



Media Release

Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg Announces the Creation of the Oakland County Land Bank Authority

- Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg—in partnership with the State Land Bank Authority (SLBA), the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and the Oakland County Executive Office—announces the creation of the Oakland County Land Bank Authority. A board will be established to direct the land bank.
- Under the Land Bank Fast Track Act, 2003 PA 258, MCL 124.751 to 124.774 ("Land Bank Act"), the Oakland County Treasurer's Office—with the approval of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and concurrence of the Oakland County Executive—will establish a separate legal entity and public body within Oakland County, Michigan, which will exercise the powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of an authority under the Land Bank Act.
- As Oakland County's newest economic development tool, the land bank authority will support economic growth and community revitalization through the strategic acquisition of properties. Tax foreclosed properties that are not purchased during the land sale auction and new development projects may be transferred to the land bank.

Pontiac, Mich., July 8, 2022, — Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg—in partnership with the State Land Bank Authority (SLBA), the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and the Oakland County Executive Office—announces the creation of the Oakland County Land Bank to support economic development and help revitalize communities and neighborhoods.

"The Oakland County Land Bank Authority enables us to expand our economic development toolkit so that we can directly address property vacancies, support new developments and return foreclosed properties to the tax rolls," said Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg. "It gives us the ability to strengthen our communities and neighborhoods by creating housing, public spaces or other creative community uses."

Land banks acquire title to properties—most commonly through the tax foreclosure process—and transfer the properties to new, responsible owners in a manner consistent with community-based plans that also return the properties to the tax roll. For land bank properties, additional resources and funds may be available to help with infrastructure, roads and utility costs for economic development projects including affordable and market-rate housing along with commercial activities.



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"The State Land Bank Authority has been supporting the creation of county land banks since 2004 and we see the application of land bank tools in Michigan communities in 2022 as important as ever," said SLBA Executive Director Emily Doerr. "The creation of the Oakland County Land Bank by Treasurer Wittenberg's office shows an ongoing commitment to utilizing public assets to maximize development / redevelopment opportunities with community benefit."

On June 23, 2022, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners approved the Intergovernmental Agreement between the State Land Bank Authority and the Oakland County Treasurer's Office to establish the Oakland County Land Bank Authority. A board will be established to direct the land bank.

"This is a big deal - the new Oakland County Land Bank will improve housing, increase home values, and help build an economy that works for everyone," said Oakland County Board of Commissioners Chairman David T. Woodward. "This has long been a priority, and we got it done!"

"A land bank is such a useful tool to help strengthen our neighborhoods and communities," said Oakland County Executive David Coulter. "In these times of soaring housing prices, efforts to put property back into productive use will also help build the inventory of affordable housing in Oakland County, which is a key priority for our communities and our residents."

Residential and commercial developers with projects in Oakland County can contact Jill Robinson, deputy treasurer and property specialist, by email at robinsonj@oakgov.com for assistance.

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