

FY26 Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative Program Guide

Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative (BVRI)

I. Introduction

Governor Moore and the Maryland General Assembly are deploying a historic level of \$50 million annually to eliminate vacant and underutilized properties in Baltimore City. On October 1, 2024, Governor Moore announced through [Executive Order](#) the [Reinvest Baltimore](#) initiative, which includes the establishment of the Baltimore Vacants Reinvest Council (BVRC) and the Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative (BVRI).

“Baltimore’s vacant property crisis is an issue that cannot wait – because in order to have a strong state, you must have a strong housing market, where people own more than they owe,” said Gov. Moore. “I want to thank all the partners who raised their hand to be a part of this work that will open paths to work, wages, and wealth for Baltimoreans and grow our state’s economy. The Baltimore Renaissance is here — and just getting started.”

The [Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Council \(BVRC\)](#), which began meeting in November 2024, is driving a unified approach to advancing community-based priorities and implementing recommended strategies to maximize investments, reduce vacancy and promote neighborhood vitality in Baltimore City.

The [Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative \(BVRI\)](#) provides public and nonprofit partners in Baltimore City with state funding to address vacant properties through acquisition, stabilization, demolition and other pre-development activities, clearing the way for new green space or affordable housing and mixed-use developments.

This request for BVRI proposals is unique in that the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (the Department or DHCD) is asking Baltimore City’s community-based development organizations to describe exactly how many properties with vacant building notices they can address over multiple years if sufficiently capitalized. Vacancy reduction plans will include a range of investments, including but not limited to: property acquisition, stabilization, renovation and demolition. Targeted geography, property selection and redevelopment activities should reflect community priorities, build from the community strengths and aim to achieve whole block outcomes.

Awarded organizations will need to be nimble, efficient, and fast. The Department and its partners have a strong sense of urgency to replace vacant properties with catalytic investments that propel the vitality of Baltimore City neighborhoods. Organizations that can scale up their production will gain more ongoing BVRI investment over time as DHCD aims to pay for performance. The Department’s investment priority

will be the renovation of residential properties with a city-issued vacant building notice (VBN) as well as redeveloping vacant land for new housing opportunities, both with an emphasis on homeownership outcomes.

II. BVRI Investment Priorities

Additional consideration will be given to initiatives that address the overarching priorities of the Moore-Miller Administration and reflect the core objectives of MD DHCD, including to: increase housing for all, create lovable places, and right the wrongs of the past. Great places—lovable places—result from consistent targeted investment in locally driven and inclusive community reinvestment plans, particularly:

- Investments in designated [ENOUGH areas](#), addressing the community conditions surrounding children in poverty, enriching community assets and services for youth.
- Investments in designated [Just Communities](#), righting the wrongs of the past by transforming neighborhoods into thriving communities where all Marylanders, regardless of background, have access to fair housing, economic stability and opportunity.
- Increased housing production, including mixed-income, middle market and affordable housing, especially at TOD sites.
- Increased household and generational wealth building, such as through homeownership, legacy homeowner renovations, and small business development in historic Main Streets and business districts.
- Accelerated elimination of vacant properties, particularly in Baltimore City.

III. BVRI Goals

- Rapidly expedite reduction of properties with vacant building notices and rapidly increase the number of vacant homes converted to occupied housing with an emphasis on homeownership growth.
- Stabilize and grow population and households through increased production of renovated homes and newly constructed homes.
- Leverage private sector capital for housing development finance.
- Strengthen neighborhood housing values and resident homeownership wealth without displacement.

IV. Values & Guiding Principles

BVRI investments will align with the [values and principles](#) agreed upon by the Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Council (BVRC).

V. Whole Block Outcomes

BVRI investments aim to achieve [whole block outcomes](#) in partner communities.

Application

I. Eligible Applicants

- Community-based development organizations (CDOs)
 - CDOs may identify development partners in their application, which may be sub-recipients of funding; those development partners should support the CDOs efforts to scale and accelerate the abatement of vacant properties.
- Local Government

II. Eligible Geography

[Sustainable Community Areas](#) with special consideration given to projects in the [Baltimore City Vacancy Reduction Priority Geographies](#), which includes the Impact Investment Areas.

III. Eligible Activities

- Acquisition, stabilization, and renovation of vacant buildings, prioritizing those with a city-issued vacant building notice (VBN). Please note that DHCD's intent is to greatly and quickly reduce longstanding deteriorating vacant properties and VBNs; it is not the Department's intent to support acquisition of occupied properties.
- Vacant lot acquisition and aggregation for the purpose of new infill housing construction.
- Vacant lot acquisition and aggregation for community open space.
- Urgent demolition of properties that are too deteriorated to reclaim and that pose a community health risk.
- Predevelopment activities for renovation and new construction projects, including: architectural and engineering, site infrastructure, site development, building stabilization and, if necessary, demolition.

IV. Forms of Financial Assistance

- Loans or lines of credit to be repaid with home sales.
- Grant funds to fill the gap between total development costs and sale prices.

V. Application Training

Application training will be offered via webinar. See the [BVRI website](#) to obtain more information and training documents. Once training is complete, a training recording and step-by-step application instructions will be posted on the website.

VI. Submission of Application

Applications will be submitted exclusively through this Survey Monkey [web portal](#). No paper applications will be accepted. You must create an account with Survey Monkey in order to apply. The application will be located in “My Tasks” once you sign in.

The application will not be available in DHCD’s IGX Project Portal. Please be sure to use the link above to find and complete the application.

When your application is complete, ensure you click the **green** submit button.

VII. Deadline for submission

Applications including all necessary attachments must be submitted by 11:59 pm on May 23, 2025.

Application Review

I. Application Scoring

- Development Experience and Capacity: 30 points
- Vacants Reduction Strategy and Outcomes: 25 points
- Vacant Property Pipeline: 25 points
- Budget and Financing: 20 points

II. Additional Considerations

Projects located in [ENOUGH](#) and [Just Communities](#) areas will receive up to 10 bonus points each.

III. Site Visits and Follow-up Discussion

During the application review process, the review teams may make visits and/or hold meetings with applicants. In addition, applicants may be contacted by the Department for follow-up discussions prior to awards.

IV. Historic Preservation Consultation

All capital projects receiving State financial assistance are subject to the Maryland Historical Trust Act, which requires State agencies to consider the effect their funding will have on historic resources. The Department has a Programmatic Agreement in effect with the Maryland Historical Trust and initiates historic preservation compliance reviews after awards are made.

V. Required Organization Documents

All CDO applicants are required to submit By-Laws, Board Roster, IRS Letter of Determination, Articles of Incorporation, and an IRS Letter of Determination. Applicants will also be required to sign and submit a Public Disclosure Authorization, which can be found on the [BVRI webpage](#).

Post-Award Requirements

I. DHCD Reporting

DHCD will measure people- and place-based metrics for each location selected for an award, which may include the following:

- Neighborhood population
- Households
- Racial and ethnic composition
- Childhood poverty rate
- Vacancy rate
- Household median income
- Homeownership rate
- Median home sales price
- Unemployment rate
- Permit activity
- Tax assessments and revenue
- Resident employment
- Cost burden for renters and homeowners

II. Awardee Reporting

Awardees may also be asked to report demographic data for beneficiaries of BVRI funding, including homeowners and renters who benefit from completed development projects. These metrics may include:

- Demographic data of new homeowners and renters, if available.
- Demographic data of the ownership of new or expanding businesses as a result of a completed commercial or mixed-use development project, if available.
- Minority- and women-owned contractors or subcontractors participating in a project funded through BVRI.

Contact Information

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