



*Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)  
Community Legal Resources (CLR)  
University of Michigan/  
Detroit Community Outreach Partnership Center (UM)  
Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD)*

Vacant and abandoned property diminishes quality of life, reduces property values, and threatens community stability and/or development efforts. The Detroit Vacant Property Campaign (DVPC) advocates for real solutions for reducing blight, restoring neighborhoods, creating wealth-building opportunities for residents, protecting and increasing property values, and increasing local residential and commercial investment. The DVPC is building a coalition of supporters – from communities, to city hall, to the state capitol – who are working together to save and strengthen communities.

The DVPC's goals include:

- Remove barriers to moving properties back into productive use;
- Strengthen the work of nonprofit community development corporations;
- Facilitate physical development in one or more investment area(s);
- Build capacity within neighborhoods to combat the effects of rising vacancies;
- Increase community and public awareness about vacant properties and strategies for addressing them; and
- Advocate for coordination of public resources and improved vacant land policies.

## WHY SUPPORT A DETROIT LAND BANK?

**So that Detroit can control its property and the future of its neighborhoods.**

### The Benefits of a Land Bank

A land bank can assist in the reduction of blight, the restoration of deteriorating neighborhoods, the creation of wealth-building opportunities for residents, and increased local residential and commercial development.

By forming a land bank, Detroit will have the opportunity to make use of Brownfield and other tax credits, speed the clearance of title, facilitate regional and intergovernmental cooperation in assembling land for redevelopment, leverage private dollars, and partner with those interested in the redevelopment of neighborhoods.

### Obtaining Local Control

A land bank is a mechanism for Detroit to get local control of property, especially in light of the current foreclosure crisis. The future ownership of tens of thousands of homes that have gone or are about to go through foreclosure is unknown. Entities such as HUD, Fannie Mae, the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority, the Wayne County Treasurer, and numerous banks have inventories of Detroit property and are looking for local partners. Creating a Detroit Land bank is an opportunity for a local entity to help determine the fate of these properties. Local control of property means local control of Detroit's future.

### **Wayne County Land Bank Already Formed**

Wayne County has formed a Wayne County Land Bank that has the potential to hold thousands of Detroit properties. The proposed Detroit Land Bank could work together with the Wayne County Land Bank to insure that Detroit properties are returned to productive use.

### **State Land Bank Already Operates in Detroit**

The Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority is already operating in Detroit and holds more than 5,000 Detroit properties. The Detroit Land Bank could enter into an agreement with the State Land Bank to market these properties – returning control over the destiny of these properties to the hands of Detroit leaders.

### **Balanced Representation of Mayor and Council**

The current proposal for a Detroit Land Bank includes a balanced governing board representing both the legislative and executive branches of Detroit city government.

### **Consolidate Inventory of Detroit Properties**

A City of Detroit Land Bank has the potential to be a common source for purchases of surplus government property from several sources – city, county and state.

The City can choose to transfer some portion of its inventory of 20,000+ surplus parcels to the Detroit Land Bank. If it so chooses, the City can exercise its right to receive the surplus Detroit property generated by the Wayne County tax foreclosure system (effectively limiting the stream of new Detroit property to Wayne County).

### **Dedicated Funds for Vacant and Abandoned Land Maintenance and Redevelopment**

The Detroit Land Bank, like other land banks in Michigan, has a unique opportunity to dedicate 100% of its resources to the maintenance and improvement of vacant and abandoned Detroit properties. When one property generates revenue—whether through sale of the property, tax increment financing, or tax recapture—that revenue can be used to maintain and improve the other properties held by the land bank. In fact, in Genesee County (Flint), this revenue stream has provided for the demolition of more than 600 homes and the removal of more than 400 tons of debris from vacant and abandoned properties in just a few years of its operation.

### **Allows for a Community Land Trust**

A Detroit Land Bank can make it easier for a nonprofit corporation to develop a community land trust and approach the Detroit Land Bank for property at a nominal price. However, a community land trust—a private nonprofit corporation that preserves land ownership but limits wealth building from homeownership—is not an alternative to a government-run and publicly accountable land bank returning land to productive use.

### **No Quick Fixes or Silver Bullets**

A Detroit Land Bank is a tool for responding to the problem of vacant and abandoned land in our City. However, there is no one solution to all of Detroit's land use, development, or affordable housing issues. Land banks have been shown to help other similar communities respond to the problem of vacant and abandoned land. Detroit's community development, faith-based, neighborhood and other communities are advocating for this "tool" for the Detroit toolbox.

Coming soon...

[www.detroitvacantproperty.org](http://www.detroitvacantproperty.org)