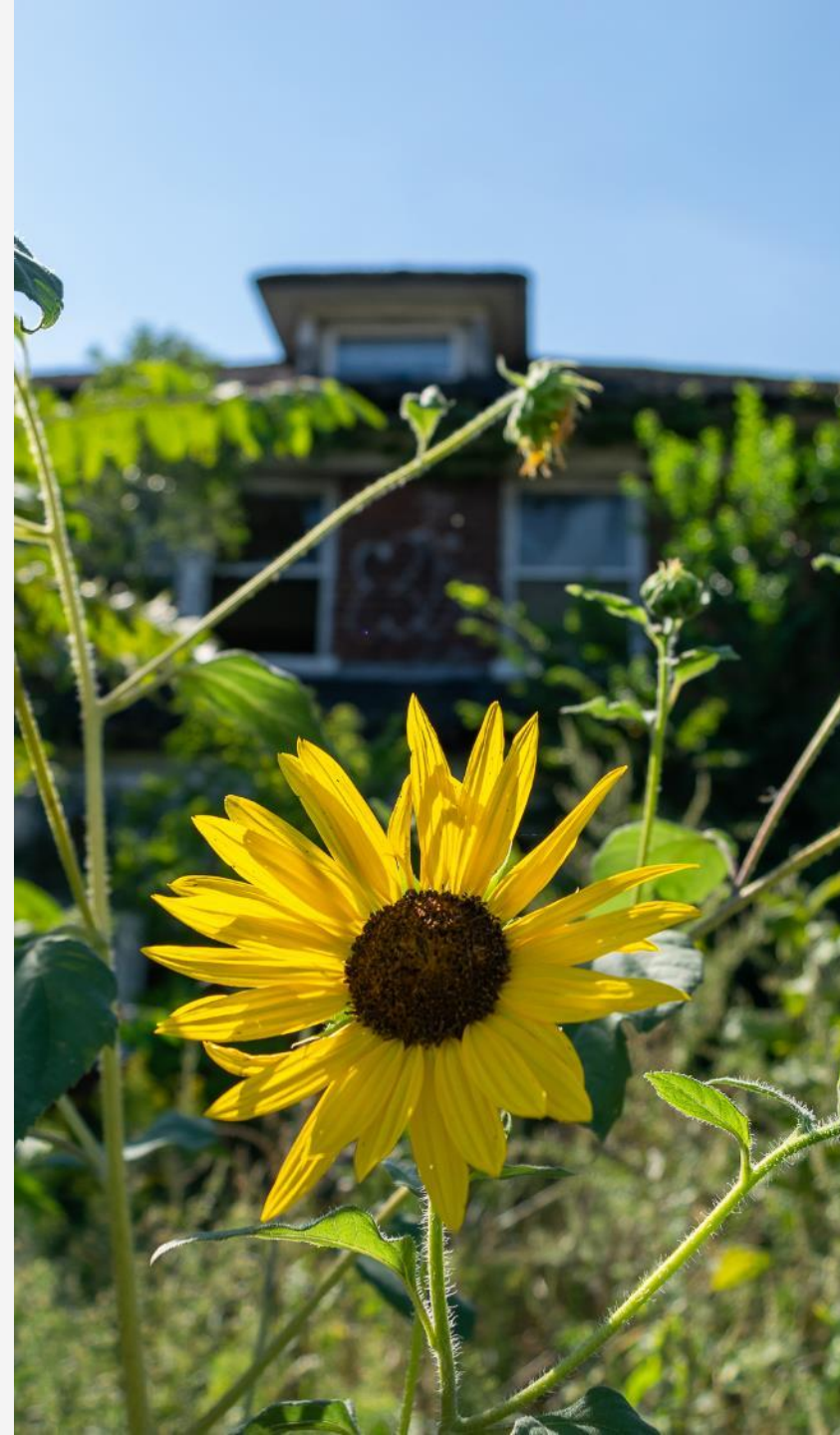

Setting the Table

Understanding the Causes of Vacancy, Abandonment, and Deterioration; and Frameworks for Solutions



Today's Presentation

1

Property Revitalization Framework and the Cycle of Vacancy

2

A Historical Context: The Triggers of Vacancy

3

Addressing VAD Properties

4

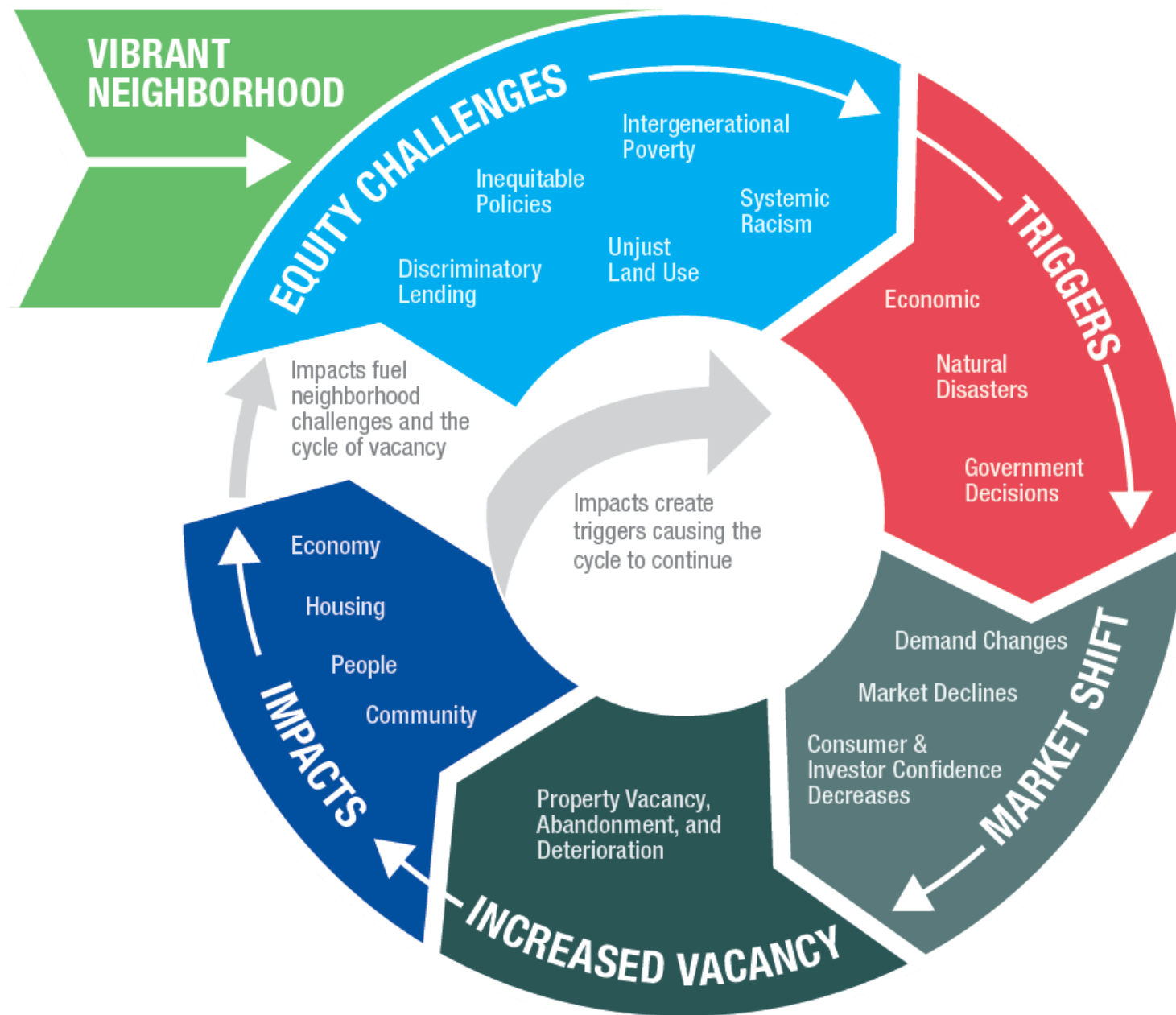
Our Systematic Approach



The Cycle of Vacancy



The Cycle of Vacancy



Historical Context



1. Equity Challenges Create the Conditions for Vacancy



Gentrification

New Investment

Redevelopment

“Cleanup”

“Blight”

**Urban
Renewal**

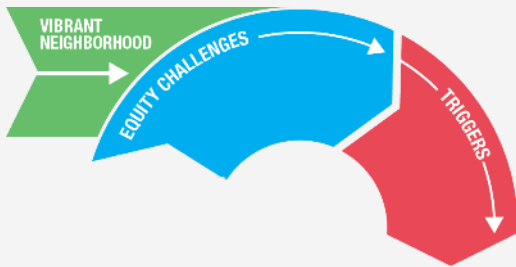


2. Disasters Trigger Vacancy

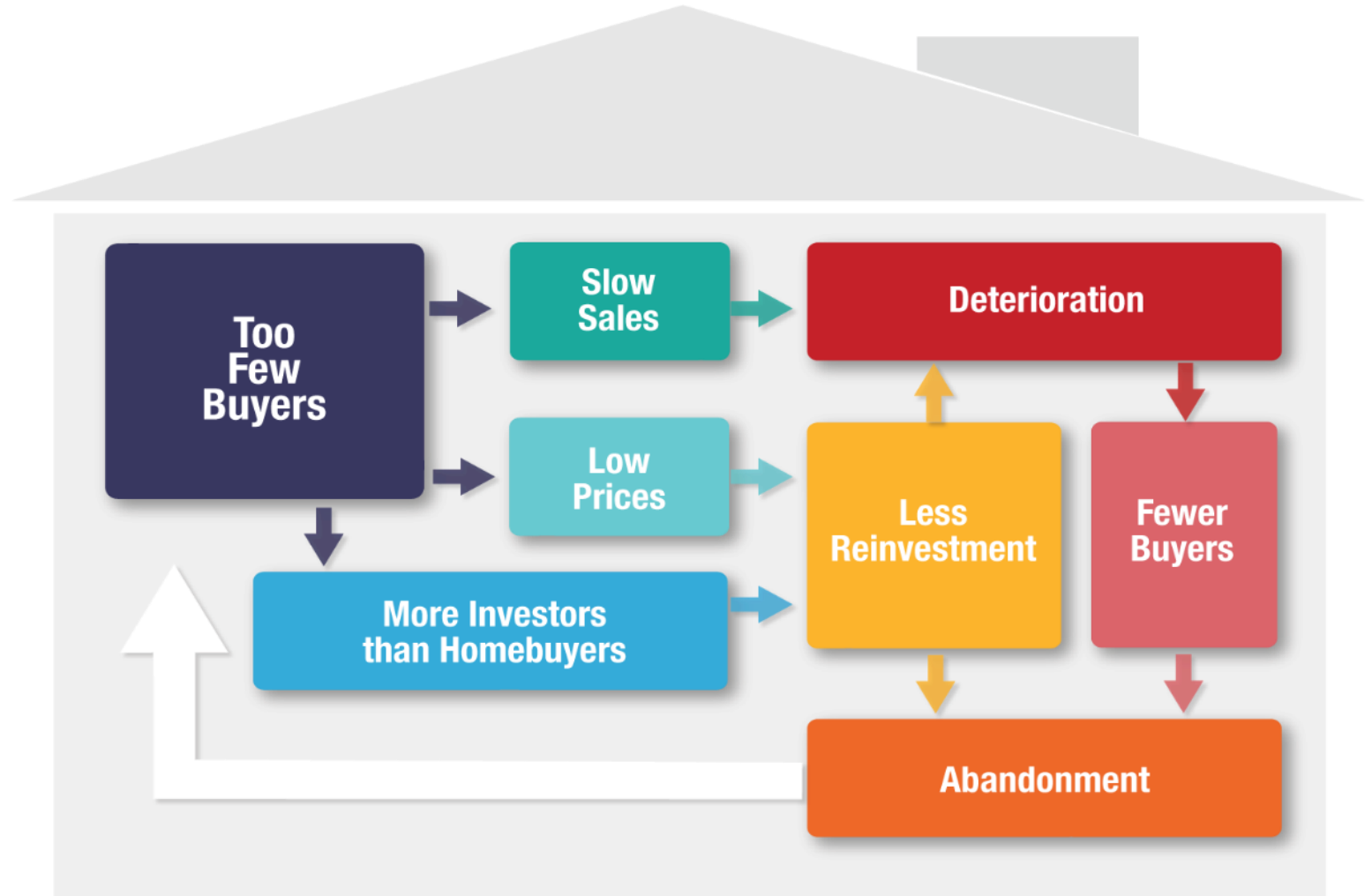
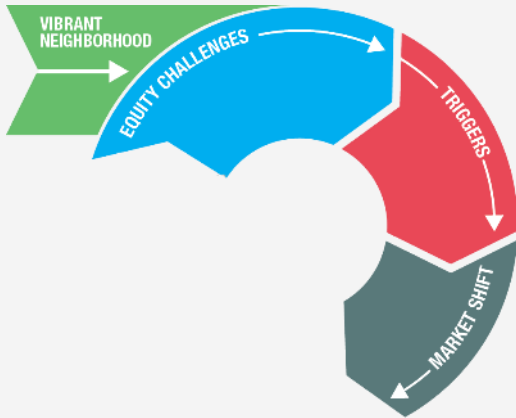
Natural disasters

Economic downturns

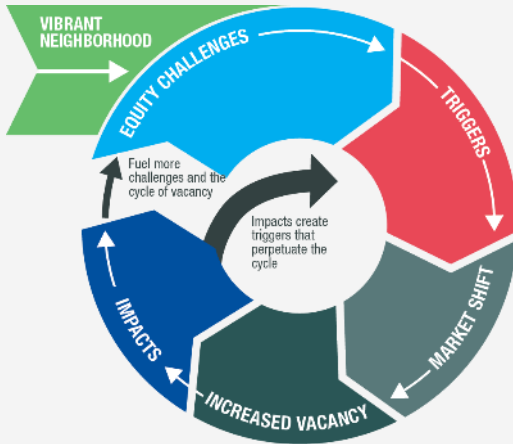
Loss of industry



3. Vacant Properties Weaken Confidence in Communities



4. Impact of Vacant, Abandoned Properties



PUBLIC HEALTH

Creates unsafe environment for occupants (e.g. lead, asbestos)

Creates unsafe environment for neighbors (e.g. attracts crime, rodent harborage, physical threat)

Harms mental health

INDIVIDUAL WEALTH

Lowers surrounding property values, threatening homeowners' investment

Property deterioration exceeds cost-effective repair

Higher insurance premiums

COMMUNITY FISCAL STABILITY

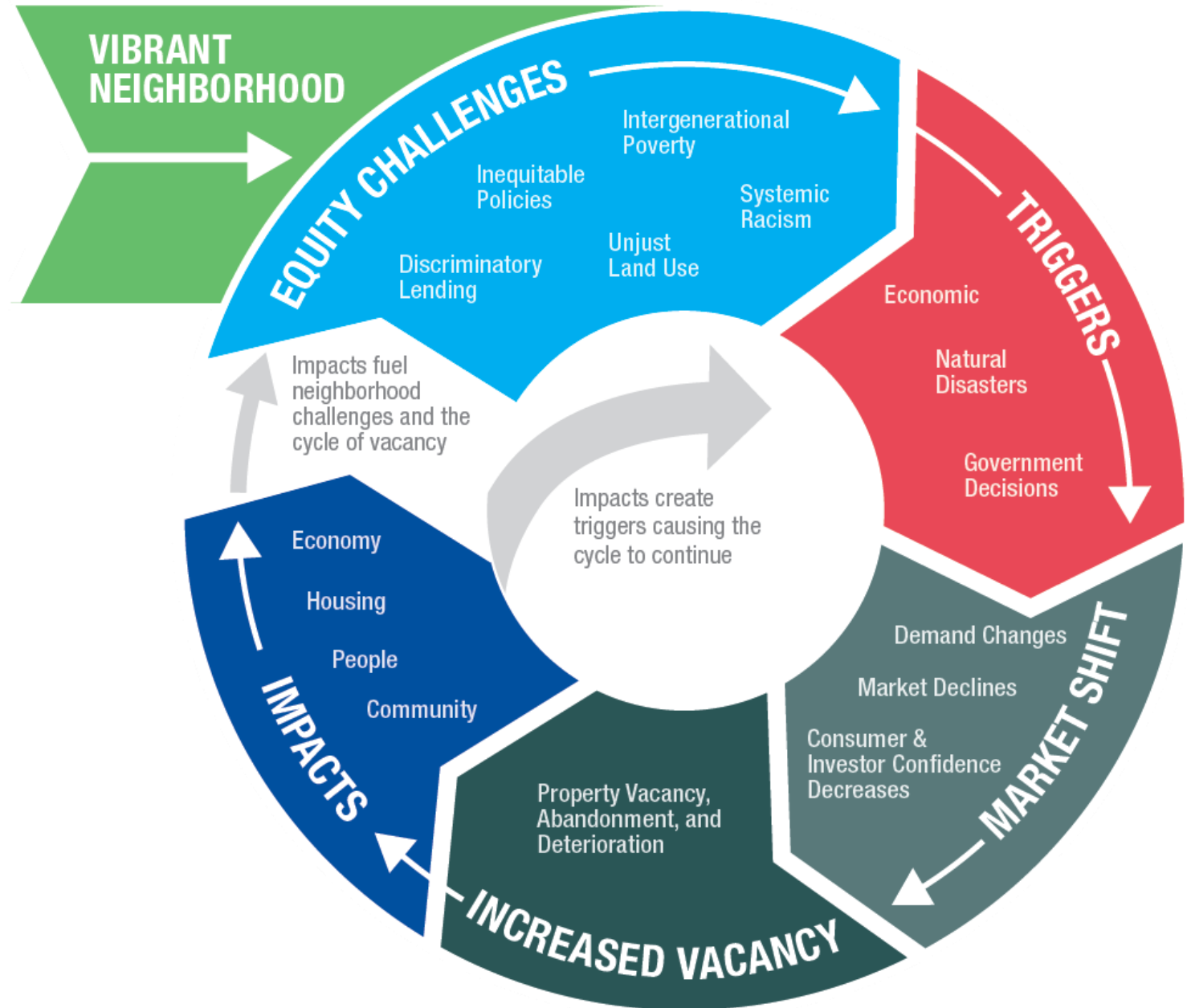
Lowers property values, reducing tax base

Contributes to future property vacancy

Increases municipal service costs



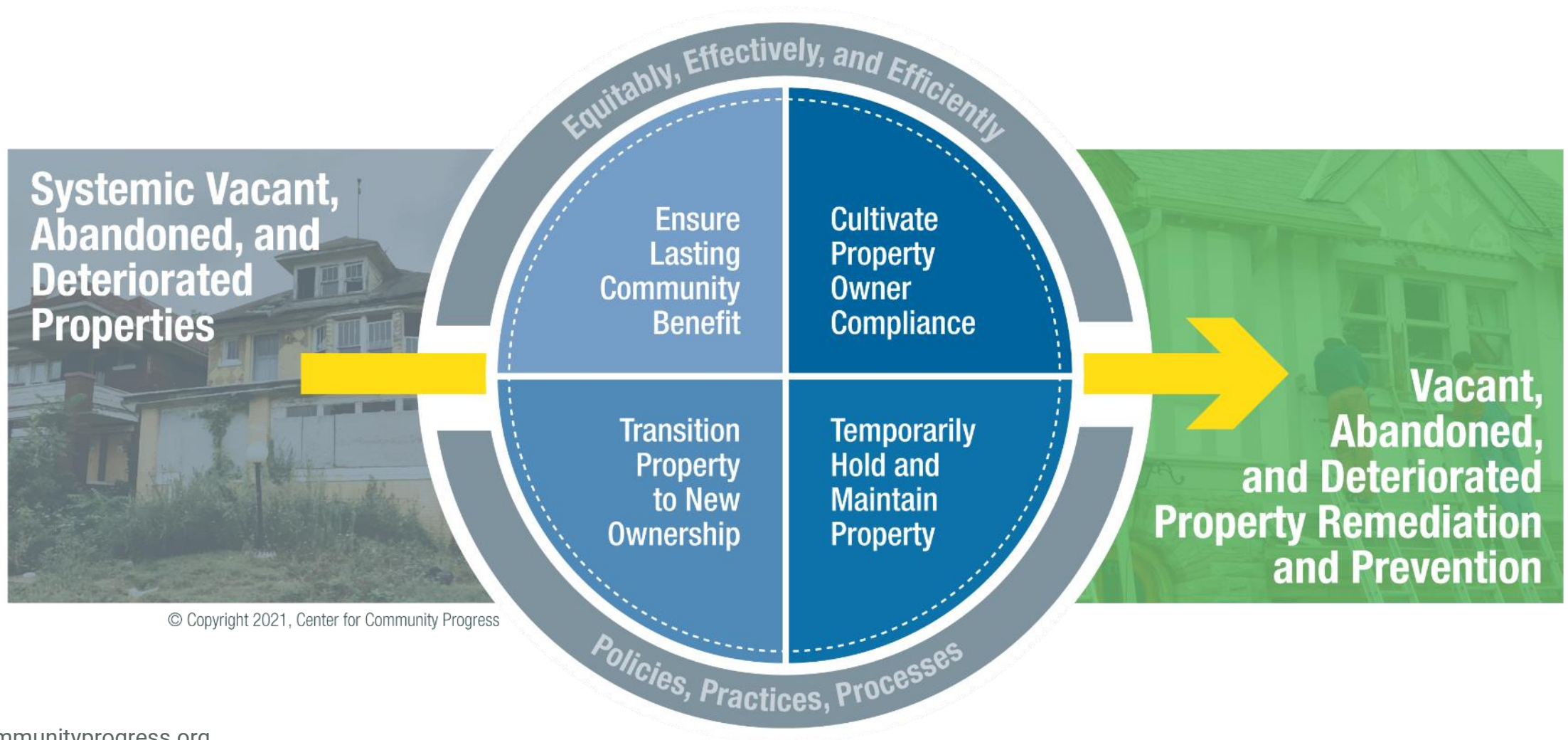
The Cycle Continues



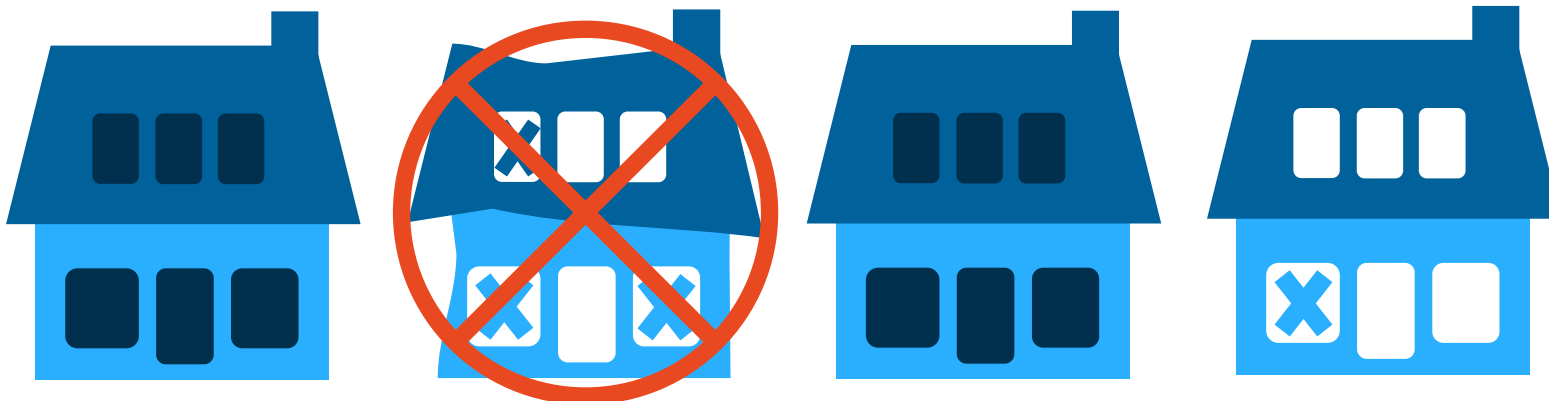
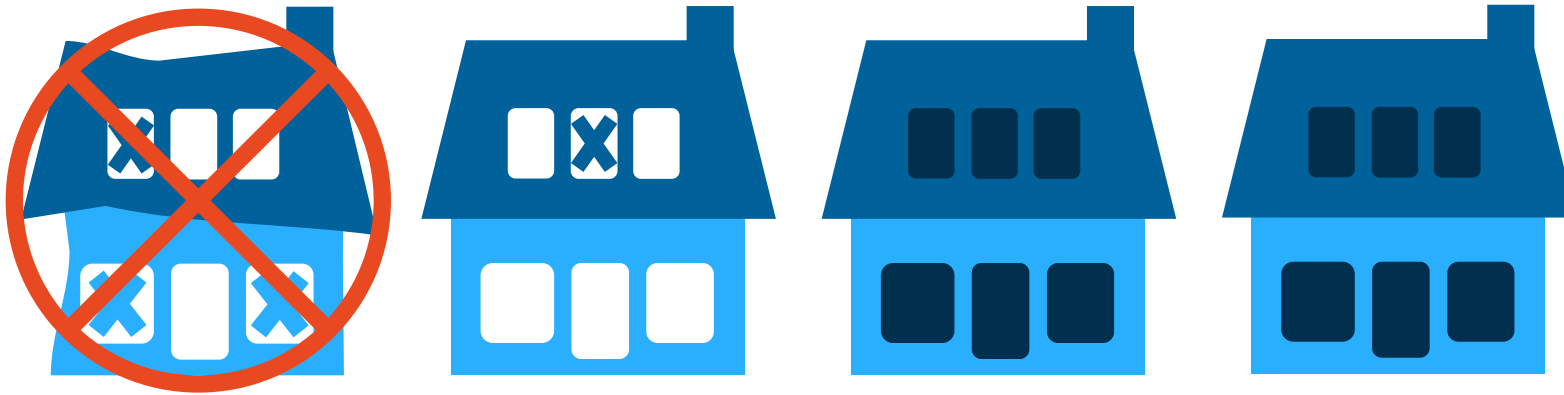
Addressing VAD Properties



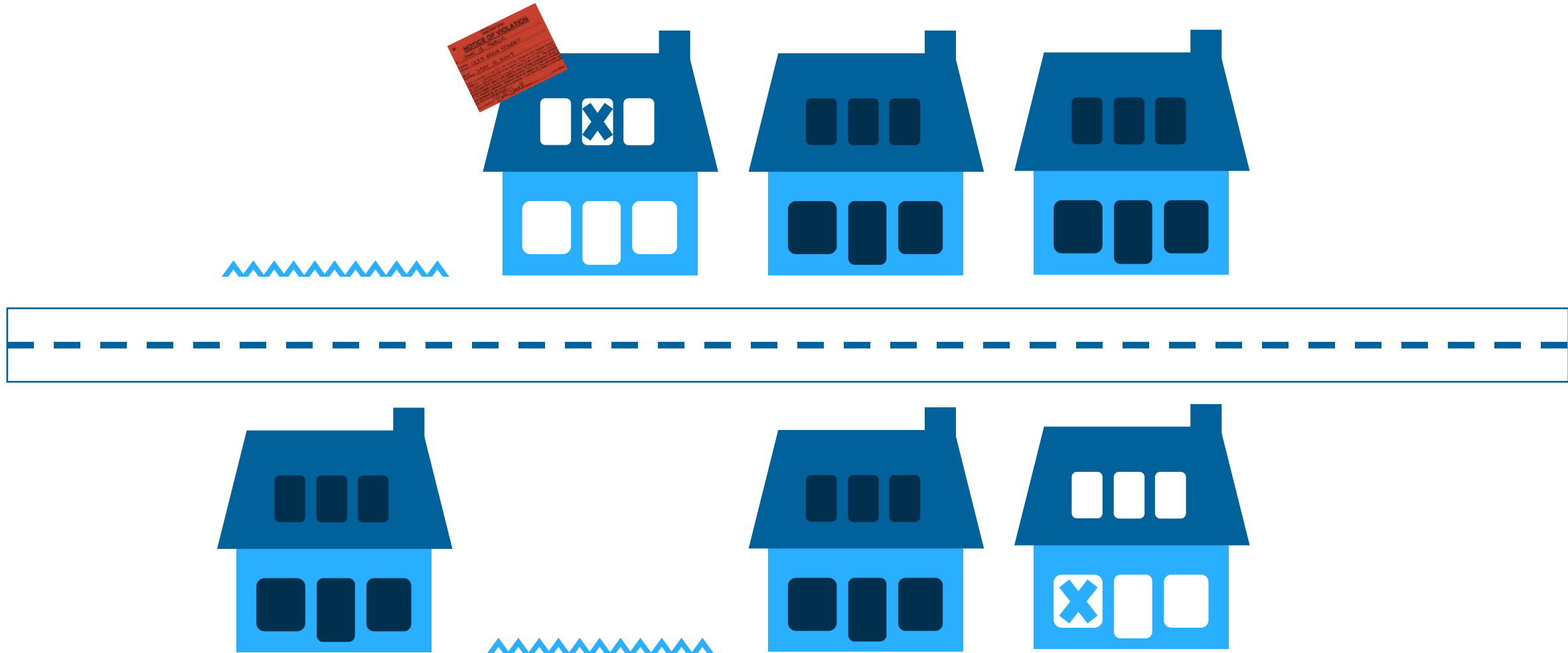
Equitable Revitalization Framework



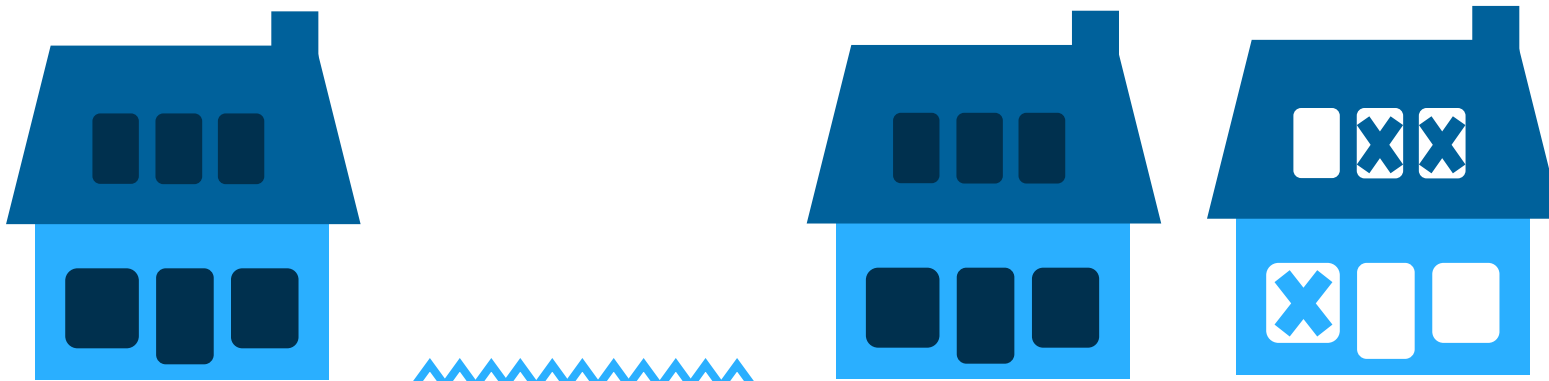
Traditional Response to Removing VAD Properties



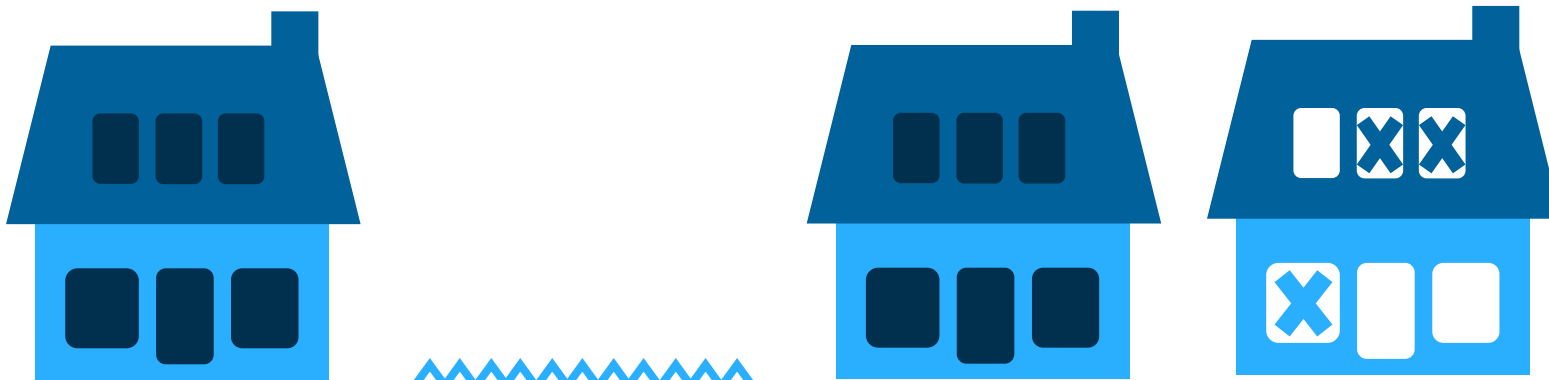
Traditional Response to Removing VAD Properties



Traditional Response to Removing VAD Properties



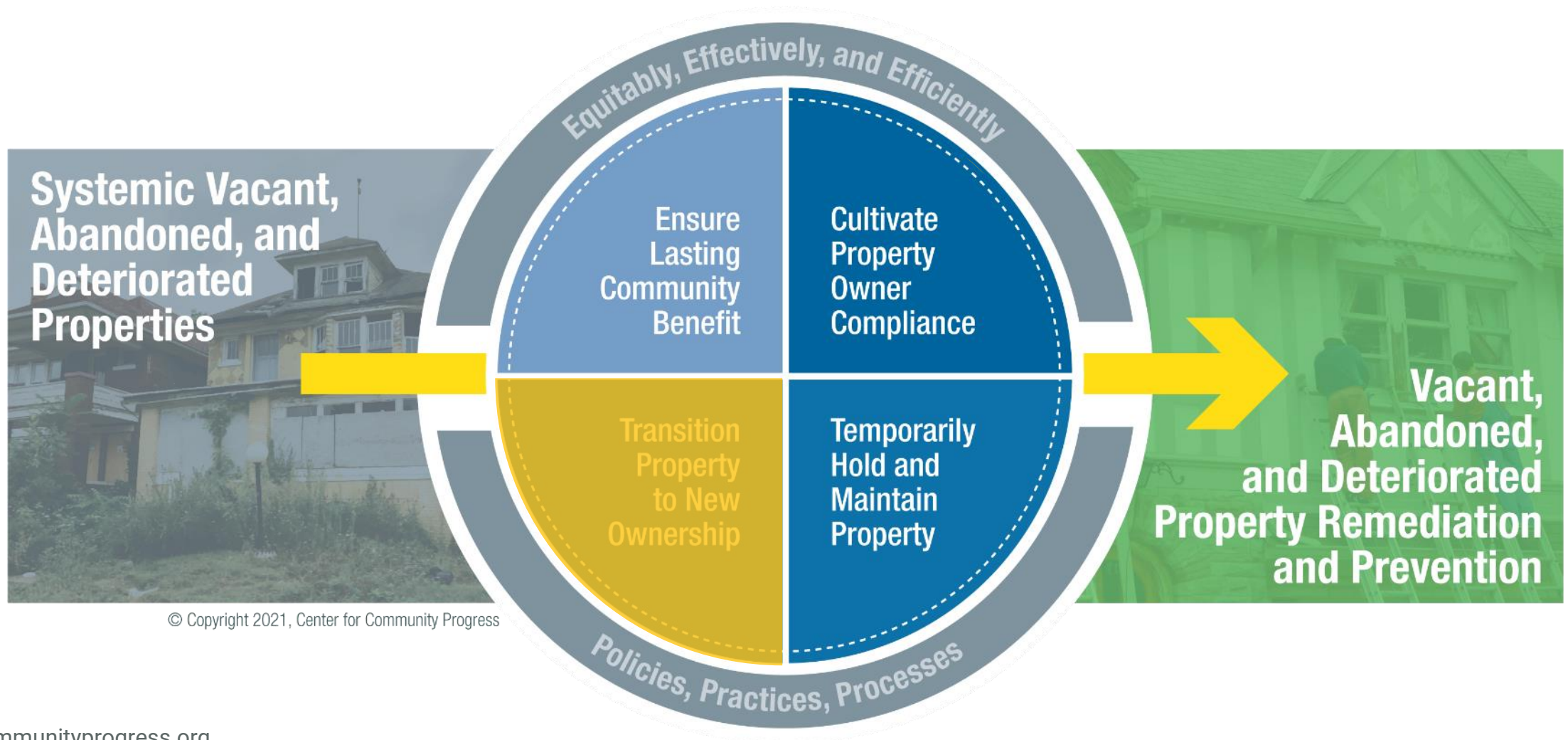
WHY ISN'T THIS WORKING?



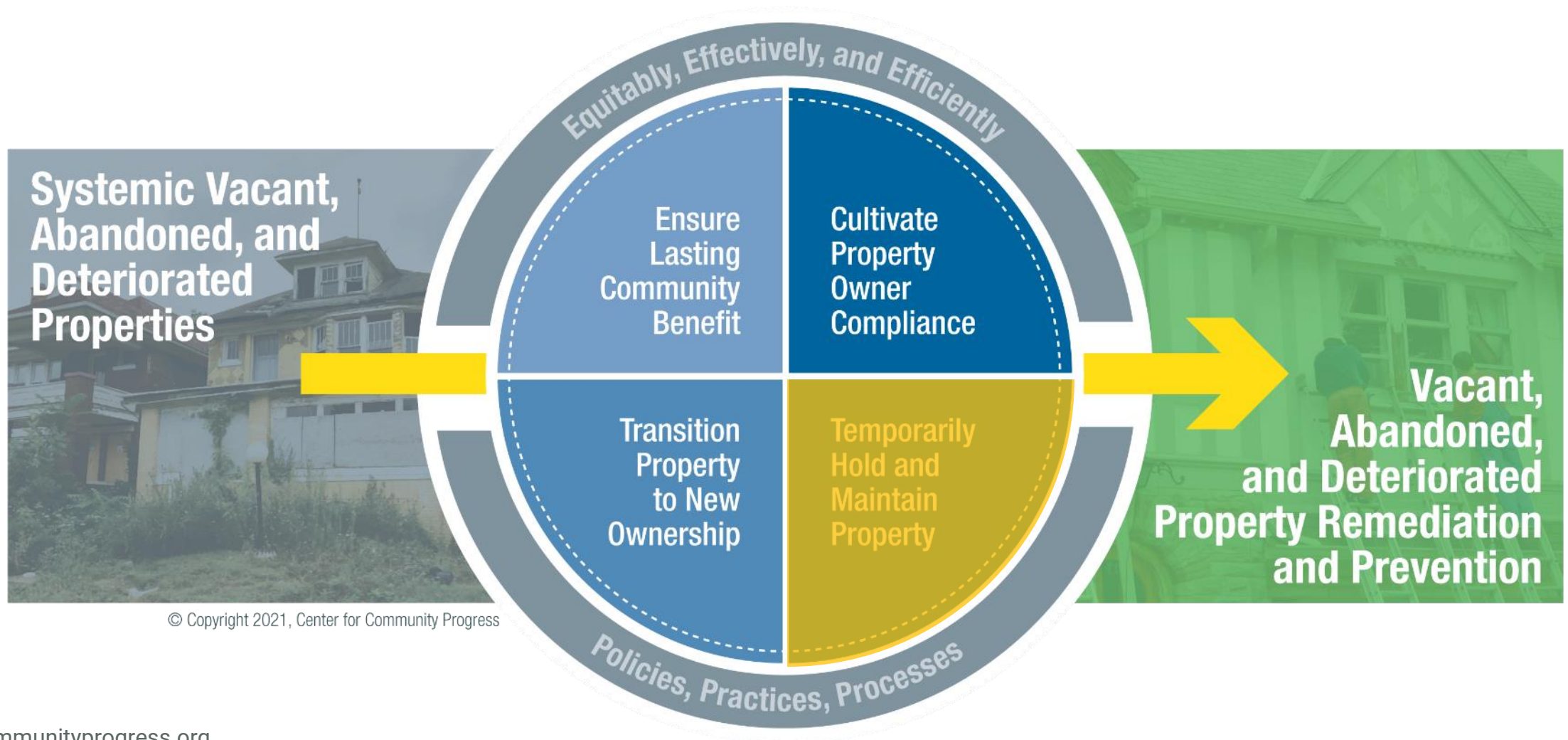
Equitable Revitalization Framework



Equitable Revitalization Framework



Equitable Revitalization Framework



Equitable Revitalization Framework



Our Systematic Approach



A Need to Center Equity and People

- Helps entire neighborhoods recover from disinvestment through **intentional, supportive approaches** to reinvestment.
- A **collaborative approach** improves community conditions and ensures ALL people live in strong, equitable communities where vacant, abandoned and deteriorated properties no longer exist.
- Acknowledges **different situations** demand **different approaches**

**Able but
unwilling**

**Able and willing
but needs a
reminder**

**Willing, but not
able**

**Able, willing,
and proactive**



Working in Rural Places: Delta Rising Initiative

A pilot program designed to provide a space for communities in the Mississippi-Arkansas Delta to gather and learn together about ways to address and leverage vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties.



Historical Context

Helena-West Helena, Arkansas



Courtesy of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism



Photo: Guy Lancaster



Historical Context

The Elaine Massacre of 1919



Photo: ualrexhibits.org/elaine/

SK APPEAL
ELAINE CASES

Haste Is Charged.
It is said that new trials will be sought on the ground that the former trials were conducted with undue haste and without granting the defendants sufficient time to prepare their defense, and that the men were

MAKES ANOTHER P
Governor Again Appeals for
sion of The Defenc

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

James Baldwin



A Lesson in Learning

Educating

Lunch and Learn sessions

- Rural Economic Development
- Land Banks and Land Banking
- Code Enforcement
- State Policy Reforms & Property Tax Enforcement
- A Quilted Life: Reflections of a Sharecropper's Daughter

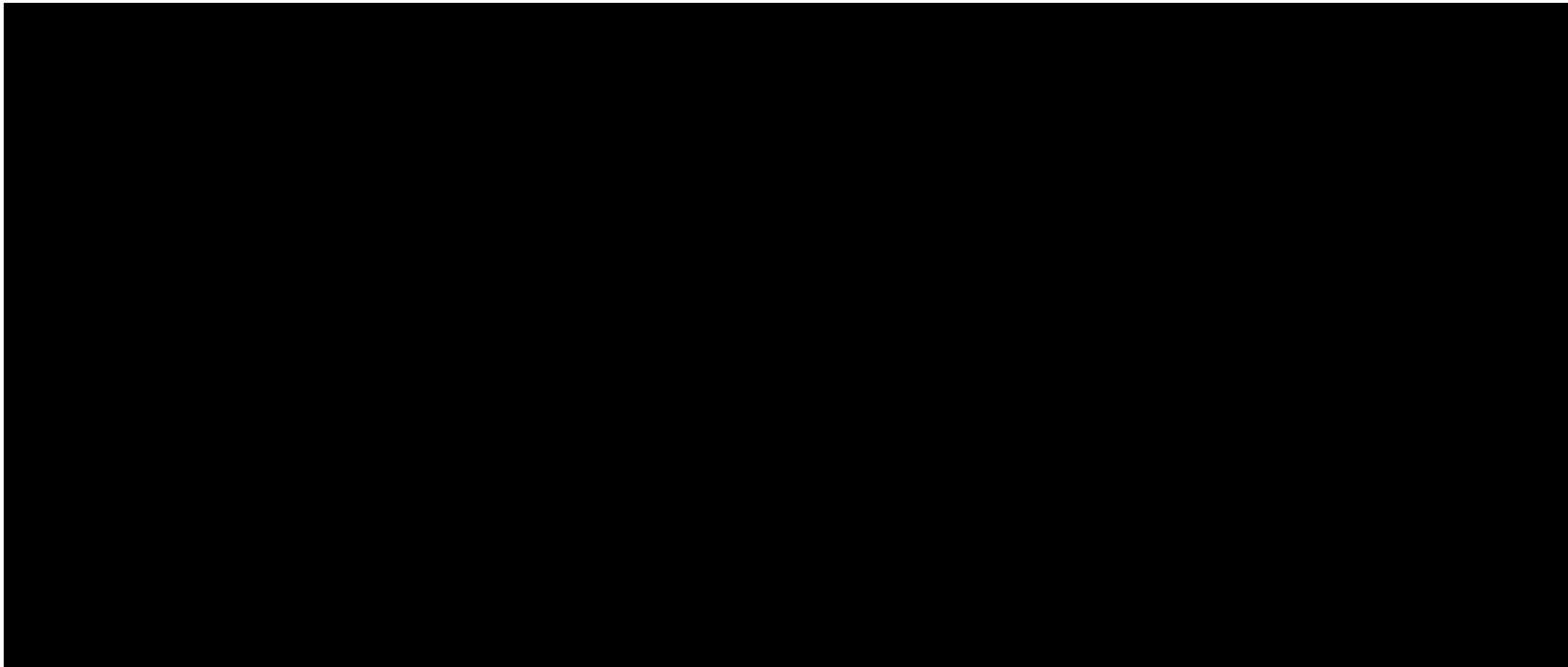


Photo: Flickr / Amanda Baird



A Lesson in Learning

A Quilted Life: Reflections of a Sharecropper's Daughter, featuring Dr. Catherine Meeks



Finding Our Place

Advocating

- Arkansas legal research
 - Policy review and familiarization
- Elaine, AR downtown renderings



Photo: Community Progress





MAIN STREET
ELAINE
ARKANSAS
© ECKERSON ARCHITECTURE 2024



EXISTING
STATUS

PROPOSED
NEW USE

- PARK
- IN USE
- VACANT
- VACANT LOT
- UNDER CONSTRUCTION

EXISTING STOREFRONTS

Historic downtowns are dependent on their storefront buildings being adapted to new uses. When historic buildings are replaced with new construction, the new buildings should be sympathetic to the historic forms, but don't need to be replicas.





MAIN STREET
ELAINE
ARKANSAS

© ECKERSON ARCHITECTURE 2024



LEE STREET COMMUNITY CENTER

The 200 south block of Main Street shown with new storefronts and three new uses:

- 1) Exhibit space including a small store for locally created arts, goods, and books
- 2) Youth Center offering tutoring, educational programs, & snack bar run by youth
- 3) A gathering place for seniors to connect, organize, and facilitate events and activities



Connecting the Dots

Delivering

- In-person convening
- Local vendors for catering
- Mobile tour of Helena-West Helena, AR
- Sharing from each community



Photo: Community Progress



Key Takeaways

- Relationship and trust building
- Policy review
- Connecting traditionally siloed organizations (and individuals)



Where can you start?

- Develop a plan to learn more about the community
- Gather partners and coordinate across silos
- Gather, analyze, and aggregate data to understand systemic causes and opportunities for strategic intervention
- Understand and implement tools for property revitalization



Thank You!



Odetta MacLeish-White

Director of Engagement



Crystal Stevens

Program Associate, Education,
Leadership, and Engagement





Flint (Headquarters)

111 E. Court St
Suite 2C-1
Flint, MI 48502

Washington, DC

1101 14th St NW
Suite 510
Washington, DC 20005

Atlanta

299 Joseph E. Lowery Blvd NW
Suite 203
Atlanta, GA 30314

Chicago

100 S. State St
Suite 405
Chicago, IL 60603

communityprogress.org