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LAWMO's Economic Development Unit Assists in Neighborhood Improvement Activities



Legal Aid's Economic Development Unit represents nonprofit community organizations in neighborhood improvement activities, including creating and preserving affordable housing in Kansas City.

Legal services include property acquisition, financing, title clearance, real estate closing and syndication, tax abatement, zoning, applications for tax exemption, nonprofit formation, and contracts with service providers.

East 39th Street

In early 2023, the Vineyard Neighborhood Association reached out to Legal Aid for help with a long-vacant, neglected property on E 39th Street. With multiple code violations and overdue property taxes, Legal Aid stepped in, filing a case under the Abandoned Housing Act to bring the home back to life.

After gaining access in December 2023, the Association discovered extensive interior damage. Through Legal Aid's Urban Homesteader program, local rehabbers Irma Acosta Carballo and Douglas Bonilla Zuniga were selected to transform the space. By May 2025, they had fully renovated the home—fixing violations, replacing plumbing and HVAC systems, and adding a new deck.

The Vineyard Neighborhood Association is thrilled with the transformation, and with the court's approval, the deed will be transferred to Irma and Douglas by June 2025. They'll call it home for at least two years, making a fresh start for both the house and the neighborhood. [CLICK HERE TO SEE PHOTOS](#)

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