



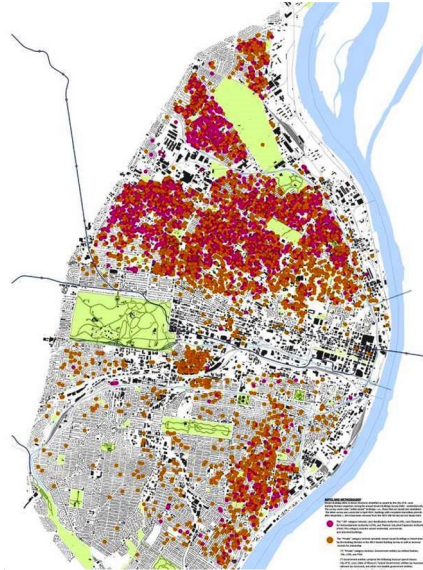
**Vacancy to Vibrancy Small Grant Initiative**



# Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions of VC Team
- VC Overview
- Small Grant Opportunity
- Questions and Answers

# The Challenge: Vacancy in St Louis



**3rd**

highest vacant property rate in the country ([source](#))

**2,500**

acres & ~25,000 parcels:  
~10,000 buildings & 15,000 lots

**65%**

of Black population lives in a high vacancy census tract compared with 19% of white population

**40%**

of fires are in vacant buildings

**The impacts of concentrated vacancy** – lower property values; higher rates of drug and gun crimes and illegal dumping; poorer environmental health; lower quality of life and sense of community pride – **disproportionately affect the health and wealth of low-income communities of color.**

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## COLLABORATIVE

Origins in 2015 w/ SLACO & community  
Launched in 2018 w/ public workshop  
40+ organizations and groups  
12+ City departments  
100s of individual volunteers

Steering Committee and 5 Project Groups:

- **Guide to Community Conversations About Displacement & Neighborhood Development**
- **Policy and Legislation**
- **Recognized Community Organizations**
- **Small Grants for Greening Vacant Lots**
- **Strategic Code Enforcement**

# Who We Are



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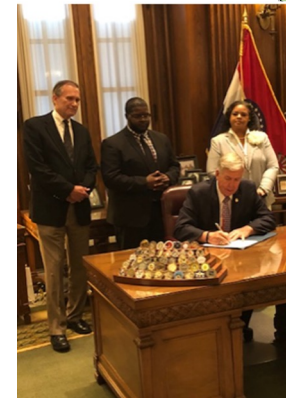


# What We Do

- Develop and share information about vacancy solutions
- Support training and outreach for residents, rehabbers, and groups
- Host and develop data tools to provide critical information on vacant properties, demolition, and community groups
- Advocate for legislation to improve our response to vacancy
- Support City pilot programs in lot maintenance, deconstruction, public health, and stabilization



<b>January 24</b>	Which Financing is Right for Me – Ask a Lender	<b>May 23</b>	LRA, Tax Sales & Proposition Neighborhood Stabilization
<b>February 28</b>	Permits, Inspections, Zoning, & Historic Districts	<b>June-July</b>	No Training Summer break
<b>March 28</b>	Ask a Lawyer – Ask an Accountant	<b>August 22</b>	Risk Management Fundamentals
<b>April 25</b>	Cash Flow, Maintenance, & Major Repairs	<b>September 26</b>	Historic Tax Credits & Tax Abatement







# Small Grant Initiative



## The Opportunity

The Vacancy to Vibrancy grant is a small grants program for vacant lot beautification and activation in St. Louis City. Local organizations and nonprofits can apply for \$1,500-\$5,000 to create a vibrant green space on a vacant lot in their community.



# Project Goals



1. Reduce Vacancy
2. Engage Community
3. Equity and Inclusivity
4. Sustainability



# Grant Outcomes

1

Reduce  
Vacancy

2

Strengthen  
Community  
Health

3

Improve  
Quality  
of Life

4

Increase use  
& Awareness  
of toolkit





# The Grant

- Awards from \$1,500 - \$5,000
- Approximately 5 projects selected
- Projects start May of 2024 and completed no later than October 31, 2024 (earlier October completion is best)
- Use of Vacant Lot Toolkit and Grant Worksheets
- Meet grant goals and outcomes



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COLLABORATIVE

# Grant Requirements

- Vacant Lot Transformation
- Privately owned property by a group or nonprofit, **not individual**
- New Project - Your project should be on a vacant property with no existing developments, buildings, garden beds, etc. If you have an existing project that was abandoned and needs revitalized, you are eligible.
- Greening Project for Community Usage
- Community Engagement
- Ongoing Maintenance



# Community Engagement

Groups applying will be required to engage the community for feedback. Some ideas for capturing feedback include:

- Get feedback from neighbors of the project location
- Present or ask for feedback at a community event
- Posted signage, flyers, or mailers
- Obtain Letters of support
- Online surveys or voting

The more efforts you can show for community engagement the more points will be awarded to your application.



# Who Can Apply?

- Community Organizations
- Nonprofits - Not necessary to be a 501(c)(3)
- For-Profit Groups

Individuals are not eligible to apply for the grant.

Grant applicants must use the grant for projects that are accessible to the public.

If you are in need of a fiscal sponsor, our group will assist you.



# Important Details

## BEFORE YOU APPLY

- Do you have a team of at least 3 people?
- Do you have a vacant lot selected?
- Can your project be successfully completed in 6 months?
- Will your project Improve community health and quality of life?

## IMPORTANT DATES

- Grant opens **February 9<sup>th</sup>**
- Questions due **February 23<sup>rd</sup>**
- Updated FAQ released **March 1<sup>st</sup>**
- Resource Fair **March 9<sup>th</sup>**
- Proposals submitted by ~~March 29<sup>th</sup>~~ **UPDATED: April 12<sup>th</sup>**
- Decisions will be communicated by ~~April 25<sup>th</sup>~~ **UPDATED: May 17<sup>th</sup>**
- Contracts signed in May and first payment





# Important Details

## Property Access Explained

- If your group owns the property, you are eligible to apply.
- If your group has a current garden lease, and have plans/funds to purchase the property, you are eligible to apply.
- If your group plans to purchase a lot from LRA, and you have plans/funds to purchase the property, you are eligible to apply
- If your group has access to an existing project that has been abandoned, you are eligible to apply.

**NOTE: Grant funds are not for purchasing property, only for activation and transformation of a vacant property.**



# How to Apply

- Fill out the grant application including all worksheets and budget template
- Submit your application and budget via email to [VCAdmin@communitybuildersstl.org](mailto:VCAdmin@communitybuildersstl.org)
- You may also mail or drop off your application if requested.
- **Applications are due ~~March 29<sup>th</sup>~~ Updated: April 12th**



# Budget

- Use the Small Grants budget template
- Budget requests should be divided into 6 months according to your project plan.
- Generally, payments will be made as follows:
  - May 24<sup>th</sup> – funds can be dispersed
  - Funds will continue to be dispersed in accordance with project plan and budget template.
  - Funds will be fully dispersed no later than September 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Note: Grants may be partially awarded or fully funded`



# Reporting

- Completed reporting documents (templates will be provided) are due on July 31 and November 30
- Midway through your project you will complete a grant report with a budget template to date, receipts, progress photos, events, etc. due at the end of July
- Final grant report will be similar but includes ongoing maintenance plans are due at the end of November.



**Questions?**