

LAND BANK 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

This report sets out the accomplishments of the Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) during CY 2022.



2022 marked the Land Bank's 10th year since establishment. The SCLRC was created by Commissioners Resolution based on ORC 5722.02 on March 21, 2012.

Throughout the past 10 years the Land Bank has transferred over 1,100 formerly unmaintained side lots to new ownership, created multiple programs to facilitate the re-use and repurposing of vacant and tax delinquent property, completed over 1,200 residential demolitions through the receipt of multiple grant awards to reduce blight, began remediation and clean-up activities on formerly abandoned gas stations, and has formed multiple partnerships with political jurisdictions, non-profit organizations and for-profit organizations across the county to facilitate community & economic development projects in furtherance of its 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."

ADMINISTRATION

The Stark County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) continued to administer the programs and activities of the Land Bank during 2022. The RPC handles the general program administration, financial planning and oversight, secretarial duties, and manages the property inventory on behalf 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 new funding opportunities and implementation/inclusion of new programs or activities that will help meet the objectives the Land Bank's mission while also being cognizant of the Land Bank's budget in CY 2023 and into the future.

BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

After nearly a decade serving on the Board of Directors for the Land Bank, Lemuel “Lem” R. Green stepped down from his position as city representative in June 2022. A founding board member, Lem also served as Vice Chairman during his time on the board. He was integral in the creation and adoption of the Side Lot Program. Lem initially administered the Side Lot Program up until May 2014 when the RPC began the program’s administration. The Land Bank had accepted over 500 side lot applications during Lem’s work with the program.

He is replaced by Christopher Hardesty, Director of Economic Development for the City of Canton. He was appointed to serve on the Land Bank board as the city representative in December 2022.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION & DISPOSITION

The Land Bank operates three (3) programs which are aimed to assist qualified applicants in acquiring tax delinquent property that, due to the high delinquency owed, would otherwise be undesirable and unobtainable through traditional purchasing methods. The chart below describes the programs.

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-profit applicants to assist with the strategic acquisition of blighted, vacant, or abandoned properties to facilitate community & redevelopment projects.	2017

While the qualifications, pricing, and applicant eligibility differ between the three (3) programs, they continue to be successful in bringing abandoned properties back into productive use, to allow homeowners to have a bigger yard, a blighted house to be rehabilitated, for new construction of single-family housing or for land assembly.

Throughout 2022, the Land Bank reviewed and approved 102 applications under its Targeted Acquisition Assistance Program (TAAP). Approximately 74.5% of the applications were for the acquisition of tax delinquent vacant and abandoned property within the Shorb Neighborhood within the City of Canton. The Land Bank’s assistance with these property acquisitions helps to support the city’s goals and strategies within this focus area as part of the city’s 2016 Comprehensive Plan. The Shorb area is directly north of the Downtown. It is transected by three important arterials: Fulton Road, Shorb Avenue, and McKinley Avenue on the east. It extends from approximately 6th Street to 12th Street.

In 2022, the Land Bank transferred a total of 161 lots to new ownership through these programs.

SIDE LOT PROGRAM REVIEW

As the longest operated program by the Land Bank, the Side Lot Program has helped improve Stark County neighborhoods by taking tax delinquent abandoned lots and transferring them to property owners who can then expand the size of their yards and who will maintain and begin paying the taxes on the lots. In turn this will increase their property values and improve the look of the neighborhood.

The Land Bank began accepting applications in 2012 and the first side lot was transferred in late 2013. Since then the Land Bank has transferred over 1,100 side lots into new ownership across 21 different communities in Stark County.

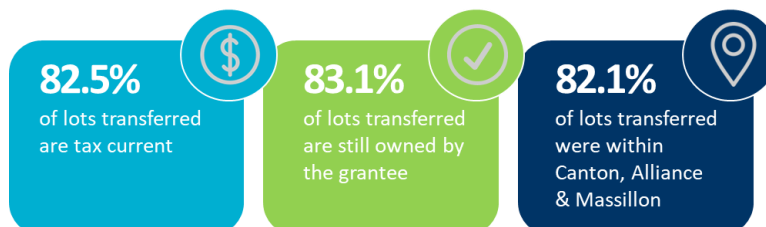


To determine how successfully the Land Bank is meeting the intended use of the Side Lot Program, over the summer of 2022 the RPC conducted a study of the completed side lot transfers to find out:

- Are the new owners paying the property taxes on the lots that they received?
- Are the lots still owned by the grantee who received title from the Land Bank?
- What does the distribution of completed side lot transfers look like?

A smaller scale study was conducted in 2017, after five years of operation of the program, where just under 700 side lot transfers were reviewed. Those results revealed that approximately 85.8% of the side lots were still tax current after a transfer to new ownership.

At the time the 2022 study was conducted, a total of 1,074 side lot transfers were reviewed. The figures below reflect these new findings. The new study's results revealed that approximately 82.5% of the side lots were still tax current after a transfer to new ownership, while 8.9% of lots transferred were considered certified delinquent with an unpaid balance. Additionally 8.6% had only an unpaid balance of taxes owed but not considered delinquent.



DEMOLITION ACTIVITIES

The Land Bank offers a demolition funding assistance program called **Demolition Assistance Program (DAP)** that has been available since 2017. This program has been available to Stark County cities, villages, and 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. As of June 27, 2022, the DAP Policies that were adopted in 2017 were modified. Applicants eligible to apply for DAP funding now include Stark County, its political subdivisions, and qualified non-profit organizations. Non-profit organizations were previously not included as an eligible applicant under the originally adopted policy.

2022 DAP PROJECTS

Property Address	Applicant/Community	Project Type	Status	Funding Reimbursement
172 & 176 E. Main St.	Alliance	Commercial	Reimbursed	\$50,779.27
530 & 536 E. Main St.	Alliance	Commercial	Reimbursed	\$81,207.62
407 N. Main St.	North Canton	Commercial	Reimbursed	\$33,646.00
2465 Waynesburg Dr. SE	Canton Township	Residential	Reimbursed	\$6,265.00
201 Orchard Ave. NE	Canton	Residential	Reimbursed	\$4,993.50
1287 Harrisburg Rd. NE	ABCD, Inc.	Commercial	Reimbursed	\$40,225.00
1031 W. Tuscarawas St.	Canton	Commercial	Reimbursed	\$70,587.56
1824 Grace Ave. NE	Canton	Residential	Reimbursed	\$6,421.38
1921 Bentley Ave. NE	Canton	Residential	Reimbursed	\$7,121.00
60 Jefferson St.	Lexington Township	Residential	Under Contract	\$5,749.47

In 2022, the Land Bank funded demolition reimbursements for four (4) residential projects and five (5) commercial projects. A total of \$301,246.33 in demolition funding was provided by the Land Bank for these nine (9) projects completed in 2022; \$24,800.88 for residential demolitions and \$276,445.45 for commercial demolitions. Additionally, one (1) residential project was still under contract at the end of the year with a reimbursement expected in early 2023.

DEMOLITION FUNDING

Guidelines for a new grant program, the Building Demolition & Site Revitalization Program (BDSR), administered by the Ohio Department of Development (DOD) were released late 2021. The funding became available from Substitute House Bill 110, the state budget bill for State Fiscal Years 2022-2023. \$150 million with \$500,000 set-aside per county was allocated for the demolition of commercial and residential buildings and the revitalization of surrounding properties. Applications for funding were due by end of February 2022.



The Land Bank submitted a grant application for the demolition of five (5) commercial demolition projects in February and was initially awarded the \$500,000 county set-aside in early August. Later in October, the Land Bank was awarded an additional \$501,321.00; for a total grant award of \$1,001,321.00. Match funding (25%) is required for projects in excess of the county set-aside. Upon notification of funding, work was able to commence. All work under the BDSR program must be completed by May 1, 2023 and final reimbursement submissions must be requested by July 15, 2023. The demolitions being undertaken with BDSR grant funding and their project status at the end of 2022 are shown in the chart below.

	Project Name / Address	Community	Status
BDSR PROJECTS	12777 Mogadore Ave. – Former Greenhouse	Lake Township	Demolition Underway
	129 and 125 Lincoln Way W.	Massillon	Not Started
	1447 N. Main St. – Former Kmart	North Canton	Demolition Complete
	530 N. Lincoln Ave. – Former Elementary School	Alliance	Not Started
	612 S. Liberty Ave. and 717 E. Cambridge St.	Alliance	Not Started

BROWNFIELD REMEDIATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The former Starfire Gas Station located at 2433 Columbus Rd. NE saw continued progress in 2022:

- Tier II Report was submitted to BUSTR and approved
- Additional drilling/sampling of the soil & groundwater was conducted
- Remedial Action Plan (RAP) was submitted in December

This work is funded by a grant which was awarded in 2019, with a work completion deadline of June 16, 2023.

Upon completion of the current grant, and based on BUSTR’s review of the RAP - the Land Bank plans to apply for a remediation grant to remove the contaminated soil and to clean up the effected groundwater.

STARK COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORP. - 2022	
First Commonwealth Bank Checking Account	
Beginning Balance at 1/1/2022	1,304,153.68
Revenue:	
Statutory DTAC Funds	835,191.58
OHFA - NIP Maintenance Disbursements	-
ODSA - Gas Station Reimbursement	63,147.28
ODOD - Building Demo and Site Revitalization	-
Side Lot Program	10,779.44
Vacant Lot Program	87,942.08
TAAP Program	29,696.10
Proceeds from Sale of Gas Station	-
Miscellaneous	0.13
Total Revenue	1,026,756.61
Expenses:	
RPC General Admin Fees	183,399.41
Treasurer's Office Services	43,626.58
Prosecutor's Office Land Bank Unit Funding	122,250.00
Accounting Fees	1,300.00
Liability Insurance	17,898.00
Audit Fees	7,892.50
Bank Fees/Charges	561.86
OHFA NIP Program Disbursements	28,020.50
ODSA Expenses	63,147.28
ODOD Expenses	215,000.00
Travel	-
Property Maintenance	-
Side Lot Expenses	78,858.07
Vacant Lot Expenses	12,411.91
TAAP Program Expenses	85,628.22
Property Management Software	7,500.00
Membership Dues	5,000.00
Marketing Expenses	-
Property Acquisition Expenses	267.88
Residential Demolition Program Expenses	24,800.88
Commercial Demolition Program Expenses	276,445.45
Gas Station Clean Up - Not Reimbursable by Grant	-
Miscellaneous	372.54
Total Expenses	1,174,381.08
Net Expenses over Revenue	147,624.47
Transfers:	
Investment Transfer	-
Total Transfers	-
Ending Balance at 12/31/2022	1,156,529.21

2022 FINANCIAL REPORT CONTINUED 

STAR OHIO Fund	
Beginning Balance at 1/1/2022	2,461,130.03
Interest Earned	42,106.19
Ending Balance at 12/31/2022	2,503,236.22