



National Vacant Properties Campaign

CREATING OPPORTUNITY FROM ABANDONMENT

Preparing for District/State Based Meetings

Goals for the Local meetings:

- Secure Congressional support for the **Community Regeneration, Sustainability, and Innovation Act of 2009, “The Regeneration Act” (H.R. 932)**
- Additionally, this is a good time to:
 - Begin to establish a relationship (or improving existing relationship) with Congressional offices by informing them about your organization.
 - Establish yourself and the National Vacant Properties Campaign as local and national experts on the role vacant and abandoned properties can play in strengthening the nation’s cities and regions, and assert the importance of addressing them.

Before you go:

- Familiarize yourself with the talking points and fact sheet.
- Have specific data about your congressional district, city, or region to provide context:
 - Population Loss (1970-2000).
 - Vacancy Rate.
 - Other information about property values, unemployment and the like that may strengthen the case that your city would benefit from this set of programs and how important innovative approaches are to addressing effects of population decline, vacancy, and revitalization.

What to Bring to the Local Meeting:

- “Leave Behind” Fact Sheet.
- Copies of the bill.
- Local Press clips and/or reports that build the case for the need for this funding stream.

Other Tips:

- Be sure to provide specific examples from your community:
 - Is there a vacant site that is languishing in a “tipping point” community?
 - Have there been setbacks because of a lack of funding for strategic planning?
 - Does your city have model programs whose impact could be expanded with these funds?
- Note the difference between local staff and DC staff. Local staff may hear more from constituents in the community and be able to relate to the local impact.
- Always send a brief thank you email to the staff you met with and reinforce the point of your meeting.