

Helena About to Receive Much Needed Facelift

September 24, 2004

The city of Helena is about to receive a much-needed facelift. When traveling into Helena, people immediately see dilapidated structures, burned out buildings, and abandoned homes. This will now change.

The Property Standards Board is partnering with First National Bank of Phillips County to implement a city beautification program for the city of Helena. This will allow the identification and removal of nuisance properties that have no tax value, and make them available for new business, parks, and other approved uses to generate tax revenue for the city, and bring back community pride.

The clean up process began with letters to owners of property that were not meeting city codes. In Helena, over 90 properties have been identified as being out of code. Six properties already have been cleaned up and brought to code standards by property owners.

The Property Standards Board is organizing its own clean up crew to begin this week in preparation for the Blues Festival.

"We are anxious to get started with the abatement of these nuisance properties," said John King, chairman of the Property Standards Board.

Other groups also are participating in the clean up effort. Habitat for Humanity and the "Over the Levee" neighborhood group are working to clean up neglected lots in north Helena. After cleaning the lot, a block captain is selected to oversee that the lot remains clean.

"It's fantastic. Hopefully this will influence the behavior of the community in a positive way," said Dr. Rosunde Nichols of the "Over the Levee" group.

If you are a property owner or concerned citizen wanting to help with the efforts, you can contact Michael Boone at 816-1121.