

The background of the entire page is a dark blue color. Overlaid on this is a light blue, stylized map of St. Louis, showing the city's street grid and the Mississippi River. In the top left corner, there are several vertical bars of varying heights. On the right side, there is a vertical strip containing a stylized illustration of the Gateway Arch and the Missouri State Capitol building, with horizontal lines below them. At the bottom right, there are three wavy lines representing water.

Pillar #2: **Neighborhood Transformation**

Neighborhood Transformation

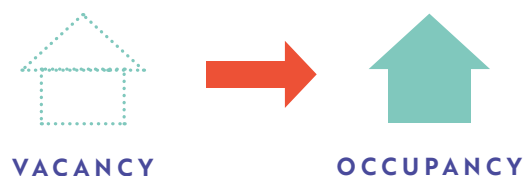
Leverage community assets to transform physical, social, and economic aspects of historically disinvested neighborhoods to build their collective capacity and wealth-building opportunities.



Economic justice at the neighborhood level requires place-based strategies that are supported by adequate resources accessible to those who need them most. Investment must be directed to quality housing, areas of economic and commercial activity, and the land on which the community is built. Each of these components is critical to transforming neighborhoods for the better. A long history of wealth extraction, disinvestment, and environmental damage has created significant challenges that disproportionately affect communities of color. However, there are equally as many opportunities to address these issues.

Actions focus on building capacity and wealth within neighborhoods via increased homeownership, anti-displacement, reactivation of unoccupied land, equitable transit options, urban agriculture, home repair, and more. These tactics can be understood as strategies to advance housing justice, environmental justice, and commercial corridor revitalization. Partnering with other organizations and city departments will be necessary for transformative action across St. Louis. SLDC - and especially the Land Reutilization Authority (LRA) located within the agency - have a strong leadership role to play city-wide in working toward these goals.

**MOVING OUR
LANGUAGE FROM
VACANCY TO
OCCUPANCY, FROM
A LIABILITY TO
AN ASSET, FROM A
RESPONSIBILITY TO
AN OPPORTUNITY**



Capacity building work through a justice lens requires starting from a strengths-based framework rather than a deficit-based mindset. When mentioning what have traditionally been referred to as vacant parcels, the term shifts to “unoccupied” to signal an intentional effort to move these properties from a liability to an asset and from a responsibility to an acknowledge and valued opportunity.

NEIGHBORHOOD CAPACITY BUILDING

Invest in Neighborhood Planning and Community-Driven Implementation

1

Deploy SLDC staff to support neighborhood planning processes and align financial resources and partnerships for implementation of community-driven plans

- ➡ Hire 7 Neighborhood Managers that will provide direct support and coordination between SLDC and neighborhood organizations and residents.
- ➡ Hire 2 additional focused support staff that will support the Project Connect and Small Business efforts in neighborhoods.
- ➡ Hold regular meetings between the Neighborhood Managers and leadership of CDCs in their footprint.
- ➡ Ensure Neighborhood Managers attend the public neighborhood meetings in their footprint to understand existing capacity and inform residents and leadership of the role of neighborhood managers.



“Create ownership and partnership opportunities in our communities for residents when giving incentives to developers.”



NEIGHBORHOOD CAPACITY BUILDING

2

Strengthen neighborhood-based organizations and community development corporations (CDCs) through grants, forgivable loans, organizational capacity support, and mentorship with established organizations.

- ➡ Utilize Neighborhood Managers to connect organizations and residents with additional resources, including City resources related to opening a business, securing permits or licensing, and façade grant opportunities.
- ➡ Utilize funding to assist CDCs with capacity building and operations.
- ➡ Utilize a portion of the \$37M corridor funding to work with CDCs to implement catalytic projects that fulfill community needs.
- ➡ Expand investment in the Missouri Main Street program to empower residents to drive commercial development along streets and community nodes.
- ➡ Work with Invest STL to provide more robust funding to CDCs. Seek outside funding from large corporate funders and major foundations to support the on-the-ground community development work of CDCs.

3

Work with community partners to identify priority buildings for stabilization and development and support projects that meet community needs.

- ➡ Work with PDA and community organizations to identify important buildings and create a plan for their future use.
- ➡ Prioritize investment in historic buildings by leveraging the Historic Preservation Fund to support this work, prioritizing historic buildings.
- ➡ Focus this work on priority corridors and areas identified through the Economic Justice Index.
- ➡ Coordinate with the LRA to facilitate the development of LRA properties in neighborhoods.



OCCUPANCY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Activate the City's Unoccupied Land to Accelerate Growth

1

Modernize the LRA to allow it to better fulfill its mission of managing properties and returning them to productive use.

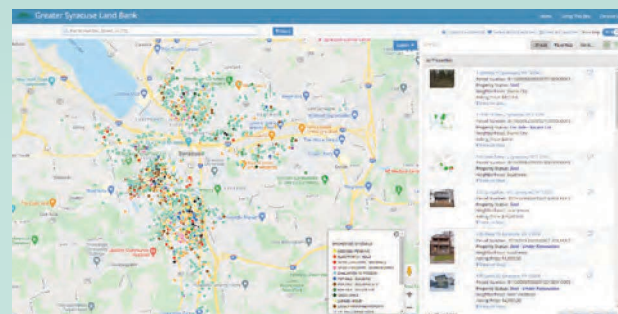
- ➡ Prepare and adopt a new Operating Plan for the LRA that includes the agency's goals and corresponding performance measures, programs, and budget for the coming year. Re-evaluate this plan annually.
- ➡ Publish an annual report that measures the LRA's progress toward its goals in the operating plan.
- ➡ Hire up to 4 staff to reflect the realignment of the organization.
- ➡ Utilize \$15M in State ARPA funds to conduct a full inventory of LRA's properties.
- ➡ Work with the Collector of Revenue to inventory tax-delinquent property and develop strategic enforcement mechanisms for LRA properties.
- ➡ Develop a new LRA website, linked from the SLDC website, which contains the STL Vacancy Map, allows for online applications and payments, and details the process of buying LRA property.
- ➡ Request additional operating funds for LRA from the Board of Aldermen.
- ➡ Integrate all LRA data into the new CityWorks platform (currently Geo St. Louis) to better understand land availability and provide a more transparent and accessible tool to the public.

CASE STUDY

GREATER SYRACUSE LAND BANK

The Greater Syracuse Land Bank has an interactive mapping portal that includes up-to-date information about unoccupied properties. The database includes the following information about each unoccupied parcel:

Parcel Number	Building Total Square Footage
Asking Price	Year Built
Renovation Estimate	Parcel Total Square Footage
Property Status	Parcel Width
Neighborhood	Parcel Length
Structure Type	Zoning District
In Homeownership	Acquisition Date
Choice Program Y/N	Full Written Description
Number of Bedrooms	Interior and Exterior Photos
Number of Bathrooms	Lead Disclosure
Number of Half-Baths	Contract & Application for Purchase
Number of Stories	



OCCUPANCY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

2

Fund land maintenance and clean-up, environmental remediation, and clearing of unoccupied lots for strategic redevelopment and empower neighborhood-based organizations' participation and inclusion in the stewardship of LRA properties

- > Implement a new process that informs CDC's and Neighborhood Associations of newly acquired LRA properties and allowed them to be put on "hold pending expression of interest".
- > Work with the Vacancy Collaborative to advocate for additional funding for vacancy work in the City of St. Louis.
- > Leverage EPA funds and available programs to remediate and prepare unoccupied properties for sale.

3

Work with other City Departments to improve the city code enforcement process.

- > Proactively connect residents with resources to resolve violations. Leverage existing home repair resources to do this.
- > Create a process map of the existing code enforcement system including existing steps and places for improvement.



"Create & fund neighborhood jobs for ongoing maintenance of neighborhood properties needing curb appeal & beautification."

OCCUPANCY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

4

Fund building stabilization through preservation and rehabilitation when possible, and quality demolition or deconstruction when necessary.

- > Provide grants and forgivable loans for projects in historic buildings and neighborhoods within Qualified Census Tracts and EJI-1 and EJI-2 areas.
- > In qualified census tracks and EJI 1 and EJI 2 areas, assist PDA and other relevant departments in the establishment of additional historic districts in St. Louis
- > Define a demolition standard to assess condition of LRA properties and create a strategy for future demolition decisions.
- > Formalize existing partnership with the Building Division to continue the stabilization and board-up efforts on LRA properties.
- > Define a comprehensive maintenance program that includes target standards for maintenance and stabilization for all properties in the LRA inventory.
- > Work with the Cultural Resources Office and Preservation Board to utilize the 2014 "demolition by neglect" ordinance to target the owners of historic buildings to bill owners for emergency repairs.

5

Invest in urban agriculture, community open spaces, greenways, and green infrastructure.

- > Strengthen the LRA garden lease program and work with neighborhood organizations to protect and develop community-driven food production in designated areas.

CASE STUDY

LAND BANK OF KANSAS CITY, MO

The KCMO Land Bank has established a set of internal policies and procedures related to demolition, including a 50-point checklist for each structure that categorizes structures into one of three categories.

1. Structures receiving 35 points and above are slated for top-priority demolition.
2. Structures receiving 15-35 points may be demolished based on the availability of resources and may also be sold for less than 2/3 market value, based on the value of repairs required.
3. Structures receiving less than 15 points will be maintained and must be sold for 2/3 market value or more.

The demolition checklist includes a variety of criteria which add and subtract points depending on the indicator:

- ▶ *Unoccupied lot can be combined with adjoining Land Bank property.*
- ▶ *Repair cost to value ratio (based on Repair Estimate form adopted by KCMO).*

St. Louis should pursue a similar demolition criteria checklist that also includes indicators relating to the preference of local Community Development Corporations and compliance with Official City or Neighborhood Plans.

CASE STUDY

STAY MIDTOWN PROGRAM - DETROIT, MI

Stay Midtown is a residential retention program targeted toward Midtown's working class population, offering rental assistance for eligible Midtown residents that are experiencing a housing cost burden due to a recent increase in rent. Residents qualifying for help receive up to \$4,500 over a three-year period to bring their total housing expenses down to 30% of their income, a level considered normal under federal guidelines. A little over \$400,000 is available to pay incentives, with funding coming from the Kresge Foundation, Ford Foundation and the specialized lender Capital Impact Partners, which also helped design the program.

HOUSING ACCESSIBILITY

Expand Access to Homeownership and Safe, Stable, and Affordable Housing

1

Increase the pipeline of homeownership and affordable housing opportunities for residents.

- Establish the Housing Development Fund and utilize \$15M of seed money to fill appraisal gaps for homebuyers in distressed markets.
- Engage local and national philanthropic institutions to provide ongoing funding to the Housing Development Fund to create a home ownership grant program for residents in EJI-1 and EJI-2 areas, filling the appraisal gap in key neighborhoods.
- Offer mortgage assistance in historically redlined neighborhoods to promote market-rate homeownership to public sector employees and individuals who moved from the City of St. Louis since 2010.
- Design an inclusionary housing incentive policy to support the development of mixed-income neighborhoods by promoting workforce and low-income rental housing units.
- Offer home buying information and mortgage technical assistance through the Economic Empowerment Center. Ensure at least one staff member knowledgeable of homebuying resources is working primarily out of the EEC to provide access to and guidance through housing assistance services.
- Continue offering the Low-Income Housing Fund which prioritizes low-income housing development in higher-income areas. Seek additional funding for this program.
- Support existing residents with \$15k down payment assistance programs for city workers, teachers, police, firemen, and others.
- Facilitate the Post-Secondary Student Housing Program in partnership with local institutions to increase educational attainment opportunities and provide targeted housing financial assistance.

CASE STUDY

PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT WITH HOME REPAIR PROGRAM - KANSAS CITY, MO

The Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City (EDCKC) through the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA) offers homeowners the opportunity for a property tax abatement, allowing those who live within a designated Urban Renewal Area (URA) within the city limits of Kansas City, MO to apply to have property tax rates locked in for a period of 10 years. To qualify for the residential property tax abatement, property taxes must be current and paid in full. Additionally, a minimum of \$5,000 for repairs and construction must be performed, addressing exterior conditions first. These repairs could include foundation repair, fixing a damaged roof or soffits, upgrading deteriorated electrical or plumbing systems, HVAC upgrades, window replacement, and exterior paint.

HOUSING ACCESSIBILITY

2

Fund the production and preservation of housing as diverse as our city.

- > Prioritize \$4M of ARPA funding devoted to the development of affordable rental units for households that do not exceed 30% AMI.
- > Use \$10M from American Rescue Plan Act to create a revolving loan fund to finance the creation of additional affordable housing with M/WBE developers in EJI-1 and EJI-2 areas.
- > Leverage existing Prop NS funds to rehab LRA properties and develop affordable housing throughout the City.
- > Actively market LRA land that is cleared and zoned for residential development.
- > Support the Missouri Low Income Housing Tax Credit and the State Historic Tax Credit programs to ensure their continued survival by providing testimony, lobbying assistance, and support as needed.
- > Require affordable housing set-asides for market-rate residential or mixed-use developments.
- > Collaborate with MHDC to align priorities and support strategic projects in the City of St. Louis.
- > Activate the Residential Renovation Loan Commission to direct tax delinquent properties from public auction for the development of additional housing options.
- > Require affordable housing set-asides for market-rate residential or mixed-use developments in EJI 4 & EJI 5.

CASE STUDY

MULTI-FAMILY PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION - SEATTLE, WA

Seattle's Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) is available as an incentive program in all areas of Seattle zoned for multi-family and provides up to a 12-year tax exemption on new multifamily buildings in exchange for setting aside between 20% and 25% of a project's units as income and rent-restricted for 10 years.



RESIDENTIAL RENOVATION LOAN COMMISSION

Pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, the City of St. Louis may establish a Residential Renovation Loan Commission, which has the authority to fund renovation activities and is required by the authorizing statute to support homeownership for low-income residents. The Commission may own and sell property, it may select contractors and may, broadly, do all other things necessary to implement and administer the residential renovation program authorized by Sections 67.970 to 67.983 RSMo. Any renovated homes sold by this entity, which were bought from the LRA, must be sold to persons who qualify for low-income housing ownership benefits under federal or state law or both. At least 75% of all residences sold by this entity must also meet the same stipulation with respect to persons who qualify for low-income housing ownership benefits.

This entity can be funded from sources of revenue available to the City in order for it to begin operations. SLDC should work with the City to determine how to create and fund this entity as another way to support homeownership in the City of St. Louis.

HOUSING ACCESSIBILITY

3

Invest in anti-displacement efforts to retain long-term City residents, low-to-moderate income residents, and elderly households.

- ➡ Work with the City of St. Louis to create a formalized rental assistance program that assists residents that are experiencing a housing cost burden. Tie this program to Circuit Breaker Policy so that eligible funds can be reimbursed.
- ➡ Allocate a portion of Economic Justice Fund to support rental assistance through low-interest loans.
- ➡ Utilize the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program to reduce energy costs and increase affordability for residents of rental properties and privately owned homes.
- ➡ Work with Community Development Administration (CDA) to market the existing Healthy Home Repair Program to eligible households with information available on the SLDC website and through the Economic Empowerment Center.
- ➡ Consider granting Tax Abatement for homes that qualify for Healthy Home Repair Program to lessen the burden of increasing property taxes on long-term residents, especially in EJI-1 and EJI-2 areas.

CASE STUDY

PORTLAND, OR RIGHT TO RETURN PROGRAM

The N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy is a Portland Housing Bureau initiative to address displacement in North and Northeast Portland through investments in new affordable housing, home ownership opportunities, and home retention programs for longtime residents. In January 2015, community advocacy for affordable housing in the rapidly gentrifying area culminated in a \$20 million housing plan from the City of Portland. The City's commitment to housing opportunities for the N/NE Portland community has grown to more than \$70 million since then.

A central feature of the strategy is the N/NE Preference Policy, which prioritizes current and former longtime residents of N/NE Portland with generational ties to the community for the City's affordable housing investments. The policy was created to address the harmful impacts of urban renewal by giving preference to housing applicants who were displaced, are at risk of displacement, or are the descendants of families displaced due to urban renewal in N/NE Portland. To be eligible for the down payment assistance loans or to access affordable rental units, applicants must meet income qualifications (30-60% AMI) regardless of preference points or priority status.

SLDC should consider a similar program in partnership with the City of St. Louis to assist first-time homebuyers who were displaced from EJI-1 and EJI-2 areas in the City over the past several decades. Support for these individuals returning to their former neighborhoods helps achieve economic justice and attract residents back to the City. Many of these residents left because of a lack of economic opportunity and the persistence of neighborhood decline. The City should have a program that presents an opportunity to build wealth for those that return to the City as neighborhoods stabilize and transform. In addition, SLDC should work with the City to establish other "right to return programs" such as providing up to 100 households each year with a transferable tax credit of \$10,000 if they can provide proof of previous residency in St. Louis.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The following outputs/impacts are aligned with ARPA funding through 2026.

NEIGHBORHOOD CAPACITY BUILDING

Invest in Neighborhood Planning and Community-Driven Implementation

- ▶ At least 10 neighborhoods have a neighborhood plan from within the past 10 years
- ▶ Neighborhood Managers have held at least **100 community/partnering convenings**
- ▶ At least **1,000 residents** have participated in the community planning process
- ▶ At least 5 CDC's receive substantial support from SLDC
- ▶ Continued investment in Main Street Programs

OCCUPANCY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Transform the City's Unoccupied Land From a Liability to an Asset

- ▶ Receive additional funding from the Board of Aldermen for LRA operations
- ▶ At least **10% of LRA unoccupied lot inventory has been stabilized**, and/or activated
- ▶ Increase the land used for greenways, community gardens, or other green uses

HOUSING ACCESSIBILITY

Expand Access to Homeownership and Safe, Stable, and Affordable Housing

- ▶ Development of at least **1,000 additional housing units**.
- ▶ Offer at least 40 homebuyer education sessions (pre-and post-closing) through partner organizations
- ▶ Provide **access to home repair** assistance programs to at least 100 residents
- ▶ Provide access to the PACE program for at least 100 residents

