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## South Fair Park's Mill City Needs Concerted Action

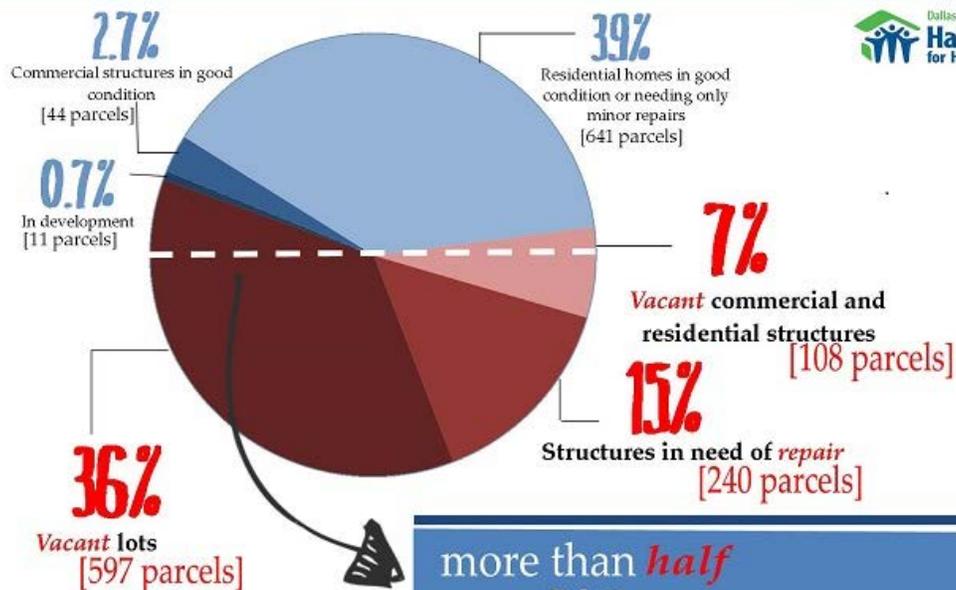
### Mill City Property Condition Evaluation Results and Analysis

The historic Mill City neighborhood is located south of Fair Park. In July 2014, Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity, [Innecity Community Development Corporation](#), and the [Mill City Neighborhood Association](#) initiated a walking survey that was done to evaluate each parcel in the community and measure the physical condition of the neighborhood. This survey revealed that 58% of parcels in Mill City require action.

### Mill City Property Condition Evaluation Results

Survey: July 2014

Report: February 2015



Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity is addressing some of this need through a recent purchase of nine adjacent properties, all vacant and requiring demolition, off the corner of Collins and Carter Streets in Mill City. The sites will be used for the construction of much needed new, affordable homes and the expansion of community building assets.

Mill City is representative of why the City of Dallas needs to [rethink its policies](#) relating to blight removal and encouraging development. Here are three important elements that must come together to address Mill City's needs with an overall goal of revitalizing the neighborhood and creating affordable and attractive homeownership opportunities.

1. **A large number of homes need repair.** Many of the owner-occupants living in these homes likely do not have the financial capacity to undertake major repairs. Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity has already completed 28 home repairs in Mill City, but more needs to be done. The City of Dallas home repair program should focus on a broader strategy to rehabilitate low-quality housing. **Investor property owners need to be held accountable** for the state of the structures. The Code Compliance department recently [briefed](#) the Housing Committee about efforts to update the Minimum Urban Rehabilitation Standards currently contained in Chapter 27. These additional tools are needed to strategically combat blighted properties.
2. **Dilapidated structures need to be demolished.** Often these structures are vacant and have been for an extended period, becoming a host to drug users and squatters, as well as attracting animals and vermin which threaten the health of neighborhood residents.
3. **A high priority must be land assemblage.** To have a significant impact on the community, the City of Dallas must capture the value of the unused land. A large number of parcels of land need to be assembled and made available to builders to increase the impact, similar to the [Frazier Courtyards](#) development in Mill City. The City and the Land Bank have to be the key actors to take the lead in strategically assembling land at scale to attract private development.

These three steps are an extension of Dallas Habitat's [homeownership initiative](#), which our CEO, Bill Hall, discussed in the Dallas Morning News recently, [here](#). Revitalizing the neighborhood and giving residents access to attractive and affordable homeownership opportunities will help to stabilize the neighborhood, build asset wealth for homeowners, and create a more thriving community.

The full survey and more information on the Mill City neighborhood are available [here](#).