

New Bedford Side Lot Sales Program



At a press conference in a residential neighborhood on Pleasant Street today, Mayor Jon Mitchell announced the launch of an exciting new program designed to reduce the number of vacant lots in New Bedford. Under the new program, eligible property owners may acquire, at a deeply discounted price, vacant city-owned lots bordering their property. New Bedford's "Side Yard Program" is a new opportunity for eligible property owners to expand and enhance their property while at the same time returning vacant lots to productive reuse.

"We've developed a pathway for the transformation of blighted empty lots into gardens, side yards, off-street parking as well as a range of other productive reuses. This program offers a great bargain to eligible landowners as the cost to purchase a vacant city-owned lot ranges from \$999.00 to just


\$250.00,” said Mayor Mitchell.

The lot price is a fixed cost as determined by the lot size. Approved abutters will be required to survey their existing lot as well as the new lot in order to properly combine the two lots and record them with the Bristol County Registry of Deeds. Upon the successful recording of the new lot, the City will refund the owners for the original acquisition price to assist with the engineering and recording fees.

Mayor Mitchell also said the City will market the program in the coming months to ensure more property owners are made aware of this opportunity to improve their lots and beautify their neighborhood. Marketing efforts will be targeted to property owners abutting available lots.

City Councilor Henry Bousquet said, “As the Ward 3 New Bedford City Councilor, I support initiatives like the new Side Yard Sales Program to help preserve green space, aid in getting unbuildable surplus land back on the city tax rolls and providing a valuable service to our taxpaying property owners. I encourage everyone bordering a vacant lot to purchase that property and build a garden or give your family room to spread out!”

The Side Yard Sales program will be operated by the New Bedford Treasurer’s Office. To begin the process of acquiring a publicly owned lot, property owners must complete and return an application. The application is available at <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/treasurers/treasurers.html> .

<p align="center"> CITY OF NEW BEDFORD Jon Mitchell, Mayor SIDE YARD SALES PROGRAM <i>Expand your property and help build strong neighborhoods!</i> </p>										
<p align="center">1. Description of Program</p> <p>The City of New Bedford is offering an exciting opportunity to eligible property owners to acquire, at a deeply discounted price, vacant lots that border your current property. If your house lies adjacent to a publicly owned vacant lot, you may be eligible to expand your property. The Side Yard Sales Program provides the possibility of reclaiming a vacant lot which will not only enhance your property, but will beautify a once blighted space and help make New Bedford neighborhoods healthier and happier places to live.</p>	<p align="center">2. Eligible Uses</p> <p>Eligible property owners can acquire vacant lots to expand their existing property for any eligible use, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Garden ❖ Side yard ❖ Landscaped open space ❖ Off-street parking ❖ Garage ❖ Septic improvements ❖ An addition to an abutter's existing structure 									
<p>For residential, the lot price is a fixed cost as determined by lot size as follows:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Lot size: 0 -1,000 square feet</td> <td>\$ 250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Lot size: 1,000 - 3,000 square feet</td> <td>\$ 500.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Lot Size 3,000 - \$5,000 square feet</td> <td>\$ 750.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Lot Size over 5,000 square feet</td> <td>\$ 999.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>Upon approval of the application, accepted abutters will be required to survey their existing lot and the new abutter lot for the purposes of combining both lots into a newly configured lot and record the new lot with the Bristol County Registry of Deeds. Upon the successful recording of the new lot, the City will refund applicants the original acquisition price to assist with engineering and recording fees.</p>			1. Lot size: 0 -1,000 square feet	\$ 250.00	2. Lot size: 1,000 - 3,000 square feet	\$ 500.00	3. Lot Size 3,000 - \$5,000 square feet	\$ 750.00	4. Lot Size over 5,000 square feet	\$ 999.00
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<p align="center">4. Next Steps to Ownership</p> <p>Once the basic requirements have been met, the vacant lot of your dreams is available through the following process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ You must complete and return the application form. ❖ You will be required to sign an Affidavit regarding payment of taxes, arson and related code violations. ❖ The City, through the Tax Title Committee, will determine whether or not the vacant lot you request is available and eligible under this program. ❖ The City will certify that you are not responsible for any outstanding taxes, water or sewage bills, or have any other municipal violations. 	<p align="center">3. The Basic Requirements</p> <p>In order to be eligible for the Side Yard Sales Program, you need to first pass some basic requirements that will allow you to apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ You must own the property that directly borders (either on the side, front or rear) the vacant lot. ❖ All taxes and water and sewage bills on the properties you already own must be current. You must not have any outstanding City inspection violations. ❖ You must provide evidence of liability insurance coverage for the vacant lot. ❖ Based on its square footage, the vacant lot must be deemed unsuitable for erecting a freestanding building, as determined by the City. ❖ The vacant lot must be publicly owned. ❖ The vacant lot cannot be used to build. 									
<p align="center"> Please contact the City of New Bedford Treasurer's Office for more information and an application! City of New Bedford Office of the Treasurer 131 William Street, Room 101 New Bedford, MA 02740 Tel: 508-979-1430 Fax: 508-961-3078 http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/treasurers/treasurers.html </p>										

The City guidebook and one page informational sheet on the program is a great source of information. The guidebook contains a range of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) about the process including eligibility requirements, cost of ownership, and terms and conditions of the sale.