

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Essex County Land Bank Launches Initiatives to Revitalize Vacant Properties

Ticonderoga, NY – August 15, 2024 – The Essex County Land Bank, administered by the North Country Rural Development Coalition, announces two strategic programs aimed at revitalizing vacant and blighted properties across Essex County. The "Vacant Rental Improvement Program (V-RIP)" and the "Pilot Vacant Property Clearance Program" are designed to transform these underutilized spaces into valuable community assets, in line with our mission to promote sustainable development and enhance residents' quality of life.

Mission Statement: *Empowering Communities Through Sustainable Development - At the Essex County Land Bank, we are dedicated to transforming vacant, abandoned, and underutilized properties into thriving community assets, fostering sustainable development, promoting economic growth, and improving the quality of life for residents throughout Essex County.*

Program Details:

1. Vacant Rental Improvement Program (V-RIP):

- **Purpose:** This program specifically targets the conversion of vacant properties into affordable rental units. It does not support remodeling of currently occupied units.
- **Priority Areas:** We are prioritizing downtown rental units, particularly those on second floors, and multifamily units that can accommodate up to five units.
- **Conversion Potential:** Properties can be converted from entirely vacant buildings into rental housing, fostering urban revitalization.
- **Funding Options:**
 - **Standard V-RIP:** Up to \$50,000 per unit for properties renting to tenants with incomes up to 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).
 - **Enhanced V-RIP:** Up to \$75,000 per unit for deeper affordability, targeting tenants with incomes up to 60% of AMI.
- **Eligible Activities:** Include necessary health and safety improvements, compliance with building codes, residential upgrades, accessibility modifications, and environmental remediation.
- **Application Info:** Learn more and apply at essexcountylandbank.org/vacant-rental-improvement-program-v-rip/

2. Pilot Vacant Property Clearance Program (VPCP):

- **Purpose:** Focuses on the demolition of derelict properties in commercial and mixed-use areas that pose health and safety risks, with an emphasis on properties that will remain vacant post-clearance.
- **Scope:** Utilizes Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for demolition-only activities where no immediate reuse has been identified.

- **Application Info:** Discover more and apply at essexcountylandbank.org/pilot-vacant-property-clearance/

Nicole Justice Green's Statement: "These programs will be a cornerstone in our strategy to drive economic development and support our local workforce by transforming vacant sites into vibrant spaces. By addressing blight and repurposing underutilized properties, we're not just enhancing our neighborhoods, we're laying down the foundations for a more robust and resilient community," said Nicole Justice Green, Executive Director of the Essex County Land Bank. "These pre-applications are profoundly important and are necessary to determine demand in order to secure funding."

Application Process:

We invite property owners to apply by the August 30, 2024 deadline. Please note, this preliminary step is crucial for assessing demand and does not guarantee funding. For more information or to apply, visit our website. If you have demolition needs outside of Ticonderoga, please contact us as we have additional funding available.

For paper applications or additional inquiries, please contact:

- **Nicole Justice Green, Executive Director**
- **Email:** info@northcountryruraldevelopment.org
- **Phone:** 518-585-6366

About Us: The Essex County Land Bank, led by the North Country Rural Development Coalition, is committed to enhancing Essex County by tackling issues of vacant and underutilized properties.

Contact Information: Essex County Land Bank

Email: info@northcountryruraldevelopment.org

Phone: 518-585-6366

Website: www.essexcountylandbank.org