

Metro

Residents clean up community eyesores

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Every morning Brent Sobol drives past two dilapidated apartment complexes on his way to work in southwest Atlanta.

The two properties that straddle Alison Court have long been vacant, save for the occasional homeless person who takes refuge in the rundown units. Condos, drug paraphernalia and bullet casings line the parking lot.

Today, it's a little easier on the eyes. Saturday morning, about 40 volunteers — led by Sobol — cleaned up the complexes, formerly known as Jewel Point and Cornerstone Apartments. They hauled away three Dumpsters full of



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Kenny Jones (left) and **Scott Boze** load garbage into a truck at an abandoned condominium complex in southwest Atlanta.

furniture and trash, boarded-up windows and secured an aging fence around part of the property.

"Giving back to the community like this, it gives me instant gratification," said

volunteer Sharae Norman.

About two years ago, all of the apartments-turned-condos at the two communities went into foreclosure, Sobol said. Soon after, the residents were either evicted

or moved out on their own.

More recently, Sobol said, the abandoned buildings have become home to squatters and drug dealers.

Sobol said city officials agreed to help clean up the properties earlier this year but later said they ran out of money. The city did donate the Dumpsters and provided security during Saturday's cleanup. City council member Jim Maddox, who represents Alison Court, also was on hand.

In coming years, an investment group plans to purchase the former Jewel Point property, fix it up and resell the condos, Sobol said. If that goes well, Sobol hopes someone will buy the former Cornerstone Apartments across the street.