

The Metro Lansing's Poor People's Campaign (mippc.org) is also working to increase the shortage of safe, affordable, and accessible housing options for marginalized populations in the Capital Area including seniors, people with abilities and disabilities, poor people, LGBTQIAA+ returning citizens and BIPOC. Dynamics of the problem include:

- Skyrocketing property values and rental fees that are far beyond the ability of 25,553 residents whose monthly income may be as low as \$836.74 when average monthly rental for a studio apartment in Lansing is \$838--more than their monthly income, so nothing to cover food, transportation, medications or unforeseen expense like a flat tire
- Inadequate shelter beds for the growing number of people impacted by homelessness.
- Deteriorating condition of properties since over 80% of Lansing residential buildings are more than 50 years old.
- Tenants may resist reporting deteriorating and unsafe conditions in their units due to terror of becoming homeless because landlords may resort to reprisals against tenants who report noncompliance with building codes which would cost them money! Those who have not raised rents to afford such repairs may issue an Order to Vacate prior to an Eviction Notice. If so, tenants who demand their rights may go on a Do Not Rent list that landlords keep about problem tenants. This will turn up on a background check and have a negative effect on the credit score of such tenants, so they may live for years with problem electricity, roof leaks, bedbug infestations, black mold, no working smoke alarms, and other violations of building codes. Code compliance officers may not re-inspect violations for years.
- Because the income of these Lansing residents is less than 75% of the Federal Poverty Line, they may be in units that are eligible for assistance administered through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) through the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). Still, many eligible tenants may not apply because they need assistance to navigate the paperwork.
- Some out-of-state for-profit corporation landlords, including the one that the Lansing Housing Commission (LHC) authorized to purchase their unkempt properties may continue the LHC's policy to ignore work order requests emailed by tenants to property managers at the LHC for years. LHC has been doing this with impunity by the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that funds the LHC. When HUD learned of the LHC's violations, HUD has now sent its own inspectors to examine violations on a case-by-case basis. Fearful that HUD would pull its approval of the LHC's plan to sell their unkempt properties to an out-of-state for-profit corporation owned by the LHC Director's brother-in-law,. The LHC quickly addressed some of the work orders, but not all, even those that go back 5 years!
- In response, tenants and allies including the mippc.org were outraged and formed The People's Council(<https://thefledge.com/event/the-peoples-council/>) to fight this apparent misappropriation of HUD funds.
- Advocates have been working with U.S Representative Elissa Slotkin to encourage HUD to rescind its approval of the sale and begin a class action suit or settle with the LHC to re-direct HUD funding to bring its properties up to code out of compassion for tenants. We continue to advocate with Mayor Schor and the City Council to join us in this effort.
- A member of the mippc.org has been attending the City Council's ad-hoc housing committee, asking if the City of Lansing is cooperating with the County Treasurer to list its tax sale properties with a Realtor so as to attract potential buyers who may compete in a bidding war that would allow the County to accumulate far more than the asking price. three Council Members are in favor of having the City's Housing Ombudsman run a training on Tenants Rights. Is it true that a landlord may ignore emailed work order but work orders that come in by certified mail / return receipt requested can be verified? I don't know.

For those members who care about safe, affordable housing for ALL and responsible use of taxpayer dollars, please join us at the Monday, August 29th hybrid event at The Fledge and share your reasons with everyone you know!

For questions and comments, please contact Norma Bauer at activadvocate@gmail.com.
Thank you!