

**NAC 11 Seriously Deteriorated and Habitually
Vacant Property (SDHVP)
Subcommittee Report**

May 21, 2019

NAC 11 Seriously Deteriorated and Habitually Vacant Property (SDHVP)
Subcommittee Report
May 21, 2019

Executive Summary

Frederick, Maryland is a thriving, historical city, both an attractive place to live and a destination for visitors. Frederick's historic core features beautifully restored properties, some of which sit side-by-side with seriously deteriorated and habitually vacant buildings. These deteriorated properties depress visitor interest and property values, and—in poor states of repair—pose a threat to safety and historical resources. The question is what do we (as residents, business owners, and elected officials and administrators) do about the problem?

The issue of habitually vacant properties in Frederick has been examined by three previous *ad hoc* groups in the past 7 years with little city action. As a next step, an *ad hoc* subcommittee (Seriously Deteriorated and Habitually Vacant Property [SDHVP] Subcommittee) of the Neighborhood Advisory Committee 11 (NAC 11) was formed to explore other possible options that the City, its residents, and businesses might adopt as proactive policies to address rehabilitation of deteriorated or habitually vacant properties within City limits.

The SDHVP, a group of 10 citizen volunteers, has met 14 times since January, met with City officials on 2 occasions and developed a three-pronged approach to assist the City in enacting a comprehensive approach to resolving the on-going problem. The SDHVP subcommittee has: 1) reviewed recommendations of the past three 'blight' committees and condensed those recommendations into 34 non-redundant options; 2) using City criteria, conducted a walk-around of the NAC 11 neighborhood to determine numbers of seriously deteriorated or habitually vacant properties; and 3) reviewed relevant ordinances for 11 Maryland municipalities that focused on specific requirements used to identify, register, and entice property owner remediation efforts for deteriorated, vacant, and blighted properties to ensure that these properties are safe and secure and continue to be valuable resources to the community.

From these activities, the SDHVP has proposed an Action Plan the City can follow to remedy property occupancy in poorly maintained and habitually vacant properties downtown. The Plan centers on adoption of a Vacant Property Registry Ordinance (VPRO), used in many other locales, that defines City terminology for deteriorated, vacant, and habitually vacant properties, sets requirements for registering vacant properties, registration fees, and inspections, details exemptions for actively marketed or foreclosed properties, and, as a last option, recommends receivership for very long-term vacant properties. An enacted Plan should adopt a multi-departmental Case Management approach to decisions on registered properties and consideration for the use of collected fees to cover staff or contracted personnel for routine neighborhood visual surveys. Finally, the SDHVP encourages adoption of strategies like those identified above, ideally through a collaborative partnership of City staff, residents, and business owners. It is only through an active partnership that the City can maintain its vital downtown as a desired venue for residents, tourists, and commercial institutions.

NAC 11 Seriously Deteriorated and Habitually Vacant Property (SDHVP) Subcommittee Report May 21, 2019

The Problem

Frederick, Maryland is a thriving, historical city, with an expanding commercial district that draws people from across the region. Surrounded by beautiful, often restored, residential properties, Frederick's core is a major destination for visitors and new as well as long-time residents. Unfortunately, vacant commercial and residential buildings detract from the overall look and feel of Frederick, inhibiting continued commercial and residential site development or restoration, with many properties remaining vacant for years. Long-term vacancy depresses visitor interest and property values of nearby sites. Moreover, deteriorated properties (both vacant and occupied) pose a threat to safety and historical resources. Frederick's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has a mandate to preserve historic buildings and not allow demolition by neglect. The question is: what do we (as residents, business owners, elected officials and administrators) do about the problem?" NAC 11 members assert that Frederick City officials, with our support, can respond effectively to blighted properties and, at the same time, take proactive steps to prevent serious deterioration and habitual vacancy of buildings in our community.

Background

In January 2019, NAC 11 members identified vacancy and blight as a priority for residents and businesses alike and formed the Seriously Deteriorated and Habitually Vacant Properties Subcommittee (SDHVP) to address the issue. Of paramount concern is the substantial number of commercial and residential properties that are vacant for long periods of time (and often overlooked as they have become "part of the landscape"). Many properties show no indication that efforts have been made towards rehabilitation and/or rentals or sales. Moreover, members agreed that long term vacancy is a precursor to blight and that prevention is more effective than remediation. Acknowledging the extensive research and numerous recommendations of prior *ad hoc* blight committees established by Frederick, and subsequent enactment of few of the recommendations, SDHVP members concluded that it is time to act, not engage in additional research.

Guided by the work of the three prior committees, the SDHVP:

- Reviewed and confirmed the status of the recommendations of the 2012, 2015 and 2016 blight committees
- Walked the NAC 11 district and identified (via the City's Code Enforcement Division "Guide to Code Compliance" rating system) all properties deemed to be in Poor, Very Poor condition and, if applicable, an Historic Resource at risk
- Compiled and organized vacant property codes and procedures and identified Best Practices in place in Maryland jurisdictions
- Outlined an action plan to address habitual vacancy.

A December 31, 2018 article in the *Frederick News Post* quoted Mayor O'Connor's pledge of action in 2019 to eliminate unsightly properties that detract from the quality of life, "setting a time period of two years plus one day for an owner to tenant a property before a levy or surcharge would kick in...". At the Mayor's direction, and concurrent with the SDHVP activities, staff reviewed City Code 12.5-3, the Receivership Ordinance, and determined that including in the code a definition of "habitual vacancy" for intractable properties would make the Receivership Ordinance a more actionable tool—and the City's response to blight.

The subcommittee applauds the City's activity in this regard and agrees that Receivership may be the correct solution for intractable properties. At the same time, we are convinced that **proactive measures** are key to addressing habitual vacancy which often results in blight. The NAC 11 SDHVP subcommittee asserts that enforcing proactive policies to prevent blight is more effective than taking legal action to rehabilitate, demolish or sell a blighted structure, recognizing that this differs from the long-standing policy to ignore deteriorated properties until a code complaint is received. The subcommittee further asserts that the most effective tool is a Vacant Property Registration Ordinances (VPRO), similar to ordinances in other Maryland jurisdictions, with inspection capability (allowing Frederick to identify both vacant **and occupied** properties at risk) and fines. This preventive approach can protect residential and commercial neighborhoods from becoming blighted through lack of adequate maintenance and will ensure the security of vacant properties. As a respondent to a 2017 survey of Maryland municipalities, cities, and towns correctly noted, "The vacant property registry is a very handy tool...The registry is used by the police department, county agencies and developers, and also used at stakeholders meetings."¹ A VPRO ordinance (if enacted in Frederick) could be referenced in ordinance 12.5-3, and the VPRO database of vacant properties would provide critical factual data if receivership becomes necessary.

SDHVP's Approach

The subcommittee considers the Denton, MD purpose statement ("...incorporating an abandoned and vacant property registration program as a mechanism to protect commercial and residential neighborhoods from becoming blighted through the lack of adequate maintenance and for the security of abandoned and vacant properties.") an apt description of our objective and reflects Denton's sense of ownership/responsibility for maintaining the jurisdiction. The subcommittee's efforts to review current NAC 11 property conditions and highlight vacancy ordinances employed in other MD municipalities confirms the viability of VPROs and their applicability to Frederick. Below are details of the steps noted earlier:

Step 1: Status of the recommendations of the 2012, 2016 and 2018 Blight Committees

Three separate reports were developed by past Blight Committees (2012, 2016, 2018) resulting in 54 recommendations. Duplicate items from the three reports were eliminated, leaving 34 distinct recommendations (see Attachment 1, Blight and Vacant Property Recommendations). It appears that 6 of the 34 recommendations were acted upon:

- Tax Credit Program (#7)
- Development of targeted reinvestment zones (#8)
- Receivership Program (#17)
- Anonymous reporting of code violations (#21)
- Codes for foreclosed properties (#23)
- Downtown window enhancement SOP (#33).

Step 2: Members walked the NAC 11 district and graded all properties deemed to be in Poor or Very Poor condition and, if applicable, an Historic Resource at risk

From its initial meeting, the consensus of the SDHVP subcommittee was that the Blight and Watch lists published on Frederick's web page do not reflect the scope of the problem of deteriorated and habitually vacant property in downtown Frederick. The number of cases listed as *Active* or *Legal* on the Code Enforcement Department data are not what downtown residents deem consistent with diligent enforcement of the International Property Maintenance Code.

¹ http://communitydevelopmentmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CDN_policy_vacant-property-survey-results_designed_Jan2017.pdf

During March and April 2019, subcommittee members walked the streets and alleys of NAC 11 and simply noted what they observed from the sidewalk or alley, focusing on the condition of properties using criteria on page 5. All properties were observed, but not all were recorded as it was not possible to determine whether a property in poor condition was occupied or habitually vacant.

On the following pages, we describe NAC 11 SDHVP subcommittee members’ observation method and outcomes that define the scope of the problem from the perspective of city residents.

NAC 11 was sub-divided into four areas for purposes of observation (Fig.1):

- **Southwest**– Bounded by West Patrick Street (north side), South Jefferson Street (east side), West South Street (north side) and South Market Street (west side). Interior streets include West All Saints, Ice/South Court, South Bentz, and Degrange.
- **Southeast**–Bounded by Patrick Street (south side), Market Street (east side), Mt. Olivet Boulevard and East South Street (north street). Interior streets being South Carroll, Winchester, Clark Place, and East All Saints.
- **Middle** – Bounded by East and West Patrick Street (north side), East Street from Patrick Street to 3rd, Bentz Street (east side) from Patrick Street to 3rd. The interior streets/alleys in this area are Church, Second and Maxwell and Chapel. A stretch of East Church and East Third Streets east of East Street is also included.
- **North**—Bounded by East and West Third Street, East Street (west side), East and West 7th Street (south side) and Bentz Street (east side).



Figure 1. NAC 11 observation areas.

Property deficiencies consistent with Frederick City Code documents were recorded:

The criteria used are consistent with those identified in the Frederick Code Enforcement Division’s publication “A Guide to Code Compliance”, i.e., “Exterior surfaces, including but not limited to, doors, door and window frames, cornices, porches, trim, balconies, decks and fences, shall be maintained in good condition. Accessory structures, including detached garages, fences, and walls, shall be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.” Additional criteria included obstructive landscaping, debris, accumulation of newspapers, mail, trash, abandoned vehicles, and junked appliances.

Properties were rated:

- **Habitually Vacant (V) and OK, Poor (P), Very Poor (VP) or At Risk of Demolition by Neglect (DN).** It is important to note that properties which simply appeared to be vacant (closed blinds or curtains or other signs) were NOT recorded. There had to be first-hand knowledge of long-term vacancy or some other significant indication such as accumulated mail or trash. Some properties whose occupancy could not be determined by an exterior-only observation may be vacant but are included in the inventory and identified as

O/V. One garage in **Very Poor** condition was included although its status is unclear. It should be noted, as well, that an adequate exterior can mask severe interior damage (another risk factor for demolition by neglect).

- **Occupied (O)** in **OK, Poor (P)** or **Very Poor (VP)** condition, highlighting those that are **O and VP** or **O and DN**. (Occupied properties in poor condition were not included. Buildings or garages where O or V status could not be determined and were considered to be in **Poor** condition were included).

Observed properties were listed and color coded: Observations reveal 68 properties of concern displayed by area and for NAC 11 as a whole as displayed (Fig. 2):

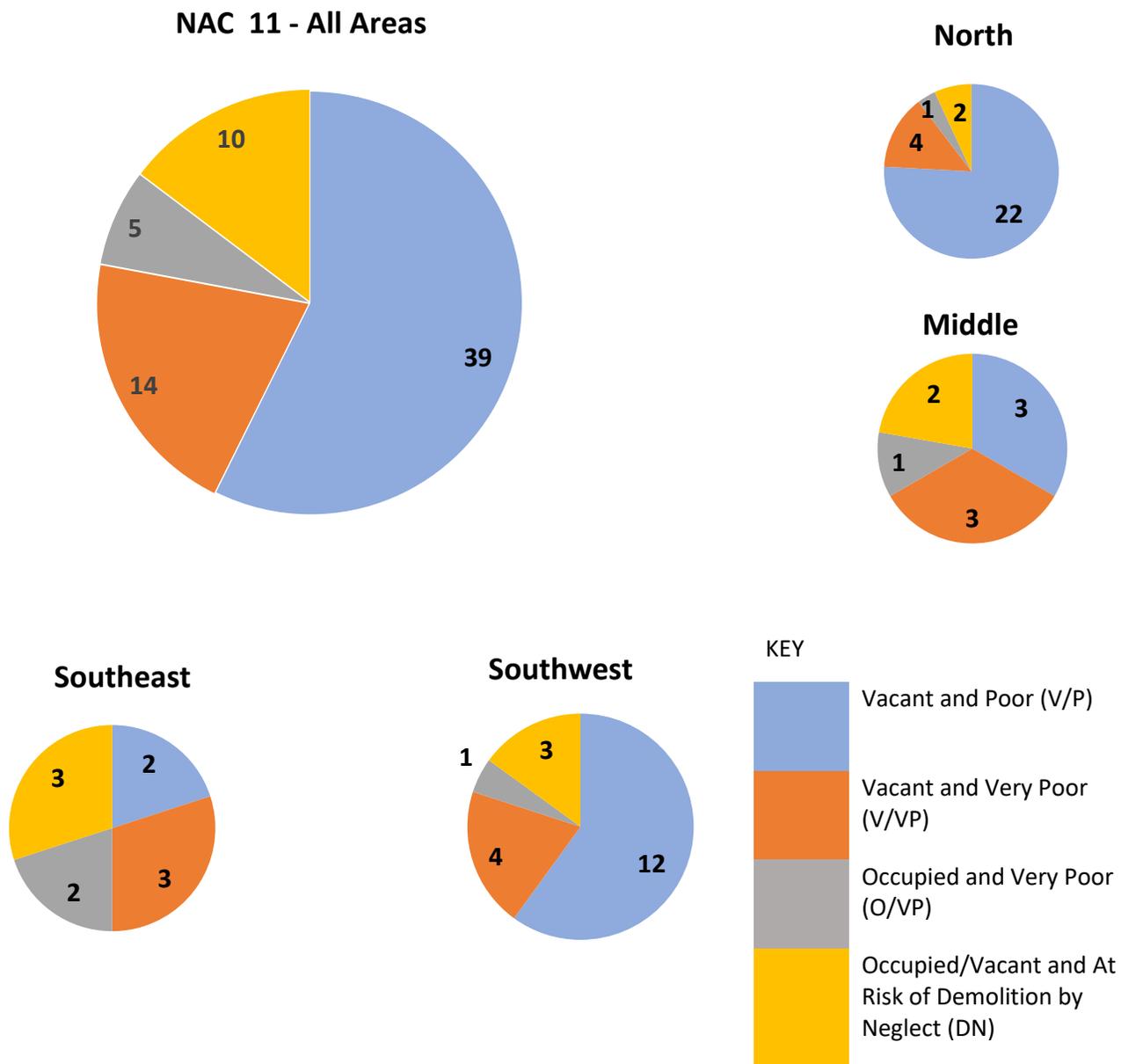


Figure 2: Properties of Concern in NAC 11

- Thirty-nine (57%) properties are **Vacant and Poor**. These properties should be closely monitored and every effort should be made to incentivize the productive use of those habitually vacant (and yet deemed OK) as they are at risk of deterioration.

- Fourteen (21%) properties are **Vacant** and **Very Poor**, and 5 (7%) are **Occupied** and **Very Poor**. These properties are a great concern and should be considered for rigorous enforcement action.
- Ten (15%) are either **Occupied** or **Vacant** and **At Risk of Demolition by Neglect**. These properties are a great concern and should be considered for code enforcement action in the very near term. We note that an overwhelming majority of NAC11 properties are over 50 years old and are, therefore, considered historical.

Step 3: Maryland jurisdiction vacant property codes and procedures and implemented Best Practices were compiled and organized

SDHVP Subcommittee members reviewed numerous ordinances from Maryland (and other) jurisdictions using key words to determine their essential elements. Although vacant property and/or blight ordinances from jurisdictions outside Maryland were excellent and instructive, it was agreed that focusing on, and highlighting elements of, Maryland ordinances was the best approach. These ordinances refer to, and conform with, Maryland State law and codes and are, thus, appropriate for consideration by the City of Frederick. The table below (Table 1) displays elements of ordinances in 11 Maryland jurisdictions as well as relevant elements in Frederick City code.

The purpose statements below illustrate the proactive approach to the problem of vacancy and blight among Maryland jurisdictions. The statements emphasize promotion of the health, safety and welfare of residents and the community; prevention of deterioration of vacant buildings; proper management and maintenance of vacant buildings; and utilization of property registration and inspections.

- **Brunswick:** “The purpose of this ordinance is to promote and assure public safety, health and welfare; to prevent deterioration of any ‘Vacant Non-Residential Structures’ and continued deterioration of any “Vacant Blighted Non-Residential Structures” (as hereinafter defined) in the City of Brunswick; to support property values; and to encourage responsible management and use of any Vacant Non-Residential Structure in the City through required licensing and inspections by the city of Brunswick.”
- **Hagerstown:** “Promote and assure public safety, health and welfare, to prevent deterioration of vacant commercial structures, to support property values and to encourage responsible management and use of vacant commercial structures through licensing and inspections.”
- **Mount Rainier:** “The health, welfare and safety of the citizens of Mount Rainier need to be protected from the ill effects of poor property maintenance and all ramifications arising therefrom. Further, the value of all property within the corporate limits of the City of Mount Rainier needs to be protected from said ill effects and ramifications.”
- **Salisbury:** “The purpose of this chapter is to protect the public health and safety and the general welfare of the citizens of the City of Salisbury and to assist the City government in monitoring the number of vacant buildings in the City to assess the effects of the condition of those buildings on nearby business and the neighborhoods in which they are located, particularly in light of fire safety hazards and unlawful, temporary occupancy by transients, including illicit drug users and traffickers, and to promote substantial efforts to rehabilitate such vacant buildings.”
- **Takoma Park:** “It is the purpose and intent of the City of Takoma Park, through the adoption of this chapter, to establish a vacant property registration program as a mechanism to protect residential and commercial neighborhoods from becoming blighted through the lack of adequate maintenance and for the security of distressed properties and vacant properties.”

Table 1. A summary of MD jurisdictions with ordinances and codes for vacant properties

Ordinance Elements	Frederick	Hagerstown	Brunswick	Seat Pleasant	Takoma Park	Mt. Airy	Annapolis	Pocomoke	Salisbury	College Park	Mt. Rainier	Denton
States vision/purpose		x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x
Defines blight	x	x	x			x		x				
Defines vacancy		x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Defines habitual offender		x						x				x
Covers residential (owner/renter occupied)		x	x		x	x	x				x	x
Covers Commercial		x	x		x	x	x				x	x
Cites related city requirements or codes		x		x	x		x		x	x		x
Specifies inspections		x	x		x	x	x					x
Specifies licenses or registrations		x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x
Specifies timelines for compliance		x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x
Specifies penalties		x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Specifies exemptions							x	x				x
Specifies appeals							x	x				x
Specifies property maintenance plan	x				x			x			x	x
Foreclosure provisions										x		
Tax Penalties (in Property Tax)												
Graduated Tiers							x					

References for the above-noted ordinances:

Hagerstown: <https://www.hagerstownmd.org/230/Vacant-Structure-Licensing>

Brunswick: https://brunswickmd.gov/vertical/Sites/%7B6128680E-2B73-4AA3-90D8-2ADE82D7827D%7D/uploads/Ordinance_536_-_Vacant_Property_Ordinance.pdf

Seat Pleasant: <https://ecode360.com/32199341>

Takoma Park: <https://www.codepublishing.com/MD/TakomaPark/#!/TakomaPark06/TakomaPark0638.html>

Mt. Airy: <https://ecode360.com/6265185>

Annapolis: <https://www.aahealth.org/about-the-anne-arundel-county-property-maintenance-code-pdf/>

Pocomoke: City Ordinance No. 437

Salisbury: City of Salisbury Ordinance No: 2017, 15.22.040 Vacant Building Registration

College Park: Chapter 125, "Housing Regulations", §125-32

Mt. Rainier: Chapter 3B Vacant Buildings and Vacant Lot Registration

Denton: Ordinance No. 629

Building on Mayor O'Connor's concept of a "time period" and "levy or surcharge," SDHVP subcommittee activities, and recommendations of the Center for Community Progress, Best Practice provisions can form the basis of a VPRO (Table 2).

Table 2. Best Practices from Maryland jurisdictions.

Elements of a Vacant Property Registration	A Summary of Maryland Jurisdictions' Ordinances
A clear definition of which properties and which parties must register	Most ordinances or regulations have been drafted to define and then regulate long-term vacant properties. Some identify residential and non-residential; others only commercial (any building commercial at street level). Vacant is defined by both a percentage of the property and the length of the vacancy. Most define exceptions.
Examples: College Park Chapter 144; Denton Chapter 94, ORD 629; Takoma Park Chapter 6.38	
The registration requirements and procedures, including the information required of the owner or lienholder	Almost all cities require registration of vacant residential and non-residential properties, ranging from a minimum of 30 days of vacancy, but generally after 6 months of non-occupation.
Examples: Hagerstown Chapters 232 & 233; Mt. Rainier Chapter III; Salisbury ORD #2017 Chapter 15	
The fee structure	The registration is usually accompanied by an initial fee (sometimes called a "license" fee) ranging from \$100-\$500, with lower fees for residential buildings. Annual registration renewals are required with accompanying larger, often doubled, fees.
Examples: Brunswick ORD 356; Mt. Rainier ORD 437 Chapter 147; Seat Pleasant Chapter 148	
The obligations of the owner, with respect to maintaining the property	Maintenance inspection standards are defined; rehabilitation plans often required. Exterior and less frequently interior inspections can be required. Self-inspections (using certified building inspectors) and/or owner-paid inspections are sometimes used, which can significantly reduce a jurisdiction's implementation costs.
Examples: Denton Chapter 94 ORD 629; Hagerstown Chapters 232 & 233; Seat Pleasant Chapter 148	
The penalties for failing to register in timely fashion	Owners with 3 code violations on a property can be listed as 'habitual offenders' with excessive fines, possible incarceration, and prevention of owning any vacant or blighted property. Other towns may assess fines and collect them as property tax additions, thereby ensuring rapid fee recovery and prevention of endless fee non-payment via application of the fee as a tax lien. Liens prevent immediate repair and sale while property taxes plus the added violation fees force property owners to quickly seek occupation and use. The fees can be returned to new owners following sale and occupancy.
Examples: Mt. Rainier Chapter III; Pocomoke Ordinance 537	

Step 4: An action plan was outlined to address habitual vacancy leading to blight.

The SDHVP subcommittee has provided an Action Plan for City consideration in adopting its own VPRO and accompanying elements (Fig. 3). Although the subcommittee has undertaken the three initial actions indicated in the figure, City staff may want to verify the subcommittee's findings before progressing to implementing tasks that would follow adoption of its own VPRO.

Proposed City Action Plan

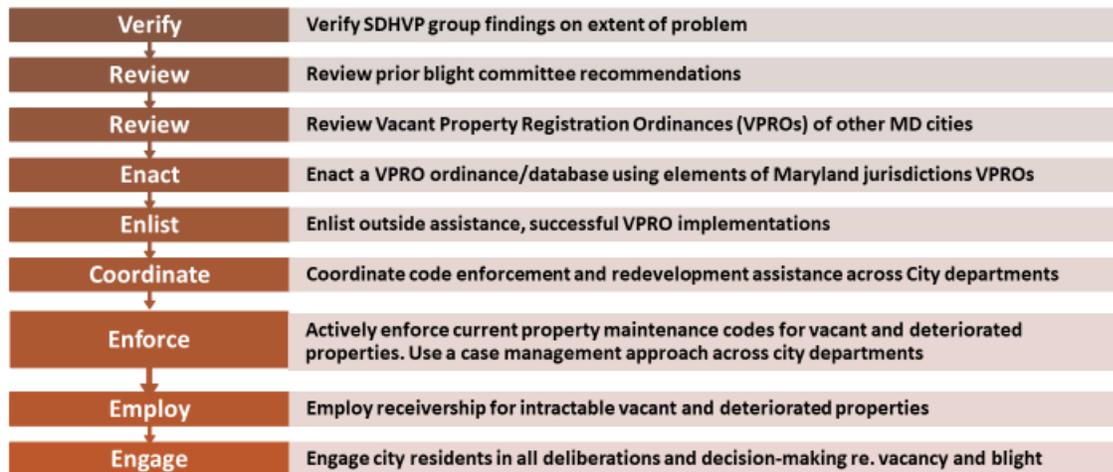


Figure 3. A potential Frederick City Action Plan to reduce seriously deteriorated and habitually vacant properties.

Most of the items in Figure 3 are self-explanatory. For others, a bit more detail is provided. Enlisting outside assistance refers to seeking input from staff of other municipalities on effective implementation for their ordinances and regulations, e.g., what has been effective and practical and lessons learned. This could also include tapping into resources of the Maryland Municipal League, Washington Council of Governments, University of Maryland, etc. “Coordinate” and “Enforce” refer to use of the Case Management processes, i.e., face-to-face multi-departmental reviews, of VPRO-listed properties to determine next steps for City actions in order to aggressively attack habitual vacancy, egregious violations and demolition by neglect. As in “Engage”, this could include city residents and business owners in deliberations and decision-making re. long-term vacancy. “Enforce” should also consider re-prioritizing Code Enforcement time commitments to identify severely deteriorated and habitually vacant properties as a periodic (monthly?) primary task while still maintaining their routine inspections of landscape violations, sidewalk clearing, exterior permit violations, etc.

Recommendations

Following City staff review of Vacant Property Registration Ordinances (VPROs) from other Maryland jurisdictions, the SDVHP recommends that the City draft and enact City ordinance text specific to severely deteriorated and habitually vacant properties. The ordinance should include requirements such as:

- Creation and maintenance of a list of seriously deteriorated and habitually vacant properties derived from its VPRO. The ordinance will need to identify terminologies for habitually vacant and deteriorated, with ample definitions from other municipalities.
- Ordinance language should include the following details:
 - ✓ Owners of all properties (residential, commercial, and mixed use) vacant for at least 6 months would be required to identify said properties to City staff, pay a modest registration fee, and conduct a property inspection for City Code compliance by a licensed contractor at the owner’s expense.
 - ✓ Annual registration renewals would be required, with a doubling of all fees and an additional property inspection at the owner’s expense.
 - ✓ Registered properties would be open to City inspection at any time during vacancy, at the owner’s expense.
 - ✓ All fees would be paid at registration or attached to annual property tax invoices. Fees would not be assessed as tax liens.

- ✓ Collected fees would be used in salary support for permanent City staff or contracted employees, except the last fee which on sale or rehabilitation of the property would be returned to the owner.
- ✓ Vacant properties with active, contracted real estate firms for rental, lease, or sale (including foreclosed properties) would be registered with all fees returned on implementation of legally binding property agreements.
- ✓ For any properties vacant for a decade, the City can enact receivership processes to assume legal ownership for subsequent rehabilitation and sale.

SDHVP Conclusion

With the support of its residents and businesses, Frederick City officials can and should take a proactive approach to seriously deteriorated and/or habitually vacant properties by enacting a VPRO to register vacant properties to assure they are safe and secure and are a contributing resource to the community (or do not detract from the community).

At the same time, Frederick City, again with the support of its residents and businesses, can and should take all steps necessary to remediate the problem of long-term blighted properties. Both approaches are necessary and feasible.

The NAC 11 SDHVP subcommittee looks forward to helping City staff develop practical, legal, and fiscally prudent measures to ensure an end to our decades-long history of long-term vacant buildings and prevent further deterioration. Many cities and towns across Maryland have implemented effective procedures to increase property occupation and maintenance. Our vibrant City should be no different.

Attachment 1: Blight and Vacant Property Recommendations from the 2012, 2016, and 2018 blight committees

	Blight Committee Recommendation	Proposed	Recommended Action
1.	Maintain Blighted Building Database Online	www.cityoffrederick.com 2012	Maintain and improve database to allow for customized searches. Purpose of the database is to document infractions in order to build a case for future enforcement actions if needed. Property shall be removed from the Database once all violations are remedied
2.	Strong leadership policy statements to publicly address blight, deterioration and vacancy	2016	Leadership and use of best practices and methods from other cities in Maryland
3.	Enhance Code Enforcement Resources with real-time mobile access	2012, 2016	Allows real-time access to databases. Databases to be updated regularly
4.	Develop internal multi-disciplinary team for case-by-case approach to deal with intractable properties	2016	Team to include: Mayor's office, Planning, Historic Preservation, Building Code Compliance, Legal, Economic Development, Public Works and other relevant intergovernmental resource as needed
5.	Voluntary Violation Remediation Program	2012	Develop a program in which a property owner can disclose code violations, develop a remediation plan and bond for such improvements without fines or penalties
6.	Lien or Fine Waiver for New Owner of Blighted Property (Commercial and Residential)	2012	City can waive lien or fines for a new owner committed to rehabilitation to encourage new ownership by lowering upfront costs and decreases impediment for the sale by the seller
7.	Targeted Reinvestment Zones/Tax credits	2012	A tax credit program is in effect.
8.	Develop Targeted Reinvestment Zones	2012	Downtown and Golden Mile have been designated and are in effect
9.	Code Enforcement Cross Training with Fire/Police	2012, 2016	Formalize written policy for cross training, Sharing of information between city departments
10.	Develop information sharing among police, fire and code enforcement to increase compliance	2012	To increase compliance and enforcement of property maintenance codes, tenanting and routine investment

	Blight Committee Recommendation	Proposed	Recommended Action
11.	Develop Scorecard Metrics	2016, 2018	Scorecard to be updated quarterly to evaluate effectiveness of blight remediation.
12.	Develop and adopt a compounding or escalating fine system	2012	Habitual offenders with 3 or more building code violations within a 12-month time frame
13.	Develop and adopt a Blighted Building Property Tax	2012	Increase city tax 5x on properties on the Blighted Database for more than one year. No further recommendation from 2012 committee
14.	Escalating Notice of Violation (NOV) Fine System	2016	Strongly recommend that Code Enforcement issue NOV's and escalating fines early and often to violators. Committee feels this is the strongest deterrent to blight
15.	Proactive enforcement	2016	Proactive enforcement with repeat code offenders
16.	Full-time downtown Code Enforcement Ombudsman	2016	Ombudsman to work with full-time city staff to provide assistance to small and medium sized projects to be completed in Downtown Frederick and to serve as a liaison to help applicants with regulatory requirements
17.	Receivership, Eminent Domain	2012 Ordinance 2013, 2016, 2018	Develop receivership program, viable option for properties with intractable problems. Buyer must rehab/demolish
18.	Market the Eminent Domain process	2016	Marketing this process may be a viable option for properties with intractable problems
19.	Outreach for potential property owner	2012	Review top 20 code violations with the owner to prevent code violations and initiate pre-foreclosure intervention
20.	State law	2016	Support blighted property nuisance abatement and earlier notification of foreclosed property registration
21.	Anonymous reporting	2016	Completed if use online code complaint
22.	Identify vacant properties via Water Bills	2016	To identify vacant properties
23.	Code for foreclosed properties	2018	Completed and approved

	Blight Committee Recommendation	Proposed	Recommended Action
24.	Form ongoing Blight Advisory Committee	2016, 2018	2016 recommended a 7-member standing committee; 2018 recommended no standing committee
25.	Streamline application/review process	2018	In reference to the Downtown Partnership 2017 presentation - redundancies exist and should be followed up by each department head. Use Land Use Council Recommendations /application review process
26.	City Disclosure	2018	Disclosure form (transfer of real estate) should include required Frederick City Code requirements to include the International Maintenance and Land Management Codes
27.	Blighted building ordinance, such as Brunswick	2018	Determined that this code was not a suitable model for the City of Frederick
28.	Promote efforts of code enforcement	2018	More emphasis should be placed on communicating awareness of the resources, efforts and outcomes of the Code Enforcement department.
29.	Add maintenance requirements to sewer and water bills	2018	Sewer and water bills should include code requirements to increase compliance
30.	Housing counseling	2012	Enhance and market housing counseling programs including, property owner and tenant responsibilities
31.	Frederick Blight and Vacancy Smartphone App	2012	Completed, iSpire
32.	Top 10 Blighted blotter list	2016	Advertise any property owner receiving a violation. Track habitual violators
	Blight Committee Beautification Suggestions – These are neither remedies nor preventatives for blight but may enhance properties or city regions until severe deterioration can be corrected.		
33.	Downtown window enhancement	2016	Code enforcement SOP in place
34.	Image, city beautification, marketing, promotion	2012, 2016, 2018	Encourage the City to set standards for its image to serve as a model to increase pride and attract businesses. Improve gateways, signage and sidewalks. Update web sites, utilize social media. Partner with residential brokers and meet with investor focus groups to identify

	Blight Committee Recommendation	Proposed	Recommended Action
			impediments to investment. Awards for exemplary renovations. This is not a remedy for blight