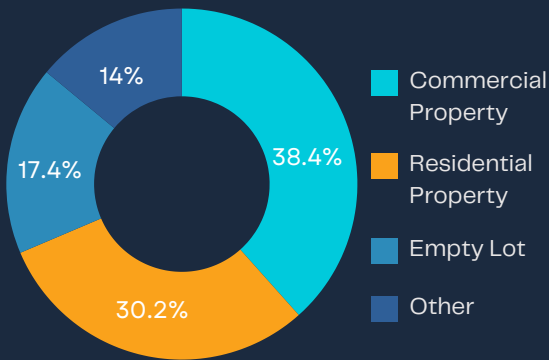
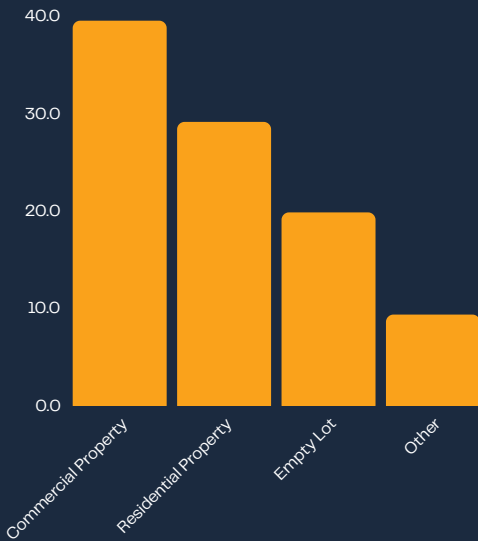


IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO COMMUNITY-BASED REDEVELOPMENT IN NORTH MINNEAPOLIS



38.4% of respondents indicated that when they imagined a vacant property, they imagined a commercial property while 30.2% imagined a residential property.



When asked which property type had the greatest impact on their day-to-day lives, about 39.5% of respondents indicated that commercial vacant properties had the most impact.

Vacant, abandoned and deteriorated properties are an increasing problem for the City of Minneapolis. The City has committed to getting these properties back into functional usage, and in partnership with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs' (CURA) Kris Nelson Program, the North Minneapolis Promise Zone analyzed the City's redevelopment process. In particular, we implemented a case-study and survey on West Broadway Avenue in North Minneapolis.

According to our case-study, fifteen properties within 250 ft of 2341 Penn Ave N have lost out on \$61,431.68 in value. Additionally, six properties within 250 ft of 818 West Broadway Ave have lost out on \$153,183.77 in value. Nine properties within 250 ft of both 2341 Penn Ave N and 2221 West Broadway Ave, another long-term vacant building, have lost out \$54,286.46. When these properties are viewed in aggregate, among the hundreds of other vacant properties on the Northside, let alone broader Minneapolis, the City is currently leaving millions of dollars on the table.

Our survey was open between October and December of 2023, and we received 87 distinct responses. About 50% of survey respondents said they were less likely to visit West Broadway due to vacant properties. Another 36% of respondents indicated that vacant properties do not impact their decision to visit. Many said that because they considered the vacancies normal, it does not impact their day to day. One respondent stated, "I am aware of the disparities in my community and I'm aware that they don't ask the people that live in the community what to do with the spaces." When asked about what they imagine vacant property being redeveloped into, many respondents indicated a need for affordable housing. One respondent stated, "Maybe more affordable housing/subsidized housing. Just making apartments, but only having one in the whole building for low income families isn't helpful." Finally, slightly over half of respondents indicated that they have used the City's 311 line at some point. A majority of those respondents said that their concerns were addressed, but a significant number said that it took repeated calls or that their concerns were not addressed at all. One respondent said, "I contacted 311 on 3 different properties with no results."

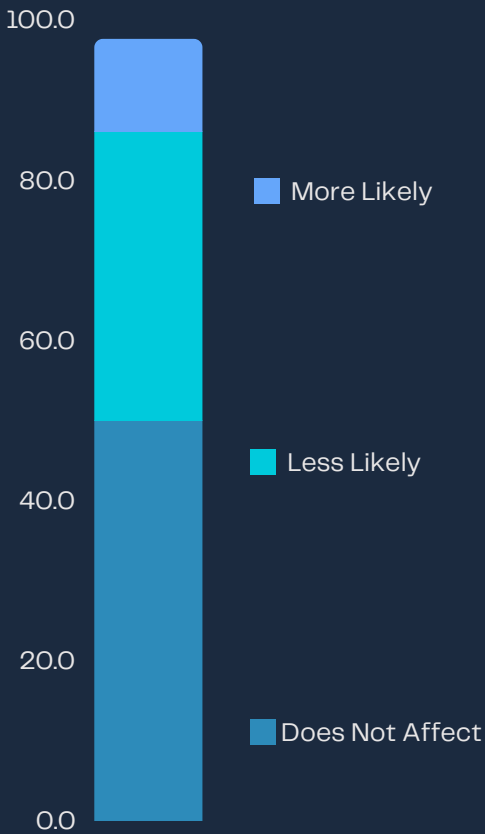
“ I am aware of the disparities in my community and I'm aware that they don't ask the people that live in the community what to do with the spaces. ”

“ I contacted 311 on 3 different properties with no results. ”

Analyzing the survey results as a whole, we identified two themes that stood out: **1) there is a strong sense of community on the Northside, and community members want to support local businesses and 2) there is a collective desire for more resources that benefit the community.** It is clear that there is no lack of enthusiasm for development work on the Northside, just some of the means for doing so.

The case study and survey results generated two specific policy recommendations. The first policy recommendation concerns identification of vacant property. We believe that Minneapolis’s complaint-based code enforcement system is undergirded by inequity. The Department of Regulatory Services should conduct an audit to investigate whether: **1) a significant number of 311 complaints do not actually involve code violations and 2) there are areas of the City with disproportionately high complaint rates or fine rates.** If the answer to either of those questions is “yes,” the City should rely on other streams of data for identifying code violations. Shifting to a proactive program of inspector sweeps and outreach, such as the one employed by Minneapolis’ neighbor, Brooklyn Park, would go a long way to achieving more equitable outcomes.

Regardless of whether Reg takes up an audit or a proactive approach, it must deploy an “early warning system” for vacant property. Instead of complaint data, this system would identify vacancies with water shutoff data, commercial licensing data and USPS vacancy data. It would have no dependence on resident knowledge of codes or reporting mechanisms. There is simply no justification for the fact that it has taken years to add several North Minneapolis properties to the VBR. The second policy recommendation concerns the actual redevelopment of vacant property. The vision Minneapolis has for equitable development necessitates redevelopment work, and it is always cheaper in the long-term to do the work sooner. State, County and City government must leverage more money for this work. Leveraging County and City monies to maintain properties will have the added benefit of clarifying that there is no double standard for code enforcement between public and privately owned property. Closing the financial gap to make the built environment on West Broadway Ave. “people-centered” will attract all new types of business. It will ensure that more North Minneapolis dollars and jobs stay in North Minneapolis and it will provide new outlets for strengthening existing community bonds.



Almost half of the survey respondents indicated that the vacancies on West Broadway make them less likely to visit the corridor. In contrast, 36% indicated that it has no impact on their day-to-day travels.