YORK HAVEN BOROUGH
YORK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 07

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A BLIGHT PREVENTION AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE; DEFINING BLIGHTED PROPERTY; REGULATING JUNK AND INOPERABLE VEHICLES; PROVIDING FOR ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES; AND ESTABLISHING PENALTIES.

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED, and it is hereby enacted and ordained by the Borough Council of the York Haven Borough, York County, Pennsylvania, under authority of law as follows:

SECTION 1: SHORT TITLE. This Ordinance shall be known as the York Haven Blight Prevention and Property Maintenance Ordinance.

SECTION 2: PURPOSE, AUTHORITY, AND LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.

A. Purpose. The purposes of this Ordinance are to prevent the development and spread of blighted properties; protect public health, safety, and welfare; preserve property values; eliminate unsafe or unsanitary conditions; and prevent properties from becoming junkyards or dumping grounds. This Ordinance regulates health and safety conditions and does not regulate aesthetic preferences.
B. Authority. This Ordinance is enacted pursuant to the Borough's general police powers and specific authority to adopt and enforce ordinances related to property maintenance, nuisances, public health and safety, and to assess fines, costs, attorney's fees, and municipal liens as permitted by law.
C. Legislative Findings. Borough Council finds and declares that:
Accumulations of rubbish, debris, and junked or inoperable vehicles can attract vermin, pose fire hazards, cause stormwater contamination, obstruct emergency access, and contribute to neighborhood deterioration.
Vacant and unsecured buildings, deteriorated structures, and properties in hazardous condition endanger occupants, neighbors, first responders, and the public.
Reasonable limits on outdoor storage of vehicles and materials on residential lots, and minimum upkeep standards for lots and structures, are necessary to abate public nuisances and protect health and safety.

SECTION 3: DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated. Terms not defined shall be interpreted consistent with their common usage and applicable state law.

Abate/Abatement. To remove, repair, correct, or otherwise remedy a violation or nuisance.
Blighted Property. Real property exhibiting one or more of the following conditions:

1. Property declared a public nuisance by the Code Official under this Ordinance.
2. Vacant or unoccupied structures that are unsecured against unauthorized entry; or are unfit for human habitation due to dilapidation, unsanitary conditions, vermin infestation, lack of utilities, or other hazards.
3. Structures that are fire-damaged, partially collapsed, or otherwise dangerous to persons or property, and not repaired or stabilized within a reasonable period.
4. Lots or structures where accumulations of trash, debris, junk, or unmanaged vegetation create health, safety, fire, or vermin hazards.
5. Property conditions that substantially and adversely affect neighboring properties by creating verifiable health or safety hazards.

Boarded. Covered with materials (e.g., plywood or proprietary panel systems) fastened securely to prevent entry and weather intrusion.
Code Official. The Borough's Code Enforcement Officer and any authorized agents or designees.
Garbage/Refuse/Rubbish (collectively, "Debris"). Putrescible or nonputrescible waste materials including, without limitation, household garbage, discarded building materials not associated with active permitted work, tires, scrap metal, appliances, indoor furniture stored outdoors, and similar materials.
Inoperable Vehicle. A motor vehicle or trailer that cannot be legally operated on public roads due to one or more of the following: missing essential parts; mechanical failure preventing self-propelled movement; or lack of current registration or inspection, unless exempt by law. Vehicles under active repair within a fully enclosed structure are not considered inoperable for purposes of this Ordinance.
Junk Vehicle. Any vehicle that is wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled, or extensively damaged; is not currently registered or inspected when required by law; or is offered or kept for parts, scrap, or salvage and is not stored entirely within a fully enclosed building.
Outdoor Storage. Placement or keeping of materials, equipment, or vehicles outside a fully enclosed structure for more than 72 consecutive hours, whether or not covered by tarps or carports. Parking of a currently licensed and inspected passenger vehicle in a driveway is not "outdoor storage."
Property. Any lot, parcel, building, or structure, whether occupied or vacant.
Recreational Vehicle (RV). Motorhome, camper, travel trailer, boat, personal watercraft, or similar vehicle primarily used for recreational purposes.

SECTION 4: GENERAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE. All properties shall be maintained to avoid creating public health or safety hazards, public nuisances, or conditions conducive to blight, including: accumulations of debris; vermin harborage; dangerous structures; and uncontrolled vegetation creating fire or safety hazards.

SECTION 5: JUNK, DEBRIS, AND OUTDOOR STORAGE.

A. Prohibited Accumulations. No property owner or occupant shall permit accumulations of debris, including garbage, scrap, tires, appliances, discarded indoor furniture stored outdoors, or construction materials not associated with ongoing permitted work.

B. Temporary Construction Debris. Materials associated with active, permitted construction or renovation may be stored outdoors in an orderly manner for the duration of the work, provided the site remains safe and free of vermin, and debris is removed within 10 days after completion of work or permit expiration.
C. Hobby or Residential Storage. Ordinary household goods for personal use may be stored outdoors if maintained in a clean, orderly, and safe condition and not otherwise prohibited by this Ordinance.

SECTION 6: GRASS, WEEDS, AND VEGETATION.

A. Height Limit. Grass or weeds exceeding the height listed in York Haven Borough Ordinance 2025-01, or any amendments thereto, constitute a violation, except within:
1. Managed gardens or ornamental landscapes;
2. Agricultural uses permitted by zoning; or
3. Managed native meadow or pollinator plantings maintained to avoid encroachment onto sidewalks, streets, or neighboring properties and to prevent vermin or fire hazards.

B. Sidewalks/Right-of-Way. Vegetation shall not overhang or obstruct sidewalks, alleys, or streets; and vegetation within sight triangles at intersections shall be trimmed for visibility

SECTION 7: OUTDOOR VEHICLE STRORAGE - GENERAL.

A. Recreational Vehicles. Residents may store RVs, campers, trailers, and boats outdoors on their property if maintained in safe condition, not leaking fluids, not blocking sidewalks or rights-of-way, and not creating safety hazards. RVs shall not be used for habitation outside of campgrounds or otherwise permitted locations.
B. Prohibited Vehicles. Junk or inoperable vehicles may not be stored outdoors except as permitted by Section 9 (limited number) and only if maintained without creating hazards.
C. Screening. Where practicable, outdoor vehicle storage shall be located to the side or rear yard.

SECTION 8: OUTDOOR VEHICLE STORAGE – LOT-BASED LIMITS.

To prevent the creation of informal junkyards on residential properties, the following maximum numbers of vehicles may be stored outdoors on a lot (including passenger vehicles, RVs, boats, and trailers), exclusive of vehicles parked entirely within an enclosed garage:
1. Lots < 0.25 acre: up to 3 vehicles.
2. Lots ≥ 0.25 and < 1 acre: up to 5 vehicles.
3. Lots ≥ 1 and < 3 acres: up to 8 vehicles.
4. Lots ≥ 3 acres: up to 12 vehicles unless authorized as a licensed business in a zoning district permitting such use.

Vehicles exceeding these limits shall be stored inside a fully enclosed building or at a lawful commercial storage facility, or removed from the property.

SECTION 9: LIMIT ON JUNK OR INOPERABLE VEHICLES.

No property shall contain more than one (1) junk or inoperable vehicle stored outdoors. Additional junk or inoperable vehicles must be:

1. Stored entirely within a fully enclosed building; or
2. Located on property properly licensed and zoned for automotive repair, or towing.

Covers or tarps do not constitute enclosure.

SECTION 10: VACANT AND ABANDONDED STRUCTURES; MINIMUM STANDARDS.

A. Security. All doors, windows, and openings must be secured to prevent unauthorized entry. Boarding is permitted if installed and maintained to resist weather and entry.

B. Structural Maintenance. Buildings must be maintained to prevent deterioration, collapse, or unsafe conditions. Fire-damaged or partially collapsed buildings shall be promptly stabilized or demolished if unsafe.

C. Property Cleanliness. Lots shall be kept free from debris, junk vehicles, and refuse. Vegetation must be maintained to avoid fire hazards and vermin harborage.

D. Utilities. Utilities in vacant structures shall be safely shut off or maintained to prevent hazards; any active connections must be safe and code-compliant.

E. Vacancy Registration. Where the Borough has adopted a foreclosure or vacant property registration ordinance, owners of vacant structures must comply with its requirements, including registration, local agent designation, and fees.

F. Designation as Blighted Property. Vacant, unsecured, deteriorated, or hazardous structures may be designated as blighted property by the Code Official. The Borough may require abatement, including repair, stabilization, securing, or demolition, with costs chargeable to the owner as provided herein.

SECTION 11: DANGEROUS STRUCTURES. A structure is dangerous if, by reason of damage, deterioration, construction, or other conditions, it presents a substantial risk of collapse, fire, or other harm to occupants or the public, or allows unauthorized entry. The Code Official may order repair, securing, vacancy, or demolition, as appropriate to abate the danger.

SECTION 12: PUBLIC NUISANCES DECLARED.

The following constitute public nuisances and are prohibited:

1. Accumulations of debris creating health, safety, fire, or vermin hazards.
2. Storage of multiple junk or inoperable vehicles contrary to this Ordinance.
3. Unsecured vacant buildings; dangerous or partially collapsed structures.
4. Properties used for illegal dumping.
5. Any condition posing a verifiable risk to public health or safety or substantially interfering with the use and enjoyment of neighboring property.

SECTION 13: INSPECTIONS; RIGHT OF ENTRY; ADMINISTRATIVE WARRANTS.

A. Inspections. The Code Official may conduct exterior inspections from public rights-of-way or with consent from the owner or occupant. Interior inspections require consent of the owner or occupant, or an administrative search warrant.

B. Administrative Warrant. Upon refusal of consent, the Code Official may apply to the appropriate judicial officer for an administrative search warrant to conduct inspections authorized

by this Ordinance. Evidence of a reasonable inspection program or probable cause of violations may support issuance.
C. Emergency Conditions. In an emergency posing an immediate threat to life, safety, or property, the Code Official may enter to the extent reasonably necessary to abate the emergency in accordance with law.

SECTION 14: ENFORCEMENT; NOTICES OF VIOLATION.

A. Enforcing Official. The Borough's Code Official is authorized to enforce this Ordinance; investigate complaints; issue notices of violation; and order corrective action.
B. Notice Content. A written Notice of Violation shall include: (1) property address; (2) description of violations; (3) corrective actions required; (4) compliance deadline; (5) right to appeal and hearing procedures; and (6) potential enforcement actions and costs.
C. Service. Notice may be served by any of the following: personal service; first-class and/or certified mail to the owner's last known address; posting conspicuously at the property; and, where an email address is on file with the Borough, by email as a courtesy.
D. Compliance Periods. Unless an imminent hazard exists: (1) routine violations (e.g., grass/weeds, debris) — not less than 10 days; (2) repairs to structures — not less than 30 days; (3) emergencies — as reasonably necessary, which may be immediate.

SECTION 15: BOROUGH ABATEMENT AUTHORITY; COSTS AND LIENS.

A. Failure to Comply. If a violation is not corrected within the time stated, the Borough may, without further notice where authorized by law, abate the violation by removing debris, cutting grass, securing buildings, or removing or demolishing dangerous structures.
B. Cost Recovery. The property owner shall be responsible for all abatement costs, together with administrative expenses, interest, and reasonable attorney's fees as permitted by law.
C. Liens. Abatement costs may be collected as a municipal claim and lien against the property, in addition to any fines or penalties.

SECTION 16: PENALTIES; REMEDIES CUMULATIVE.

A. Criminal Enforcement. Violations of this Ordinance are summary offenses. Upon conviction before a Magisterial District Judge, an offender shall be subject to a criminal fine not exceeding $1,000 per violation, plus court costs and reasonable attorney's fees when allowed by law. Borough Council may provide that each day a violation continues and each section violated constitutes a separate offense.
B. Civil Penalties. Where authorized by resolution, the Borough may alternatively assess civil penalties not exceeding $600 per violation, plus costs and reasonable attorney's fees where permitted, collectible via civil action.
C. Equitable Relief. The Borough may seek orders in equity to enjoin violations or compel compliance. The remedies in this Section are cumulative and not exclusive.

SECTION 17: APPEALS; LOCAL AGENCY HEARINGS; JUDICIAL REVIEW.

A. Right to Appeal. Any person aggrieved by a Notice of Violation, order, or other adjudication under this Ordinance may appeal in writing within 10 business days of service of the Notice.
B. Hearing Body. Appeals shall be heard by Borough Council.
C. Procedure. Hearings shall be conducted as Local Agency hearings. The Borough shall issue a written adjudication containing findings and reasons. The decision shall be served on the parties.
D. Judicial Review. A party aggrieved by the Borough's adjudication may appeal to the Court of Common Pleas within the time and manner provided by law.
E. Stays. Filing an appeal does not stay emergency orders necessary to address imminent threats to life or property.

SECTION 18: CONFLICT WITH OTHER CODES. Where this Ordinance conflicts with a Borough-adopted property maintenance code or other ordinance, the more stringent provision for health or safety shall govern.

SECTION 19: SEVERABILITY. If any section, subsection, clause, or provision of this Ordinance is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 20: REPEALER. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 21: EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall take effect **five (5) days** after enactment.

ORDAINED AND ENACTED this 3 day of 9 2026.

ATTEST:

YORK HAVEN BOROUGH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Secretary

By:
President

Mayor