
2 local communities seek funds to address blight

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By Nick Blizzard

Miami Twp. and West Carrollton plan to apply for land bank money.

Miami Twp. and West Carrollton are seeking money to clean up blighted properties.

The township is focusing on dilapidated land as part of its strategic plan and will be asking for funds through the [Montgomery County Land Reutilization Corp.'s Neighborhood Initiative Program](#) for the first time.

West Carrollton has received funds in the past from the program, known as the land bank. The county has about \$8 million for the program this year and provides up to \$25,000 per property and does not require a local match, officials said.

The land bank was created in 2012 to make funds available for different projects, including demolition of dilapidated properties or seizure of tax delinquent properties.

The township is seeking funds to demolish “a group of 6-7 properties in Chautauqua that have been an ongoing nuisance,” records show.

“It’s a good neighborhood but it’s got a couple of bad apples,” said township Planner Robin Palm. “But there are also properties in Chautauqua that are very nice and very well kept.”

Palm said he expects to file a target area plan this month with the county making a decision late this year or in early 2017.

The township’s adoption of home rule last year helps it have more control of abandoned or foreclosed properties, said Board of Trustees President Doug Barry.

“To me it just makes sense because it’s a way to get rid of some blighted properties and that’s one of the things that came up in our strategic planning process,” he said, noting seeking county funds is a “no brainer.”

West Carrollton is working to define its target area plan to submit to the county, Planning Director Greg Gaines told city council last week.

“We think it will be a nice add on to the demolition work we’ve done with other grant programs,” he said.

In 2013, the land bank awarded grants in the amounts of \$160,000 to West Carrollton and helped the city rehabilitate a single-family home to reposition it for ownership as a test for a new loan program, county records show.

West Carrollton does not have as “near as abundant” of nuisance properties it had in recent years, “but we still have some candidates,” Gaines said.

Selection for funds is based on vacancy rates in jurisdictions that apply and “hopefully it will be proportional to the need,” Gaines said.

The land bank manages the property throughout the process, which could last three years, officials said. That includes owning, maintaining it and demolishing a structure before it is resold.