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Abandoned and Blighted Property:

Issues Surrounding Recovery Efforts in New Orleans

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Understanding Code Enforcement: RealitiesCitywide challenges

Reality: Code Enforcement has limited resources

Reality: Trade off between in breadth of inspections and in depth follow up inspections

Reality: Approximately 134,564 occupied homes were damaged by the hurricanes Katrina and Rita, only 15,000 were thought to be severely or moderately damaged.

Reality: Harder to acquire demolished property than a blighted property

Challenge: Insufficient City resources to acquire and redevelop every blighted and derelict parcel

Challenge: Staggering inventory of blighted and derelict structures

Challenge: Old solutions are inadequate

Ex) Liens on insolvent properties will not be repaid

Ex) Demolished properties require significant security and maintenance costs

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Understanding Code Enforcement cont.

Code Enforcement staff numbers:

Inspectors: 11

Clerical staff: 4

Potential property disposition channels:

Civil Sheriff's sale

Blight/public nuisance

Expropriation via Quick Take

Adjudication via Donation, Cash or Tax Sale

Inspection is ineffective without the resources and capability to do one of three things

- Force a property owner to rehabilitate and/or maintain property.
- Demolition of property.
- City's acquisition and disposition of property.

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Specific challenges lead to tailored strategies

Four distinct strategies tailored to rebuilding

Strategy 1: Removal of imminent threats to public health and safety

Sample areas: Citywide

Strategy 2: Initiate redevelopment of key areas

Sample areas: VA Hospital Acquisition

Strategy 3: Re-establish communities that presently have scattered blight

Sample area: Areas on the cusp of fully recovering but for scattered blight

Strategy 4: Implement Long-term redevelopment and hazard mitigation

Sample areas: Lower 9th Ward

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Strategy 1: Removal of Imminent threats to public health and safety: Current challenges and priorities

Strategy 1: Properties that pose imminent threats to public health and safety sample areas: Citywide

- Challenge: Currently structures posing an imminent health threat must be either rehabilitated or demolished immediately.
- Priority: Provide systematic proactive inspections driven by individual and community complaints and council input.
- Priority: Coordinate demolitions utilizing available FEMA funding resources.

Tailored policies must allow:

1) Enforcement of Liens 2) Ensure properties are in compliance with city codes

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Moving Forward: Strategy 1

Adopting strategic procedural and policy changes to get the job done

Required Changes to Laws

None applicable.

Required Policy and Management Changes

Outsource Code Enforcement functions where applicable.

Funding

- Acquisition of management and support staff
- Acquisition of equipment and technology

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Strategy 2: Initiate redevelopment of key areas: Current challenges and priorities

Strategy 2: High priority target zones identified through Citywide Recovery Plan for immediate redevelopment and initiating land banking, sample areas VA Hospital

- Challenge: The acquisition and disposition of blighted property.

- Priority: Establish and enforce community standards, limit leniency of blighted property, land banking requires vigilant and strict Code Enforcement

Tailored policies must:

1) Ensure all eligible properties complete administrative blight hearing process

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Moving Forward: Strategy 2

Adopting strategic procedural and policy changes to get the job done

Required Changes to Laws

None applicable.

Required Policy and Management Changes

Zoning changes

- i.e. moratorium in targeted areas.

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Strategy 3: Re-establish communities that presently have scattered blight: Current challenges and priorities

Strategy 3: For areas with a high ratio of stable properties to blighted properties
Sample areas: on the cusp of fully recovering but for scattered blight.

- Challenge: Strict Code Enforcement, limited blight remediation efforts will improve property values and quality of life, a little goes a long way.
- Priority: Sustainable reinvestment for City, property values higher than median, City imposed demolition or maintenance liens will likely be recouped when property sold.
- Priority: Property by property reinvestment.

Tailored policies must allow:

1) All City owned property within these areas must require expedited disposition channels.

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Moving Forward: Strategy 3

Adopting strategic procedural and policy changes to get the job done

Required Changes to Laws

None applicable.

Required Policy and Management Changes

Targeted code enforcement to address specific areas of blight.

Policy and management changes.

Work closely with neighborhood and civic associations to identify and resolve quality of life issues.

Strategically place quality of life instructors throughout neighborhoods.

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Strategy 4: Implement long-term redevelopment and hazard mitigation: Current challenges

Strategy 4: Target areas with wide-spread blight by providing incentives, low interests loans, and grants for redevelopment.

- Challenge: Requires extensive capital and coordinated effort to have a noticeable impact
- Priority: Coordinate demolitions utilizing available FEMA funding resources.

Tailored policies must allow:

1) Develop public/private partnerships with non-profits that reduce long-term cost of maintaining these properties Ex) Urban agriculture, community gardens

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Moving Forward: Strategy 4

Adopting strategic procedural and policy changes to get the job done

Required Changes to Laws

Required Policy and Management Changes

Identify and develop relationships with private entity to support public/private endeavors.

Acquire grant writer to seek money from foundations and other sources.