staff will visit the property to assess the conditions and take photos. Eligibility for funding will be dependent on conditions of that property relative to other properties needing clean & clear work (i.e. prioritized based on need).	Private property owners must first be cited and provided time to improve conditions themselves. If they do not follow through, we may be able to provide clean and clear services and fine the owner.		

Last Revised June 2020



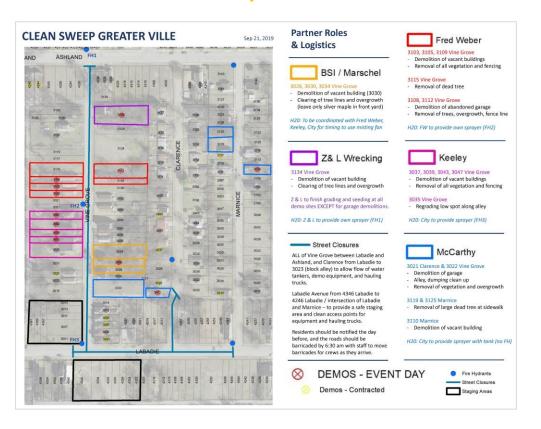
COMMUNICATIONS



Communicating Collaborative Projects

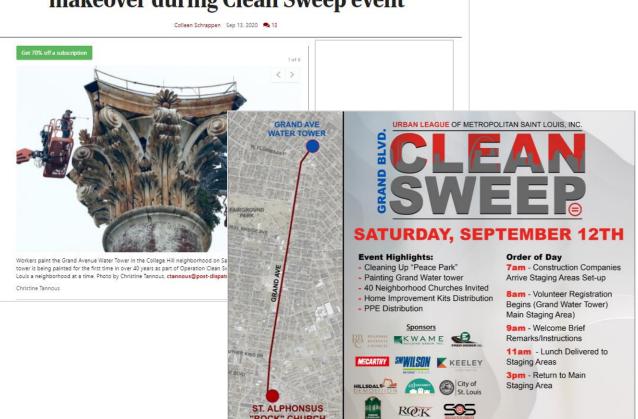
an example from Operation Clean Sweep

with partners



with community

Grand Avenue Water Tower gets long-needed makeover during Clean Sweep event



COLLABORATIONS







Updated City Demolition Handbook 2018

- EPA funding
- Delta Institute

Deconstruction Research & Pilot

 EPA, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, EIERA, St. Louis Community College Workforce Solutions, Regional Business Council, City of Baltimore & Details Deconstruction

VC Stabilization, Maintenance, Demolition Working Group

- Meets monthly to discuss the availability and allocation of resources for vacant building stabilization, demolition, deconstruction, and maintenance
- Open to the public
- Resulted in launch of **Demolition & Public Health Task Force** to continue improvements AND better communicate to residents

DEMO BEST PRACTICES TOUR

Thursday, October 4

Please join the Building Division, SLDC, and the Mayor's Office for a tour of active demolitions, and a discussion about demolition practices in the City of St. Louis.

RSVPs required.

Please email ginnl@stlouis-mo.gov or call (314) 657-3778.

Event Schedule

8:00 am - 9:00 am
Introductions & Light Breakfast
2923 North Broadway, 2nd Floor

9:00 am - 12:30 pm Shuttle to 3 Demo Sites & Stages:

- 1. Smash and Spray
- 2. Clean Fill & Bury
- 3. Soil Fill & Compaction

Transportation Provided by STLFD.

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Roundtable Discussion: City Staff, EPA, USGS, St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District, Delta Institute, EIERA, and more (optional)



COMMUNICATIONS







Proposition NS

- Developed by resident petitioners and voted in by residents
- Vacant building stabilization
- Up to \$30,000 for single family buildings and \$50,000 for multiple family
- Land bank buildings only
- Public nomination process
- Transparent from submission to completion

www.stlouis-mo.gov/propns

List of Properties Currently Nominated

List of properties currently in pilot phase and their status

The Prop NS Program is currently implementing a pilot phase which involves the stabilization of a limited number of buildings that were not nominated by the public but identified by program staff. These buildings have been selected to test operational components of the program. After the pilot phase, the program will only involve stabilization of buildings that have been nominated and evaluated.

The properties listed below with a nominated date of September 8, 2020, or earlier were selected as pilot buildings for testing how the program will be implemented and do not reflect the public nomination process. All nominations received after that date are being reviewed in the order received and will be assessed based on the program's evaluation criteria.

Search Nomin	ations:					
Showing 121						
Address •	Ward ▲	Neighborhood	Nominated By	Status	Comment	Nominated
	18	Fountain Park	City Property Owner	Research: In progress		
1125 WALTON			 City Resident 			09/17/2020
AVE			 Neighborhood Organization Representative 			

COMMUNICATIONS





Nuisance Abatement & Evictions

All sessions are from 6:30 to

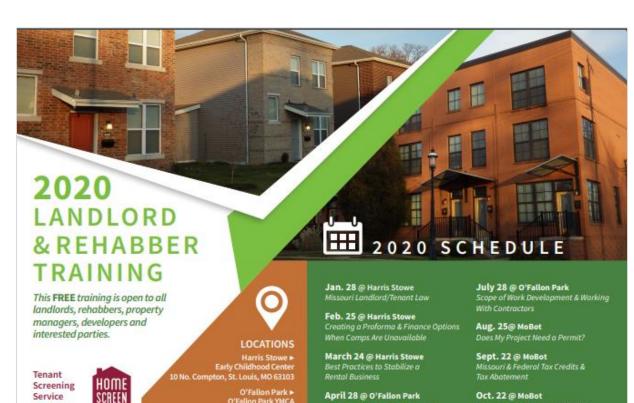
8:30 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of



Rehabber / Small Developer Training Series

- Financing options
- How to buy a vacant property
- Permitting ad Contractors
- New Construction on a Vacant Lot
- Brownfields and Abatement

Switched to ONLINE in 2020



Opportunity and Evaluate Costs

June 23 @ O'Fallon Park

4343 W Florissant Ave. St. Louis, MO 63115

4344 Shaw Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63110

available

for all areas! VERIFICATION

Visit MyHomeScreen.org

or call 314-865-5530

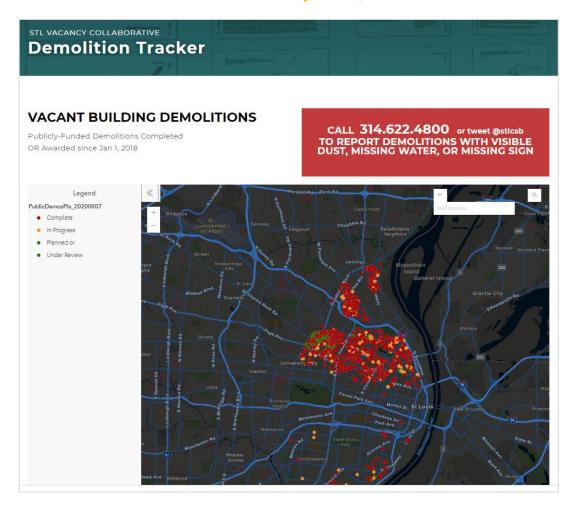
VACANT BUILDINGS - DEMO

COMMUNICATIONS





www.stlvacancy.com/demo



Building Stickers & Hotline





TRACK DEMOLITIONS IN YOUR WARD



www.stlvacancy.com/demo

Interactive map of demolitions of vacant buildings in 2018

Completed – the contract is complete and there should no longer be any sign of demolition (except perhaps straw)

In Progress – the contract has been awarded to a contractor, but could be anywhere from applying for permits to disconnecting utilities to active demo (the full process can take several months)

Coming Soon – the building has been identified for demolition but has not yet been awarded to a demolition contractor

Click on a dot for more details.

Neighborhood Meetings

REMEMBER: There should never be dust coming from a demolition site; contractors should be spraying with water throughout the process. If you see dust, stay inside and call (314) 622-4800.



For questions about demolition, call Laura Ginn (314) 657-3778 or email ginnl@stlouis-mo.gov.



VACANT BUILDINGS - DEMO

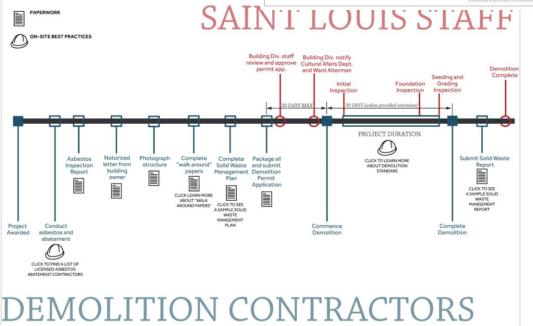
COMMUNICATIONS

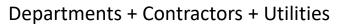


Updated Handbook & Resources

Infographics
Templates
Mandatory Meetings



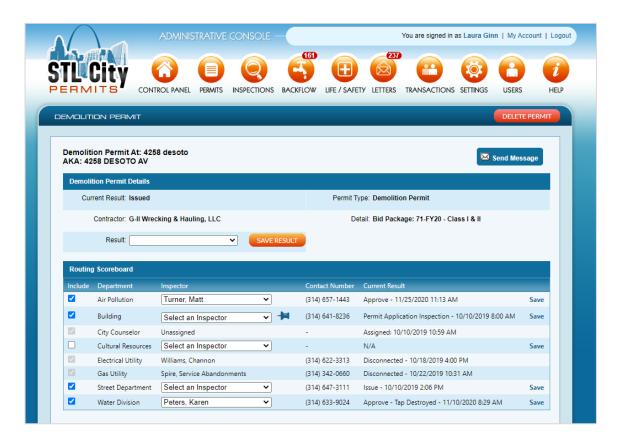






stlcitypermits.com

mobile friendly custom-made software program



VACANT BUILDINGS - DEMO

COMMUNICATIONS







Photo: St. Louis Post Dispatch

- 1. Resident Calls Citizens Service Bureau
- 2. Air Pollution Inspector and Building Inspector Notified Instantly
- 3. Either can take photos and charge fines on site with mobile platform

COMMUNICATIONS





ST. LOUIS DECONSTRUCTION MARKET ASSESSMENT

April 2019

WHAT IS DECONSTRUCTION?

The systematic
disassembly of
structures so valuable
building materials can
be returned to the local
marketplace, as
opposed to landfilled.

Instead of tearing down vacant buildings, St. Louis set to give 'deconstruction' its first try

By Bryce Gray St. Louis Post-Dispatch Nov 19, 2018 💂



91%

of St. Louis' vacant housing stock was built prior to 1930.



Reduce Waste Generation Up To:













VACANT LOTS

COMMUNICATIONS

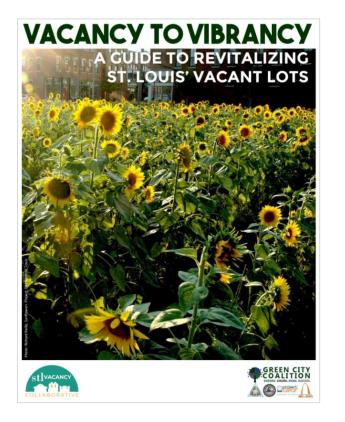


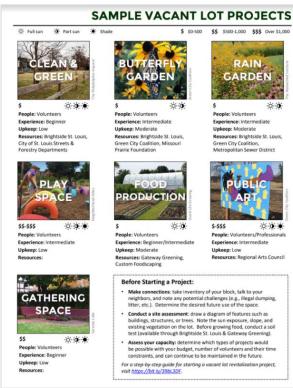




Lot Reuse Guide

launching Spring 2021





SAMPLE VACANT LOT PROJECTS Now that your group has been established, you have mapped out your lot, and established everyone's primary motivation, you may select a project category. Below is a sampling of project categories. Fill out pg. to determine which general category will work best for your lot and group. (Note: these categories are not intended to provide rigid guidelines for your project. Rather, this will help narrow down the general types of • Volunteers & • • Professionals Beginner • • Intermediate Low • Moderate • • Good Better • • Best • • \$500-1,000 • • Over \$1,000 •

•

•

Vacancy to Vibrancy | A Guide to Revitalizing St. Louis' Vacant Lots

Full Shade

Part Sun

Full Sun

VACANT LOTS

COMMUNICATIONS



Pre-Covid

Neighborhood Workshops
Participatory Mapping
On-Site Activities

Mid-Covid

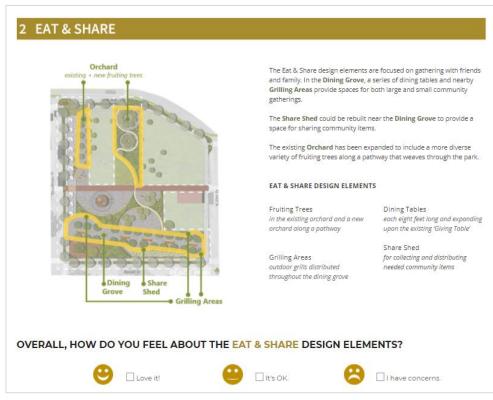
Virtual Design Tour & Online Survey

Paper Survey Packet

Distanced, Masked Tabling Events

Zooming into Community Meetings

Online Tour / Survey



www.greencitycoalition.org/peacepark

Postcards



Find More & Get In Touch









Laura Ginn STL Vacancy Strategist ginnl@stlouis-mo.gov (314) 657 - 3778

St. Louis Development CorporationLand Reutilization Authority of the City of St. Louis
www.stlouis-mo.gov/sldc

St. Louis Vacancy Collaborative www.stlvacancy.com

Green City Coalition
www.greencitycoalition.org

