

## LAND BANK 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

This report sets out the accomplishments of the Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) during CY 2020.

### ADMINISTRATION

The Stark County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) continued to administer the programs and activities of the Land Bank during 2020 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.



As the Land Bank’s administrator, the RPC will continue to explore and make recommendations to the Land Bank for potential implementation/inclusion of new programs and activities that will maximize the Land Bank’s budget while furthering its mission and supporting other County and local community initiatives into CY 2021.

### PROPERTY ACQUISITION & DISPOSITION

Throughout 2020, the Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) continued offering programs/activities focused on the reclamation and repurposing of vacant and abandoned properties in Stark County although it faced challenges in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Foreclosure actions were halted for months due to Covid-19, which significantly affected the Land Bank’s ability and progress in acquiring vacant & abandoned properties across Stark County, but despite this, the Land Bank was still able to accomplish important work.

The two longest operating programs offered by the Land Bank, the “**Side Lot**” & “**Vacant Lot**” programs, help give qualified applicants the opportunity to acquire tax delinquent vacant land. In 2020, the Land Bank transferred 119 lots to new ownership through these 2 programs. The new owners are now maintaining the lots as an extensions of their existing yards, for gardens & greenspace and even new home construction.

The “**Targeted Acquisition Assistance Program**” (TAAP) is available to Stark County cities, villages and townships or qualified non-profit applicants to assist with the strategic acquisition of blighted, vacant or abandoned properties to facilitate community and redevelopment projects. Through this program in 2020, 20 parcels were transferred to new ownership to facilitate projects such as: demolition, new home construction, greenspace, or for opportunities for community and economic development.

## DEMOLITION



In September 2020, the Land Bank accepted the opportunity to receive additional funds to complete additional residential demolitions from the **Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP)**, a program administered by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA). These funds became available from a reserve of non-allocated funding on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Land Bank was able to reserve funds to help complete eight (8) additional residential demolitions within the City of Canton. All demolition work was completed in late November and reimbursement was submitted to OHFA on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. OHFA reimbursed the Land Bank a total of \$119,780.70 for these 8 demolitions in early January 2021.

With the completion of these 8 additional demolitions, the Land Bank was ultimately able to acquire, demolish, and green 805 vacant, blighted, and delinquent residential properties within designated target areas in the cities of Canton, Alliance, and Massillon with NIP funding between 2014-2020.

Many of these post-demolition lots are still 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.

In June 2020, the Hall of Fame Village (HOF Village) came to the Land Bank seeking funding assistance for 84 demolitions within their campus footprint (79 residential homes, two commercial structures, two garages and one partial school structure).



These demolitions were estimated to cost the HOF Village approximately \$800,665.00 overall. The Land Bank entered into an agreement in early July for up to 50% of HOF’s documented hard-costs incurred on the project; not to exceed **\$400,332.50** in total. Assisting the HOF Village in funding the removal of these structures will allow for groundbreaking and construction of larger structures that are part of the overall development project.



The HOF Village completed demolition work by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 with the exception of the partial school structure. Contractors finalizing the remaining site grading work in early January 2021. The Land Bank’s reimbursement to HOF Village for the 83 demolished structures is expected in early spring 2021.

Each year, the Land Bank 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. In 2020, the Land Bank funded 15 demolition projects for a total of \$136,893.03 within 6 communities. To date through the DAP program, the Land Bank has helped fund 32 demolitions across 11 communities in Stark County.



## **BROWNFIELD REMEDIATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

In December 2019, the Land Bank was awarded a \$250,000 grant from the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) to clean up an abandoned gas station located at 2433 Columbus Road NE in Plain Township. In 2020, after selection of an environmental consultant to oversee the project, underground storage tanks were pulled, the building & canopy were demolished and testing/remediation work began. Additional soil testing was conducted at the site and a Tier 1 Delineation Report (which delineates extent of contamination) was completed and will be submitted to BUSTR in early January 2021. The Land Bank is currently addressing the requirements to install additional monitoring wells and waiting on the approval to proceed with completing a Tier 2 Report (cleanup cost analysis) for the site.



**2020 FINANCIAL REPORT**

STARK COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORP. - 2020	
First Commonwealth Bank Checking Account	
<b>Beginning Balance at 1/1/2020</b>	<b>1,054,895.21</b>
<b>Revenue:</b>	
DTAC Funds	764,170.38
OHFA NIP Grant Funds	386,316.98
ODSA - Gas Station Reimbursement	107,072.80
Side Lot Fees	10,500.00
Vacant Lot Fees	17,530.00
TAAP Program	18,880.50
Miscellaneous	103,875.15
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,408,345.81</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
RPC General Admin Fees	189,000.00
RPC - ODSA Gas Station Admin	4,533.44
Treasurer's Office Services	57,281.29
Prosecutor's Office Land Bank Unit Funding	42,187.50
Accounting Fees	1,100.00
Liability Insurance	16,958.00
Audit Fees	8,077.00
Bank Fees/Charges	722.46
OHFA NIP Program Disbursements	203,890.07
ODSA Expenses	107,072.80
Travel	-
Property Maintenance	315.00
Side Lot Expenses	49,957.38
Vacant Lot Expenses	4,710.67
TAAP Program Expenses	11,132.73
Property Management Software	7,500.00
Membership Dues	5,000.00
Marketing Expenses	-
Property Acquisition Expenses	-
Demolition Program Expenses	136,893.03
Miscellaneous	368.44
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>846,699.81</b>
<b>Net Expenses over Revenue</b>	<b>(561,646.00)</b>
<b>Transfers:</b>	
Investment Transfer	480,000.00
<b>Total Transfers</b>	<b>480,000.00</b>
<b>Ending Balance at 12/31/2020</b>	<b>1,136,541.21</b>

<b>STAR Plus Fund</b>	
<b>Beginning Balance at 1/1/2020</b>	<b>6,414.69</b>
Transfers	-
Interest Earned	<b>37.48</b>
<b>Ending Balance at 12/31/2020</b>	<b>6,452.17</b>
<b>STAR OHIO Fund</b>	
<b>Beginning Balance at 1/1/2020</b>	<b>1,958,180.55</b>
Transfers	<b>480,000.00</b>
Interest Earned	<b>14,486.17</b>
<b>Ending Balance at 12/31/2020</b>	<b>2,452,666.72</b>