



2023 Annual Report



PITTSBURGH LAND BANK 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

SECTION 1 THE PLB'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Throughout the United States, land banks have been designed to be flexible, nimble tools that adapt to changing environments enabling them to meet the needs of the neighborhoods they serve. 2023 was a dynamic year for the Pittsburgh Land Bank (PLB). It was a year full of considerable progress and unprecedented challenges in reaching the goals set forth in the PLB's founding legislation.

This past year, we have focused on carving out PLB's place in the City's greater land recycling system by scaling up its operations, building closer working relationships with residents and community organizations and increasing land transactions. With the first of many successful sales underway, the PLB plans to continue this momentum in 2024 with new funding streams and opportunities to recycle vacant and abandoned properties back to productive reuse.

The PLB's 2023 and 2024 goals can be traced back to the PLB's Strategic Plan from 2018, which lays out the following priorities:

1. The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) administers primary day-to-day functions under existing Agreement, adjusting the scope if/as necessary.
2. Initial portfolio will include approximately 50 properties: 25 land and 25 single family structures.
3. Focus on Neighborhood-Scale Development:
 - a. Homeownership Preservation
 - b. Catalytic Demonstration Projects
 - c. Affordable Housing
 - d. Greenspace
 - e. Bight Reductions
 - f. Public Art
4. Concentrate on significant corridors and demonstration projects.
5. Transition Administration of the Pittsburgh Property Reserve.
6. PLB will acquire an initial portfolio from public surplus – the City of Pittsburgh and/or the URA.
7. PLB will acquire additional properties from tax foreclosure sale for nominal consideration, and potentially the Sheriff's Sale using its power of Priority Bid.
8. A significant portion of the initial portfolio should have end users/uses identified.
9. The PLB will be strategic about the properties it acquires.

The priorities above were derived from a set of goals that will continue to guide the PLB as the organization grows:

- a. Significant strides should be made in reducing the total number of blighted properties
- b. The overall quality of life will be improved for Pittsburgh residents
- c. Over a period of time the tax base should directly increase as vacant properties are reclaimed and the indirect impact on surrounding property values (and corresponding tax base) should be realized and measured
- d. Develop an effective proactive communication and education program that keeps key partners and the general public engaged and informed in the work for the PLB and addressing the problem of vacant and abandoned properties
- e. The PLB is a proactive, functioning, fully funded organization.

SECTION 1.1 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVERVIEW

The PLB's mission is to acquire, maintain and market vacant, abandoned, and tax -delinquent properties in the City of Pittsburgh. In alignment with this mission, we accomplished the following in 2023:

1. Successful implementation of the PLB's **Competitive Disposition Process** and first interagency transfer between the URA and the PLB.
2. Implementation of the PLB's **Non-competitive Disposition Processes** for various transactions involving community -benefiting end uses and the return of unproductive property to the City's tax base.
3. Implemented the **URA-PLB Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** that outlines the terms of the property transfers between the two organizations with heavy collaboration from both.
4. Completed the first **Quiet Title Action** for the PLB's first property to enter the inventory and subsequently conveying to the Urban Academy of Greater Pittsburgh in the Larimer neighborhood.
5. The passage, authorization, and utilization of the **City-URA-PLB Tri-Party Cooperation Agreement** which outlines transfers of property between the three organizations; as of December 2023, the PLB is requesting to transfer twenty-five properties from City inventory to the PLB.
6. Delivered a predisposition public hearing in the Larimer Neighborhood per the **PLB's Objection Process** to collect public feedback and enable residents and community members to better understand the potential benefits of a PLB sale to a neighborhood organization.
7. Extended the **Pittsburgh Property Reserve Donation Agreement** to clear title for properties remaining in the City's Property Reserve. To date, the majority of quiet title cases have been completed, and many of the almost 60 properties have been successfully purchased by CDCs with clear, insurable title paid for in-kind by the PLB.
8. Executed an **updated Land Care Contract** with the URA to maintain PLB's growing inventory of properties. The new contract also allows for stabilization services via URA third party contractors that will provide immediate blight relief to surrounding households.
9. Participated and spoke at the **Vacant Property Working Group (VPWG)** - a working group of community stakeholders, public and private, around the issues of blight, abandonment, and land reclamation.
10. Issued a **Request for Proposals (RFP)** for services related to title, settlement and quiet title and successfully brought three firms under contract to complete quiet title actions for properties acquired by the Pittsburgh Land Bank.

SECTION 1.2 2023 DIRECTED SALES CRITERIA

In 2022, The Pittsburgh Land Bank’s Board of Directors ratified an amendment to the Policies and Procedures allowing for a directed sales process for community-benefiting end uses. This process was implemented in 2023 with several successful sales in Pittsburgh’s neighborhoods and communities. The below end uses qualify for the PLB’s Noncompetitive Disposition Process:

PLB’S NONCOMPETITIVE DISPOSITION PROCESS (DIRECTED SALES)	
<p style="text-align: center;">SIDE YARDS</p> <p>An applicant seeks property to be used as a Side Yard. Side Yard or Side Lot sales are ineligible for independent development based on local side yard guidelines or the PLB’s own determination (including but not limited to geographic location, topography, total land area, and dimensions). Applicants must be adjacent owner-occupants and may only purchase a maximum of two side yards.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AFFORDABLE, MIXED INCOME OR WORKFORCE HOUSING</p> <p>An applicant agrees to provide for at least 25% of the units at the property being made available to those at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) or below based on local United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income limits.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">PROPERTY RESERVE</p> <p>The applicant is a community group approved to use the Pittsburgh Property Reserve (PPR), or a subsequent iteration thereof, and the property subject to the application has been placed in the Reserve and has obtained clear title.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNITY-BASED FACILITIES</p> <p>The development has a use that will benefit the community, such as, but not limited to, a playground, a healthcare center, or a senior center that is designed to benefit low-income and/or moderate-income households.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">DEVELOPMENT ASSEMBLAGES</p> <p>An applicant owns a significant portion of a proposed development site (at least 50%) and the property that is subject to the application will be developed as part of the same development project.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GREEN SPACE</p> <p>An applicant seeks property for use as a community garden, green space, open space, or recreational area, provided that such applicant is a nonprofit organization under Pennsylvania Law.</p>
<p>BOARD APPROVAL</p> <p>The Board of Directors has approved the non-competitive sale by two-thirds majority vote of the entire Board.</p>	

SECTION 1.3 END USER ACCOUNTABILITY

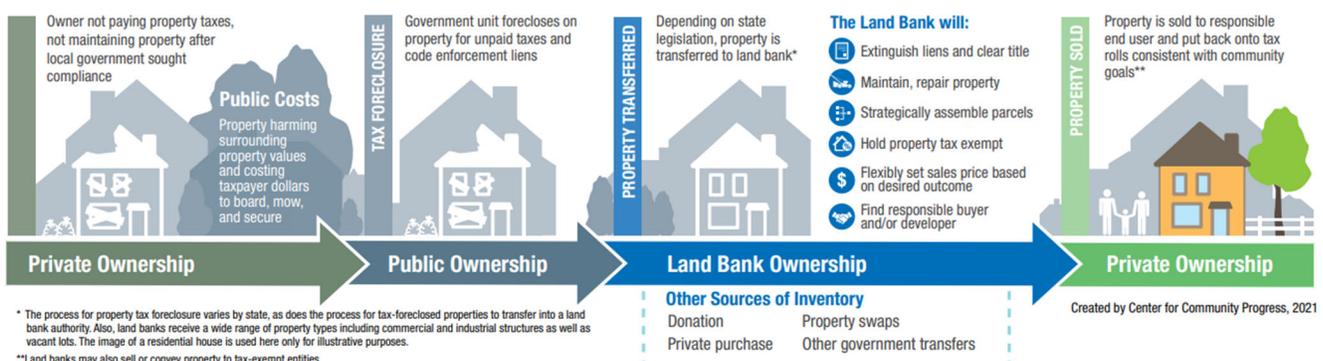
The Pittsburgh Land Bank has the ability to sell property expeditiously - this is an additional, nimble tool to address the thousands of vacant and nuisance properties in the City of Pittsburgh. But how does the PLB ensure that developments are completed in a timely manner and in compliance with state and local rules and regulations, that buyers fulfill the promises outlined in applications, and that properties fall into the hands of responsible stewards?

To do so, the PLB can place several post-sale requirements on a sale. These protections act as a safeguard to ensure that properties are redeveloped according to code and returned to productive reuse.

The PLB will ask buyers to select from the below options:

- ⇒ **Renovation Enforcement Mortgage** held against the property until the renovation work has been satisfactorily completed. This mortgage doesn't require the buyer to make any payments, nor does it accrue interest; it is a safeguard to make sure that the property conveyed is renovated in accordance with the sales agreement and in a manner that complies with local and state laws.
- ⇒ **Deed-in-Escrow** a deed held in trust by a third party to be turned over to the grantee only upon fulfillment of the renovation work outlined in the sales agreement.
- ⇒ **Reverter Deed-in-Escrow** a clause in a deed or statement that, upon the occurrence (or non-occurrence) of a specific event or events, mandates that title to the deeded property returns (reverts) to the original owner (land bank).
- ⇒ **Flexibility around Deed Restrictions** that the PLB can place on certain property sales and transactions to maintain control over the end use.

How does a land bank work?



SECTION 2 COMPLETED PROPERTY SALES AND INVENTORY

As of December 2023, the Pittsburgh Land Bank has completed five real estate transactions, four of which were directed sales via the Noncompetitive Disposition Process. Information on individual sales is listed below.

6 Boggs Avenue | Mount Washington

SALES PROCESS	Competitive Disposition Process
ADDRESS	6 Boggs Avenue Mount Washington
BLOCK/LOT NO.	4-L-133
STATUS (acquired/pending sale/sold)	SOLD
SALES PRICE	\$30,000
SOLD AT COST (Y/N)	Y
QUALIFIED END USER	Mount Washington CDC
SUMMARY OF POST-SALE TERMS & CONDITIONS	Renovation Enforcement Note and Mortgage
INTENDED END USE	Permanent home for the Washington Heights Ecumenical Food Bank (WHEFB) and an affordable second floor rental unit available to those at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI)
APPROXIMATE INCOME OF END USERS	80% AMI

FIRST ROUND OF APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED				SECOND ROUND OF APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED	
First Round of Applications	Date Submitted	First Round of Applications (cont'd)	Date Submitted	Second Round of Applications	Date Submitted
Individual	06/05/2021	Individual	11/04/2021	Individual	10/17/2022
Individual	06/18/2021	LLC	12/07/2021	Individual	10/30/2022
LLC	06/21/2021	LLC	01/14/2022	Individual	11/13/2022
Individual	07/03/2021	Individual	01/18/2022	Individual	11/21/2022
Individual	07/08/2021	Individual	02/26/2022	LLC	11/28/2022
Nonprofit	07/29/2021	Individual	03/16/2022	Nonprofit	11/28/2022
Individual	07/29/2021	LLC	03/16/2022		
Individual	07/30/2021	Individual	03/23/2022		
LLC	07/31/2021	Individual	04/19/2022		
LLC	09/04/2021	Individual	05/23/2022		
Individual	09/13/2021	Individual	07/04/2022		
Individual	10/01/2021	Individual	08/06/2022		
Individual	10/07/2021				

0 Meadow Street | Larimer

SALES PROCESS	Noncompetitive Disposition Process
ADDRESS	0 Meadow Street Larimer
BLOCK/LOT NO.	124-P-199
STATUS (acquired/pending sale/sold)	SOLD
SALES PRICE	\$46,745.45
SOLD AT COST (Y/N)	N – additional third-party lien payment to buyer
QUALIFIED END USER	Urban Academy of Greater Pittsburgh
SUMMARY OF POST-SALE TERMS & CONDITIONS	Renovation Enforcement Note and Mortgage
INTENDED END USE	Green space for Urban Academy’s campus and future development of campus auxiliary building or parking lot
APPROXIMATE INCOME OF END USERS	Not applicable

SALE DETAILS

The Pittsburgh Land Bank acquired this property from the City of Pittsburgh’s inventory (Council Resolution 2018-0732). After quieting the title, the original end user declined to purchase the property. After receiving a letter expressing interest in purchasing the property, in February 2023, the Board of Directors approved a sale to the Urban Academy.

After receiving a petition meeting the minimum number of signatures to require a public hearing, PLB Staff worked with Board members, the Urban Academy, the Larimer Consensus Group, and other individuals to host a successful predisposition public hearing where residents were able to ask questions and give testimony pertaining to the proposed sale. The PLB received another petition signed by fifty parties in support of the sale.

In May 2023, the PLB Board of Directors unanimously approved the sale to the Urban Academy. The property was successfully conveyed to the Urban Academy of Greater Pittsburgh Charter School on August 15, 2023.



Pittsburgh Land Bank Public Hearing PROPERTY SALE



SALE OF 243 MEADOW STREET

APPROVED BUYER: URBAN ACADEMY OF GREATER PGH

NEIGHBORHOOD: LARIMER

Join the Pittsburgh Land Bank for a public hearing on the sale of 243 Meadow St., Pittsburgh, PA 15206, to the Urban Academy of Greater Pittsburgh Charter School. This meeting will cover information on the benefits of the sale, and how the sale is consistent with the goals and needs of the Larimer neighborhood.

Food and beverages from Panera Catering!

Date

Monday, May 1, 2023
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.
(Doors open at 5:45 p.m.)

Location

Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church
6556 Shetland St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Agenda

- Learn about the Pittsburgh Land Bank and its sales process
- Hear about the Urban Academy’s campus expansion plans
- Network with neighbors, community leaders, Councilman Rev. Burgess’ Office, URA Leadership, Pittsburgh Land Bank Staff and Board Members

Questions and RSVP:

Pghlandbank.org
staff@pghlandbank.org
(412) 255-6566



0 Flowers Avenue | Hazelwood

SALES PROCESS	Noncompetitive Disposition Process
ADDRESS	0 Flowers Avenue Hazelwood
BLOCK/LOT NO.	56-C-239, 240 and 240-A
STATUS (acquired/pending sale/sold)	SOLD
SALES PRICE	\$18,100
SOLD AT COST (Y/N)	Y
QUALIFIED END USER	Hazelwood Initiative, Inc.
SUMMARY OF POST-SALE TERMS & CONDITIONS	Reverter Agreement and Deed
INTENDED END USE	New construction of three affordable homes available to those at or below 80% Area Median Income
APPROXIMATE INCOME OF END USERS	80% AMI

SALE DETAILS

The Pittsburgh Land Bank acquired these properties from the Urban Redevelopment Authority per the terms set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organizations to streamline the sale of this fully funded three-unit affordable housing project. Hazelwood Initiative received funding from the Federal Home Loan Bank and Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, so the PLB's streamlined disposition process allowed Hazelwood Initiative to purchase before the funding expired. These properties were successfully conveyed to Hazelwood Initiative on August 29, 2023.

0 Centre Avenue | Middle Hill

SALES PROCESS	Not applicable
ADDRESS	0 Centre Avenue Middle Hill
BLOCK/LOT NO.	10-R-152
STATUS (acquired/pending sale/sold)	ACQUIRED
INTENDED END USE	Potential future addition to local neighborhood business in the Greater Hill District Neighborhood

SALE DETAILS

The Pittsburgh Land Bank acquired this property from the URA's affiliate the Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation (PHDC). PHDC had acquired this property at a Treasurer's Sale as a key parcel in the Centre Avenue corridor. While PHDC was able to protect the property from outside bidders, the organization had no clear pathway to quiet title for future sale. The Pittsburgh Land Bank is working with an outside law firm to initiate the quiet title process to provide clear, insurable title to the future owners.

SECTION 2.1 PROPERTY SALES FROM THE URA TO PLB

In 2023, another pilot approach the PLB has taken to acquire property has been to focus on building out the URA-PLB property transfer pipeline. The transactions below involve small-scale residential developments, side yards, urban agriculture, community spaces, and more – projects where the limited scale and costs can make the URA’s disposition process comparatively burdensome, but which are precisely the types of neighborhood scale development the PLB was designed to support. As of November 2023, the PLB is in the process of completing the sales of the property listed below. Many of the sales are projected to be completed by the end of Q1 2024. While the PLB plans to source much of its projected 2024 inventory from the City of Pittsburgh, this pipeline allows for flexibility and partnership between the two organizations as they work to further the City’s economic development goals and increase the supply of quality affordable housing for the average Pittsburgher.



Property Transfers from the Urban Redevelopment Authority to The Land Bank

Soil Sisters Plant Nursery and Food Farm Production Site			
129 Beltzhoover Ave	14-E-163	Allentown	Soil Sisters
131 Beltzhoover Ave	14-E-164	Allentown	Soil Sisters
133 Beltzhoover Ave	14-E-165	Allentown	Soil Sisters
137 Beltzhoover Ave	14-E-167	Allentown	Soil Sisters
Allegheny Land Trust – Ballfield Farm			
2544 Crispen Street	45-H-264	Perry Hilltop	Ballfield Farm
Trimble Street	46-A-310	Perry Hilltop	Ballfield Farm
Trimble Street	46-A-323	Perry Hilltop	Ballfield Farm
Allegheny Land Trust – Healcrest Farm			
Hillcrest Street	50-G-049	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Hillcrest Street	50-G-129	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
City of Bridges Community Land Trust Affordable Housing Development			
Hazelwood Ave	56-B-326	Hazelwood	CBCLT Development
Hazelwood Initiative Playground Extension			
½ Lytle Street	56-P-72-A	Hazelwood	Hazelwood Initiative, Inc
Side Yard Sale			
1843 Webster Ave	9-S-200	Crawford-Roberts	Future side yard sale
Bedford Ave	9-M-273	Hill District	Side yard sale
Bedford Ave	9-M-274	Hill District	Side yard sale
Amani Christian CDC Affordable Housing Development			
Ledlie Street	9-M-171	Hill District (Upper Hill)	Affordable Housing Development
Neighborhood Garage Renovation			
0 Winslow (Maxwell Way)	124-P-11-A	Larimer	Garage Rehabilitation

SECTION 2.2 PROPERTY SALES FROM THE CITY TO PLB

With a process in place to request and receive property from the City's inventory via the Tri-Party Agreement, as of December 2023, the PLB has submitted its first batch of property transfer requests. Consisting of 25 properties, projects range from preservation of long-standing urban farms and community gardens to affordable housing preservation and development. The PLB projects these properties to enter its inventory in January 2024. The PLB will then begin the quiet title process while piloting a stabilization program with key partners on certain parcels.

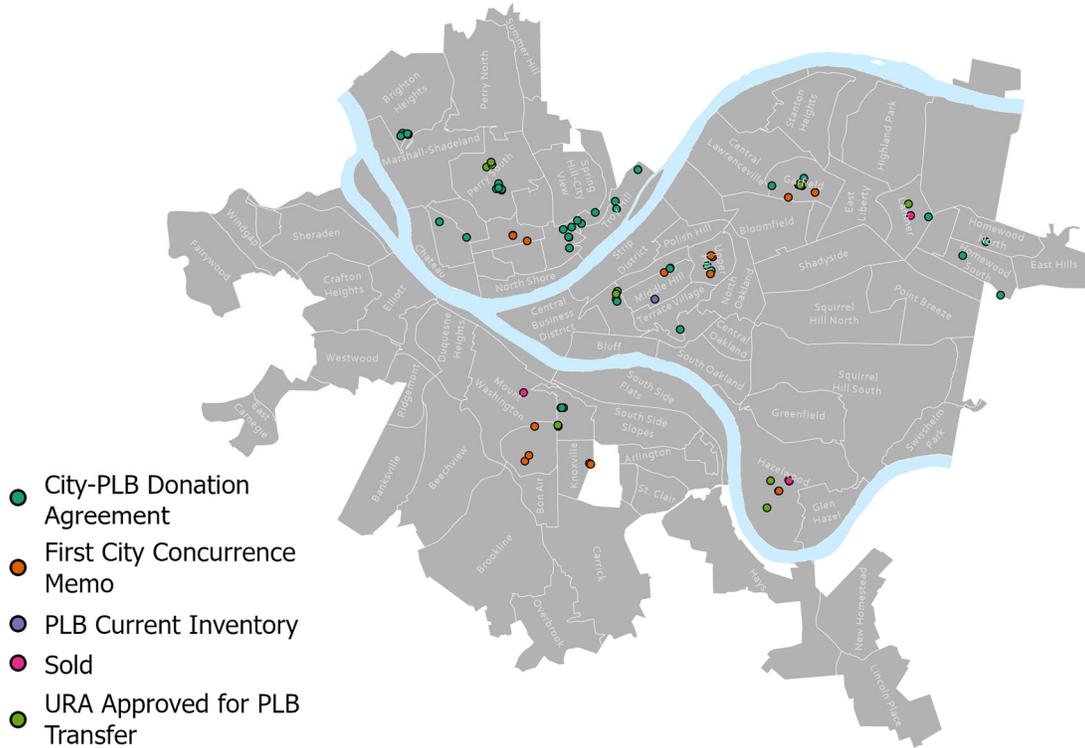


Proposed Property Transfers from the City of Pittsburgh to The Land Bank

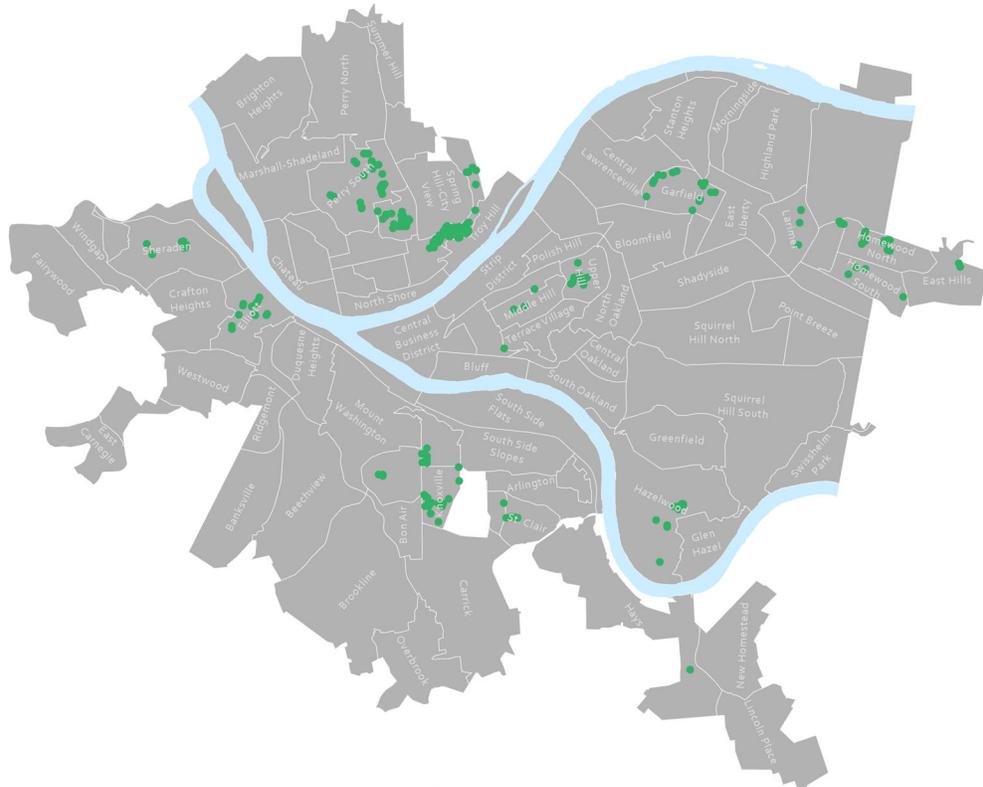
Allegheny Land Trust – Healcrest Farm			
Hillcrest Street	50-G-112	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Hillcrest Street	50-G-128	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Rosetta Street	50-G-055	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Rosetta Street	50-G-053	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Rosetta Street	50-G-046	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Rosetta Street	50-G-045	Garfield	Healcrest Green Urban Farm
Longstanding Community Gardens (Three Rivers Agricultural Land Use Initiative)			
5409 Kincaid Street	50-M-167	Garfield	Kincaid Garden (TRALI Community Garden Program)
Arch Street	23-K-300	Mexican War Streets	Olde Allegheny (TRALI Community Garden Program)
1309 Arch Street	23-K-299	Mexican War Streets	Olde Allegheny (TRALI Community Garden Program)
1309 Arch Street	23-K-298	Mexican War Streets	Olde Allegheny (TRALI Community Garden Program)
Side Yard Sales to community members			
Dearborn Street	50-K-257	Garfield	Side Yard Sale to Private Resident
Brashear Association Program Expansion			
8 Grape Street	14-R-230	Knoxville	Brashear Association 320 Brownsville Road Reno
Brownsville Road	14-R-238	Knoxville	Brashear Association 320 Brownsville Road Reno
Strategic site assembly for future affordable housing development			
20 W North Avenue	23-L-101	Allegheny City Central	Former Light of Life Property
PHDC & Rising Tide Partners Residential Rehab for affordable home ownership			
205 Glen Caladh	56-F-174	Hazelwood	Rising Tide Stabilization Pilot
201 Glen Caladh	56-F-176	Hazelwood	Rising Tide Stabilization Pilot
844 Gearing Ave	15-R-230	Beltzhoover	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
244 E Warrington	15-H-291	Beltzhoover	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
814 Delmont Ave	15-R-281	Beltzhoover	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
2526 Bedford Ave	10-C-26	Bedford Dwellings	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
826 Shawnee St	27-B-392	Upper Hill	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
828 Shawnee St	27-B-393	Upper Hill	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
0 Adelaide	26-P-156	Upper Hill	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
0 Adelaide	26-P-157	Upper Hill	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project
736 Adelaide	26-P-164	Upper Hill	PHDC Home Rehab 80% AMI Affordable Project

SECTION 2.3 2023 & 2024 PROPERTY PIPELINE

The below image highlights properties impacted by the PLB in 2023, this includes properties that are receiving in-kind quiet title donation services, properties requested from the City and URA's inventories and properties successfully sold out of the PLB's inventory.



The below image highlights properties targeted for strategic acquisition in the City's inventory for 2024. These properties will have identified buyers and end uses that align with community goals and development priorities.



GIS Maps created by Oscar Medina (GIS Data Analyst, URA)

SECTION 3. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following sections highlight the Pittsburgh Land Bank's key accomplishments in 2023.

SECTION 3.1 THE PITTSBURGH PROPERTY RESERVE 2.0

PITTSBURGH PROPERTY RESERVE DONATION AGREEMENT

In 2023, the Pittsburgh Land Bank approved an extension to the Pittsburgh Property Reserve Donation Agreement. This Agreement allows the City of Pittsburgh and PLB to engage a third-party law firm to quiet title to properties in the City's inventory.

Pittsburgh Property Reserve Donation Agreement	
Original # of Properties in the Agreement	54
Properties sold with clear, insurable title to CDCs	18
Final Order of the Court signed for quiet title	47
Properties mid-process for quiet title	7
PLB funds spent to provide these services	\$ 123,000

To date, the below properties have had a Final Order to quiet title signed by a judge. Once properties have clear, insurable title, they can be purchased from the City's inventory and brought back to beneficial reuse. You can use the Parcel Number and/or Case ID to look up case files on the Allegheny County Department of Court Records Civil/Family Division website: dcr.alleghenycounty.us/Civil/LoginSearch.aspx.

Properties with a Final Order to Quiet Title					
Parcel #	Case ID	Parcel #	Case ID	Parcel #	Case ID
14-B-239	GD-22-004530	32-G-287	GD-22-002911	50-M-9	GD-22-002934
14-A-283	GD-22-004526	3-N-160	GD-22-004535	50-E-4	GD-22-006088
174-F-270	GD-22-004528	3-N-190	GD-22-006090	46-J-339	GD-22-006087
24-N-161	GD-22-004520	3-N-197	GD-22-008051	15-D-87-B	GD-22-002932
24-F-268	GD-22-004517	175-L-1	GD-22-008048	15-H-273	GD-22-004516
15-H-341	GD-22-004519	75-L-289	GD-22-008049	24-F-32	GD-22-008050
15-H-340	GD-22-004522	24-J-328	GD-22-008056	46-J-193	GD-22-006089
125-C-46	GD-22-002935	50-G-196	GD-22-008778	174-N-91	GD-22-002948
14-G-290	GD-22-002875	24-D-152	GD-22-006101	75-M-35	GD-22-014760
24-E-185	GD-22-002933	3-N-194	GD-22-006093	22-F-87	GD-22-008805
14-G-227	GD-22-002895	75-M-61-B	GD-22-008801	10-C-86	GD-22-014742
14-G-228	GD-22-002880	75-M-59	GD-22-008791	9-S-215	GD-22-014748
24-F-63	GD-22-002878	50-G-194	GD-22-008803	27-B-172	GD-22-014746
15-H-335	GD-22-002936	22-L-202	GD-22-008053	27-B-299	GD-22-014743
14-B-370	GD-22-002904	46-J-245	GD-22-014763	24-J-327	GD-22-014736
		47-S-265	GD-22-014738	75-M-64	GD-22-014732

SECTION 3.1 THE PITTSBURGH PROPERTY RESERVE 2.0 (Cont.)

IMPLEMENTATION: PITTSBURGH PROPERTY RESERVE 2.0

The Pittsburgh Property Reserve provided a protected process for community development corporations to purchase property from the City’s inventory. The Property Reserve was sunset in 2020 and transitioned to the PLB per the Tri-Party Cooperation Agreement. The PLB, with the support of the URA, has taken over the process of requesting property on behalf of participating Community Development Corporations (CDCs). A direct sales process for CDCs is one way to ensure that development occurs in accordance with adopted community plans and support.

In 2023, Land Bank Staff met regularly with staff from the City’s Real Estate Division and the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) to coordinate efforts and implement overall process improvements. Among these improvements are the following items:

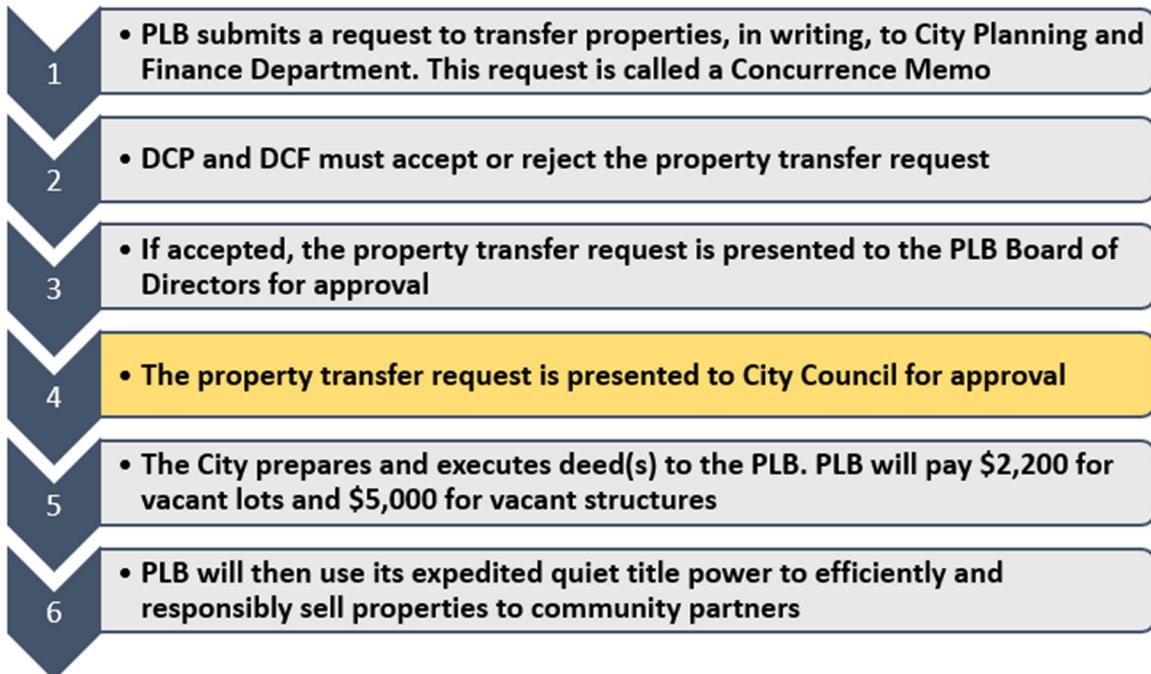
- A. Providing vacant property data and an interactive GIS map of current tax delinquent properties in the City of Pittsburgh, including criteria that displays the number of years tax delinquent, total amount of delinquent taxes, “dead end” properties, and USPS vacancy data.
- B. A comprehensive guide to navigating the Treasurer’s Sale that clearly explains the vacancy requirements, redemption periods, and public bid process along with other information pertinent to the sale.
- C. Increasing the time CDCs have to select property from 2 weeks to 2 months.
- D. A shared drive that gives organizations access to previous Treasurer’s Sale submissions and allows them to view real time updates as the sales process progresses.
- E. Office hours for organizations to speak directly to staff members and perform a neighborhood-by-neighborhood assessment of vacant and abandoned properties.

Participating Community Organizations	
<p>Community Alliance of Spring Garden and East Deutschtown</p> <p>Perry Hilltop and Fineview Citizen’s Councils</p> <p>Oakland Planning and Development Corporation</p> <p>Rising Tide Partners</p> <p>Uptown Partners</p> <p>Troy Hill Citizens</p>	<p>Mount Washington CDC</p> <p>Manchester Citizen’s Council</p> <p>Larimer Consensus Group</p> <p>Hilltop Alliance</p> <p>Hazelwood Initiative</p> <p>Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation</p> <p>Charles Street Area Corporation</p>

SECTION 3.2 PASSING KEY LAND BANK LEGISLATION

Passage of an amendment to the Tri-Party Cooperation Agreement

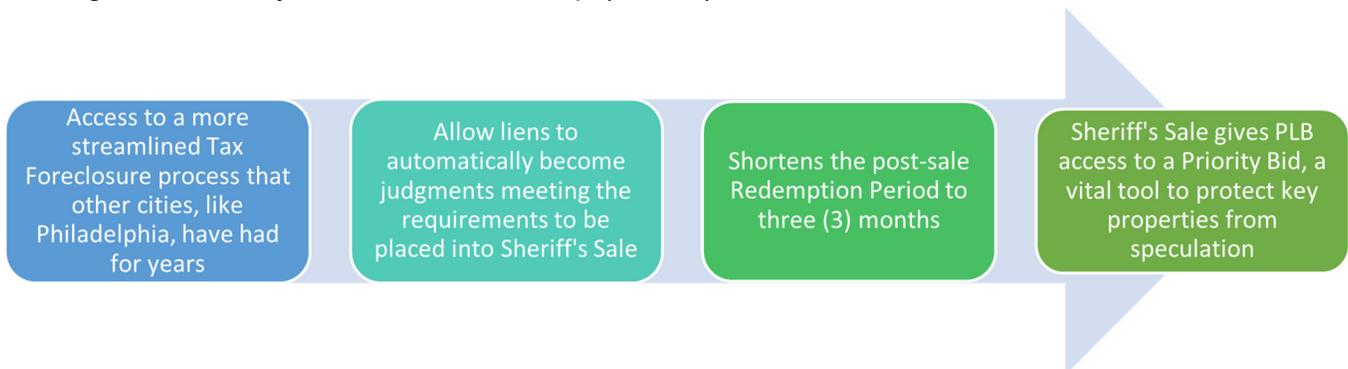
The Tri-Party Cooperation agreement is an agreement between the City of Pittsburgh, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and the Pittsburgh Land Bank. The agreement was executed in August after an amendment was passed by the City Council establishing a standard process by which the Land Bank can formally request and receive property from the City's inventory, as described below:



Passage of MCTLL Amendments

The Pittsburgh Land Bank in cooperation with the Urban Redevelopment Authority advocated for amendments to the Municipal Claims and Tax Lien Law (MCTLL) which were passed by the PA State Legislature and signed into law by the Governor on July 5, 2023. The amendments streamlined the Sheriff's sale process by allowing municipal liens to automatically become a judgment and shortened post-sale redemption periods. The bill was presented as SB202 and HB711 in the PA State Senate and House respectively by Senator Wayne Fontana and Representative Emily Kinhead.

The legislation was supported by a broad-based coalition that included the Urban Redevelopment Authority, Grounded Strategies, Allegheny County Economic Development, Tri-COG Land Bank, Pittsburgh Land Bank, Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, Housing Alliance of PA, and Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG).



SECTION 3.3 UPDATING AGREEMENTS IN PREPARATION FOR A GROWING INVENTORY

A. RFP for services related to Title, Settlement and Quiet Title

In February 2023, The Pittsburgh Land Bank Issued a Request for Proposals for services related to title, settlement and quiet title. Staff collected responses from a handful of law firms and a committee of PLB/URA representatives was selected to review responses. From the review, the PLB successfully brought three firms under contract to complete quiet title actions for properties acquired by the PLB.

Why does this matter?

Having experienced law firms under contract to increase the system's capacity to quiet title is imperative to the PLB's mission to return unproductive real property back to productive reuse. In 2024, the PLB plans to significantly increase its inventory and provide property with insurable title to buyers. The PLB will source property from the public inventory and look to 2024 as a pilot year to leverage its powers at Sheriff's Sale.

B. Updated LandCare Contract with the Urban Redevelopment Authority

In April 2023, The Pittsburgh Land Bank executed an updated Land Care Contract with the URA to maintain its growing inventory of properties. The new contract also allows for stabilization services via URA third party contractors that will provide immediate blight relief to surrounding households.

Why does this matter?

This contract allows the PLB to plan for a larger inventory in 2024 with increased stabilization services to ensure that vacant land and dilapidated structures are preserved from further deterioration, thus saving the character and history of Pittsburgh's housing stock and decreasing the overall cost of a future rehab. By partnering with a larger organization, such as the URA, with strict requirements for Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE), the PLB can also exceed its own MWBE goals.

C. PLB participation in the URA's LandCare Contract RFP Process

The PLB also participated in the URA's renegotiation of contracts and bundles for the maintenance of their inventory. By participating in this process, the Land Bank was able to clearly describe the increased services needed for 2024 in lock step with the URA.

Why does this matter?

As a small organization, the PLB's relationship with the URA allows it to leverage its capacity and expertise. Shared resources make the PLB and its partners more effective in maintaining and stabilizing distressed properties.

While vacant and abandoned properties are an obvious eyesore, they also pose many health and safety risks to surrounding households and communities that can be addressed by reliable, safe maintenance.

SECTION 3.4 FUNDING OVERVIEW

A. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding – A Fully Funded and Operationalized Land Bank

As of December 2023, The Pittsburgh Land Bank has been allocated \$3.5 Million in American Rescue Plan funding to fully operationalize. While long-term, sustainable funding is still needed, this essential funding allocation allows the PLB to fully operationalize, and support operations into 2026. The PLB estimates that it will be able to acquire, clear title and sell around 160 properties with its ARPA allocation.

B. The Heinz Endowments 2018 \$400k Grant Award – Initial Seed Funding for the Land Bank

In June 2023, PLB Staff successfully spent an initial Heinz Grant Award of \$400k given to the Land Bank to kick start day-to-day operations and property acquisitions. As the initial funding source for the organization, it marked a pivotal point of progress in the Pittsburgh Land Bank's functions. The PLB will be looking to its partners at the City for future sustainable funding to keep this organization moving forward.

C. 2023 Operating Budget and Financial Audits – Responsible stewardship of public and private funds

At the end of 2022, the PLB's Board of Directors approved the 2023 Operating Budget. Soon to follow, the Financial Audits for FY 2021 and FY 2022 were completed with no irregularities. These audits along with an Activity Report were submitted to the Department of Community and Economic Development in accordance with Pennsylvania's annual land bank requirements.

SECTION 3.5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING WITH LEADERS

September 2022

- ◆ A select group of Board and Staff attended the Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference in Chicago. This experience was pivotal for newly welcomed Staff and Board Members. The Conference brought leaders together under the theme “*Responding to Crisis: Building an Equitable and Resilient Future.*”
- ◆ The Pittsburgh Land Bank networked with Staff and Board members from the Detroit Land Bank Authority, Tri-COG Land Bank, Baltimore Land Bank, and other similarly minded organizations. The Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference is an impactful, inspiring event that highlights modern policies and practices implemented in the field to revitalize vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties.

December 2022

- ◆ The Land Bank’s full-time staff attended the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania’s Homes Within Reach Conference where the Pennsylvania Land Bank Network’s final meeting of the year occurred. The theme of the Conference, “*A Stronger, More Equitable Tomorrow,*” which reflected the focus on achieving a just and equitable housing system for all Pennsylvanians.
- ◆ The Conference featured more than fifty workshops and plenary sessions and spotlighted the impactful work being done by organizations in Pittsburgh.

June 2023

- ◆ The Land Bank’s full-time staff attended the 13th Annual Community Development Summit hosted by the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG); the Summit’s theme remained the same from the year before, “*[Re]defining Equity, Equality and Justice.*” Attendees were given the opportunity to gain experience about initiatives, programs, and grassroots advocacy taking place in and around Pittsburgh; the Conference elevates the efforts of Pittsburgh’s robust community development sector working for a more just Pittsburgh for all.

October 2023

- ◆ The Land Bank’s full-time staff attended the Center for Community Progress’ National Land Bank Network Summit in Cleveland, OH.
- ◆ The Summit featured over 300 individuals that came together for the first ever in-person conference focused solely on land banking nationwide. From the keynote session until the closing awards, leading voices from across the country shared their knowledge and experience.
- ◆ The Summit also featured an in-depth discussion on the recent U.S. Supreme Court Ruling: *Tyler v. Hennepin County* – a recent ruling that calls into question the constitutionality of the priority bid for land banks.



SECTION 3.6 LOOKING FORWARD TO THE COMING YEAR — NEXT STEPS

Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement (ICA) between the City of Pittsburgh, County of Allegheny, Pittsburgh School District, and Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority

The Pittsburgh Land Bank will need to enter into an ICA with the City of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS), and Allegheny County to set a standard process to clear away back taxes and establish a base price per property for the PLB at the Allegheny County Sheriff's Sale. The Tri-COG Land Bank and Westmoreland County Land Bank have ICAs in place with participating school districts and municipalities in their service areas.

Accessing the Sheriff's Sale for The Pittsburgh Land Bank

The Sheriff's Sale is a judicial tax sale that allows the land bank to utilize a priority bid to protect key properties from speculative developers. The Sheriff's Sale also offers an expedited process that results in a free and clear title so that the Land Bank can acquire and dispose of properties more efficiently. While the amendments to MCTLL help to make this process more efficient, it is not practical for the PLB to access the Sheriff's Sale without an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement (ICA) that specifies an agreed upon price for the acquisition of properties.

