

# Blight Tools to Promote Housing Access

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# About VFC



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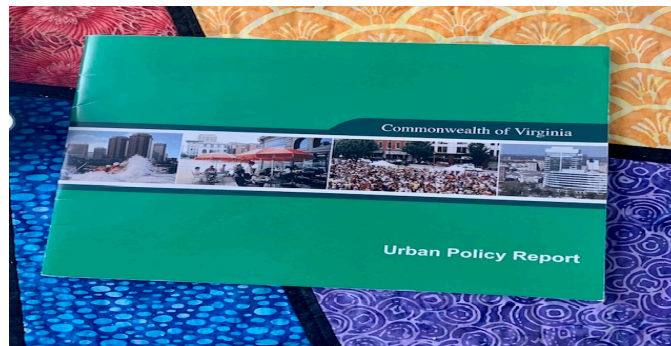
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# Focus Blight & Housing Access



- VFC Pillar - Ameliorating Conditions that Result in Urban Blight
- Intersection of Blight Abatement and Housing Access
- Governor Kaine's 2008 Urban Policy Task Force



# Urban Policy Goals 2008 Housing



- ✓ Create a state housing trust fund to support the development & retention of affordable housing **2013 VHTF established**
- ✓ Provide incentives for workforce housing so workers can live in communities where they work **Va Housing Opportunity Credit, Housing Choice Voucher Program, Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit**
- ✗ Fund Virginia's existing Housing Revitalization Zone Program & target implementation to urban areas to support housing development & focused revitalization activities **Never funded**

# Housing Revitalization Zones



- Passed in 2000
- Administered by DHCD
- Found in § 36-157 through § 36-170
- DHCD Powers & Duties
- How it Works
- Has Never Been Funded
- Statute Needs Tweaking
- Needs Budget Funding

# Blight



- Blight was an issue back in 2000 when the Interim Report on the “Condition and Future of Virginia's Cities” was published
- Blight in our cities has ebbed and flowed. General Assembly has been responsive
- The Blight Matrix

**USING VIRGINIA CODE  
PROVISIONS TO COMBAT BLIGHT**

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Statutory Reference	Key Points	Practice Pointers
Virginia Code Section 15.2-250 Local Ordinance Required	- Allows locality to maintain an action to compel a responsible party to abate a nuisance.	- Code is very broad and elements easy to prove.
Cost Recovery	- “Responsible party” is: owner, occupier or possessor or of premises - owner or agent of material released - owner or agent transporting material whose negligence caused release - “Nuisance” is: 1) dangerous or unhealthy substances released 2) unsafe, dangerous or unsanitary buildings, walls, or structures - Allows locality to undertake abatement if immediate and imminent threat. - Allows locality to recover emergency response costs.	- Code is used by many localities as basis for Hazmat Response Cost Recovery Program. - Negligence need not be shown by a locality except under transporting material category. - Lien against real property for unpaid costs is authorized under 15.2-206(4). - Code can be used against derelict structures.

The chart is not intended to be exhaustive. Instead only the major provisions are mentioned. All the Virginia Code Sections referenced herein can be accessed at the Virginia Legislative Information Service website at [leg1.state.va.us](http://leg1.state.va.us) under the Code of Virginia link.

(Amended July 2018)

# Blight & Housing



- 2023 VFC Member Housing Survey/Blight Questions & Workforce Housing Questions
- We looked to see what tools were already in the Code of Virginia
- The VHRZ and Fund rang a lot of bells as an existing tool that would be very useful

# The Intersection – Blight & Housing Revitalization



- All could really use a program that helps with the infrastructure and seeding revitalization
- Amending the statute for the Virginia Revitalization Zone Fund Program to be a program that is useful, that encourages urban and community renewal will be a game changer
- Funding the Virginia Revitalization Zone Fund in FY 2026 will bring positive outcomes for housing access, blight remediation and recovery