

VACANT TO VIBRANT

The Indianapolis Land Bank

2026

City of Indianapolis, Department of Metropolitan Development

Priorities, Policies, and Procedures

Version 4 (Updated 2/26/2026)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I – INTRODUCTION	3
OUR VISION	3
OUR MISSION.....	3
WHAT IS A LAND BANK?	3
Part II - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	4
APPLICATIONS.....	4
Neighborhood Input	4
Application Types	5
• Affordable	5
• Homestead.....	5
• Standard.....	5
○ Side Lot	5
Applicant Criteria	7
Eligibility	7
Ineligible Applicants.....	7
Filling out the Application	8
Applications for Multiple Properties.....	8
Scope of Work	8
Proof of Funds	8
Architectural Plans.....	9
Third-Party Authorization	9
Pricing and Inventory	9
Inventory	9
Affordable Housing Reduction.....	9
REVIEW PROCESS	10
THE PROCESS AND TIMELINE	10
DENIED APPLICATIONS.....	10
POST-FINAL APPROVAL TIMELINE	10
TITLE COMPANIES	10
FORMS OF PAYMENT.....	11
FAILURE TO CLOSE AFTER FINAL APPROVAL	11
PURCHASE OPTIONS.....	11
PROJECT AGREEMENT - STANDARD AND HOMESTEAD PROPOSALS	11
Failure to Perform.....	12
Unauthorized Transfer of Land Bank Properties.....	12
FAQ’s – Frequently Asked Questions	13
PART III – ADDENDUM	18
FEE SCHEDULE.....	18

OUR VISION

Vacant to Vibrant envisions communities where quality of life, access to housing, and opportunities to build businesses are not determined by race, socioeconomic background, or zip code. Our communities support impactful partnerships that preserve and build wealth for neighborhoods and individuals in ways that are equitable and inclusive. Our communities offer a range of affordable housing choices for residents based on their needs and aspirations, offering places to work, shop, play, learn, and worship.

OUR MISSION

The Vacant to Vibrant (V2V) program is committed to facilitating the revitalization of Indianapolis neighborhoods by transforming vacant and blighted properties into vibrant assets. We strive to create affordable housing, enhance the quality of life, and stimulate economic growth. By strategically transferring properties to qualified developers and homesteaders, eliminating blight, and supporting community goals, V2V aims to restore pride and prosperity to our neighborhoods.

WHAT IS A LAND BANK?

A land bank is an entity with a mission and authority to use available tools to put vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties back to productive use according to community goals. Department of Metropolitan Development Staff operates Vacant to Vibrant to facilitate the redevelopment of these properties through a streamlined, transparent, and accountable process. In partnership with citizens and stakeholders across the city, Vacant to Vibrant supports neighborhood revitalization efforts throughout Indianapolis.

PART II - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Vacant-to-Vibrant Indianapolis Land Bank Policies and Procedures have been developed in consultation with its Land Bank Review Committee (“Review Committee”), the City of Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development (“DMD”) and other stakeholders. DMD initially adopted these Policies and Procedures effective January 1, 2025. DMD Staff and the Review Committee shall review and revise these Policies and Procedures from time to time at their discretion.

APPLICATIONS

Interested parties may submit an application to purchase property through the Vacant to Vibrant website [HERE](#). DMD staff will answer inquiries about the application, but the content must be generated and submitted by the applicant. Complete applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Applicant's financial capability;
- Adequate and complete scope of work;
- Applicant's capacity to complete the proposed scope of work;
- Appropriateness for a given neighborhood, especially in terms of approved land uses, neighborhood plans, and infill housing guidelines;
- Applicant's property tax status; and,
- Applicant's history with health and building code violations
- Applicant’s history of compliance with policies and agreements related to Real Estate dispositions through the Department of Metropolitan Development.

Priority is given to Applicants proposing to develop affordable housing or use the property as their primary residence. DMD may request additional information to supplement the application and approve applications subject to certain requirements. The Department of Metropolitan Development may approve or deny any application at its sole discretion.

NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

The Department of Metropolitan Development provides notice to registered neighborhood associations and community development corporations for any complete application in the area where the property is located. Notice includes essential information about each application, including the proposed site plan and elevations and the contact information for the prospective buyer. It is at this time that opposition to an application should be registered with DMD. This opposition will be submitted to the Review Committee along with the application and a staff recommendation. Applicants are required to engage with community-based organizations as requested by DMD and those groups during the application process.

A complete list of registered community-based organizations is available through the Registered Community Organizations database: [HERE](#)

APPLICATION TYPES

The Land Bank offers properties for sale for different uses, each of which has its own requirements.

- **AFFORDABLE** - Properties that the applicant must develop as affordable housing, defined as being made available for occupants at 80% or below Area Median Income for Marion County, as defined by the latest guidance available through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Income and Acquisition Limits ([LINK](#)).

Applicants must provide the following:

- Identify all forms of subsidy awarded or actively being requested.
- Identify any Partnerships.
- Affordability Period (for rental projects).
- Target income range(s) for end-users
- Intended end-use (sale or rental)

Eligibility – Applicants using the affordable application must be:

- Not-for-profit entities that have affordable housing creation in their mission, have existed for a minimum of one (1) year, and have a proven track record of affordable housing creation.
 - Entities that are proposing the creation of affordable housing and have applied for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) or funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
- **HOMESTEAD** – Properties on which the applicant must rehabilitate a home or build a new dwelling to be used as their primary residence for a period of not less than two (2) years after the release of the Project Agreement.

Homestead Properties may include improvements or be vacant lots. New construction must be a permanent improvement that will add to the assessed value of the property. Applicants may be required to secure variances or rezoning approval prior to closing. Companies, partnerships, corporations, and non-profit organizations are not eligible purchasers of Homestead Properties

- **STANDARD** - Properties that the applicant must rehabilitate or build new construction and may be used as a rental property or resold to other buyers once the project agreement is released. Standard Properties may include improvements or be vacant lots. New construction must be a permanent improvement that will add to the assessed value of the property. Applicants shall, if required, secure variances or rezoning approval prior to closing. Individuals, companies, partnerships, corporations, and non-profit organizations are all eligible purchasers of Standard Properties.
 - **SIDE LOT** – As a subset of Standard Applications we offer Side Lot Properties (SLPs) that are available *exclusively* to adjacent property owners. Adjoining property must be

the applicant's primary residence. These properties do not require immediate development and may be used for gardens, side yards, parks or held for investment. The SLP only includes vacant lots. Buyers must combine SLP with their adjacent property after purchase, maintain the property, remain current on all property taxes and levies, and comply with all local and state regulations.

LINK TO COMBINE REAL ESTATE PARCELS: [HERE](#)

- Properties eligible for the Side Lot program are evaluated by DMD Staff based on the following criteria:
 - Development activity within a 1/2 a mile within the past 18 months;
 - Fewer than 2 percent of properties with 3 or more development permits
 - Duration of time in the Land Bank inventory;
 - Greater than 2 years in the inventory
 - Physical Characteristics of the property
 - Odd Shaped Lot
 - Limited Access
 - No Access to Utilities
 - Noxious Adjacent Uses
- Complete, competing applications for SLP properties will be evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- SLPs may be transferred through a quitclaim deed with an attached Project Agreement and, if required, an Assumption and Assignment Agreement, in which the buyer agrees to pay future taxes and maintain the property. The buyer will not be obligated to develop the property.
- The SLP property and the adjoining property must be combined before the beginning of the following Tax Assessment year.

APPLICANT CRITERIA

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals, companies, partnerships, corporations, and non-profit organizations are all eligible to apply to purchase property through Vacant to Vibrant, subject to the requirements above.

Applicants must disclose any ownership interest or affiliated party with an ownership interest in property in Marion County. Applicants who fail to disclose property ownership, affiliated interests, or whose affiliated parties would be ineligible applicants may also be determined to be ineligible. DMD may require additional documentation prior to processing an application.

Applicants must also disclose any ongoing or anticipated projects.

Applicants and affiliated parties must be current on all property taxes and assessments. Any penalties, interest, judgements, or other costs owed to the City of Indianapolis, Marion County, or any subdivision must be paid in full before DMD will act on an application. History of delinquency may affect PA terms.

Applicants appealing property tax assessments shall be considered eligible if in compliance with the property tax appeal process. Vacant to Vibrant may require additional documentation, including proof of payment, prior to processing an application.

Applicants and affiliated parties must not have pending violations or civil penalties issued by Health and Hospital Corporation or the Department of Business and Neighborhood Services. Vacant to Vibrant may require additional documentation prior to processing an application.

Applicants that own or have an ownership interest, directly or indirectly, in rental property must be registered with the City of Indianapolis' Landlord Registry before Vacant to Vibrant will act on an application. Information regarding the registry can be found on the city's website: [HERE](#).

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants will be deemed ineligible if any of the following apply:

- Applicant or affiliated party is currently out of compliance with a Land Bank Project Agreement, or other Agreement with the City of Indianapolis, or has been substantially out of compliance within the last 5 years;
- Applicant provides substantively inaccurate or outdated information in its application or misrepresents itself to DMD staff;
- Applicants or affiliated party were owners of record of a property at the time that tax foreclosure proceedings were initiated by Marion County; or,
- Applicant or affiliated party was the owner of any real property in Marion County at the time it was transferred to the County or to a unit of local government as a result of tax foreclosure proceedings.

Vacant to Vibrant reserves the right to bar parties from applying to purchase properties through the program for non-compliance with the Policies and Procedures or Project Agreements.

FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION

Applications to acquire properties may be submitted online [HERE](#). Paper applications are available upon request. Once an online application is started, Applicants must complete and submit the application within 90 days, or it will be deemed inactive. The application includes required fields and supporting documentation.

APPLICATIONS FOR MULTIPLE PROPERTIES

Applicants may apply for multiple properties provided they can demonstrate capacity to successfully acquire and simultaneously develop multiple properties in accordance with the terms of a Project Agreement. Applicants are limited to three active Project Agreements at a time.

Applicants should only apply for the property or properties they wish to purchase.

Applicants requesting multiple/3 or more properties may be considered on a case-by-case basis and shall be evaluated based on:

- History of successfully developing Land Bank properties;
- Proven capacity and sufficient funding necessary to carry out simultaneous projects;
- Portfolio of experience commensurate with the application; and,
- Alignment of the proposed project with any adopted redevelopment or quality of life plan for area.

SCOPE OF WORK

Applications for all properties except Side Lots must include a complete scope of work to be considered complete. Scopes of work must include a detailed description of proposed improvements to be made to the property, an estimated cost of materials, and an estimated cost of labor. Templates for the scope of work are available [HERE](#).

Floor plans, elevations, a scaled site plan, and schedule of values are required for new construction projects. Applicants who intend to perform some, or all, of the proposed work themselves or have materials on hand should designate so on the scope of work, with a corresponding dollar amount in the project budget.

Applicants may be required to complete a visual inspection of the property prior to closing on the property. Showings can be requested by sending an e-mail to the following address: dmdland@indy.gov.

PROOF OF FUNDS

Applications must include proof of funds sufficient to acquire and complete the proposed scope of work. Acceptable *current* documentation of proof of funds includes:

- Bank statements;
- Pre-approval letter from a lender;
- Existing loan statements (e.g. HELOC);
- Affidavit from a third-party investor (may require additional documentation); or,
- Personal affidavit for qualifying costs for properties priced under **\$10,000**.

Applicants relying on pre-approval letters may be required to close on the loan on or before the date of the property closing. Applicants may replace the source of funding up to the date of closing, provided it is sufficient to acquire and complete the proposed scope of work.

Paystubs and tax returns are not accepted as proof of funds.

Homestead Applications for properties priced below \$10,000 may use a personal affidavit as proof of funds for the full amount of the scope of work.

ARCHITECTURAL PLANS

Applications for new construction must include Architectural Plans. These plans should include a scaled site plan, floor plans, and elevations. Once all required plans have been submitted for a proposed project, the plans will be evaluated by city staff including the City Architect. Plans should conform to and will be evaluated based on the [Infill Housing Guidelines](#).

THIRD-PARTY AUTHORIZATION

If someone is completing an application on the applicant's behalf or representing the applicant, such as a Realtor™, a translator, a family member, or a friend then the applicant and that person will need to complete a Third-Party Authorization Form, which can be found [HERE](#) and must be completed and uploaded to the application.

PRICING AND INVENTORY

Vacant to Vibrant uses market-based pricing, informed by comparable sales in the area from the previous 12 months, and adopted by the Department of Metropolitan Development. Prices are non-negotiable. Properties will be sold for the listed price as of the day an application is started in the online system or received in paper.

Vacant to Vibrant may adjust prices from time to time. Vacant to Vibrant will not adjust prices if an application has been initiated or is pending. Vacant to Vibrant will not take action on any application for a property subject to a price adjustment for a period of at least 30 days from the date of approval of the price adjustment.

INVENTORY

Vacant to Vibrant may add or remove property from availability from time to time at its discretion. The availability status of a property will not be changed if there is an active application pending or started in the system.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING REDUCTION

Vacant to Vibrant promotes the development and preservation of affordable housing. Applicants requesting property for use in a government-sponsored affordable housing program may be eligible to acquire the property at the Affordable rate. Applicants must complete the Affordable Housing Supplement and provide supplemental documentation about the program(s) through which the property will be developed. For the purposes of this program, affordable housing must be limited to households earning at or below 80% of the Area Median Income as defined by the

latest guidance available through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Income and Acquisition Limits.

Applicants must provide the following:

- Identify all forms of subsidy awarded or actively being requested.
- Identify any Partnerships.
- Affordability Period (10-20 years)
- Target income range(s) for end-users (below 80% AMI)

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and time-stamped upon creation by the applicant and upon submission. Department of Metropolitan Development staff will review applications for completeness and request clarification or additional documentation if needed. Applicants will receive written notice of approval or denial including explanation for denial.

THE PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Applications completed by the first Friday of each month will be submitted to the Vacant to Vibrant Review Committee ("Committee") for review the following month. The Committee typically meets to evaluate applications on the second Tuesday of each month unless rescheduled.

Sale of City-owned property requires additional approval by the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC), which typically meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Successful applications for City-owned property will be recommend for approval to the MDC by the Vacant to Vibrant Review Committee.

DENIED APPLICATIONS

Applicants whose request is denied will be notified in writing, including explanation for denial.

POST-FINAL APPROVAL TIMELINE

Vacant to Vibrant will provide a "purchase and project agreement" to execute. All properties, except side lots, will be closed through a title company and require title insurance. Purchasers and their title companies will be responsible for identifying title defects. Quiet title actions may be required to clear title of imperfections, which typically take about ninety (90) days.

Approved applicants for new construction projects will need to submit their plans for architectural review to the following website, [HERE](#). Design approval is required to proceed so please submit architectural plans as soon as possible.

Homestead and Standard buyers must close within fourteen (14) days of receipt of clear title from the title company, subject to scheduling requirements. Extensions may be granted to allow for the buyer to finalize lender financing.

Side Lot buyers must close within forty-five (45) days of final approval. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

TITLE COMPANIES

All affordable, homestead, and standard transactions must close using a title company. Properties priced at \$10,000 or more may require buyers to submit earnest money to the title company.

Buyers are required to pay for all closing costs, including recording fees, title insurance policies, costs to address title defects, and other fees. Property prices do not include closing costs, which vary by property.

FORMS OF PAYMENT

A bank-issued cashier's check issued to the title company is acceptable for transactions under \$10,000. Wire transfers are required for all transactions \$10,000 and above. Bank-issued cashier's check can be made payable to The City of Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development.

FAILURE TO CLOSE AFTER FINAL APPROVAL

Applicants who receive final approval and have signed a purchase agreement but fail to close may be assessed a termination fee. The parties shall execute a mutual release of the purchase agreement and the applicant may be prohibited from submitting future applications.

Failure to pay the required fee may result in a prohibition of an applicant applying in the future without first paying the mutual release fee.

PURCHASE OPTIONS

The Land Bank offers applicants the ability to apply for an option to purchase property for applicants that require additional time to secure funding, plans, or grants. Applicants are limited to three (3) purchase options unless otherwise approved by DMD Staff. Purchase options are non-transferable.

Applicants must request a purchase option at the time of application, submit a timeline for securing funding, reasons why the project can't begin immediately, and specific project details. The Committee will review the proposed project and applicant details to determine if the option is appropriate. Purchase options extend for a period of twelve (12) months for Affordable and Homestead applications or six (6) months for Standard applications. These may be renewed on a case-by-case basis.

Upon exercising the purchase option, the applicant must submit proof of funds and full project plans for review by the Committee unless provided at the time of application.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Vacant to Vibrant program seeks to return vacant and abandoned property to productive use and ensure properties are successfully redeveloped. Purchasers will be required to enter into a project agreement that captures the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of acquiring a Vacant to Vibrant property as well as remedies in the event of breach.

PROJECT AGREEMENT - STANDARD AND HOMESTEAD PROPOSALS

Project agreements include a requirement to commence improvements promptly, a 24-month deadline for completion of development activities, a list of improvements to be made to a property, and corresponding benchmarks. The project agreement will include the approved scope of work and detailed architectural plans provided by the applicant.

Properties subject to an active project agreement may not be transferred to new owners. Buyers will be required to submit a semi-annual (twice/year) report on the status of the project. Upon completion of the scope of work, the buyer must request a release of the project agreement, which will only be granted after a physical inspection and submission of completion photos of the property.

FAILURE TO PERFORM

Buyers who fail to fulfill their obligations under a project agreement are subject to DMD's remedies under the agreement, including reversion of ownership of the property to the City of Indianapolis, Department of Metropolitan Development. Buyers are strongly encouraged to immediately communicate any potential delays or other deviations which violate the project agreement, including:

- Failure to complete the project on time;
- Failure to adhere to the approved plans;
- Failure to pay taxes and/or penalties;
- Failure to submit a semi-annual report;
- Altering the scope of work without written consent;
- Engaging in any illegal activity at the property;
- Failure to commence the project within 12 months of closing; or,
- Transferring the property without written authorization from DMD.

UNAUTHORIZED TRANSFER OF LAND BANK PROPERTIES

Transferring ownership interests in a property purchased through Vacant to Vibrant while the project agreement is in effect is strictly prohibited and may result in the City retaking title to and possession of the property without compensation to the owner. Please contact DMD Staff with questions regarding post-closing transfers and associated fees.

FAQ'S – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are Vacant to Vibrant property showings currently offered?

No, currently, we are not offering property showings except for special circumstances. If you believe you require a showing you are welcome to request one by sending an e-mail to dmdland@indy.gov.

What is a Land Bank?

A land bank is an entity with a mission and authority to use available tools to put vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties back to productive use according to community goals. Department of Metropolitan Development Staff operates Vacant to Vibrant to facilitate the redevelopment of these properties through a streamlined, transparent, and accountable process. In partnership with citizens and stakeholders across the city, Vacant to Vibrant supports neighborhood revitalization efforts throughout Indianapolis.

A land bank is an entity with legal powers to get vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties back to productive use according to community goals.

A land bank's primary purpose is to acquire properties in areas in need of redevelopment and temporarily hold and take care of them until they can be transferred to new, responsible owners. State laws give various entities, including DMD, authority and tools to implement land banks goals.

Ideally, land banks can cost-effectively acquire and hold tax-foreclosed property, extinguish liens, clear title, sell property to a responsible buyer based not on the highest price but on the outcome that most closely aligns with community goals, and monitor compliance with planned development.

When are applications due?

Applications are due on the first Friday of each month to be reviewed the following month. For example, to be reviewed in May, you must submit your application by the first Friday in April.

How long does the application process take?

The application process timeline varies, but on average it will take 8 to 11 weeks, depending on when you submit your application relative to the deadline. Also, title companies may need more time to conduct a title search on some properties.

What does the Application Process Involve?

The application process involves the submission of a completed online application, including scope of work and proof of funds. Once all the materials have been submitted, the application is put forward for review by the Vacant to Vibrant Review Committee. If approved, the application is presented to the Vacant to Vibrant Board, after which, if approved, the application will go before the Metropolitan Development Commission for final approval. For a detailed timeline see our chart here.

Can I see the inside of a house, and do I have to see it before applying?

Yes, you can schedule a viewing through our website. Once a request is submitted, you will be contacted by the city. Please be patient, as we get a lot of requests and have a limited number of people to do showings.

It is highly recommended that you view a house prior to applying. It is important to understand the needs of the house for the scope of work that you submit with your application. Not viewing the house will impact the quality of your application and may result in a denial.

When do I Pay?

Since the process is an application process and you must receive approval to buy a property, you will not pay anything until you have received final approval. Once you get final approval, you will pay a processing fee. Buyers will pay for the property and other associated costs at the closing when the property is signed over to the end-buyer.

Why do I have to pay a processing fee?

The processing fee serves two purposes. The first is to help cover administrative costs. The fee is used to offset the maintenance of the property and to cover processing the paperwork and other aspects of the closing process on the City's end of the transaction. The second purpose is to ensure that buyers will close; since so many resources go into the application process on our end, should someone decide not to close on a property, all our work and effort will have been for nothing. We appreciate your understanding on this issue.

After I close, will I own the property, or will the City hold the deed?

Once we close, the property is in your name. However, attached to the deed is a Project Agreement, which is a contract that stipulates the buyer's obligation to maintain the property, pay the property taxes, and, if applicable, complete the proposed project within 24 months according to the scope of work and detailed architectural plans submitted with the application.

Once the project is completed, contact the Department of Metropolitan Development to have the Project Agreement released. Without a release, the Project Agreement will be an exception that needs to be addressed before the property can be sold.

What if I can't complete my proposed project within the 24 months?

Failure to fulfill your project agreement within the 24-month timeline may result in The Department of Metropolitan Development taking back the property without compensation. To avoid this, we recommend communicating with us as soon as possible that you will not be able to meet the deadline.

How often do you update your website?

Our property listings are updated in real-time.

How can I get a list of properties?

You can see the properties we have on our [website](#), either on the interactive map or by downloading a spreadsheet. If you can't access our website we can provide you with a printed list, although it will be out of date quickly.

Can I sell or transfer my Vacant to Vibrant-purchased property while the two-year project agreement is attached to the deed?

Properties that are purchased from Vacant to Vibrant have a project agreement attached to the deed. The project agreement is a contract between the City and the buyer. If a buyer tries to sell or transfer the property, the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) is notified by the title company or the assessor's office. If a property has been transferred before the project agreement is released, DMD will contact all parties and may seek to have the property returned to DMD and the title company could seek damages from the original buyer. Once the project is satisfactorily complete- even if sooner than two years after transfer, buyer can request/ record the release and sell the property.

How can I qualify to apply for a property?

Broadly speaking, anyone or any entity can apply for properties. However, eligibility depends on current property tax status, experience, proof of funds to carry out the project, and whether the prospective buyer has any outstanding code violations on properties owned either by the prospective buyer or an affiliate.

I submitted an application after the monthly deadline, what happens?

Application deadlines are always the first Friday of the month to be considered the following month. If you submit after that, the application (if the property is still available) will go forward in the following cycle. Yes, you do run the risk of the property becoming sale pending during that time if someone else submitted a viable application before the deadline. Moreover, from the first Friday deadline to the Review Committee meeting on the second Tuesday of the following month, the property will continue to be "available" until a decision is made during the Review Committee meeting, after which the property will become "sale pending" or remain "available." However, you can see whether a property has been scheduled for the Review Committee by contacting DMD staff at dmdland@indy.gov.

What sale programs does Vacant to Vibrant offer?

Vacant to Vibrant offers four types of sale programs: 1) Affordable, 2) Homestead, 3) Standard, and 4) Side Lots (SLP).

AFFORDABLE: Properties that the applicant must develop as affordable housing, defined as being made available for occupants at 80% or below Area Median Income for a specified affordability period.

HOMESTEAD: This application is for individuals whose intent is to rehab or build new construction for themselves and use the dwelling as their primary residence. Most individuals may claim a "homestead" deduction on their property taxes on their primary residence.

STANDARD: Standard applications are for individuals or entities whose intention is to rehab or to build new and either sell or rent out the structure. This type of application is for investment purposes.

SIDE LOTS: Side Lot applications are available exclusively to adjacent properties owners. These applications do not have a development requirement; however, owners need to stay current on their taxes, be compliant with all codes, and agree to timely combine the parcels.

What Properties are in Vacant to Vibrant's Inventory?

The Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) assists the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) serving as the Redevelopment Commission of Marion County in acquiring properties for the purpose of neighborhood redevelopment. Most of these properties are acquired following a Tax Sale where the properties are publicly offered for sale but are not sold.

Should I use a title company?

While you must go through a title company on land bank properties requiring redevelopment, our Side Lots (SLPs) do not require closing through a title company. Title companies perform title searches to identify liens and other issues on the title that can cause problems down the road. Once known, those issues can often then be cleared up. Title companies also offer title insurance which can offer protection against title defects.

Do I need a realtor?

No, it is not necessary to have a realtor. However, if you choose to use a realtor, please make sure to fill out the Third-Party Authorization form in the application. This will allow the realtor to be part of the transaction.

Why is a particular property not on the Vacant to Vibrant list?

Surplus Sale

Not all vacant and seemingly abandoned properties are owned by the City of Indianapolis, Department of Metropolitan Development. Surplus properties are those properties that have been foreclosed on by the County due to a failure by the owner to pay property taxes and were offered, but not sold, at tax sale. Title to these properties often remains in the name of the last owner of record. These properties, not having been redeemed or sold, may then go forward to the Surplus Sale.

Tax Sale Process

All properties which are tax delinquent for at least three installments are eligible for tax sale. The title remains in an owner's name unless and until it sells in a tax sale or surplus sale or is acquired by a governmental entity or other authorized purchaser.

Not all DMD owned properties are available through Vacant to Vibrant.

I'm a part of a neighborhood organization, how do I learn about Vacant to Vibrant projects in my area?

As part of the Vacant to Vibrant process, City staff reaches out to neighborhood organizations for feedback on applications. In order to make sure your organization is in the City's database and/or updated, go here: <https://maps.indy.gov/Indy.Organizations.Web/> and click on the red box up in the upper right-hand corner, "registrations and downloads." Select update or new and input the new information. Each time the V2V sends out notifications, we automatically update the list of recipients.

Why do I need to submit plans for new construction before I have been approved.

Our approach is that most people are intent on building regardless of where or from whom they purchase the lot. Therefore, we require that you submit floor plans, elevations, site plans, and a breakdown of construction costs. We need this information to ensure that the proposal is viable and so the Review Committee and the Metropolitan Development Commission can make an accurate assessment of your application. We solicit neighborhood feedback and circulating the plans is a crucial component of that process.

FEE SCHEDULE

The schedule below outlines the fees for various services. Please note: these prices are effective January 1, 2026, and are subject to change without notice.

Fee type	Fee
Processing Fee	\$250
Affordable Housing Qualified - Improved	\$5,000 (subject to increase over time)
12-month option (Affordable or Homestead) (Fee credited toward purchase price)	\$500/parcel
6-month option (Standard Sale)	10% of purchase price or \$1,000, whichever is greater/ per option request/per parcel.
Transfer fee	\$300

Application Process and Timeline

