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## Area Officials, Community Leaders to Announce Details of Comprehensive Organizing Strategy to Address Vacant Properties

*Results of city-wide vacant property canvassing as well as details of the new  
Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation will be released.*

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**YOUNGSTOWN** – A coalition of federal, state, city and county officials as well as community and faith-based leaders will conduct a press conference organized by the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative on Thursday January 22<sup>nd</sup> 11am at City Hall to unveil details of a comprehensive vacant property and community development strategy geared toward neighborhood stabilization and restoration in the City of Youngstown.

Thursday's meeting will include the results of the city-wide vacant property canvassing which enlisted over 150 area leaders and citizens in an effort to identify and rate each vacant structure and parcel of land in the city of Youngstown. Notable findings from the data include the city's total city's percentage of vacant land which stands at 36.4%, two and a half times the national average of 15.4% (Brookings). Perhaps even more compelling is the city's abandoned structure-to-citizen ratio, which, per 1,000 inhabitants, stands at 61.8 or 23 times the national average (2.63).

Given this compelling data, a number of initiatives are being developed to address the situation in targeted neighborhoods throughout the city. A critical component is the development of a city-wide community development corporation (Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation), details of which will be released publicly Thursday.

The YNDC is being developed to provide the community with a high capacity and multifaceted organization staffed by talented and experienced professionals of a national scale. The YNDC's portfolio of featured initiatives will include: foreclosure prevention, housing rehabilitation and development, home maintenance assistance, community greening, and neighborhood marketing.

The MVOC will also work hand in hand with the YNDC to effectively lobby for sufficient resources to undertake these strategic and innovative community development activities. The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation is intended to be a "sister project" to the Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative. The two organizations will work together and in collaboration with government and other organizations or institutions involved in urban revitalization activities to begin the process of collectively rebuilding the social and physical fabric of neighborhoods across the City of Youngstown.

Mayor Jay Williams will also provide an update on status of the landlord registration ordinance as well as discussion of a strategic demolition policy to be adopted by City Hall.

Other press conference agenda items will include:

- Status of alternative funding by the State of Ohio for neighborhood stabilization efforts in Youngstown as well as announcement of meeting date with Lt. Governor Lee Fisher by State Senator Joe Schiavoni;
- Overview of Congressman Tim Ryan's Urban and Suburban Communities Regeneration Act legislation by Press Secretary Pat Lowry;
- Overview and initiatives contained in the newly released Youngstown/Mahoning County Vacant Property Initiative by Commissioner John McNally;
- East Side Organizing Project foreclosure prevention testimonial by beneficiary and City of Youngstown employee Erica Jackson;
- Overview and update regarding the MACK Properties Problem Landlord Campaign.

For more information, please contact the MVOC at (330) 743-1196.

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**Identifying and Developing Leaders • Organizing Neighborhoods • Building Capacity to Achieve Healthy Communities**