



Neighborhood Blight Cleveland Research Trip Summary

The BREAD Neighborhood Blight Committee took a research trip to Cuyahoga County to meet with Cuyahoga County Treasurer Jim Rokakis to learn more about the new Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank). The Committee also met with the creator of a comprehensive property database, Michael Schramm of Case Western University.

Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) Summary

- Treasurer Rokakis worked over the past year to get legislative permission to implement this Land Reutilization Corporation in Cuyahoga County to attack vacant and abandoned property head on.
- This Land Reutilization Corporation will **generate \$10 - \$15 million each year for Cuyahoga County to then reinvest in the community.**
 - Where does this new revenue come from?
 - This money will come from collecting taxes not paid on time. When property taxes are paid late, late fees and interest are added. In Cuyahoga County, the late fees and interest will come to about \$10 million dollars per year. Most people who pay their taxes late end up paying in full within 90 days. Almost all late taxes are paid within one year.
 - Currently, outside investors collect late taxes and pay Franklin County a fraction of the amount they end up collecting. These investors then pocket the late fees and interest.
- The Land Reutilization Corporation is not run by the County Treasurer. It is a separate entity run as a non-profit with city/county officials on the board of directors. This allows the land bank to have more flexibility to deal with blight in creative ways.
- With this yearly revenue income, Cuyahoga County plans to:
 - Demolish dangerous and select blighted properties
 - Rehabilitate properties for reuse
 - Maintain properties on a regular basis
 - Purchase portfolios of mortgage foreclosed properties from banks since banks do not want to pay for upkeep of many of these properties as they move through the process
 - Focus on tax foreclosure prevention to keep people in their homes
 - Create green space
- Neither the City of Columbus Land Bank nor the Franklin County Land Bank generate any significant revenue stream to reinvest in the community.

Database Summary

- The NEO CANDO Database is housed at Case Western University. It is focused on aggregate data to help different neighborhoods/organizations better understand the dynamics of their neighborhoods as a whole. This database is similar to data collected and organized by Community Research Partners in Columbus. The database provides no new information on early detection of property at risk of becoming vacant. It also does not provide any more up to date information on owners of vacant property than Columbus already has.

The Neighborhood Blight Committee has formally voted to focus all efforts on the implementation of a Land Reutilization Corporation in Franklin County.