

CHAPTER 2







IMPROVING PROPERTY CONDITIONS

Property deterioration such as peeling paint, broken windows, high weeds and grass, and trash accumulation create a sense of unease for neighbors and pedestrians and can begin lowering property values.







Obj. 1 - INCREASING PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE COMPLIANCE

The city's Property Maintenance Code (PMC) and Neighborhood Improvement Ordinance require that all properties in the city meet minimum standards.

-  **Structural Conditions**
-  **Sanitation**
-  **Lighting**
-  **Fire Safety**
-  **Ventilation**
-  **Historic Preservation**

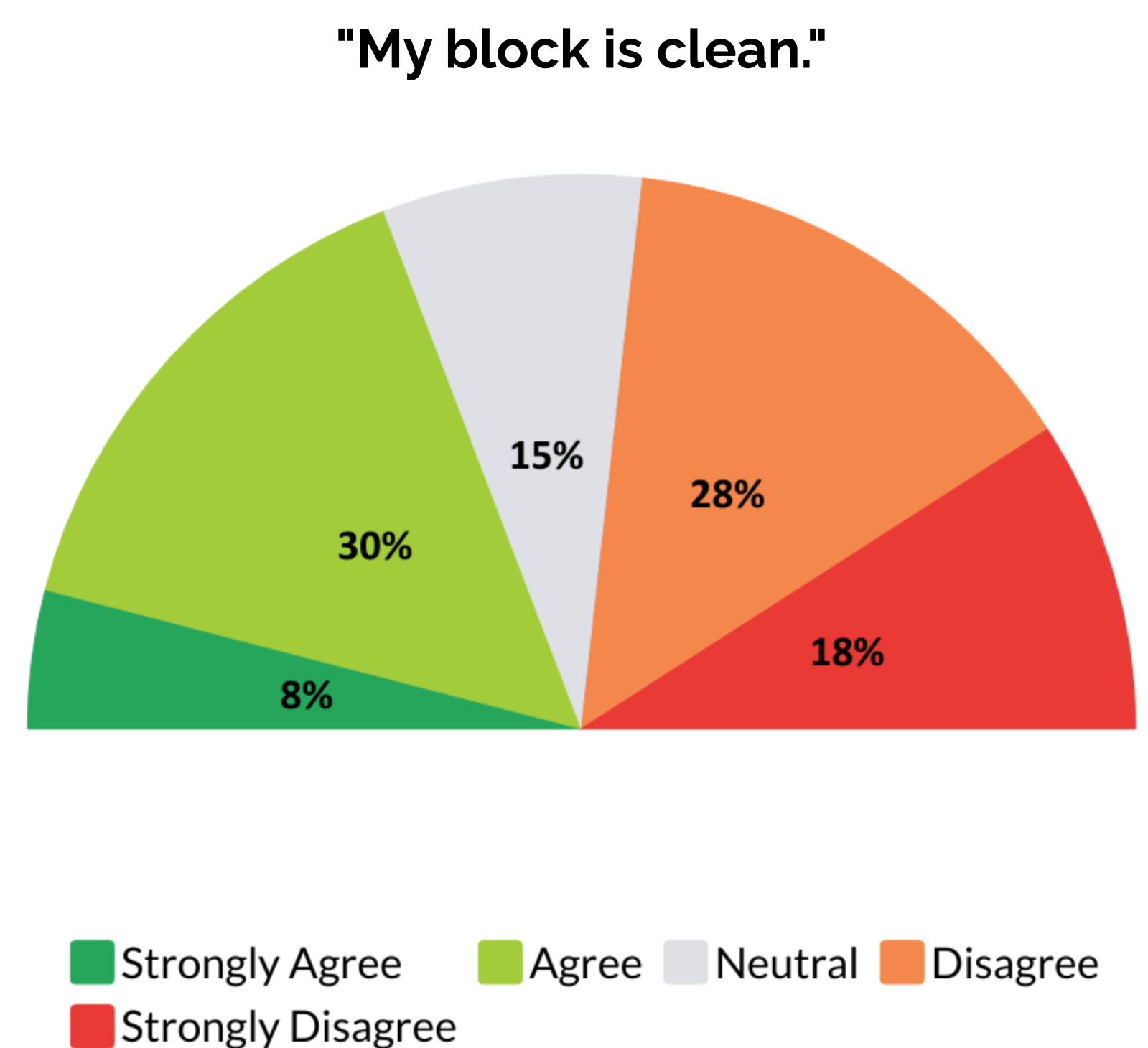
Why do we enforce it?

-  **Improving health and safety**
-  **Enhancing attractiveness & vitality of the City.**
-  **Supporting the economic and social development of the City.**
-  **Maintaining historically significant architecture**

Obj. 2 - REDUCING TRASH ON STREETS

Maintaining streets free from trash is essential for maintaining a clean, safe, attractive urban environment.

Less than 50% of residents surveyed agreed that their street or block is clean.



The presence of litter and animal waste were priority concerns identified during the listening tours in Fireside, Downtown, Parkway, the South End, The West End, and the Avenues.

Obj. 3 - CREATING A BETTER SYSTEM TO REMEDY LANDLORD-TENANT DISPUTES

Creating a better system is necessary to ensure fair, timely, and efficient conflict resolutions, promote housing stability, and protect the rights of both parties.

IMPORTANCE OF A BETTER SYSTEM:

- Maintaining Housing Stability
- Preventing Negative Economic Impacts
- Protecting Tenants' Rights
- Ensuring Legal Compliance
- Improving Landlord-Community Relations
- Preventing Homelessness

CHAPTER 2

IMPROVING PROPERTY CONDITIONS The Vision & The Solutions - Part I

Obj. 1 - INCREASING PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE COMPLIANCE

The Vision - “We prioritize healthy, safe, and well-maintained living conditions. Uniform code enforcement ensures that all properties meet standards. Clear lease expectations guide maintenance, and proactive property care fosters a livable environment for all residents. Through shared pride of place, we collectively enhance our community.”

The Solutions



Education & Persuasion

- Support a strong housing code enforcement program to identify unsafe structural conditions and substandard housing and provide an improved quality of life through repair and rehabilitation. **Tier 1**
- Support historic preservation efforts by maintaining and rehabilitating structures of historic value for residential use. **Tier 1**
- Create and publish educational videos regarding common property maintenance violations and how to repair or mitigate them. **Tier 1**
- Include educational materials regarding property maintenance in deed transfer information and utility and tax bills. **Tier 1**
- Advise Historic Preservation Board members of training opportunities with the State Preservation Office. **Tier 1**
- Provide training to Code Enforcement staff to recognize and cite historic properties that suffer from decline due to neglect, vacancy, and deferred maintenance. **Tier 1**
- Advocate for the protection and awareness of historic resources and archaeological sites. **Tier 1**
- Develop promotional and reference materials about local historic resources, preservation, and cultural heritage and make them available at City Hall and on the city's website. **Tier 1**
- Sponsor at least one public yearly seminar or workshop about historic preservation topics. **Tier 1**
- Educate stakeholders and the development community as to the development review process for historic sites and structures. **Tier 1**
- Work with local agencies and history-based organizations to promote heritage tourism as part of the city's economic development efforts, such as creating historical tours. **Tier 1**
- Encourage and support the nomination of historic structures, sites, and/or districts to the National Register of Historic Places. **Tier 1**

- Promote and increase awareness of historic structures, sites, and districts for heritage tourism purposes, such as installing historic street identification and recreational and cultural interest area signs. **Tier 1**
- Encourage residents and property owners to plant and maintain trees on their property to increase air quality. **Tier 1**
- Bring back the Ray Crenshaw Neighborhood Awards. **Tier 1**
- Promote awareness of historic and cultural resources through continued use of the historic markers program administered by the Department of State. **Tier 2**
- Develop an education and outreach program about the benefits of owning a historic site and listing an eligible resource to the Local or National Register of Historic Places; this outreach shall include information about the economic advantages inherent in the rehabilitation of historic buildings and that historic preservation is a form of sustainable development. **Tier 2**
- Promote awareness of historic and cultural resources through continued use of the historic markers program administered by the Department of State. **Tier 2**
- Create a branded, city-wide awareness campaign to provide routine communication regarding property maintenance and its critical importance to the city. **Tier 2**
- Develop and distribute new owner, tenant, and landlord information to highlight rights and resources. **Tier 2**
- Consider the creation of a property maintenance university, perhaps to work in coordination with the tool lending library. **Tier 3**

Inducements & Incentives

- The creation of a tool lending library. **Tier 1**
- Formally recognize historic resources that are considered significant according to the Historic Preservation Ordinances. **Tier 2**
- Coordinate with local community partners and create low-interest loans for owner-occupied and tenant-occupied structures. **Tier 2**

- Consider creating tax incentives for property owners without property maintenance violations. **Tier 3**
 - Establish an annual awards program that officially recognizes excellence in historic preservation activities. **Tier 3**
 - Recognize local historic preservation efforts each year during National Preservation Month through programming activities and collaborating with local organizations. **Tier 3**
 - The creation of a tool lending library. **Tier 1**
 - Create a rewards and recognition program for property owners and neighborhoods that achieve improvement or greatness in property maintenance. **Tier 1**
 - Collaborating with local community partners, provide eligible city property owners with no-cost or low-cost appliances. **Tier 1**
 - Offer housing rehabilitation assistance to upgrade substandard owner-occupied housing in designated target areas. **Tier 1**
 - Provide local funding and pursue financial incentives and new public funding sources for the rehabilitation of the exterior of existing owner-occupied units. **Tier 1**
 - Explore and pursue incentives for maintaining, restoring, rehabilitating, and stabilizing eligible and historic resources. **Tier 1**
 - Increase the prestige of ownership by providing certificates recognizing the significance of historic structures or sites. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the feasibility of creating a subsidy or low-interest loan program to assist property owners with kitchen and plumbing improvements. **Tier 2**
- #### Services & Capacity-Building
- Provide dedicated legal support to the property enforcement division. **Tier 1**
 - Demolish housing units within residential neighborhoods that cannot be effectively rehabilitated only when necessary, and replace the units with creative housing solutions that are compatible with the neighborhood. **Tier 1**
 - Provide coordination between city staff, solid waste personnel, property owners, and residents regarding comprehensive clean-up programs. **Tier 1**
 - Increase property maintenance inspection staff capacity by increasing the number of inspectors. **Tier 2**

- Annually budget staff support and resources to assist communities and neighborhood associations with routinely scheduling and conducting neighborhood cleanups. **Tier 1**
- Maintain a qualified Historic Preservation Board that meets the Pennsylvania Certified Local Government Guidelines to oversee and further develop the functions of the historic preservation program. **Tier 1**
- Maintain staff to carry out the duties and responsibilities delegated to the Certified Local Government. **Tier 1**
- Continue to monitor and participate in local and State historic preservation programs to fund local historic preservation activities. **Tier 1**
- Provide dedicated legal support to the property enforcement division. **Tier 1**
- Consider providing dedicated annual funding to all Departments involved in implementing routine "Clean Sweeps" of target neighborhoods. **Tier 1**
- Transition property maintenance activities to a cloud-based project management software that can automate administrative activities. **Tier 1**
- Create partnerships with local "youth build" organizations to assist property owners with making home improvements. **Tier 1**
- Explore the feasibility of establishing neighborhood cooperatives to buy materials and contract services. **Tier 1**
- Encourage restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures and sites where such investments will provide for or contribute to heritage tourism development. **Tier 1**
- Design and construct public infrastructure improvements, such as streets, street trees, streetlights, signage, furniture, and sidewalks, within historic districts to be compatible with and reinforce the historic character of the district. **Tier 2**
- Establish, maintain, and strengthen partnerships with external agencies and local institutions, as well as local history, preservation, and archaeological organizations for implementing preservation and education objectives. **Tier 2**
- Use historic buildings to accommodate public uses whenever feasible. **Tier 2**

- Use the city's Certified Local Government (CLG) designation to apply for funding from the PHMC to conduct a historic district survey to create landmark design guidelines and other landmark preservation educational materials. **Tier 2**
 - Explore the creation of a dedicated staff position to coordinate property maintenance initiatives across departments. **Tier 2**
- #### System Changes
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a single-stop housing court rather than coordinating enforcement activities across five (5) district magistrate jurisdictions. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the creation of a dedicated staff position to coordinate property maintenance initiatives across departments. **Tier 2**
 - Provide dedicated legal support to the property enforcement division. **Tier 1**
 - Survey housing conditions in areas where deterioration is known or suspected on a biennial basis. **Tier 1**
 - Ensure that all housing is healthy and safe and meets basic housing-maintenance requirements through programs, regulations, and enforcement. **Tier 1**
 - Accommodate the city's existing and future housing needs by maintaining existing residential neighborhoods. **Tier 1**
 - Continue to coordinate with all utility providers to locate utilities in a manner consistent with the historic character of historic sites and districts. **Tier 1**
 - Promote the preservation of historic resources by conducting a Section 106 review of houses 50 years or older utilizing local, state, or federal assistance, if applicable. **Tier 2**
 - Target collaborative code enforcement and law enforcement activities directed at solving specific problems to help move the neighborhood toward a "stable" residential classification. **Tier 2**
 - Continue to maintain and update the historical, archaeological, and cultural inventories for properties and historic districts listed on the Local and National Registers of Historic Places. **Tier 2**
 - Explore the potential for the designation of parks, landscapes, gardens, trees, and tree canopies to the Local Register of Historic Places. **Tier 2**
 - Implement neighborhood programs to prevent property deterioration and neighborhood decline. **Tier 2**



Laws & Mandates

- Explore the feasibility of requiring an inspection at the time of tenant turnover. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the feasibility of requiring an inspection when a property transfers from a rental unit to an owner-occupied unit. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the feasibility of requiring an inspection when a property transfers ownership. **Tier 1**
 - Ensure that all housing is healthy and safe and meets basic housing-maintenance requirements through programs, regulations, and enforcement. **Tier 1**
 - Continue to require that the Historic Preservation Board make findings that any land use or development application for a historic structure, site, or within a historic district is consistent with the provisions of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the Land Development Regulations. **Tier 1**
 - HARB Recommendations. **Tier 1**
 1. Prioritize stabilizing historically significant properties in the Historic District
 2. Create a Historic York Ordinance that has a greater enforcement ability.
 3. Create an annual funding mechanism to provide the HARB with professional consulting services.
 4. Create regulations, educational materials, and an evaluation process that seek to protect historic buildings outside of the HARB District, such as the Madison School Building.
 - Ensure historic resources remain consistent with the Historic York Ordinance relating to affirmative maintenance, demolition by neglect, and boarding, which are adopted in the Land Development Regulations and the Code of Ordinances. **Tier 1**
 - Continue to develop new land use and zoning incentives for eligible and historic resources within the Land Development Regulations, such as encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic structures within mixed-use zoning districts and providing parking relief strategies. **Tier 1**
- #### Taxes, Fees, and Fines
- Explore the feasibility of increasing fines to a level significant enough to deter noncompliance. **Tier 1**

CHAPTER 2

IMPROVING PROPERTY CONDITIONS

The Vision & The Solutions - Part 2

Obj. 2 - REDUCING TRASH ON STREETS

The Vision “In our thriving city, success is defined by a cleaner, safer, and healthier environment. Residents take pride in their spaces, ensuring unobstructed sidewalks and efficient waste containers. Haulers prioritize care and caution, while composting efforts reduce vermin and vectors. Across all neighborhoods, understanding about recyclability fosters a city where every street and block reflects our shared commitment to cleanliness.”

The Solutions

- Education & Persuasion**
 - Include an informational packet on the city's trash policies in deed-transfer paperwork and utility and tax bills. **Tier 1**
 - Promote composting and its benefits on the city's website. **Tier 1**
 - Create anti-littering PR campaigns to be advertised throughout the city. **Tier 1**
 - Increase community awareness of trash pick-up schedules. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the feasibility of sending those who litter to "trash school". **Tier 2**
- Inducements & Incentives**
 - Offer large items and yard waste removal from curbside twice a year. **Tier 2**
 - Partner with local stakeholders to offer monetary sponsorships for block clean-ups. **Tier 3**
- Services & Capacity-Building**
 - Offer online large-item pick-up scheduling on the city's website. **Tier 1**
 - Organize neighborhood trash clean-up events. **Tier 1**
 - Create an Adopt-A-Block program that the city sponsors. **Tier 1**
 - Install additional public trash cans throughout the city. **Tier 2**
 - Explore the feasibility of providing a dumpster in each neighborhood of the city. **Tier 3**

- System Changes**
 - Establish consistent trash collection routes. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the feasibility of businesses within the city adopting a pay-per-bag pricing model. **Tier 2**
 - Explore the feasibility of allowing back-alley collection. **Tier 2**
 - Explore the feasibility of offering each residence a series of collection totes, including separate containers for trash, paper recyclables, and plastic recyclables. **Tier 2**

- Laws & Mandates**
 - Explore the feasibility of requiring multi-unit properties to have an accessible dumpster. **Tier 1**
 - Explore the feasibility of requiring trash bin lids in public areas. **Tier 1**

- Taxes, Fees, and Fines**
 - Explore the feasibility of allowing parents and guardians to pay for truancy fines with community service, i.e., trash pick-up. **Tier 1**
 - Increase littering fines. **Tier 1**

Obj. 3 - CREATING A BETTER SYSTEM TO REMEDY LANDLORD-TENANT DISPUTES

The Vision - “In our forward-thinking city, we envision a system that reduces evictions and minimizes landlord-tenant complaints filed with Magisterial District Judges (MDJs). Through mutual respect, we create a safe living environment, promoting healthier kids and decreasing violence. Our commitment to fairness and collaboration ensures a better remedy system for all.”

The Solutions

- Education & Persuasion**
 - Offer easily accessible information on code violations and responsibility on the City's website. **Tier 1**
 - Conduct outreach and educational programs to inform landlords and tenants about their rights and responsibilities. **Tier 1**
 - Require landlords to register for an online portal system to track complaints and other actions. **Tier 3**
- Inducements & Incentives**
 - Explore the feasibility of creating a system of landlord and tenant scores to rank their worthiness, similar to a credit score. **Tier 3**
- Services & Capacity-Building**
 - Create a universal standard lease template. **Tier 1**
 - Create an online platform for submitting and tracking dispute resolutions, making the process more accessible and transparent. **Tier 3**
- System Changes**
 - Explore the feasibility of requiring a housing court for mediation before eviction. **Tier 2**
 - Explore the feasibility of offering low-cost/free attorneys to remedy landlord-tenant disputes. **Tier 3**
- Laws & Mandates**
 - Require inspections to be conducted between each tenant occupancy. **Tier 1**
 - Periodically review and update local policies and regulations. **Tier 1**