

SCLRC 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

This report sets out the accomplishments of the Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) during CY 2019 and projects the expectations for 2020.



Administration

The Stark County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) continued to administer the programs and activities of the Land Bank during 2019 in furtherance of their mission “to strategically acquire properties, return them to productive use, reduce blight, increase property values, support community goals and improve the quality of life for county residents.” The RPC entered into a contract in May 2014 for the general administration, financial planning and oversight, and secretarial duties of the Land Bank. The RPC has a staff with experience in operating federal and state grant programs and financial management.

2019 PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES:

Demolition

December 18, 2019 marked the final deadline for **Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP)**, a 5-year long program administered by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), with funding coming from US Department of Treasury, utilizing Hardest Hit Funds (HHF) in order to remove blight in an effort to stabilize property values and prevent future foreclosures. The Land Bank received its initial funding award in 2014 and throughout the course of the program and various additional funding rounds received \$12,717,292.35 overall. Funding was utilized to acquire, demolish, and green 797 vacant, blighted, and delinquent residential properties within designated target areas in the cities of Canton, Alliance, and Massillon.

From 2014 – 2019, with the use of NIP funds, the Land Bank was able to demolish 797 vacant, blighted residential structures within targeted areas in Canton, Massillon and Alliance. The cluster map to the right represents the overall number of NIP demolitions completed within each city.



In 2019, the Land Bank demolished and submitted 175 properties for reimbursement through NIP. Of these final demolitions, 133 fully exhausted the Land Bank’s remaining NIP allocation, leaving 42 properties that fell outside of the grant. In an attempt to help cover some of the costs incurred for those 42 demolitions, the Land Bank was able to obtain additional funding from OHFA from a reserve pool of non-allocated funds (NAF). The Land Bank received \$545,345.29 in NAF for these 42 properties (22 in Canton and 20 in Massillon). This left only a balance of \$207,643.71 in costs that were not reimbursed. These costs were split appropriately between the Land Bank and the cities of Canton and Massillon.



\$12,171,947.06

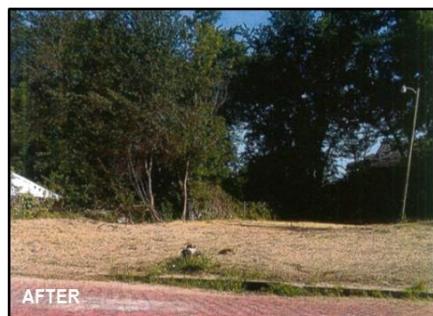
NIP Funds Awarded



\$545,345.29

Non-Allocated Funds (NAF) Awarded

Post-demolition lots are available for disposition to eligible neighboring property owners through the Land Bank’s “NIP Side Lot Program”, to qualified non-profit organizations or to the respective Partner city for immediate redevelopment or reuse. Through 2019, 19% of the lots demolished under NIP had been disposed to new ownership.



Aside from NIP, the SCLRC offers a **50/50 Demolition Assistance Program (DAP)** that is available to Stark County cities, villages, townships in order to facilitate the demolition of property that is beyond repair or rehabilitation, by providing matched funding up to 50% of hard-demolition costs of the project. Cities, villages, townships must either own the property or have completed the proper legal authority in order to demolish the structure prior to applying for DAP funding assistance.

In 2019, the Land Bank allocated \$116,178.53 of its \$165,000.00 DAP program budget towards 13 demolition projects across 6 communities in Stark County (Cities of Alliance, Canton, Louisville, Village of East Canton, and Canton & Lexington Townships). By December 31st, 11 of those projects were fully completed, while 2 projects were still under contract and will be completed in early 2020. Below are examples of demolition projects that received DAP funding.



2630 6th St. SE

Funding Agreement for 50% of demolition hard-costs not to exceed \$4,250.00

Agreement signed: November 2018

Project completed: February 2019

SCLRC reimbursed City \$4,250.00



733 N. Chapel St.

Funding Agreement for 50% of demolition hard-costs not to exceed \$9,500.00

Agreement signed: June 2019

Project completed: August 2019

SCLRC reimbursed City \$8,761.50



12026 Wisconsin Rd. NE

Funding Agreement for 50% of demolition hard-costs not to exceed \$2,846.43

Agreement signed: July 2019

Project completed: October 2019

SCLRC reimbursed City \$2,846.43

Property Acquisition & Disposition

In 2019, the Land Bank continued to offer three (3) programs aimed towards acquiring tax delinquent, vacant and abandoned property, cleaning the title, and transfer the property into new ownership for a productive use.

Program	Description	Year Est.
Side Lot Program	Available to qualified contiguous property owners who wish to extend the size of their yard.	2013
Vacant Lot Program	Available to qualified <u>non-contiguous</u> applicants who wish to acquire tax delinquent property in the County for an approved use.	2015
Targeted Acquisition Assistance Program (TAAP)	Available to Stark County cities, villages and townships or qualified non-profits applicants to assist with the strategic acquisition of blighted, vacant, or abandoned properties to facilitate community & redevelopment projects	2017

Amongst these programs, the Land Bank has acquired properties across Stark County that were vacant, abandoned and long-time tax delinquent and transferred them to new owners who will maintain/use them as side lots, sites for redevelopment, and/or for new construction. In 2019, a total of 162 side lot and vacant lot properties transferred to expand new owners' existing backyards, became a place for planting or gardening, are now being mowed/ maintained and cared for within neighborhoods; while 23 properties transferred through TAAP will become sites for new pocket greenspace, single-family home construction and opportunities for community and economic development projects.

Brownfield Remediation & Economic Development

On August 20th, 2018, the Land Bank was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) to clean up an abandoned gas station located at 1652 Whipple Avenue NW in Canton Township. Asbestos abatement, building and canopy removal, parking lot clearance, soil testing and excavation work, which began in November 2018, was completed by October 2019 and the site received a clean bill of health in December 2019. The property is currently ready for future redevelopment.



The Land Bank acquired a second former gas station property, located at 2433 Columbus Road NE in Plain Township, in June 2019 with the intent to apply for and obtain clean up funds from ODSA. After acquiring the property, a consultant was hired to assist in completing the application. After the application was submitted and a geophysical survey was conducted, ODSA awarded the Land Bank a \$250,000 grant, on December 17th, 2019, to undertake the needed remediation at the site. Unlike the recently completed site on Whipple Ave. NW, the tanks are still present at the Columbus Rd. site and will need to be removed. It is anticipated that the RPC will solicit for and select a consultant to oversee the project with work expected to be underway by mid-2020.



General Expectations for the Future

As the Land Bank's funding for residential demolitions has been fully expended through NIP, the RPC will make recommendations to the Land Bank for possible development of new programs (such as a rehab or deed-in-escrow program) or for potential implementation of community development projects that support County and local community missions and initiatives and strengthen existing partnerships created through past and ongoing programs.

2019 FINANCIAL REPORT:

Beginning Balance at 1/1/2019	1,653,441.15
Revenue:	
DTACT Funds	779,353.96
OHFA NIP Funds	2,671,732.74
ODSA - Gas Station Reimbursement	96,200.02
Side Lot Fees	21,910.00
Vacant Lot Fees	26,200.00
TAAP Program	3,228.15
NIP Property Redemptions	2,247.10
OHFA - NIP Prosecutor Fees	46,000.00
Miscellaneous	6.53
Total Revenue	3,646,878.50
Expenses:	
RPC General Admin Fees	176,523.30
Treasurer's Office Services	54,993.63
Prosecutor's Office Land Bank Unit Funding	132,838.15
Accounting Fees	1,100.00
Liability Insurance	55,264.60
Audit Fees	8,573.10
Bank Fees/Charges	585.00
OHFA NIP Program Disbursements	2,637,877.15
ODSA Expenses	99,180.02
Travel	-
Property Maintenance	-
Side Lot Expenses	111,152.32
Vacant Lot Expenses	14,680.38
TAAP Program Expenses	18,499.73
Property Management Software	7,500.00
Property Acquisition Expenses	-
Demolition Program Expenses	19,502.93
Miscellaneous	7,154.13
Total Expenses	3,345,424.44
Net Expenses over Revenue	(301,454.06)
Transfers:	
Investment Transfer	900,000.00
Total Transfers	900,000.00
Ending Balance at 12/31/2019	1,054,895.21

STAR Plus Fund	
Beginning Balance at 1/1/2019	6,268.16
Transfers	-
Interest Earned	146.53
Ending Balance at 12/31/2019	6,414.69
STAR OHIO Fund	
Beginning Balance at 1/1/2019	1,031,946.98
Transfers	900,000.00
Interest Earned	26,233.57
Ending Balance at 12/31/2019	1,958,180.55