

# Oak School Under Renovation

With a \$3.7 million HUD 202 Senior Housing grant, and additional funds from MSHDA and federal historic tax credits, Communities First, Inc., a local community housing development organization in partnership with the Genesee County Land Bank, is developing the old Oak School into 24-units of rental housing for low-income seniors. On September 6th, Communities First, broke ground on the old Oak School Redevelopment. The renovations are now underway and the old gymnasium is in the process of being demolished (see photo below.) The historic school built in 1855 is being remodeled to historic standards and a new wing will be added over the old gym footprint. We are glad to see this great building restored for the community. It is located at 1000 Oak St, just west of downtown Flint.

By Heidi Phanuef



# Clover Demonstration



The Genesee County Land Bank has received a grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) to support the Low Maintenance Greening Demonstration Project. This project aims to test low maintenance plantings on tax foreclosed lots owned by the Land Bank in neighborhoods in Flint. With more than 5,000 vacant lots in its inventory the Land Bank is challenged with finding effective ways to keep vacant lots maintained and return them to productive use. The Low Maintenance Greening

Demonstration Project will involve planting clover as a low-growth ground cover. The type of clover to be planted is a native white clover that only grows 10-12 inches tall. After being established, the clover will only need to be mowed twice per year which will lower maintenance costs and keep vacant land looking good throughout the growing season. Clover provides food for wildlife, is drought tolerant, and "fixes" nitrogen in the soil improving soil conditions on lots where typically soil conditions are poor after a demolition has occurred. Trees, wild foods and wildflower plantings can also be incorporated into the project sites which are about 1-acre in size and located in the Northwestern Neighborhood, near Downtown and Eastside of Flint.

By Heidi Phanuef

**From The  
Board Chair  
Deborah Cherry**



## Demolition Has Begun!

Last quarter, we were informed that the Land Bank was awarded \$20.1 million from the federal Hardest Hit Fund to demolish about 1,650 blighted homes in Flint, Mt. Morris Township, Genesee Township, Flint Township and the City of Burton. The first home was demolished on Barth Street in Flint on October 14 during a press conference that was attended by federal, state and local officials as well as dozens of neighbors and people from the neighborhood. The program will take a little time to ramp up production but by the first of the year the Land Bank will be releasing large lists of homes for contractors to bid on demolishing.

Work has also begun on demolition using a state grant for blight elimination (the Michigan Blight Elimination Grant) totaling about \$3.7 million dollars. The first projects for these funds include demolishing the Carpenter Road Apartments in Flint and the Brookstone Apartments in Flint Township. Bids have been let to two local contractors each located in Flint Township. Work will begin in the next week or two on these projects.

I will continue to keep you informed as work progresses on these important projects!

*Deb Cherry*  
Genesee County Treasurer  
Genesee County Land Bank Authority, Chair

## Be The Church Returns to Civic Park

The parishioners of the West Flint Church of the Nazarene and other churches for the 5<sup>th</sup> year extended a helping hand to the residents of the city of Flint in the Civic Park Community and other neighboring areas. Three years ago the *Be The Church Ministry* of the West Flint Church of the Nazarene conducted a massive cleanup in the Civic Park community that included the boarding of Land Bank properties. The ministry returned again this September to continue their work with Pastor McCathern and the Joy Tabernacle Church. Listed below are some of the activities that were completed on Sunday, September 22, 2013.

- ◇ 60 houses were secured with plywood
- ◇ Debris was removed from 25 properties
- ◇ An area on Mason Street from Welch Boulevard to Pasadena was cleared of debris and mowed enabling children to walk safely to and from their bus stops.
- ◇ 75 families were provided winter clothing and other items by Little Lambs Compassionate Ministries Center
- ◇ 200 people were served a Community Meal
- ◇ Playground Equipment was painted behind Berston Field House
- ◇ The Basketball Court surface at Dewey Park was painted with the support of Quincy Murphy and his team.

Genesee County Land Bank paid for the plywood and fasteners for the Board up Projects. There was some plywood left over which will be used in the April event as well as some ongoing Land Bank projects that the church is involved in. Plans are already underway for the "Be The Church" event on April 26, 2014. Thanks to all as we continue to work together to Create a Blight Free Flint.

By Raynetta Speed



## Clean & Green Celebrates the Conclusion of its 10<sup>th</sup> Season

The Clean & Green program began at the Land Bank in 2004. During its first year, two groups participated and cared for roughly 60 lots. To say that the program has grown over the last ten years is an understatement. This year's program generated record numbers. In 2013 the participants of Clean & Green included 46 community-based groups, 38 groups representing predominantly African American neighborhoods, and an average of 115 youth participants every three weeks. These groups and participants collectively mowed 1,869 different vacant lots and completed 10,447 "mowings" between April and September this year.

The successful tenth season of Clean & Green concluded with a celebration on Thursday, October 17 at the MTA Conference Center on Dort Highway in Flint. Representatives from Clean & Green groups gathered to connect with each other, review their work over the last year, and receive recognition and awards. Thank you for an outstanding 2013 Clean & Green program!

By Natalie Pruett



# City of Flint Approves Master Plan



It's official! The City of Flint has its first comprehensive, long-range plan in over 50 years. The unanimous votes by both the City of Flint Planning Commission and the Flint City Council are a result of over 2 years' worth of work from many individuals, organizations, and leadership throughout the City. The Imagine Flint planning process ultimately connected with over 5,000 Flint residents, over 80% of them residing within ½ mile of any master plan engagement event. This exemplary participatory planning effort exceeded many expectations and connected a diverse group of Flint residents and community stakeholders together for one common purpose.

The Imagine Flint master plan will now serve as a blueprint for City operations, future development, Land Bank decision-making within Flint, and as a tool to stabilize the community as a whole. In addition to the extensive civic engagement throughout the process, the Imagine Flint plan has introduced an innovative approach to future land use planning. The "Placemaking" approach to land use planning was introduced within the master plan as a way to repurpose the significant amounts of vacant and underutilized land within Flint, and to recognize that every area of Flint has unique characteristics that demand attention for stabilization and reinvestment. There is still much work left to do however. A full re-write of the City's zoning code, the development of a 5 year Capital Improvements Plan, and the creation of 8 sub-area plans will be on-going over the next 8 months, but Tuesday, October 28 should go down in history as a proud day for the City of Flint and its residents. To view the City's master plan, visit [imagineflint.com](http://imagineflint.com)

By Kevin Schronce

## Greening of Chevy in the Hole

In March of 2013, the Genesee County Land Bank initiated work on a \$1.6 million EPA Sub Grant from the County's Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund to remediate Chevy in the Hole. Through an agreement with the City of Flint, the Land Bank is managing the process of assessing, designing and constructing a green cap that will transform the concrete slab into passive green space. This includes coordinating with the Center for Community Progress and the City of Flint on tree planting efforts and long term sustainability planning. The site design will be completed this winter and the first phase of the development of the cap will begin in the spring of 2014. The City of Flint is working to secure additional funding for future phases of cap development.

By Christina Kelly



Rendering of Chevy in the Hole from: "Reimagining Chevy in the Hole", Flint Futures Group, University of Michigan DNR&E, GCLB, & Genesee Institute.







Property inspections and surveys	Abatement and disposal of hazardous material	Utility cuts	Demolition permit	Structure and basement removal	Backfill with clean soil and initial site grading	Final grade including seeding and mulching	FULL COST OF DEMOLITION PER HOUSE Avg. \$10,600
\$300-\$600	\$0-\$15,000	\$250-\$600	\$75-\$350	\$2,300-\$25,000	\$1,200-\$2,000	\$500-\$750	

## The Land Bank Secures \$20 million for Demolition

The State of Michigan recently awarded the Genesee County Land Bank Authority \$20 million to demolish more than 1,600 blighted publicly owned houses. The “Blight Blitz” will eliminate approximately 25 percent of the city’s 5,600 abandoned and blighted properties. The funding comes from \$100 million in federal spending MSHDA was approved to allocate in 2013 as part of the Troubled Asset Relief Program’s Hardest Hit Fund, designed to help homeowners in states hit hardest by the housing crisis. The first-in-the-nation campaign will focus efforts on decreasing foreclosures and stabilizing neighborhoods through the demolition and greening of some of the more than 78,000 vacant and abandoned single-family and multi-family properties in Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Pontiac and Saginaw. The Land Bank will sell some of the vacant lots to interested adjacent homeowners and use the grant funding to maintain the remaining lots for up to 5 years after demolition. A small portion of the funds (about 4%) will cover administration, reporting, and compliance with state and federal requirements.

## Understanding the Costs of Demolition

Since the funding was announced, many people have asked about the costs of demolition and why they are so variable from one community to another. The purpose of this overview is to respond to such questions and provide more information on how the Land Bank’s demolition program is thorough, in compliance, supportive of local employment, and cost effective.

**There is a good deal of confusion about demolition costs.** When people talk about the cost of demolishing a house, they are often talking about different things. Some people are only talking about the cost of knocking down the house while others are talking about the full costs associated with demolishing a house in compliance with all relevant state and federal requirements. This includes inspections, abatement and proper disposal of hazardous material, utility cuts, permits, full basement removal, backfill with clean soil (including top soil), and site grading, seeding and mulching. The Land Bank’s average demolition cost of \$10,600 includes all demolition-related expenses from start to finish.

**The Genesee County Land Bank will continue to encourage and support local contractors and use an open and competitive bidding process to secure the most qualified contractors to complete the work for the lowest cost.** To learn more about what it takes to become a demolition-related contractor and to see bids as they

**The Land Bank's single family demolition costs are well below the state-wide average.** According to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), the state-wide average for single family demolition under NSP 2 was \$12,000.

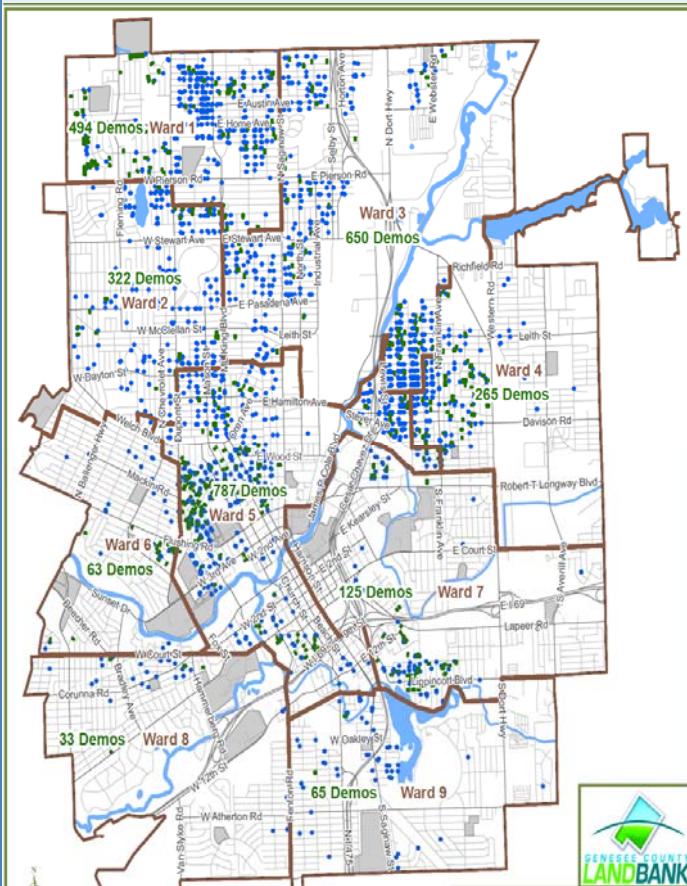
**The cost of demolition-related activities varies greatly based on the size and condition of the structure.** Costs can range anywhere from \$3,000 to \$25,000. Contractors develop their cost estimates based on the size and the complexity of the job. The building material of the house and the amount of recyclable material in the structure impact demo costs.

**The abatement of asbestos and hazardous materials greatly impacts the cost of a demolition.** Some structures are loaded with asbestos-containing materials and can cost as much as \$15,000 to abate while others have few or no abatement costs.

**Those who claim to do very low cost demolitions should clarify what they are including in their costs and back up their claims.** Often times, only the cost of demolishing the structure is cited and not the full costs of completing a demolition in FULL compliance with all local, state or federal laws.

**While cutting corners in the short term may reduce the immediate cost of demolition, it creates many long-term costs.** Regulations controlling demolition exist to protect public health, the environment, and the safety of demolition contractors. Local ordinances that require basement removal do so to prevent the many complications created by leaving the basement in place. Beyond protecting community residents, following these regulations enables the Land Bank to avoid hefty fines from regulators. It also positions the Land Bank for future state and federal funding.

## Land Bank & City of Flint Completed Demolitions 2004-2012



PAST DEMOS (2004-2012)		Hardest Hit Fund Demolitions	Michigan Blight Elimination Grant Demolitions
Ward	Number of Demolitions	Number of Demolitions	Number of Demolitions
1	494	241	19
2	322	343	14
3	650	227	0
4	265	139	0
5	787	248	31
6	63	182	40
7	125	34	0
8	33	45	27
9	65	40	25

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**2210 Joliet St. ~ Mott Park ~**

**\$336**  
PER MONTH

**\$19,000**

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Century 21 Woodland  
810-659-3161



**2026 Maybury Ave. ~ South Parks ~**

**\$309**  
PER MONTH

**\$12,900**

Call Dan Borgerding,  
Century 21 Woodland  
810-659-3161



**2025 Howard Ave. ~South Parks~**

**\$349**  
PER MONTH

**\$21,900**

Call Theresa Allen,  
Royal Realty  
810-732-9210



**1846 Barks St. ~South Parks~**

**\$309**  
PER MONTH

**\$12,900**

Call Barbara Arvoy,  
Re/Max Town & Country  
810-577-5553



### Eligibility Requirements:

1. Must have income between:

- 1 person \$12,270 - \$46,680
- 2 persons \$14,040 - \$53,280
- 3 persons \$15,780 - \$60,000
- 4 persons \$17,520 - \$66,600
- 5 persons \$18,930 - \$72,000
- 6 persons \$20,340 - \$77,280

2. Must have all judgments paid in full. Must be able to get a mortgage with a bank or be able to pay cash.

3. Must reside in home (primary residence) for 5-15yrs after the purchase in order to qualify for 100% forgiveness of financial assistance received.

\*All monthly payments shown here include estimated taxes and insurance (\$250/mo.) and are calculated using, an average interest rate of 5.5% for a 30-year mortgage. The 20% discount offered on all homes.

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