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## Residents Want Apartments Torn Down

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by: Bill Stamps

**A group of residents and business leaders in**

**Northwest Houston are upset about a run down apartment complex that's been sitting vacant for more than two years now. They say the city promised to do something about it but so far has done nothing. Bill Stamps reports.**

People who live near Candlewood Trails have been complaining for some time now. It takes up almost an entire block. More than one hundred units run down, windows broken out, trash strewn about.

*"The vagrants have been in there just tearing the place apart. There's no copper left in the walls. It's in terrible condition. It's not safe for anybody. It's been fenced off for security but there are gaping holes in the fences."*

That's Wayne Norden of the Near Northwest Management District.

*"Drug use and prostitution is running rampant throughout the whole area."*

Two years ago, Norden led a group of people who live, work and own businesses in the area to city hall. The city said it would work on the problem.

*"At that time in 2008 the mayor and city council agreed that this would be taken care of. Now two years later, we have a new administration and we're going downtown to remind them that this was a commitment that they had made and that we need to start moving forward on this because we've been stagnant now for two years on this project."*

But Norden says nothing has been done. Two years ago city officials said the problem was trying to track down the owners of the building. The units are actually condominiums that are individually owned. Most of the owners were investors who have since sold their interest. Norden admits finding them isn't easy:

*"Because they have been sold in groups in batches from one investor to another investor to another investor. It's just being treated right now as a bad loan."*

Still, residents and business leaders want it torn down. It's obvious who ever owns the units has no intention of doing anything with them and Norden says the city will eventually take ownership.

*"We just want to make them understand that this is impacting not just that property. It's impacting the properties that are around it that we're trying to save. The apartments that are valid, viable properties, but they're getting a very bad reputation because they're neighbors to this piece of property."*

The group plans to speak to the city council at next week's meeting.

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