

— PROPOSAL TO THE CITY OF PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA

Vacant & Foreclosed Property Registration

Executive briefing · Prepared by Hera Property Registry

POTENTIAL FOUND.

PREPARED BY



HERA
PROPERTY REGISTRY

PRESENTED TO



ST. ANDREWS BAY · FLORIDA PANHANDLE



— THE PROBLEM

Blight isn't an ugly house. It's an empty one.

CUI & WALSH (2015); ELLEN, LACOE & SHARYGIN (2013), J. URBAN ECONOMICS; HARDING, ROSENBLATT & YAO (2009); WHITAKER & FITZPATRICK (2013); ATTOM 2026 MID-YEAR FORECLOSURE MARKET REPORT

01

A foreclosure starts it

Foreclosure alone has no measurable effect on crime. The harm begins the day the house empties.

02

The vacancy does the damage

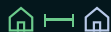
Violent crime rises 19% within 250 feet once a foreclosed home sits vacant, peaking at 12 to 18 months.

03

The limbo is the window

563 days is the national average to complete a foreclosure. The damage peaks inside that window, while the City has no idea who to call.

75 FT



-30%

sale price on a home within 75 feet of a vacant house

300 FT



-1%

home value for each foreclosed property within 300 feet

500 FT



-1 to -2%

sale price for each vacant or tax-delinquent home within 500 feet

A conversation the City has already started

Panama City has never had a foreclosure or vacant-property registry. On August 12, 2025, the City Commission discussed a staff-drafted ordinance and asked staff to return with real-world examples and a narrower scope. Next door, Panama City Beach already requires lenders to register foreclosed properties.

OCT 2018

Hurricane Michael

A Category 5 landfall damages at least 90% of the City's structures. Code enforcement pauses for a year.

2019-2024

The long recovery

Damaged and abandoned homes sit untouched, many held by out-of-town owners and lenders the City struggles to reach.

AUG 12, 2025

The Commission asks

Staff present a draft registry. Commissioners ask how the City would reach out-of-town lenders, who it would affect, and how to keep it narrow.

TODAY

The gap remains

No registry, and no single record of who is responsible once a property enters foreclosure.

131

active foreclosures in the City

54

new filings in 2025

0

registered with the City today

PROGRAM SCOPE: CITY OF PANAMA CITY

EXCLUDES PANAMA CITY BEACH, LYNN HAVEN, CALLAWAY, PARKER, SPRINGFIELD AND UNINCORPORATED BAY COUNTY

The right questions, answered

In August 2025, commissioners raised fair concerns about a citywide registry. A foreclosure-first program run by Hera answers each one.

"How would the City find out-of-town banks and collect from them?"

Hera does that work. Our team locates servicers, LLC managers and out-of-state owners through established relationships with hundreds of mortgagees and servicers, then notifies, registers and follows up. City staff never chase a bank.

"Would ordinary homeowners be affected?"

No. Registration is triggered by a foreclosure filed in court, and the obligation sits with the lender or servicer, not with a family away for the summer or rebuilding after a storm.

"Does the City have to decide what's vacant?"

Not to start. The trigger is a public court filing, not a City judgment about someone's private property. Occupancy is reported by the lender's own inspections.

"Can we start narrow?"

Yes. Begin with foreclosures only. Vacant commercial properties in gateway corridors can be added later by amendment, if and when the Commission chooses.

The Commission adopts it. Hera runs it.



- 01

Adopt the ordinance
Hera supplies model ordinance language and works with the City Attorney through adoption.

CITY ATTORNEY
& COMMISSION
- 02

Find the responsible party
Our team locates servicers, LLC managers and out-of-state owners and notifies them of the requirement.

HERA
- 03

Register and track
Lenders register online, and City staff get live access to every record, contact and status.

HERA
- 04

Enforce and follow up
Code officers reach a named local contact the same day, with Hera following up on the City's behalf.

CODE
ENFORCEMENT &
HERA

 No new headcount and no City build work. Live within one adoption cycle.

A focused ordinance

This is not untested ground. Panama City Beach already requires foreclosure registration, and Florida communities from Palm Bay to Cutler Bay run registries on Hera that put responsibility on lenders. The City's August 2025 draft is a strong start. We recommend narrowing it to foreclosures first.

01 • START WITH FORECLOSURE

Lenders register within [10–15] days of filing a foreclosure, name a local property manager, and keep the property inspected and maintained. The lender registers even if the home is still occupied, so the City has a contact before it empties. Homeowners themselves have no registration duty.

02 • FOLLOW IT THROUGH BANK OWNERSHIP

Registration stays in place after the foreclosure sale, while the bank holds title, until the home sells to a new owner. That is the stretch where properties most often fall through the cracks.

03 • GROW ONLY IF NEEDED

Start with foreclosures and measure results. Vacant commercial properties in gateway corridors can follow as a Phase 2 amendment, if the Commission chooses.

Someone accountable, from filing to resale



WITHOUT A REGISTRY

The City learns about a property late, usually after a neighbor complains.

Once the bank takes title, the owner is gone and the servicer is out of state. Bank-owned homes are the ones that fall through the cracks.

Mowing, securing and abatement fall to City crews, and the cost sits with taxpayers.

With no one on file, the property can deteriorate quickly, leading to possible abandonment and blight.

WITH A REGISTRY

The lender is identified the day the foreclosure is filed, with a local property manager named.

Registration follows the property through bank ownership until it sells, so there is always someone to call.

Grass, pools, roofs and open structures are handled on request by the party already responsible.

Problems are caught and fixed early, so the home stays maintained and ready for its next owner instead of sliding into blight.



No new staff and no City build work. The program funds itself through lender registration, and a share returns to the City to support code enforcement.

— THE RECORD

Proven by Florida peers

SOME OF THE FLORIDA PEERS RUNNING OUR
FORECLOSURE AND VACANT PROPERTY SYSTEM

Palm Beach County

City of Jacksonville

Citrus County

Hillsborough County

City of Palm Bay

Town of Cutler Bay

"Hera transformed how we manage
foreclosed and vacant properties. Their data-
driven system improves compliance, reduces
blight, and generates revenue, without adding
burden to city staff."

**STEPHEN NOWROSKI, DIRECTOR OF CODE &
ZONING**

CITY OF EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA

200+

COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE
RUNNING HERA PROGRAMS

— Q&A —

Questions & discussion

What would you need to see to bring a foreclosure-first ordinance back to the Commission?

Potential Found.

CJ JOHNSON, FOUNDER • CJOHNSON@HERAREGISTRY.COM • 321-234-5303

