

# VACANT & ABANDONED PROPERTY DONATION TO THE CITY OF SOUTH BEND GUIDELINES

*Disclaimer: The submission of a property donation form is a request to the City. The City is not obligated to accept the donation of property.*

## **Purpose of the Program**

- To provide the property owner an opportunity to:
  - Avoid the costs of improving the property to meet City code;
  - Avoid the expense of securing a vacant building;
  - Eliminate the need to maintain insurance (fire and liability);
  - Eliminate property taxes;
  - Avoid the problem of trespassing;
  - Avoid the cost of spraying for weeds, maintaining trees / shrubs and cutting grass.
- To provide an opportunity to eliminate the financial burden associated with property ownership.
- To offer the opportunity to improve and maintain property in the City of South Bend.
- To offer the opportunity to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods.

## **Property Eligibility**

In order to be eligible for the program the following requirements must be met:

- Applicant(s) holds the deed for the property.
- Property is within the boundaries of the City of South Bend. Properties designated by the City as abandoned **may** receive priority.\*  
*\*Abandoned property information can be found at [www.southbendin.gov/vap](http://www.southbendin.gov/vap)*
- The property must be unoccupied.
- Property must be current on property taxes.
- Property cannot have any unpaid liens against it at the time of donation property transfer (i.e. mortgages, federal tax liens, etc.).
- If the property has one or more of the following the donor may be required to provide funds to assist the City of South Bend abate the problem:
  - an active code violation;
  - an affirmed demolition order through the City of South Bend's Department of Code Enforcement\*\*;
  - under contract for demolition by the City\*\*; or
  - City imposed fee, civil penalty or lien.*\*\*Demolition information can be found at [www.southbendin.gov/demolitionorders](http://www.southbendin.gov/demolitionorders)*
- Properties donated in conjunction with a cash donation to assist with future maintenance, repairs and/or demolition will receive preference.
- The City reserves the right to accept or deny any, and all, donation requests.

### **Application Process**

- Applicants must submit a completed, and signed, donation form. All individuals listed on the recorded deed must sign the donation form. Along with the completed form, applicants must submit a copy of the recorded deed that indicates the applicant(s) is the owner of the property.
- Donation forms will be reviewed within 30 days of submittal. If it is determined the applicant provided false information, the request will immediately be denied.
- If the property is approved for donation, the owner(s) will be notified using contact information provided within 45 days of donation form submittal. The property transfer must occur within 60 days of approval.

### **Terms**

- Submission of a donation form does not guarantee that the City will take ownership of the property. The donation form is a request to the City of South Bend to accept a property donation. The City reserves the right to deny any and all requests.
- The City of South Bend will not provide any payment to the property owner(s) as part of the property transaction.
- The City of South Bend cannot provide a tax deduction letter for a donated property.
- The specific guidelines detailed herein are subject to revision or amendment without notice. Subject to the availability of funding, the City of South Bend may discontinue this program at any time.