

NOTICE OF ADOPTION

TOWNSHIP OF WATERTOWN SANILAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN

ORDINANCE NO.2026-3, ANTI-BLIGHT

An Ordinance to repeal and replace the previously adopted Township Blight Ordinance, in order to protect the public health, safety and general welfare by eliminating blight, to define and prohibit blight, and to provide penalties for violation hereof.

THE TOWNSHIP OF WATERTOWN ORDAINS:

The previously adopted Watertown Township Ordinance No. 2, entitled Blight Ordinance, as amended, is hereby repealed in its entirety and replaced with this Ordinance. All amendments, revisions, or supplements thereto are likewise repealed effective upon the effective date of this Ordinance.

ARTICLE I. BLIGHT DEFINED AND PROHIBITED

Section 1.01 Declaration of Nuisance.

The Township Board hereby determines that the uses of land and conditions described in this Article constitute blight which, if permitted to exist, create unsafe, unsanitary, and undesirable conditions within the Township and are declared to be a public nuisance.

Section 1.02 Prohibited Conditions.

No person shall create, maintain, store, deposit, or permit to exist upon any private property within the Township any of the following conditions:

- (a) The outdoor storage of any junk motor vehicle, unless such vehicle is kept within a completely enclosed building.
- (b) The storage or accumulation of garbage of any kind, except for domestic refuse generated on the premises and maintained in a sanitary manner in appropriate containers for a period not to exceed fourteen (14) days.
- (c) The outdoor storage or accumulation of junk.
- (d) The accumulation or storage of abandoned building materials.
- (e) The maintenance or existence of any blighted structure.

Section 1.03 Definitions.

For purposes of this Article, the following terms shall have the meanings set forth below:

- (a) Abandoned Building Materials. Building materials, supplies, or construction components that are not actively being used in connection with construction or repair conducted pursuant to a valid, current building permit issued by or under the authority of the Township or Sanilac County.
- (b) Blighted Structure. Any dwelling, garage, outbuilding, accessory building, factory, shop, store, office building, warehouse, sign, or other structure, or any portion thereof, which:
 - (1) Because of fire, wind, natural disaster, neglect, or physical deterioration, is no longer habitable as a dwelling or usable for the purpose for which it was originally intended;
 - (2) Is partially completed and construction has ceased for a period exceeding six (6) months without a valid, current building permit issued by or under the authority of the Township or Sanilac County;
 - (3) Is not structurally sound, weather-tight, waterproof, or vermin-proof;
 - (4) Is not protected by paint, siding, or other weather-resistant covering sufficient to prevent deterioration from the elements; or
 - (5) Is so damaged, decayed, dilapidated, unsafe, or otherwise deteriorated that it constitutes a danger to the life, safety, health, morals, or general welfare of the occupants or residents of the Township.
- (c) Garbage. Food waste, discarded food containers, and other household refuse.
- (d) Junk. Any abandoned, discarded, unusable, or unused objects, materials, machinery, or equipment, including but not limited to furniture, household appliances, barrels, tanks, implements, motor vehicle parts, tires, machinery, cloth, cartons, crates, boxes, and paper products. This term does not include farm machinery or equipment located on a bona fide farm, provided such machinery or equipment has been utilized for its intended agricultural purpose within the preceding twelve (12) months.
- (e) Junk Motor Vehicle. Any motor vehicle that is not currently licensed for lawful operation upon a public highway and that has been inoperable for any reason for a period exceeding thirty (30) consecutive days.

Section 1.04 Exemption.

This Article shall not apply to any lawfully established and operating commercial junkyard that complies with all applicable Township ordinances and other applicable laws.

ARTICLE II. ENFORCEMENT

Section 2.01 Immediate Abatement.

If a person fails to eliminate a violation of this Ordinance after notice from the Township or its authorized agent, and the Township Board determines that the violation constitutes an imminent threat to public health or safety, the Township may enter upon the property and cause the condition to be corrected, removed, or otherwise abated.

Section 2.02 Civil Action.

If a person fails to eliminate a violation after notice, the Township may commence an action in a court of competent jurisdiction to abate the nuisance, compel compliance with this Ordinance, or pursue any other remedy authorized by law or equity.

Section 2.03 Costs; Lien; Collection.

The costs incurred by the Township in investigating, correcting, removing, or otherwise abating a violation of this Ordinance, whether through immediate abatement or court action, including but not limited to administrative expenses, contractor fees, inspection costs, expert fees, legal fees to the extent permitted by law, and any other expenses incurred in enforcement, shall be charged to the owner of the property.

Such costs shall constitute a lien upon the property as of the date incurred. The lien shall accrue interest at the same rate applicable to delinquent real property taxes and shall be collected in the same manner as provided by law for the collection of delinquent real property taxes, including certification to the tax roll and collection by the county treasurer, if applicable.

Section 2.03 Municipal Civil Infraction.

A person or entity who violates any provision of this Ordinance is responsible for a municipal civil infraction.

Section 2.04 Cumulative Remedies.

The penalties and remedies provided by this Ordinance are cumulative and not exclusive. The Township may pursue any remedy or combination of remedies available at law or in equity. The pursuit of one remedy shall not preclude the pursuit of any other remedy.

ARTICLE III. REPEALER

Section 3.01 Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

ARTICLE IV. SEVERABILITY

Section 4.01 Severability.

If any section, subsection, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the valid the remaining portions of this Ordinance

Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the Township as required by law and shall take effect ten (10) days after publication, unless a effective date is provided herein

ADOPTION

This Ordinance was duly introduced and adopted by the Township Board of Watertown Township, Sanilac County, Michigan, at a regular meeting held on the 3rd day of March, 2026 at which meeting a quorum was present, by the following vote:

AYES: Radloff, Hacker, Henderson, Ross, Coats

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

TOWNSHIP OF WATERTOWN

By: Richard Henderson,
Township Supervisor

By: Tammy Ross,
Township Clerk