



St. Louis

Start Where You Are: Collaborative Planning around Vacancy in the City

October 28, 2020 | 8:30 am



Laura Ginn

Vacancy Strategist
City of St. Louis

Laura serves as the Vacancy Strategist for the City of St. Louis, working across City departments and in collaboration with residents and community-based organizations to improve vacant property conditions and convert abandoned properties to community assets. Through these collaborations, she strives to increase the use of best practices and data-driven decision-making to support government collaboration, transparency, and accountability. With a master's degree in Conservation and master's certificate in Geographic Information Systems, Laura combines over a decade of experience in research and project management with geospatial and community planning to inform urban land-use decisions and policies that improve community resilience, and public and environmental health.



Robert M. Lewis, FAICP, CEcD
Assistant Professor of Urban Planning
Saint Louis University

Bob became a professor of urban planning and development at Saint Louis University in the summer of 2018 after retiring from Development Strategies, a St. Louis-based planning and development consulting firm. The focus of Bob's professional work is the analysis of the market, economic, and organizational forces that influence urban development and economic growth. At SLU, Bob teaches in the Master's degree program for Urban Planning and Development. His courses include the foundations of planning, land use planning, the impacts of planning and economic development, real estate and economic development, and an interdisciplinary studio class that works on real-world community development challenges. Bob continues to consult, as well. A native of Glencoe, Illinois, in the Chicago area, Bob holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (1976) and a bachelor's degree in business economics from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (1973). He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners and is a Certified Economic Developer.



St. Louis



Sundry Whiteside

Board President

St. Louis Association of Community Organizations (SLACO)

Sundry serves as Board President of the St. Louis Association of Community Organizations (SLACO). She is Co-Founder of the St. Louis Vacancy Collaborative and the current Co-Chair of the Vacancy Advisory Committee of the St. Louis Vacancy Collaborative. Sundry received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the Missouri University of Science & Technology. She has worked as a Project Engineer for MEMC Electronic Materials, Inc., and as a Factory Information Systems Engineer for Daimler Chrysler. She also worked for the Community Action Agencies of both St. Louis City and County as a Site and Technology Coordinator. Sundry is also a licensed realtor in the state of Missouri and operates Equitable Development Strategies, LLC (EDS). Sundry served on the Tax Increment Financing Commission for the City of St. Louis from 2000-2014. The American Planning Association – St. Louis Metro Section awarded her the 2019 Community Planning Champion Award. In 2016, the St. Louis City Neighborhood Stabilization Team awarded Sundry a Community Service Award, and in 2008, the City of St. Louis awarded her for outstanding service and unyielding commitment to the Tax Increment Financing Commission.

Moderator:



Cecilia Dvorak, AICP

City Planning Executive

Planning and Urban Design Agency, City of St. Louis

Cecilia is a planner originally from the Chicagoland area, with an educational background in Planning and Sustainability. She is currently working for the City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency, the long-range planning department of the City. She has experience in both municipal and private planning consulting sectors. Her goal in her work with the City is, with the help of partners and collaborators, to shift the culture of community and development by prioritizing community-driven planning to create places where all people can thrive.