

CITY OF ST. GEORGE

BY COUNCIL MEMBER MURRELL:

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-004

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE 12, CHAPTERS 5, 8,
AND 11 RELATIVE TO THE ELIMINATION OF BLIGHT
AND TO PROVIDE FOR RELATED MATTERS**

WHEREAS, the Council for the City of St. George, finds that conditions affecting premises, including but not limited to noxious weeds, overgrown vegetation, and dilapidated, condemned, or abandoned structures ("blight") are hazardous to the health, safety or welfare of the public, and/or conditions which are detrimental to property values, economic stability, or to the quality of the environment;

WHEREAS, the Council for the City of St. George, finds the presence of blight conditions constitute a public nuisance; and

WHEREAS, the Council for the City of St. George, desires to amend its ordinances to eliminate blight conditions in the City through implementing all available tools for nuisance abatement by conforming the language of its ordinances with state law,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the St. George City Council, State of Louisiana, that Title 12 of the Ordinances of the City of St. George, "Nuisances," and more particularly Chapter 5, "Weeds, Grass, and Noxious Growths," Chapter 8, "Dangerous Buildings," and Title 4 of the Ordinances of the City of St. George, "Administrative Adjudication," Chapter 1, "Administrative Adjudication Procedure," be, and they are hereby, amended as follows:

Section 1. Amendments

The following ordinances of the City of St. George are amended as indicated. Words in ~~struck through~~ type are deletions from existing law and words **underscored in bold** are additions to existing law.

Title 12. NUISANCES
Chapter 5. WEEDS, GRASS AND NOXIOUS GROWTHS

Sec. 12:501. Maintenance required.

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(b) The owner of the lot, place, or area, or the owner of the abutting property where the weeds or growths are to be removed, as shown on the last assessment roll shall have an opportunity to remove any noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthful or noxious growths within five

days after notice has been given to him by advertisement in the official journal of the City for two consecutive days or by ~~certified or~~ registered mail, addressed in accordance with the tax rolls of East Baton Rouge Parish, ~~the Certified Mail Receipt for which shall serve as proof of such notice.~~ If the owner fails to do so, the City is hereby authorized to cut, destroy, and remove such noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthful, or noxious growths at the owner's expense.

* * *

(d) The charges, costs, and expenses incurred by the City in enforcing the provisions of this Section shall, to the extent of the actual cost thereof to the City, be a charge, cost, or expense of the property abutting the sidewalk or banquette or of the lot, place, or area, and the owner thereof. If, after the cutting, destruction, or removal of such weeds, grass, or growths, by the City after due notice as above provided, the cost or expense thereof has not been paid within ten days, the City shall furnish the owner, as shown on the last assessment roll of the Parish of East Baton Rouge, by registered mail, a written statement showing the cost or expense incurred for the work, and the place or property on which the work was done. If the said statement is not paid within one month thereafter, the amount thereof may be included in and form part of the ad valorem taxes due by the owner of said property ~~following administrative hearing held pursuant to Title 4 of the Code of Ordinances for the City of St. George or by a court of competent jurisdiction.~~ When collected, said amount shall be credited to the general fund of the City.

(e) If the statement of costs or expenses incurred by the City of grass cutting, weed abatement, and trash and garbage removal is not paid within one month after notification pursuant to subsection (d), those costs and expenses shall constitute a privilege and lien upon the immovable property and its improvements in favor of the City, and the owner of the property shall be personally liable therefor. The privilege and lien shall be preserved by the filing and recording of an affidavit signed by the Mayor or his designee in the mortgage office of East Baton Rouge Parish. The affidavit shall include a description of the property sufficient to reasonably identify the immovable and a statement of facts listing the approximate cost or costs incurred by the City. The privilege and lien shall be enforced by ordinary process in the Nineteenth Judicial District Court within three years after it is perfected.

~~(e)~~(f) The provisions of this Section shall not constitute the exclusive remedies available to the City to abate nuisances and recover costs of abatement under any other provision of law now in effect or hereinafter adopted.

Title 12. NUISANCES

Chapter 5.1 RUBBISH, JUNK, UNLAWFUL DEPOSITS AND DEBRIS

Section 12:5101. Definitions

The following words, terms, and phrases, when used in this Chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them herein, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

(a) "Rubbish" shall mean combustible and noncombustible waste materials, except garbage, including residue from the burning of wood, coal, coke and other combustible materials; paper, rags, cartons, boxes, wood, excelsior, rubber, leather, tree branches, yard trimmings, tin cans, metals, mineral matter, glass, junk auto parts, oil or petroleum products, building materials, crockery, refuse, junk, and dust or other similar materials.

(b) "Garbage" shall mean putrescible animal and vegetable waste resulting from the handling, preparation, cooking, serving, or consumption of food, including kitchen refuse and table scraps.

(c) "Unlawful deposits and debris" shall mean the carcasses of animals or fowl not disposed or within a reasonable time after death, and the accumulation of rubbish or other materials that provide harborage for rats, mice, snakes, or other vermin, or give rise to emission of disagreeable or obnoxious odors or stenches.

Section 12:5102. Accumulation of rubbish, garbage, or unlawful deposits and debris.

It shall be unlawful for any person to cause, permit, maintain, or allow the creation or maintenance of an accumulation of rubbish, garbage, or unlawful deposits and debris, whether located on exterior property or in the interior of any structure. All properties within the City shall be free from any accumulation of rubbish, garbage, and unlawful deposits and debris as defined herein.

Section 12:5103. Disposal of rubbish.

Every owner or occupant of a structure shall dispose of all rubbish in a clean and sanitary manner by placing such rubbish in approved containers. The owner of an occupied property shall supply approved, covered containers for the disposal of rubbish and shall bear responsibility for the removal thereof.

Section 12:5104. Notice to Abate.

The owner of the lot, parcel, place, or area upon which the unlawful rubbish, garbage, deposits, or debris are located shall have an opportunity to remove such rubbish, garbage, deposits, or debris within five days after notice to abate the nuisance conditions has been provided by domiciliary service, or by advertisement in the official journal of the City for two consecutive days, or by registered mail, addressed in accordance with the tax rolls of East Baton Rouge Parish. If the owner fails to do so, the City is hereby authorized to remove such rubbish, garbage, deposits, or debris at the owner's expense. All nuisance materials that are removed by the City from any property pursuant to this Chapter shall become the property of the City, and may be disposed of by the City.

Section 12:5105. Costs at Owner's Expense; Collection.

The charges, costs, and expenses incurred by the City in enforcing the provisions of this Section shall, to the full extent allowable by law, be the responsibility of the property owner, and may be included in and form part of the ad valorem taxes due by the owner of said property. Furthermore, the charges, costs, and expenses incurred by the City in enforcing the provisions of this Section shall constitute a privilege and lien against the property upon which the nuisance condition existed, which lien shall be filed, proven, and collected as provided for by law. Such lien shall be notice to all persons from the time of its recording, and shall bear interest at the legal rate thereafter until satisfied.

Section 12:5106. Order to Enclose Vacant Lots, Unoccupied Property

The City may order that the owner of a vacant lot or unoccupied portion of a lot, parcel, place, or area upon which unlawful rubbish, garbage, deposits, or debris are stored, enclose such property with an opaque fence, wall, or other surrounding in such a manner as to fully screen such nuisance conditions from the view of the public and/or abutting property owners.

Section 12:5107. Non-exclusive Remedies; Penalties

The provisions of this Section shall not constitute the exclusive remedies available to the City to abate nuisances and recover costs of abatement under any other provision of law now in effect or hereinafter adopted. Any person who violates the provisions of this Chapter shall be subject to a fine of up to \$500.

Title 12. NUISANCES
Chapter 8. DANGEROUS BUILDINGS

Section 12:800. Authority to condemn.

The ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer for the City, as established pursuant to Title 4 of the City's ordinances, may** condemn and cause to be demolished or removed any building or structure within the City of St. George when it is in a dilapidated and dangerous condition that endangers the public welfare.

Section 12:801. Recommendation of removal; notice; service; condemnation in emergency.

(a) Before the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** may condemn any building or structure, ~~there must be submitted to it~~ **they must receive** a written report recommending the demolition or removal of the building signed by the building official or other person authorized to act in such matters for the City of St. George. The ~~Mayor~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** shall thereupon serve notice on the owner of the building or structure requiring him to show cause ~~at a meeting of the City Council, regular or special,~~ why the building or structure should not be condemned. The date and hour of the ~~meeting~~ **hearing** shall be stated in the notice which shall be served at least ten days prior to the date of the hearing, except in case of grave public emergency as hereinafter provided.

* * *

(d) In case of grave public emergency where the condition of the building is such as to cause possible immediate loss or damage to person or property, the ~~Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** may condemn the building after 24 hours' notice served upon the owner or his agent or the occupant and attorney-at-law appointed to represent the absent owner. Any such notice may be attached to a door or main entrance of the premises or in a conspicuous place on the exterior of the premises and shall have the same effect as delivery to or personal service on the owner, occupant, or attorney at law appointed to represent the absentee owner.

(e) The building official shall have the authority to authorize disconnection of utility service to the building, structure or system regulated by this code and the referenced codes and standards set forth in Section 102.8 of the IPMC in case of emergency where necessary to eliminate an immediate hazard to life or property or where such utility connection has been made without approval. The building official shall notify the serving utility and, whenever possible, the owner or owner's authorized agent and occupant of the building, structure or service system of the decision to disconnect prior to taking such action. If not notified prior to disconnection the owner, owner's authorized agent or occupant of the building structure or service system shall be notified in writing as soon as practical thereafter.

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Section 12:802. Condemnation order; demolition

(a) After the hearing, if, in the opinion of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer**, the facts justify it, an order shall be entered condemning the building and ordering that it be demolished or removed within a certain delay. If repairs will correct the dilapidated, dangerous or unsafe condition, the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** may grant the owner the option of making such repairs, but in such a case the general nature or extent of the repairs to be made, the time thereof, and the defects to be corrected, shall be specified in the decision of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer**. It shall be mandatory for the ~~Mayor~~ **City** to proceed with the **next steps toward** demolition of condemned structures not later than 30 days after the expiration of the delays permitted by the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** for the owner to either repair or demolish the subject building or structure.

(b) The decision and order of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** shall be in writing and shall be final unless appealed ~~from~~ within five days as hereinafter provided.

Section 12:802.1. Signs to be posted at condemned buildings

Once a building or structure has been condemned by order of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer**, the Department of Public Works shall post a sign upon the property notifying the public of the classification of the building or structure as a vacant uninhabitable building. The criminal penalties for trespass and vandalism shall be stated on the sign. The sign shall read as follows:

"By order of the St. George City ~~Council~~, this structure has been classified as a vacant, uninhabitable building. Trespass and vandalism are prohibited and punishable by law."

Section 12:803. Appeal from ~~Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** order.

(a) The owner, occupant, agent, or other representative of the owner may appeal from the decision of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** to the Nineteenth Judicial District Court. The appeal shall be made by the filing of a suit against the City of St. George setting forth the reasons why the decision or order of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** is illegal or improper and the issue shall be tried de novo and by preference in the District Court. Where a public emergency has been declared by the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer**, the owner of the building who desires to prevent the demolition or removal thereof must file his petition within 48 hours of the posting of the notice of the demolition or removal order on the property and must at the time of the filing of the petition, furnish such bond as may be fixed by the district judge to cover any damage that may be caused by the condition of the building.

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Section 12:804. Repair or demolition of building.

(a) The owner or his designated agent may proceed to demolish and remove the building, or have it repaired, in accordance with the order of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer**, provided the owner or his agent executes a contract in writing obligating himself to have the work done within the required time and files with the Mayor a copy of the contract, together with a bond to guarantee performance.

(b) If the owner or occupant of the building or structure fails or refuses to comply with the decision of the ~~City Council~~ **Administrative Hearing Officer** and fails to appeal therefrom within the legal delays provided herein, then, in that event, the Mayor may proceed with the demolition or removal of the condemned building or structure, in which case neither the Mayor nor the City of St. George shall be liable in damages.

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Section 12:805. Costs of demolition to be a lien on property.

(a) The City of St. George shall have a lien and privilege upon an immovable and its improvements, and the owner is personally liable for:

~~(1) The cost to the City of maintenance of the immovable or improvements; and~~

~~(2) The cost to the City of demolishing or removing, or both, the building or structure situated upon the immovable or improvements, and all attorney fees incurred by the City in connection with such demolition or removal.~~

~~(b) "Maintenance" shall include but not be limited to grass cutting, weed abatement, and trash and garbage removal.~~

Subsections (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h) shall be renumbered as (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g)

Title 4. ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION
Chapter 1. ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION PROCEDURE

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Section 4:105.1. Condemnation authority.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, hearing officers shall have the authority to hear and make determinations regarding the condemnation of dangerous buildings. All such condemnation proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the terms, processes, and delays set forth in Title 12, Chapter 8 of the City's ordinances.

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Section 2. Effective Date

This Ordinance shall be effective upon publication.

This Ordinance having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

For: Cook, Dellucci, Edmonds, Himmel, Murrell, Talbot

Against:

Absent: Monachello

Adopted this 24th day of February, 2026.

Signed this 25th day of February, 2026.

Delivered to the Mayor on the 25th day of February, 2026:

Lorraine Beaman

Lorraine Beaman, City Clerk

Approved:

Dustin Yates

Dustin Yates, Mayor

Received from Mayor on the 26th day of February, 2026:

Lorraine Beaman

Lorraine Beaman, City Clerk

Adopted Ordinance published in The Advocate on the 7th day of March 2026.