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Land bank to provide funding to tear down vacate eyesores

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By Cornelius Frolik, Staff Writer

State and federal dollars for vacant property demolition have dried up, but a new program through the Montgomery County Land Bank will provide local communities with matching funds to help tear down eyesores.

Montgomery County Treasurer Russ Joseph called on the local land bank to use some of its reserve funds to combat blight and develop a program offering a 1-for-1

The new program, unanimously approved by the local land bank board last week, will provide \$3 million over two years to local communities that commit equal amounts of their own funds to demolition.

With the local matches, the combined \$6 million of new spending on demolition will provide much-needed help in neighborhoods across the county, Joseph said.

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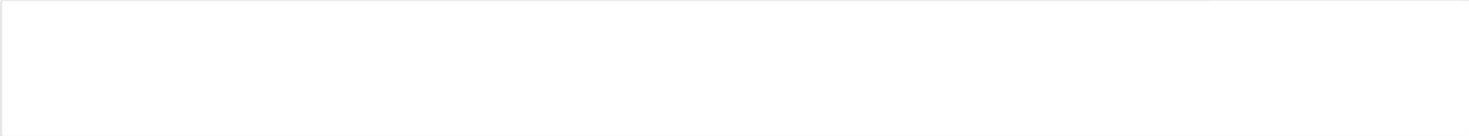
The program provides a critical new funding source at a time when state and federal resources have run out, and it will help cities stretch their limited dollars further to stabilize neighborhoods, Joseph said.

“This is just one piece of a much bigger conversation our community is having on removing blight in our neighborhoods, but it is important that the Land Bank use resources at their disposal to help stabilize our neighborhoods today before the problem gets worse,” Joseph said.

The city of Dayton still has about 5,000 vacant residential properties, and new money for demolition is very valuable, said Todd Kinskey, Dayton’s director of planning and community development.

“As long as dollars are available, I’m going to use them,” he said.

The program will devote the lion’s share of funding to larger communities in Montgomery County, but smaller communities (with less than 10,000 residents) will be eligible for funds as well, officials say.



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The funds will be allocated based on need, and the primary consideration will be the number of vacant and abandoned properties in local communities, Grauwelman said.

The funding comes from delinquent tax and assessments that the land bank receives from the treasurer’s office.

Both residential and commercial properties will be eligible for funding.



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