

2014 Entry Form
(Complete one for each entry.)

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name _____

HFA _____

Submission Contact _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Qualified Entries must be received by **Tuesday, July 1, 2014**.

For more information about Qualified Entries, [click here to access the 2014 Entry Rules](#).

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA _____

Entry Name _____

Communications	Homeownership	Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs
Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Abandon Property Program

Introduction/Program Need

Strategic demolition, securing, and rehabilitating abandoned properties can play a vital role in improving neighborhood conditions and be the tipping point in community stabilization and revitalization. When the recession hit the United States, Illinois was among many states to experience high foreclosure and vacant property rates. As Illinoisans rebuild their communities and pick up the pieces from the mortgage crisis, abandoned properties still negatively affect many areas throughout the state. Vacant and abandoned residential properties impact the vitality of a community and put a strain on municipal resources across Illinois. These properties create safety issues and bring down the property values of neighboring homes.

RealtyTrac.com reports 99,666 Illinois properties had at least one foreclosure filing in 2013, giving the state a foreclosure rate of 1.89 percent. Nationally among metro areas, Rockford ranked eighth (2.59%) and Chicago ranked 11th (2.4%). In December 2013, the suburban counties of Will, McHenry, Kendall, Kane, and Lake had the highest foreclosure rates statewide. State foreclosure numbers have gone down 27% compared to 2012 but vacant properties continue to be a negative drag on community revitalization efforts. There is a direct correlation between foreclosures and abandoned properties. USA Today stated that one in five homes in the foreclosure process stands vacant after being abandoned by owners. In Illinois, nearly 10% of all homes in the state currently sit vacant (according to realtytrac.com).

To address these issues, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed Senate Bill 16 into law in 2013 to create the Abandoned Property Program (“APP”). Under this program, the Illinois Housing Development Authority (“IHDA”) makes grants to municipalities and counties for the demolition and maintenance of abandoned residential properties within their jurisdiction. Funding is derived from foreclosure filing fees paid by banks and lending institutions and funds are distributed throughout the state geographically, as determined by enabling legislation.

IHDA staff spent many hours working with Governor Quinn’s office and a host of advocates and municipalities to pass this legislation. While SB 16 created the Abandoned Property Program, it also expedites the foreclosure and sale process for abandoned properties. This allows these properties to enter the market or be removed at a much quicker rate, reducing the number of abandoned homes overall. The expedited foreclosure process for abandoned homes allows the courts to complete a foreclosure in 90 days, down from 600, while putting safeguards in place to protect the rights of property owners, tenants, legal occupants, and lenders. The tiered fee structure of this legislation ensures that financial institutions pay foreclosure fees based on their size, protecting smaller community banks and credit unions.

Program Description

Senate Bill 16 gives IHDA the authority to make grants to municipalities and counties for the maintenance and demolition of abandoned properties within their jurisdiction. Effective June 1, 2013, banks and lending institutions pay the clerk of the county court a \$500, \$250, or \$50 filing fee for each residential foreclosure, which is then deposited into the Abandoned Residential Property Fund. Filing fees are dependent upon the total number of foreclosure complaints the financial institution has filed in the previous year. As determined by legislation, funds are allocated as follows: 1) 25% to the City of

Chicago; 2) 30% to Cook County and municipalities in Cook County, other than the City of Chicago; 3) 30% to the collar counties of DuPage, Lake, McHenry, and Will as well as municipalities inside those counties; and 4) 15% to the balance of counties in the state.

Eligible uses under the program are cutting, trimming, removal of neglected weeds, grass, bushes, trees; demolition; board up; extermination or prevention of pests; removal of garbage, debris, and graffiti; surrounding parcel with a fence or a wall; and rehabilitation (limited to exterior safety). Activities apply to residential buildings of 1-6 units. Fees are collected until December 31, 2017, but the Program will continue until funds are fully expended.

To make the greatest impact, a maximum grant amount was established at \$75,000. Award amounts are dependent on the amount of funding available and the capacity of the applicant to undertake the planned activities as well as other applicants in the same geographic area. An applicant may request a waiver of the maximum grant amount in an amount not to exceed \$250,000 by demonstrating exemplary capacity, need and impact, and providing dollar for dollar match funding on the amount above \$75,000. All expenses will be reported to IHDA and funds will be reimbursed after they are expended. Either municipal staff or third-party service providers may perform all eligible activities. Grantees must comply with all applicable environmental laws and historic preservation requirements and certify to these and other standard certifications in the grant application.

Implementation

IHDA created the grant application with input from various departments. Representatives from our legislative, community affairs, legal, and policy/programs teams created an application covering five categories: Need, Capacity, Impact, Budget and Cost Reasonableness, and Readiness to Proceed. In October 2013, IHDA released the application for Round 1.

To reach as much of the state as possible, IHDA conducted outreach through the Illinois Municipal League, the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, and the Illinois General Assembly. IHDA hosted three application workshops – in south suburban Cook County, in the far west suburb of Elgin, and downstate in Springfield. Two webinars were held for statewide access. Once applications were received in December 2013, a review team spent three months reviewing 93 applications (representing 40 of the 102 counties) from counties, municipalities, and land banks around the state. With IHDA board authorization, Round 1 grant agreements are currently being finalized with grantees, with an August 1, 2014 effective date. IHDA is tracking the collection of receipts statewide in anticipation of Round 2 funding.

Ensuring accessibility to program information, IHDA created a dedicated APP page on the IHDA website with information including Program Rules, a FAQ, the Program Application, and webinar presentations. IHDA also created a dedicated email address, APPinfo@ihda.org to take questions and receive applications.

Lastly, IHDA is collaborating with The Center for Community Progress, a national leader providing local, state, and federal policies and best practices that address the full cycle of property revitalization. Together we are jointly-sponsoring a peer-to-peer webinar for applicants, grantees, and potential grantees focusing on “Strategic Demolition” to share best practices and further assist communities in their revitalization efforts.

Results

One of our early goals when starting this program was to impact the entire state with these funds and distribute them as evenly as possible given the legislative limits. After months of painstaking review and internal deliberation we feel we have achieved this initial goal. In Round 1, fifty-three applicants received awards totaling \$7.2 million in grant funds. Funds will be used to assist communities with eligible uses, reducing the strain on municipal resources, including police and fire, and helping to create community vitality and pride. Over \$6.3 million, representing approximately 70% of grant funds, were requested for

demolition, removing an estimated 750 abandoned homes from communities around the state. According to a recent study out of Cleveland, for every \$1 spent on demolition there was a return of over \$13 in value for nearby properties in high functioning markets and a decline in mortgage foreclosure of nearly 3%.

Communities have already started making positive changes with the announcement of their awards. One community started with six blight inspectors. As a result of these funds they have now hired seven additional part time seasonal blight inspectors.

Conclusion

Addressing abandoned and vacant properties is an essential step that must be taken to keep our communities strong and our economic recovery moving forward. The Abandoned Property Program builds on existing efforts to bring much needed relief to help Illinois families and communities begin to thrive again.

In the application, we asked each community to describe the positive effects of their current efforts and how the Abandoned Property Program would help leverage any existing efforts. As one grantee noted in their application,

“The city acquired an abandoned home in a state of disrepair. While the home was being rehabilitated by the contractor, the city’s neighborhood improvement officer noticed that surrounding property owners seemed to be taking better care of their own lots. One neighbor was putting siding on their home, another neighbor across the street bought a small vacant lot adjacent to his and has been mowing and maintaining it. There is a renewed sense of pride. To add to the positive impacts, when the longtime leader of the neighborhood association covering these properties stepped down, it appeared no one wanted to take over leadership. However, one of the individuals who bought a home from the city stepped up. He told the neighborhood improvement officer that the city had done so much for him and his family, he felt he should give something back. This neighborhood is showing the positive impacts.”

It is stories just like this one that the Abandoned Property Program endeavors to replicate – providing an extra boost to help reach that tipping point to ultimately bring vitality to our communities, improve local conditions, restore neighborhoods, increase local property values, generate additional operating revenue for the cities, and give community members a renewed sense of pride in their neighborhoods.

VISUAL AIDS

1. Abandon Property Program FAQ’s
2. Website
3. Decatur Article
4. Glenview Article
5. Joliet Article
6. Mattoon Article
7. Will County Article
8. Stabilization Cook County Press Release

Government

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Abandoned Property Program

Under this program, IHDA will make grants to municipalities and counties for the maintenance or demolition of abandoned residential properties within their jurisdiction. Funds will be distributed throughout the state geographically as determined by the enabling legislation.

To be eligible, applicants must be a municipality or a county located in the State of Illinois.

Grant funds may be used for securing, maintaining, demolishing, or rehabilitating abandoned homes. A list of specific activities allowed as part of securing and maintaining properties may be found at [Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Program Rules](#).

Round 1 funding was approved at the April 11, 2014 meeting of the Members of the Authority. Information about Round 1 funding can be found [here](#).

For information on timing of the Round 2 application release, please check back or sign up for notifications at APPinfo@ihda.org.

More information on the overall program, process and eligibility can be found by visiting the [APP FAQ](#) or by viewing the [presentation](#).

For additional questions, please contact APPinfo@ihda.org.

Abandoned Property Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Note to reader: This is a partial list of program requirements and is meant to serve as a general guide. For the complete Rules, see [Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Program Rules](#). This FAQ may be updated from time to time. Please check back.

What is the Abandoned Property Program?

The Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund (the “Program”) was created in 2010 when Governor Quinn signed the Save Our Neighborhoods Act. Funding for the Program was expanded by subsequent legislation that Governor Quinn signed into law and took effect in June 2013.

Who can apply for funding?

To be eligible, applicants must be a municipality or a county located in the State of Illinois. A county or municipality may join with other counties/municipalities and together submit a single application. However, each county/municipality may only apply once per funding round.

When will funding be available?

It is anticipated that funds will be distributed in the winter of 2013/2014 based on the rate at which funds accumulate.

How much funding will be available?

Funding for the Program is derived solely from foreclosure filing fees paid by lending institutions and collected by the county clerk. The collection of additional filing fees began in June 2013. Of the total amount received each year:

- 1) 30% will be granted in Cook County;
- 2) 25% will be granted to the City of Chicago;
- 3) 30% will be granted in the Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will); and
- 4) 15% will be granted in other areas of the State not previously defined.

The amount of funds collected to-date may be viewed on the Illinois Comptroller’s website [here](#). The Program’s special state fund number is 892.

What are the eligible uses for funding under the Program?

Grant funds may be used for securing, maintaining, demolishing, or rehabilitating abandoned homes. The rehabilitation of an abandoned residential property is strictly limited in scope to address exterior building safety concerns such as repairing the roof, windows, doors, masonry, or walkways of an abandoned residential property. A list of specific activities allowed as part of securing and maintaining properties may be found at [Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Program Rules](#).

How is an Abandoned Property defined under the Program?

Abandoned Property is real estate that is either:

- 1) not occupied by any mortgagor or lawful occupant as a principal residence; or
- 2) contains an incomplete structure if the real estate is zoned for residential development, when the structure is empty or otherwise uninhabited and is in need of maintenance, repair or securing.

Two or more of the following conditions must be shown to exist in order for a property to be eligible:

- a) construction was initiated and was discontinued prior to completion leaving a building unsuitable for occupancy, and no construction has taken place in 6 months;
- b) multiple windows on the property are boarded up, closed off or smashed through, broken off or unhinged, or multiple window panes are broken and unrepaired;
- c) doors on the property are smashed through, broken off, unhinged, or continuously unlocked;
- d) the property has been stripped of copper or other materials, or interior fixtures to the property have been removed;
- e) gas, electric or water services to the entire property have been terminated;
- f) one or more written statements of the mortgagor or the mortgagor's personal representative or assigns, including documents of conveyance, indicate a clear intent to abandon the property;
- g) law enforcement officials have received at least one report of trespassing or vandalism or other illegal acts being committed at the property in the last 6 months;
- h) the property has been declared unfit for occupancy and ordered to remain vacant and unoccupied under an order issued by a municipality or county authority or a court of competent jurisdiction;
- i) the local police, fire or code enforcement authority has requested the owner or other interested or authorized party to secure or winterize the property due to the local authority declaring the property to be an imminent danger to the health, safety and welfare of the public;
- j) the property is open and unprotected and in reasonable danger of significant damage due to exposure to the elements, vandalism or freezing; or
- k) other evidence indicates a clear intent to abandon the property, or the real estate is zoned for residential development and is a vacant lot that is in need of maintenance, repair, and securing.

Can funds be used to maintain and secure commercial property?

No, the property must be a residential-only property of one to six units.

How does an applicant apply for funding?

A municipality or county applies to the Illinois Housing Development Authority. Round 1 funding applications are available and due December 6, 2013 by 3:00pm CST. See the [application](#) for detailed instructions on completion and submission.

Is this a grant or loan?

This is a grant. Grant funds not used in compliance with the Rules and Grant Agreement are subject to recapture.

Where does the funding come from?

The funds for the Program are collected in the State Treasury from fees paid by banks and other lending institutions on a sliding scale depending on how many foreclosures they file each year. Beginning in June 2013, institutions that file more than 175 foreclosures per year will pay \$500 per foreclosure filing, while ones with between 50 and 175 per year will pay \$250 per foreclosure filing, and those with less than 50 foreclosure filings per year will pay \$50 per filing.

Will there be funding cycles?

There is expected to be one cycle per year with the option of a second cycle based on applications received and funds available.

Is an applicant guaranteed funding?

No. Each application will be scored based on qualifications including applicant's experience or expertise to manage the activities listed in Section 381.203 of the Rules; capacity for effective fiscal management proven through a third-party audit; Applicant's ability to identify which Eligible Uses are to be undertaken with Program funds; time for expending funds (inclusion of a budget and timeline schedule for performing the eligible uses of

program funds outlined in the application); and other factors that IHDA requires to ensure proper grant administration.

What is the maximum grant amount?

A maximum grant amount of \$75,000 per county/municipality* has been established. IHDA does not anticipate that each applicant will apply for the maximum funding available, but will base their application on actual activities that can be addressed during the grant period. Award amounts will depend on the amount of funding available and the capacity of the applicant to undertake the planned activities as well as other applicants in the same geographic area.

An applicant may request a waiver of the maximum grant amount by completing the requested information in the application. An applicant must illustrate exemplary capacity, need, and impact in order to be considered for such a waiver. IHDA will consider waiver requests on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the amount of funding available in the geographic set-aside, along with the criteria set forth in the application, to determine whether to grant the waiver. In no case may any grant exceed \$250,000 to any grantee within a geographic area outside the City of Chicago.

** Exclusive of the City of Chicago, who pursuant to legislation may apply for 25% of the moneys in the Fund that have been appropriated, subject to the annual receipt of funds.*

Does it matter if the Applicant is home rule or non-home rule unit of government?

No. Home rule and non-home rule units of government may apply.

How long will the program last?

Fees are collected until December 31, 2017 and the Program will continue until funds are no longer available.

What if I have further questions?

Requests for notification of these sessions and other questions may be submitted to APPinfo@ihda.org.

Addendum as of November 15, 2013

Can we use these funds on HUD homes? (HUD is on the title)

Municipalities and counties applying for grant funds must have the legal authority to undertake activities under the program.

What is the amount of time to spend funds and complete projects?

Grant funds must be expended in two years.

Should there be a contingency plan in the application? (If an applicant is working on a project and something stops them from completing it, can a proposed back up plan to use the funds be cited in the application?)

Yes, to the extent all plans meet the requirements of the program.

Are administrative fees billable?

No. Grant funds are for Eligible Uses as defined in Section 381.203 of the Rules.

Are NSP dollars an eligible match for the waiver?

Yes.

Is the waiver match required for the full grant requestor for the amount over \$75,000?

A 1:1 (dollar for dollar) match is required for the amount over \$75,000.

How do municipalities/counties certify their status?

A letter from an officer of the municipality or county stating the municipality or county is a valid municipality or county pursuant to local law. (If awarded grant funds, at time of preparing grant agreement IHDA will need adopted resolution or ordinance from applicant allowing applicant to accept funds, and copy of certificate of incumbency of authorized officers).

Is IHDA available for pre-review?

No. But questions may be posed to APPinfo@IHDA.org and at the next webinar (see [here](#) for details).

Does an in-kind match count? (For example, a town purchased equipment for demolition/rehabilitation of abandoned buildings, would this or the personnel hours count as match?)

No. Matching funds must be direct funding or grant funds. Physical assets or other in-kind donations will not qualify as matching funds.

Can past expenses be reimbursed?

Yes, if they meet the definition of Eligible Uses in Section 381.202 of the Rules, and were incurred on or after January 1, 2012.

Do past expenses count for match?

Yes, if they are from direct funding or grant funds, meet the definition of Eligible Uses in Section 381.202 of the Rules, and were incurred on or after January 1, 2012.

What is the appropriate score you must receive to be considered for the waiver?

Those applicants scoring the highest will have done a good job demonstrating the reasons, including need, for a waiver. There is not a specific score an applicant must have, but those with the higher scores will have a better chance for receiving a waiver.

When will awards be announced?

Awards are expected to be announced in mid-late January, 2014. Grant funds are expected to be disbursed in the first or second quarter of calendar year 2014. However, all dates are subject to change.

Are buildings zoned for mixed use eligible?

No. Buildings must meet the definition of Abandoned Residential Property in Section 381.202 of the Rules.

Do we have to comply with all environmental laws for all activities?

A municipality or county must comply with all applicable environmental laws. The Abandoned Property Program was created pursuant to state statute and therefore grant funds under the program are considered state funds,

thereby triggering historic preservation and environmental requirements triggered by the activities undertaken. Every property must adhere to the requirements of a Historic Preservation review through the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (see <http://www.illinoishistory.gov/ps/rcdocument.htm>)

Are matching funds necessary if we are applying for 75,000 or less?

No.

Can an application be a mix of reimbursable and planned activities?

Yes.

If a municipality/county will be using third-party vendors, do vendor bids have to be in place before submitting an application?

No, but a solid, well estimated budget is expected.

Does a municipality/county have to go through the condemnation process before using grant funds?

Condemnation is not required.

If meeting requirements takes longer than expected (due to delays beyond applicants control, i.e., state Historic Preservation or EPA), can the applicant receive an extension?

The Grant Funds Recovery Act allows 24 months for the expenditure of funds. Funds must be expended within this time frame.

If a municipality has four homes meeting the definition of Abandoned Residential Property and there is an abandoned garage on an adjacent parcel, can grant funds be used to demolish the garage as well as the Abandoned Residential Properties?

No. In this example, demolition of the garage that is not on the same parcel does not fall within the definition of Eligible Uses in Section 381.203 of the Rules. The funds under the program are for Eligible Uses for Abandoned Residential Properties defined in Section 381.202 of the Rules.

Does a municipality/county need to get an environmental clearance review in advance of submitting an application?

No, but the applicant will need to meet all certifications, including environmental certifications, before grant funds are disbursed.

If the municipality/county is a certified unit of local government, and as such are eligible to demolish buildings, why do we need EPA and ISHPA approval (especially given these are funds from lending institutions)?

The Abandoned Property Program was created pursuant to state statute and therefore grant funds under the program are considered state funds thereby triggering state historic preservation and environmental requirements.

Will grant funds be disbursed up front or will expenses be reimbursed?

All expenses will be reported to IHDA and funds will be reimbursed after they are expended.

Will the waiver grant be pulled from the area set-asides?

Yes.

Can I use city staff to perform activities or do I have to hire third parties?

You can use either.

Will completed projects get a better score?

Applications will be reviewed in their entirety.

Will it negatively affect me to target the same area across multiple rounds?

Applications will be reviewed in their entirety by round.

Does repair to siding on a home qualify as an eligible use of grant dollars?

Please see definition of Eligible Uses in Section 381.203 of the Rules, part h) rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is defined as rehabilitation strictly limited in scope to address exterior building safety concerns such as repairing of the roof, windows, doors, masonry or walkway of an Abandoned Residential Property.

If applying for reimbursement for past activities, what type of documentation is required for submittal?

Invoices, receipts and complying with all certifications are required for reimbursement.

Is municipality/county staff time eligible for reimbursement?

Administrative staff time is not an eligible use. However, staff time for labor related to the Eligible Uses, such as the person's time cutting the grass, is eligible.

Are municipality/county equipment/materials eligible for reimbursement?

No.

Does a municipality/county have to be the owner of the abandoned property?

Municipalities and counties applying for grant funds must have the legal authority to undertake activities under the program.

What if an abandoned property has a state lien placed on it (ex: Public Aid lien), like on a home where a person has been placed in a nursing home for years and the home was left abandoned? How are those state liens handled or would they even be eligible?

Municipalities and counties applying for grant funds must have the legal authority to undertake activities under the program.

How will having more than 1:1 match affect my request for a waiver?

Applications will be reviewed in their entirety and award amounts will be subject to available funds and the number and quality of applications received.

If an applicant is awarded an amount less than the requested grant amount, how will that be addressed?

Once awarded, an applicant will be required to submit a revised budget based on the award they receive which may be equal to or less than their requested grant amount.

Addendum as of November 21, 2013

If costs are incurred for liens, fines, citations and attorney fees, are applicants allowed to bill those to this program? If they are, do they have to repay IHDA if the lien is lifted or a settlement is made? (During a fast track demo you cannot bill attorney fees; can you use APP to pay these fees?)

Program funds can be used to reimburse applicants for Eligible Uses, as that term is defined in Section 381.203 of the Rules. Liens, fines, citations and attorney's fees are not stated Eligible Uses. With respect to the repayment of funds if a lien is settled or lifted, please refer to the Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS5/11/20/15.1 (i-5), which states that all amounts received by the municipality for costs incurred pursuant to this section for which the municipality has been reimbursed under Section 7.31 of the Illinois Housing Development Act shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit into the Abandoned Residential Municipality Relief Fund. Applicants should consult with their legal counsel regarding the maintenance of liens.

Are multi-family buildings eligible?

Residential buildings of 1-6 units that meet the definition of Abandoned Residential Property, as that term is defined in Section 15-100.7 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure and Section 381.202 of the Rules, and Residential Real Estate, as that term is defined in Section 15-1219 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure are eligible.

Do grant funds have to be repaid?

Generally, grant funds are not required to be repaid; however, in cases where a municipality has been repaid costs incurred pursuant to Section 5/11-20-15.1(i-5) of the Illinois Municipal Code, for which the municipality has been reimbursed under the Program, the municipality is required to repay the State Treasurer for those costs and those repaid funds will be deposited into the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund.

If we apply and are successful for dollars to reimburse demolitions that have previously been done in our community, would we still be able to maintain certain liens (i.e. weeds) in order to allow us to foreclose on those properties?

Applicable local laws should be followed. Municipalities and counties should consult with their legal counsel.

Can asbestos abatement be an eligible cost?

Asbestos abatement may be an eligible use of Program funds if the asbestos abatement falls under an Eligible Use as defined in Section 381.203 of the Rules. For more information regarding asbestos requirements, see www.epa.state.il.us/air/asbestos.

Is the demolition of an abandoned school that is zoned residential eligible for the Abandoned Property Program?

In order to be reimbursed for Eligible Uses under the Program, the building must meet the definition of Abandoned Residential Property, as that term is defined in Section 15-100.7 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure and Section 381.202 of the Rules, and Residential Real Estate, as that term is defined in Section 15-1219 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure.

Council to focus on city's appearance

June 02, 2014 3:00 am • [By ALLISON PETTY H&R Staff Writer](#)

DECATUR — Several measures before the Decatur City Council tonight are aimed at cleaning up the city's appearance.

The council is slated to consider accepting a \$75,000 grant from the Illinois Housing Development Authority that would allow it to demolish additional dangerous and abandoned properties. It's a goal that city leaders have said they will pursue aggressively this year, having already set aside \$750,000 in Community Development Block Grant money for that purpose.

"We're actively working through the backlog of homes that are on the demolition list," City Manager Ryan McCrady said.

McCrady said the average property costs \$8,000 to demolish, so the additional money will help the city demolish eight to nine more.

An item on the consent agenda also would allow the council to authorize a list of "unsafe structures," which is the first step to pursuing court-ordered demolition. The list in the council packet includes 23 properties, their listed owners and a short description of the issues with each one. Some cases began as far back as 2011 and 2012 and, in one instance, 2008.

Also on the consent agenda are changes to the city code that would allow McCrady to move the neighborhood inspections division within the city's legal department. It previously operated as part of development services, which also includes building inspections and neighborhood outreach.

McCrady said he felt there were gaps between the process of issuing citations and adjudicating them through the city's administrative court. Moving the neighborhood inspectors to the legal department could help them work more efficiently.

"The person writing the citation needs to understand what the prosecutor is going to go through if the alleged violator asks for a hearing," he said. "You have to do the first part of the process understanding what needs to come out the other end."

McCrady said he, the mayor and council members are not satisfied with the condition of properties in the community, and a major focus this year will be using the code enforcement process to clean them up.

“I don’t like what I’m seeing. I don’t like the end product, and I don’t see, in an overall capacity, conditions improving in properties around the community,” he said. “For me to say right now why that’s not working right, I don’t really know yet, but I’m going to figure it out.

“By having all those folks under one department director, I think that’s the best way to start trying to figure out what the right hand and the left hand are doing and how they can work together more efficiently.”

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Chicago Tribune

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Glenview gets grant to deal with abandoned buildings

June 12, 2014 | By Alexandra Chachkevitch, Tribune reporter



Community member Jane Weaver shows the single-family house at 4111 Kennicott Lane that Glenview slated for demolition in summer 2013. The property, which was since demolished, is an example of an abandoned building the cleanup of which could qualify for reimbursement through the state's new Abandoned Property Program. (Alexandra Chachkevitch, Chicago Tribune)

Glenview and other municipalities and counties throughout the state are scheduled to receive from the state of Illinois that would help maintain or demolish abandoned residencies, cleaning up blighted areas.

Glenview trustees formally accepted a \$75,000 grant at a recent meeting and hope to use the money to cover expenses associated with about nine abandoned properties in the village, according to officials.

The Illinois Housing Development Authority's abandoned property program, which was created by the state legislature in 2013, gave the grant to the village and 17 other municipalities in Cook County, including about \$2 million to the City of Chicago, according to a May press release from Governor Pat Quinn's office.

In total, about \$7.2 million is going to 53 municipalities throughout the state during the first round of the program. Among the list are Grayslake, which is receiving \$50,731, and Lake Zurich, which is getting \$41,800.

"It really is a good opportunity to help spark some revitalization," said Nicki Pecori, director of community affairs at the Illinois Housing Development Authority. "It's not going to be a silver bullet. But I think it can provide an impetus for some proper revitalization efforts."

The funding comes from the fees banks and other lending institutions have to pay to the state each year depending on how many foreclosures they file, Pecori said. The fees are going to be collected until the end of 2017, and the state will continue to issue grants until funding runs out, she said.

Glenview's Deputy Village Manager Don Owen said Glenview hasn't had as many abandoned properties as city of Chicago and some of the other areas. But the village was affected by foreclosures as well.

"We've been very lucky," Owen said. "It's not been a big problem for us, but it's still something that almost every community had to struggle with."

When it comes to neglected properties, it's not just about aesthetics, Owen said.

"It's also a safety issue," he said, adding that one concern is children getting into the abandoned buildings and hurting themselves.

The village finds out about abandoned properties from its inspectors and from other residents who express their complaints about neighboring properties.

If the property's last known owner is unresponsive, the village completes maintenance of the property or demolishes the site.

The bill for demolishing, depending on the size of the building, can vary from \$19,000 to \$47,000 or more, said Becky Suhajda, the village's management analyst.

"It can cost a lot of money," she said.

Suhajda said the village is now looking at nine properties in the village that could qualify for the state's reimbursement of demolition expenses.

State municipalities can continue to apply for funding under the abandoned property program.

The maximum amount a municipality can receive is usually \$75,000, but up to \$250,000 can be awarded if a waiver is approved for a particular jurisdiction.

Pecori encouraged municipalities to email the Illinois Housing Development Authority at APPinfo@ihda.org to find out when the next round of applications will begin.

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Joliet Gets Abandoned Property Relief Grant, Buys New Sirens

Money can be used to rehab or demolish abandoned buildings.

Posted by [Shannon Antinori](#) (Editor) , June 05, 2014 at 11:37 AM



Credit: File photo

In addition to [signing off on a pinball arcade](#) in downtown Joliet and [tabling a request to allow a medical marijuana dispensary](#), Joliet City Council members on Tuesday voted to accept a \$75,000 grant to maintain abandoned properties.

The funding comes from the Illinois Housing Development Authority's Abandoned Residential Property Municipal Relief Program, which itself is funded through foreclosure filing fees paid by financial institutions.

Joliet is one of 53 municipalities to receive grants from the first round of funding for the program, signed into law by Gov. Pat Quinn last year.

The money can be used to maintain weeds and grass, trim trees and bushes, install fences to protect the public, and repair or demolish abandoned properties.

Mattoon council to vote on demolition grant

June 03, 2014 12:00 am • [KAYLEIGH ZYSKOWSKI JG-TC Staff Writer](#)

MATTOON -- The City Council plans today to consider the acceptance of a \$25,000 grant the city will use to fund two house demolitions and yard cleanup, according to the city administrator.

The council will meet at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 208 N. 19th St.

The grant is from the Illinois Housing Development Authority's abandoned residential property municipal relief program and must be used within two years of acceptance to assist with maintenance or demolition of abandoned properties, City Administrator Kyle Gill said.

The grant allowance was announced by Gov. Pat Quinn on May 1 and is part of a \$7.2 million investment that will allow communities across Illinois to clear blight and stabilize neighborhoods, according to a press release from the governor's office.

In other business, the council plans to:

- Set the prevailing wage rate as determined by the Illinois Department of Labor. The rates must apply to the city's public works department consistent with state mandates.
- Approve a \$4,000 tourism grant from the hotel/motel tax fund for the Mattoon Babe Ruth Baseball Organization for the Babe Ruth 12- and 15-year-old state tournaments July 10-13.
- Approve a \$3,000 grant from the Bagelfest funds for the Mattoon Area Family YMCA Run for the Bagel to be July 19.
- Approve a \$6,200 tourism grant from hotel/motel tax funds for the Mattoon American Legion Post No. 88 for the 2014 Firecracker Classic June 23-29.

Contact Zyskowski at kzyskowski@jg-tc.com or 217-238-6869.

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Joliet to Receive Community Stabilization Grant

The grants are aimed improving blighted areas.

Posted by [Shannon Antinori](#) (Editor), May 04, 2014 at 04:00 PM



Gov. Pat Quinn. Credit: File photo

Gov. Pat Quinn last week announced a \$7.2 million investment that will allow communities across Illinois to clear blight and stabilize neighborhoods. The investment includes \$526,000 for Will County communities. Today's announcement is part of Governor Quinn's commitment to stabilize neighborhoods and return vacant properties to productive use to advance the economy.

The grants come from the new Abandoned Property Program, which is administered by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) and funded through filing fees paid by financial institutions. The program was created by legislation Quinn signed into law last year.

Will County communities and institutions receiving Abandoned Property Program funds include:

- Braidwood: \$41,150
- Joliet: \$75,000
- South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority: \$260,600
- Will County: \$150,000

"We are starting programs to reinvigorate our economy and strengthen communities in the wake of the national foreclosure crisis," Governor Quinn said in a press release. "This support will give local governments the tools

they need to stabilize communities throughout Illinois.”

A total of 53 municipalities, counties and land banks have been approved for the first round of funding based on need, capacity, impact, budget, cost reasonableness and readiness to proceed. Eligible uses for the grants include maintaining weeds and grass, trimming trees and bushes, installing fences to protect the public, and repairing or demolishing abandoned property.

“Many areas of Will County have been hit significantly hard by the foreclosure crisis over the past several years,” State Representative Larry Walsh, Jr. (D-Elwood) said. “Initiatives to help combat this crisis by providing these grants are the kind of relief local communities have desperately needed so families and businesses throughout Will County can thrive again.”



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
PAT QUINN

For Immediate Release
Thursday, May 1, 2014

Governor Quinn Announces \$4.1 Million in Community Stabilization Grants for Cook County

*New \$7.2 Million Program Helps Local Governments Across Illinois Secure
Abandoned Properties and Strengthen Communities*

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today announced a \$7.2 million investment that will allow communities across Illinois to clear blight and stabilize neighborhoods. The investment includes \$4.1 million for Cook County communities. Today's announcement is part of Governor Quinn's commitment to stabilize neighborhoods and return vacant properties to productive use to advance the economy.

"We are starting programs to reinvigorate our economy and strengthen communities in the wake of the national foreclosure crisis," Governor Quinn said. "This support will give local governments the tools they need to stabilize communities throughout Illinois."

The investments for today's announcement come from the new Abandoned Property Program, which is administered by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) and funded through filing fees paid by financial institutions. The program was created by legislation Governor Quinn signed into law last year. This builds on the Governor's March 27 announcement that the U.S. Department of the Treasury will support IHDA efforts to leverage up to \$30 million of its federal Hardest Hit Fund resources to eliminate blight in communities around the state.

A total of 53 municipalities, counties and land banks have been approved for the first round of funding based on need, capacity, impact, budget, cost reasonableness and readiness to proceed. Eligible uses for the grants include maintaining weeds and grass, trimming trees and bushes, installing fences to protect the public, and repairing or demolishing abandoned property.

The Cook County communities and institutions receiving Abandoned Property Program funds include:

- Berwyn, \$75,000
- Blue Island, \$75,000
- Calumet Park, \$75,000
- Chicago, \$2,045,354
- Chicago Heights, \$75,000
- Cicero, \$250,000
- Cook County DPD, \$250,000
- Cook County Land Bank Authority, \$250,000
- East Hazel Crest, \$75,000

- Evanston, \$75,000
- Glenview, \$75,000
- Hanover Park, \$18,128
- Harvey, \$250,000
- Justice, \$60,000
- Robbins, \$75,000
- South Chicago Heights, \$67,000
- South Holland, \$75,000
- South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority, \$289,800

Effective in June 2013, banks and other lending institutions began funding the new program by paying fees on a sliding scale based on how many foreclosures they file each year. For example, an institution that files more than 175 foreclosures must pay \$500 per foreclosure, while one with between 50 and 175 must pay \$250 per foreclosure, and those with less than 50 foreclosures a year must pay \$50 per filing.

“Under Governor Quinn, the state has leveraged every available resource to enable more than one million families to access assistance to stay in their homes and help hard-hit communities thrive again,” IHDA Executive Director Mary R. Kenney said.

“One of my top priorities is to continue working on ways that our state can help stimulate our local economies while encouraging families to stay in their communities,” State Representative Elgie Sims (D-Chicago) said. “This new program is a step in the right direction, and I applaud all the governor’s efforts to help combat this serious issue.”

“This funding will help us provide safer communities for local families by revitalizing vacant and abandoned properties that attract crime and gang activity,” State Representative Will Davis (D-Homewood) said. “This initiative will also attract new residents to our neighborhoods, which will help re-energize the local economy and improve our quality of life.”

Since he took office in 2009, Governor Quinn has:

- Successfully implemented the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Hardest Hit Fund (HHF) program in Illinois – creating four programs with \$445 million in federal foreclosure prevention resources. The latest – the Blight Reduction Program – will help communities eliminate blight starting this summer.
- Launched the Illinois Foreclosure Prevention Network (IFPN), a one-stop comprehensive, free resource to connect struggling homeowners with a safe and trusted source for assistance to keep them in their homes and help them from being victims of mortgage fraud. More than 1 million families have accessed this free assistance through the IFPN. Homeowners seeking assistance should visit the IFPN website at keepyourhomeillinois.org or call the hotline at 855-KEEP-411.
- Created Illinois Building Blocks program – Available in 15 Illinois communities, buyers of vacant homes can access \$10,000 in cash assistance to purchase a home. The program also provides funds for the re-development of vacant homes. To date, approximately 800 vacant homes have been purchased through this program.
- Launched the Illinois Homebuyer Rehabilitation Assistance Program - \$6.6 million to 16 public and not-for-profit organizations to allow 240 low- to moderate-income homebuyers of vacant homes to apply for rehabilitation grants in seven targeted communities.
- Administered the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) to purchase and rehabilitate 240 rental units and 106 foreclosed and abandoned homes that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight. An additional 29 blighted properties have been demolished.

For more information on the programs above, visit ihda.org.

IHDA (ihda.org) is a self-supporting state agency that finances the creation and the preservation of affordable housing across Illinois. Since its creation in 1967, IHDA has allocated \$12.4 billion and financed approximately 240,000 affordable units across the state.

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