

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date:	December 19, 2016
	Agenda Item No.	49
	Roll Call No.	<u>16-2188</u>
	Communication No.	<u>16-702</u>
	Submitted by:	Phillip Delafield, Community Development Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Receive and file report from Vital Neighborhoods Consulting, LLC regarding Strategies to Address and Prevent Vacant and Blighted Properties, and refer to the City Manager for staff review and response.

SYNOPSIS:

The City contracted with Vital Neighborhoods Consulting, LLC to prepare a report recommending strategies for addressing vacant and blighted properties, and preventing the issue more effectively in the future. The report contains a number of recommendations related to code enforcement practices, revisions to the housing code, data collection, and land banking.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties are a serious issue that threaten the health of many of Des Moines’ neighborhoods. Taking a more proactive and coordinated approach to addressing this issue has been recommended by the Capital Crossroads Neighborhood Improvement Plan, PlanDSM, and GuideDSM.
- On July 11, 2016, City Council approved a professional services agreement with Vital Neighborhoods Consulting, LLC to provide technical assistance on how to more effectively address vacant and blighted properties on a Citywide scale as well as through targeted neighborhood revitalization efforts.
- The Consultant met with City and County staff, City Council members, and other community stakeholders during a site visit July 19-21, 2016. Since that time, the Consultant has been working with City staff from the Community Development and Legal departments to develop the set of recommendations contained in this report.
- The report recommends a number of strategies for how the City should respond to properties that are already nuisances in order to return them quickly to productive use, as well as mechanisms the City should put into place in order to prevent properties from becoming dilapidated. The majority of the report focuses on code enforcement tools for residential

property, although there are also recommendations regarding data collection to inform decision-making, and land banking as a tool for addressing this issue in the context of neighborhood revitalization.

- While City staff has been involved in the development of this report, staff will need to assess the resource implications of the recommendations and will return to Council at a later date with an implementation plan.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: October 24, 2016

Roll Call Number: [16-1835](#)

Action: [Amendment](#) to Agreement for Professional Services with Vital Neighborhoods Consulting, LLC for technical assistance on vacant and blighted properties. Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: July 11, 2016

Roll Call Number: [16-1135](#)

Action: [Professional](#) Services Agreement with Vital Neighborhood Consulting, LLC to provide technical assistance, education, and recommendations for addressing issues of vacant, abandoned and blighted properties. ([Council Communication No. 16-382](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Staff will return to Council with a recommendation for implementing the strategies in this report and related resource implications.

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