

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 8 OF THE CITY CODE TO  
CREATE A VACANT PROPERTY REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM**

**#0223**

**Sponsor:**

**Council  
Member  
Willauer**

**WHEREAS**, access to safe, stable, and affordable housing is essential to the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the City of Wilmington.

**WHEREAS**, the City of Wilmington has experienced rising homeownership costs and rental costs in recent years, placing significant financial strain on low- and moderate-income households; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Wilmington has over 1,000 vacant residential properties at the current time; and

**WHEREAS**, most of the vacant residential properties in the City of Wilmington are privately owned; and

**WHEREAS**, many of those property owners have the capacity and desire to rehabilitate their vacant properties, but lack the financial resources to complete the repairs needed to return the property to occupancy-ready status; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council finds that establishing a locally administered City of Wilmington Vacant Property Rehabilitation Assistance Program will serve a valid public purpose by providing temporary financial assistance to owners of vacant residential properties looking to rehabilitate those vacant properties, thereby increasing housing availability and protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of City residents.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON  
HEREBY ORDAINS:**

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 8 of the City Code is hereby amended by creating a new

Section 8-10 with the following underlined language:

**Section 8-10.-City of Wilmington Vacant Property Rehabilitation Assistance**

**Program**

- (a) Authorization. The Department of Real Estate and Housing is hereby authorized to undertake a program using funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Fund in any fiscal year for the purpose of assisting owners of vacant properties with bringing those properties back into productive use.
- (b) Eligibility. Eligible residential homeowners must provide to the Department of Real Estate and Housing an affidavit containing the following:
  - a. Identification;
  - b. Verification of vacant property address;
  - c. If property is to be a rental property:
    - i. Landlord must agree to keep rent affordable for 10 years.
    - ii. Landlord agrees to rent to households at or under eighty percent (80%) of the Area Median Income level.
  - d. If property is to be owner-occupied:
    - i. Verification that their household income is equal to or less than eighty percent (80%) of the Average Median Income for the City of Wilmington.

- ii. The homeowner must agree to remain in the home as owner-occupants for 10 years.
- (c) Eligible Properties. The vacant property must be located within the corporate boundaries of the City of Wilmington.
- (d) Administration and Enforcement. The Department of Real Estate and Housing is authorized to prescribe, adopt, promulgate, and enforce rules and regulations relating to any matter pertaining to the administration and enforcement of this section.

**SECTION 2.** This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its date of passage by the City Council and approval by the Mayor.

First Reading ..... April 16, 2026  
Second Reading ..... April 16, 2026  
Third Reading .....

Passed by City Council,

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of City Council

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved as to form this 14<sup>th</sup>  
day of April, 2026.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant City Solicitor

Approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

**SYNOPSIS:** This Ordinance amends Chapter 8 of the City Code to create a Vacant Property Rehabilitation Assistance Program that shall be administered by the Department of Real Estate and Housing. The Vacant Property Rehabilitation Assistance Program offers financial assistance to owners of vacant properties to make repairs to their vacant properties to bring them back into occupancy-ready status.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:** The Office of Management and Budget has reviewed and analyzed this Ordinance, which amends Chapter 8 of the City Code to authorize the creation of a Homeowner Repair Program, to be administered by the Department of Real Estate and Housing.

The Ordinance does not establish complete rules for the proposed Homeowner Repair Program but instead authorizes the Department of Real Estate and Housing to prescribe Program rules and regulations. Consequently, until such rules and regulations are established, the fiscal impact of this Ordinance cannot be calculated. Moreover, until these rules and

regulations are established, it is not clear whether this program will replace, expand, or operate parallel to, the existing Home Repair Lottery Program.

In addition to direct assistance payments, the Department of Real Estate and Housing will likely incur administrative costs associated with program implementation, though the scope of these costs is dependent on the prescribed rules and regulations.

Additionally, as this Ordinance does not appropriate funds, the potential fiscal impact of this Ordinance will depend upon the amount of funding appropriated through the annual operating budget process, capital budget process, or the level of grant funding secured.