



THE STATE OF VACANCY IN THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS & THE PATH FORWARD

AGENDA

530 - 550

Welcome & Presentation

about the VSI and the Upcoming Report

550 - 645

Strategy Activity

7 - 720

Trivia

720 - 8

**Recommendations Review
& Social Hour**

STL Vacancy Collaborative (STLVC) ---

A coalition of community members, private and non-profit stakeholders, and City agencies committed to reducing vacant property in St. Louis.

40+ organizations and groups

12+ City departments and agencies

100s of individual volunteers



Vacancy Strategy Initiative (VSI)

A two-year collaboration between St. Louis City's Community Development Administration (CDA) and the STLVC launched in 2023

Working to develop a strategic plan regarding resource prioritization for vacant property prevention, stabilization, and reuse.

- **VSI Coordination and Engagement**
 - STLVC volunteer-led Project Groups
 - VSI Community Project Teams
- **VSI Partners**
 - A holistic approach, incorporating diverse perspectives to tackle the complex and multifaceted nature of vacancy
- **Community Engagement**
 - 8 public events
 - Around 500 attendees

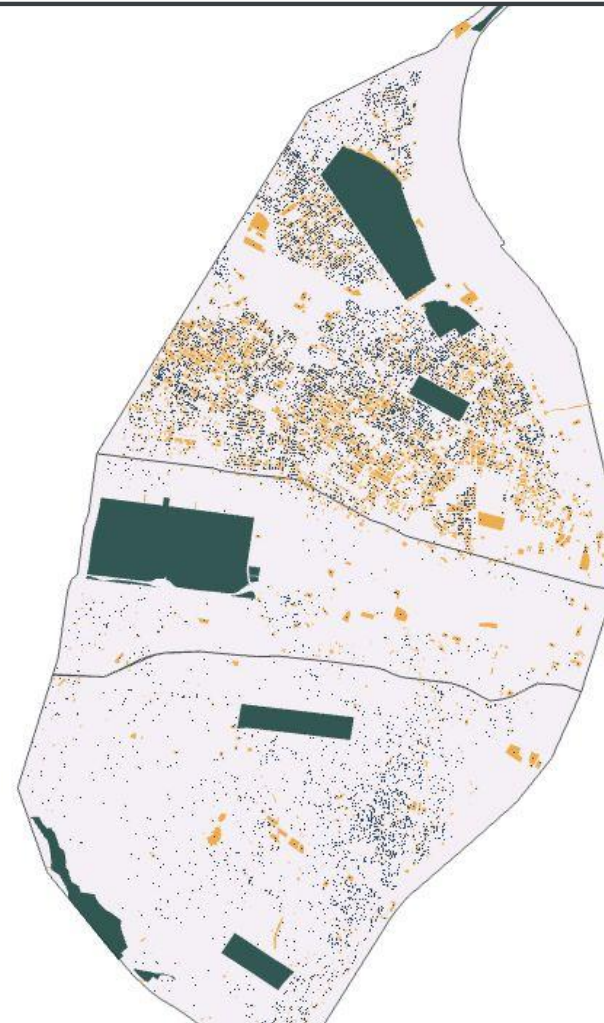


Goals

- **Develop Tech Tools** to support departmental coordination, strategic decision making and public transparency
 - Prioritization Models
 - Maps & Dashboards
 - Cost of Vacancy Analysis
- **Publish Vacancy Strategy Report & Recommendations**
 - Policy
 - Programmatic
 - Operational

VSI Report Outline

- **STATE OF VACANCY**
- **VSI PROCESS**
- **DATA ANALYSIS & TOOLS**
- **RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **IMPLEMENTATION**





ENGAGEMENT & RESEARCH PROCESS

| Dept/Agency Coordination | Public Engagement | Research |

Engagement & Research Process

162 meetings & events [to date]

- 75 project group meetings
- 56 VSI project team meetings
- 21 VSI planning team meetings
- 10 public events

City Depts & Agencies

CDA, SLDC/LRA, PDA/CRO, ITSA, Mayor's Office, Building Division, City Counselor's Problem Properties Unit, Collector of Revenue's Office, Forestry Division, Board of Aldermen, Sheriff's Office, & Comptroller's Office

Non-governmental organizations

UMSL-CIAC, CBN, Tolemi, WBlue



Nearly 500 participants
have attended public events
[to date]

Review of Past Reports & Recommendations

16 reports completed in the region in the past 12 years

>150 unique recommendations related to vacancy

60% have not been started | 17% have been completed | 13% are currently in progress

Land Reutilization Authority

- Funding & Business Plan
- Comprehensive Maintenance Plan
- Supporting Green Reuse
- Community Engagement Processes
- Transparency

Demolitions & Public Health

- Training & Enforcement
- Quality over Quantity

Strategic Code Enforcement

- Increased Code Enforcement with Strategies for Absentee Owners & Support for Local Owners
- Dedicated & Trained Inspectors
- Increased Use of Legal Tools & Receivership

Property Maintenance

- Increased & Coordinated Maintenance
- Increased Holding Costs for Lots

Review of Past Reports & Recommendations

Celebrating Progress

Data Integration & Coordination

- Integration of data systems across City departments related to vacancy
- Enhanced coordination and planning to strengthen the special tax sale process

Proposition V

- Increased Fines & Fees for Vacant Buildings
- Allocations to Vacant Building Initiative & Impacted Tenants Fund

Land Bank Programming

- Proactive Building Inspections
- Demolition Funding Partnerships
- Revised Purchase Programs
- New Website

Community Support

- Economic Development Scorecard
- Neighborhood Advocacy Legal Services

Catalogue of Available Tools & Interventions

LRA

Property Maintenance
Structural Assessments
Building Stabilization
Building Demolition
Green Space Development
Purchase Programs
Rights-of-Reentry
Donations

SLDC & LCRA

Acquisition & Assemblage
Eminent Domain
Development Incentives

City Departments

Code Enforcement
Property Maintenance
Building Demolition
Building Stabilization
Housing Court
Receivership
Tax Lien
Tax Sale

CDA

Federal Housing Funds
Green Infrastructure Development

Interventions available for privately-owned vacant and abandoned buildings (4,500 - 5,000 parcels)	Tax Foreclosure Auctions public auction after foreclosure for back taxes, if not paid after 12 mo. for any property	Special Tax Auctions public auction after foreclosure for back balances, if not paid after 12 mo. for vacant properties only	In Rem Foreclosure judgment and execution on liens through court action (not tax foreclosure)	City Receivership civil suit for receivership filed by city	Civil Receivership civil cases (AHA) managed on behalf of a neighborhood-based nonprofit	Stabilization stabilization (abatement of code violations) contracted, if unpaid, foreclosed in special tax suit or in rem action
Lead (& Supporting) Entity / Department / Agency						
Building Division		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Collector of Revenue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Assessor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City Counselor - PPU			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City Counselor - SLDC						
Cultural Resources						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SLDC		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Comptroller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CDA						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LSEM (NA and CDC)					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Minimum Eligibility						
Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tax Delinquent >1 year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Structural Condemnation (SC or ESC)				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outstanding Code Violations				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Improvement Costs Delinquent		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

COMMUNITY

Citizens' Service Bureau
Civil Court & Litigation
Private Investment

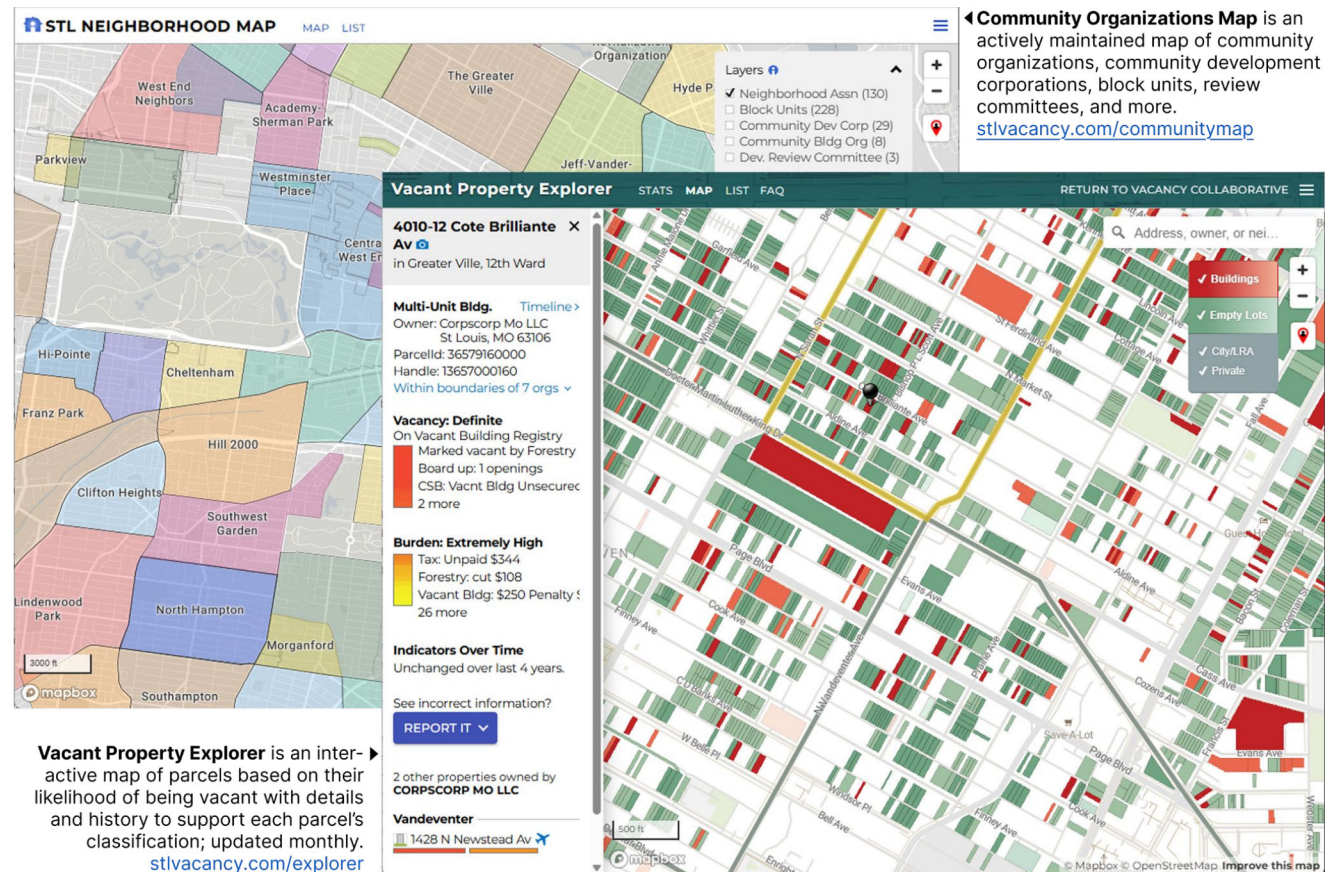


DATA TOOLS PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE

| Vacant Property Explorer | Community Organizations Map |

Vacant Property Explorer & Community Organizations Maps

Foundational tools
developed by STLVC
& volunteers,
2018-2020





DATA TOOLS NEWLY AVAILABLE

| Prioritization Model | Maps & Dashboards |

NEW Building Intervention Suitability Analysis

The Building Intervention Suitability Analysis (BISA) was developed to prioritize vacant and abandoned buildings to receive City services.

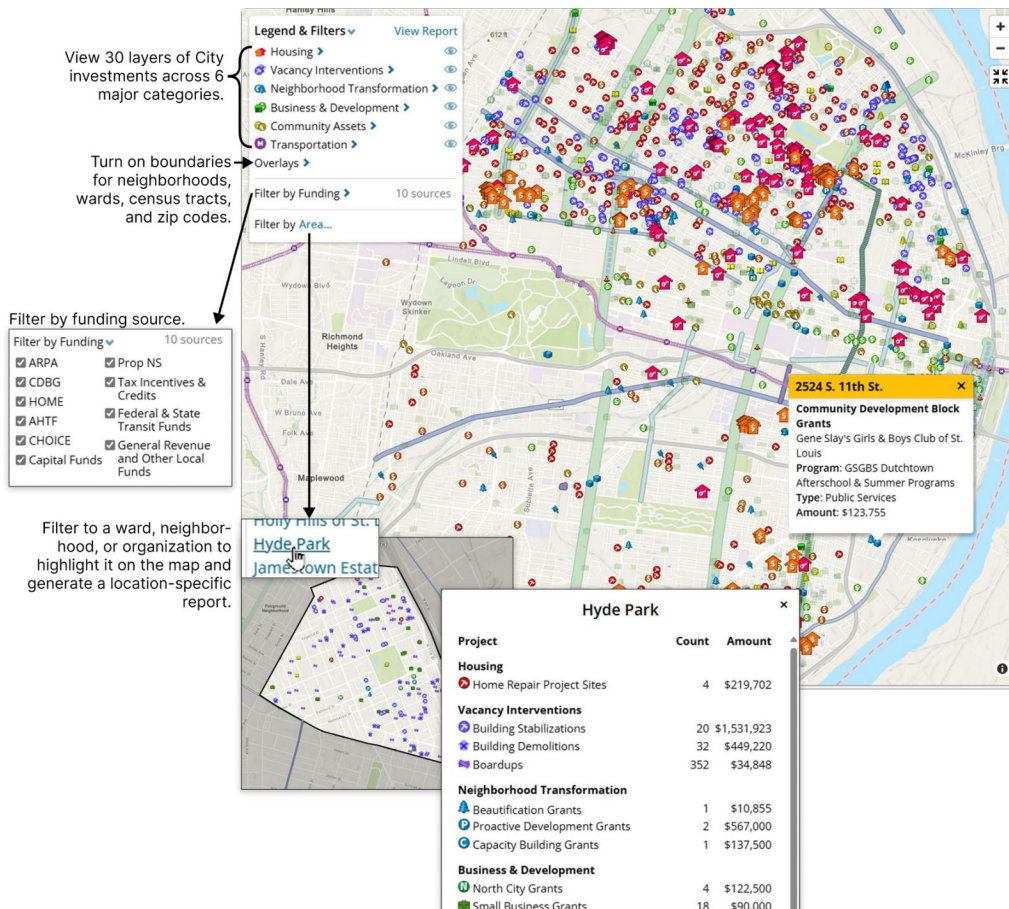
- GIS-based model with 17 data points from 9 departments & 5 software systems
- prioritizes which buildings may need intervention sooner than others
- does not prescribe *which tool* should be applied
- 3 scores can be used independently or combined

ECONOMIC INVESTMENT POTENTIAL
In Historic Districts
Near Building Stabilizations
Near Building Permits
In Redevelopment Plan Area
Near Commercial Corridor
Economic Justice Index Category

PUBLIC SAFETY
Next to a Home
Near a School
Violent Crime Calls for Service
Citizen's Service Requests
Near a Park

PROBLEM PROPERTY / ABSENTEE OWNER
Owns >1 Vacant Buildings
Entity Owner
Bldg Division Collections
Forestry Collections
Tax Delinquency
Out of MSA Owner

NEW Neighborhood Transformation Map and Dashboard

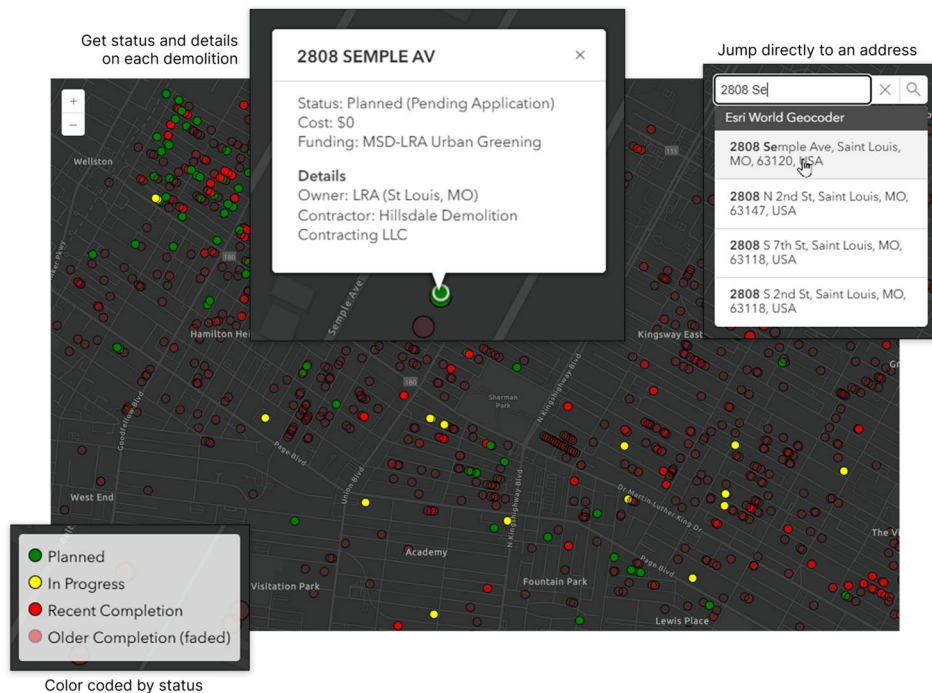


30 layers of location-specific, clickable investment data

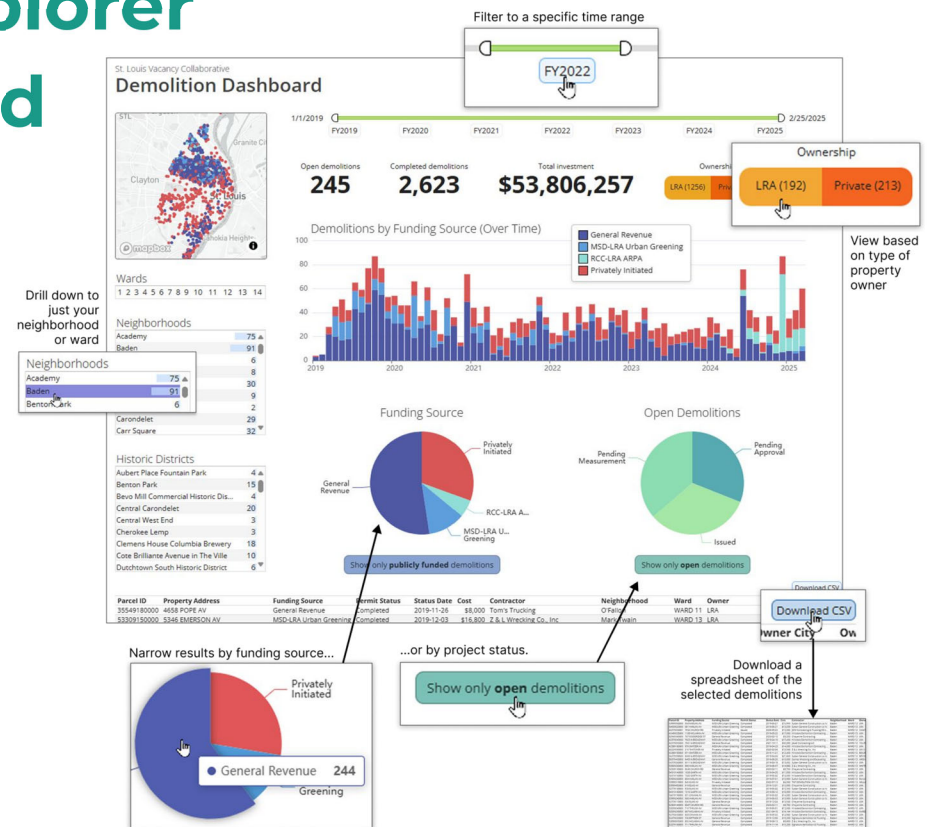
- Communicate public investments in vacancy and housing in a highly local and contextualized way
- Generate neighborhood-specific reports by type of investment and funding source

IMPROVED Demolition Explorer

NEW Demolition Dashboard



- Search for demolition status and details by specific address
- View a snapshot of demolition activity within any neighborhood



- Generate quick, customized reports of demolition activity
- Download focused spreadsheets with property owner, contractor, project cost, funding source, and structure type



STATE OF VACANCY

| Counts | Costs |

State of Vacancy 2025

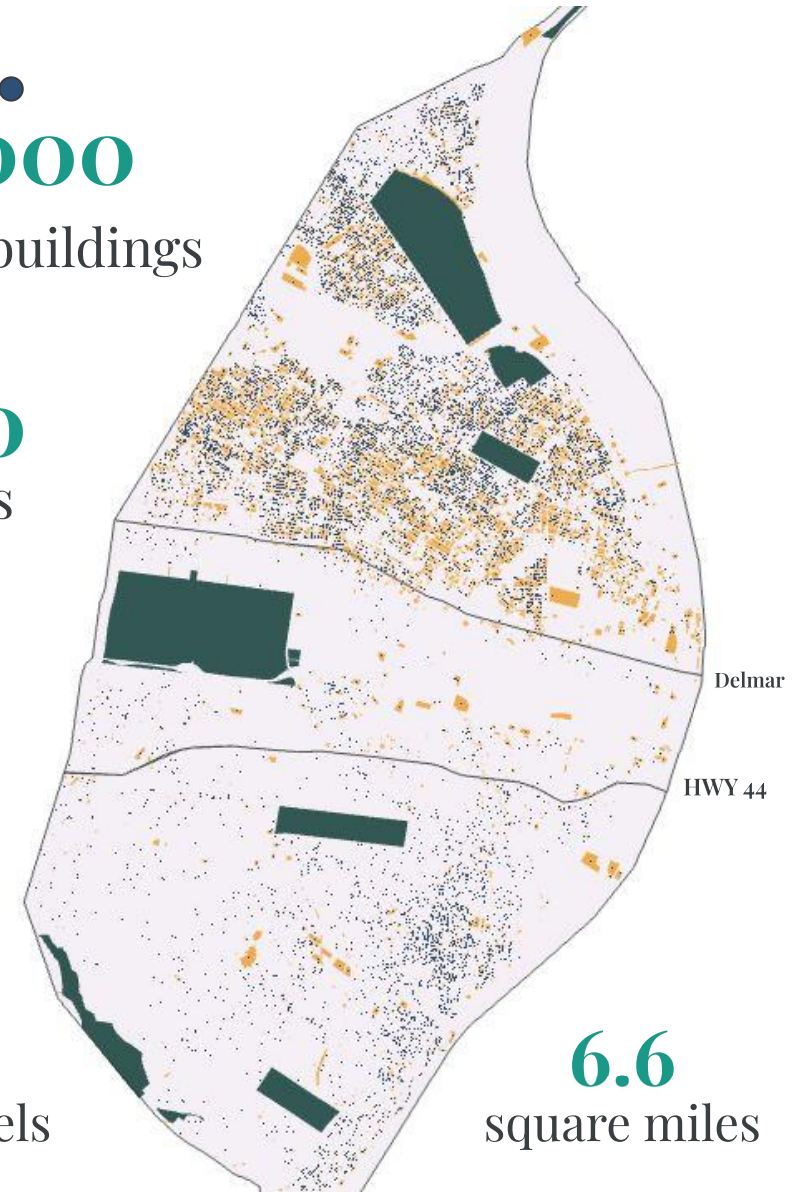
9,000
vacant buildings

15,000
vacant lots

24,000
parcels

18%
of city parcels

6.6
square miles



Data Analysis & Findings

**Overall, vacant properties
have dropped 7% in 7 years**

**Nearly 90% of properties
that are vacant today
were vacant in 2018**

Most properties had no change in status or ownership while **thousands of properties became occupied** and **nearly as many became vacant**.

This turnover did result in a net reduction in vacancy, with variations across neighborhoods.

Vacant Building Trends

Overall, the number of vacant buildings decreased by 4% since 2018.

	2018 Estimate	2025 Estimate	7-Year Change Estimate
Public Vacant Buildings	3,130	1,200	↘62%
Private Vacant Buildings	6,540	8,100	↗24%
All Vacant Buildings	9,670	9,300	↘4%

The land bank reduced their inventory of buildings by 62 percent, primarily through building demolition, while the overall number of privately-owned vacant buildings increased by nearly 25 percent.

Data Analysis & Findings

Vacant Housing Stock

Trends by Neighborhood

LRA & Prop NS Purchases *Where Are They Now*

Success Stories

Ward 7 experienced a 4% population loss between 2010 and 2020, but from 2018 to 2025 more properties became occupied than became vacant, suggesting an upward trend since the last census.

NBRHD	Nbrhd Name	2010 Population	2020 Population	% Pop Change 2010-2020	Vacant Parcels	% of Parcels Vacant	Vacant Lots	Vacant Buildings
57	Ville, The	1868	1427	-24%	902	62%	688	214
59	Jeff VanderLou	5557	4209	-24%	1935	57%	1465	470
67	Fairground	1793	1157	-35%	790	57%	626	164
60	St. Louis Place	2939	2336	-21%	762	55%	660	102
50	Wells/Goodfellow	5895	4473	-24%	2073	54%	1538	535
66	College Hill	1871	1243	-34%	731	53%	552	179
56	Greater Ville, The	6189	4545	-27%	1996	52%	1332	664
78	Hamilton Heights	3105	2187	-30%	920	51%	617	303
72	Walnut Park East	4130	2757	-33%	1233	50%	771	462
53	Fountain Park	1484	1075	-28%	312	46%	181	131
65	Hyde Park	2668	2271	-15%	924	46%	617	307
58	Vandeventer	1682	2041	21%	608	46%	472	136
54	Lewis Place	1673	1359	-19%	455	46%	291	164
63	Old North St. Louis	1916	1488	-22%	369	43%	287	82
51	Academy	2816	2355	-16%	607	40%	330	277
55	Kingsway East	3542	2502	-29%	599	37%	309	290
68	O'Fallon	5791	4342	-25%	880	36%	449	431
52	Kingsway West	3441	2604	-24%	403	32%	171	232
76	Walnut Park West	3349	2561	-24%	534	32%	202	332
71	Mark Twain	4188	3257	-22%	636	32%	358	278
48	West End	6574	6846	4%	584	30%	359	225



COST OF VACANCY

| Maintenance |
| Real Estate Taxes & Property Values |

Cost of Vacancy

FY24

Vacant properties burden City operations

\$21
MILLION
annual minimum*

** not included: debris removal and hauling, lead remediation, tree removal, department staff time*

Board up	\$130k
Mowing	\$3.2M
Demolition	\$2.7M
Stabilization	\$4.4M
Property Condition Interventions	\$10,430,000

Police	\$7.4M
Fire	\$1.6M
EMS	\$250k
Public Safety & Emergency Services	\$9,250,000

Unpaid Property Taxes	\$1,600,000
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Cost of Vacancy

estimated

UMSL | Community Innovation
and Action Center

Vacant properties depress nearby property values.

A *Spillover Analysis* of the financial impacts of vacancy on nearby property values revealed

\$310 MILLION

of lost personal property values
and unrealized wealth potential

\$25

MILLION

of unrealized
annual property
tax revenue

VSI Recommendations

Planning & Transparency efforts focus on a combination of data-informed and community-led reuse planning and improvements to the City's data infrastructure, to support informed decision making and foster trust and collaboration across neighborhoods.

Community-Led Investment highlights programs that empower residents, community-based organizations, and developers to reclaim and reuse vacant lots for infill and new development, and green spaces and green infrastructure. This theme also emphasizes the need to prevent further vacancy with housing stability through home repair funding and legal and tax assistance.

City Staff recommendations aim to expand and modernize personnel across departments, including LRA, inspections, maintenance, and permitting, to streamline processes and improve service delivery.

City Services recommendations call for coordinated agency action on property maintenance, building interventions, and strategic code and legal enforcement, all designed to improve property conditions and thereby resident quality of life, health, and safety, along with supporting reinvestment with the goal of returning properties to productive use.