

## Celebrating Hardest Hit Fund Success

Beginning in 2014, the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) and its partners secured more than \$67.5 million in Hardest Hit Fund (HHF) grants from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. With the last demolitions completed in early 2020, GCLBA demolished 4720 vacant, blighted, and tax-foreclosed residential structures in seven municipalities throughout the County. HHF also provided limited funding for five years of maintenance for the vacant lots left after demolition, funding more than 27,000 mows over the years.

To date, the GCLBA has returned more than 820 HHF demolition properties to the tax rolls through vacant lot sales. Lots have also been adopted by community groups and turned into gardens and community assets like the lots depicted below. The GCLBA would like to thank our funders and our community partners for supporting these improvements.

*-Faith Finholm*



1423 Maplewood Before



1425 Maplewood Before



1423 & 1425 Maplewood—After  
Photo by Renee Harvey

### Message from our Board Chair, Deborah Cherry



Deborah Cherry

We are pleased to introduce Michael Freeman as the new Executive Director of the Land Bank. Michael is a life-long resident of Flint and Genesee County with 26 years of experience in community and economic development. Most recently, he served as the Chief Operating Officer and Associate Director of Programmatic Underwriting for the City of Detroit's Housing and Revitalization Department where he directed and oversaw departmental operations and the Community Development Block Grant program for the City of Detroit. A graduate of the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, he began his career in Flint as a community organizer with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)/AmeriCorps program in 1994, facilitating dialogue and consensus amongst community stakeholders and promoting neighborhood advocacy. Michael is committed to the communities of Genesee County and he is very pleased that his career path has brought him home. He looks forward to working with you to serve Flint and Genesee County as we all adapt operations to navigate the unprecedented challenges posed by the pandemic and economy. Michael has made a commitment to lead this organization with integrity, ethics, transparency and in partnership with those who want a better future for our residents. Please feel free to reach out to Michael directly to discuss the role GCLBA currently plays in your community, opportunities you see for the role GCLBA could play in your community, or just to introduce yourself.



Michael Freeman

- Deborah Cherry, Genesee County Treasurer and Genesee County Land Bank Authority, Chair

# Supporting Neighborhood-Based Placemaking

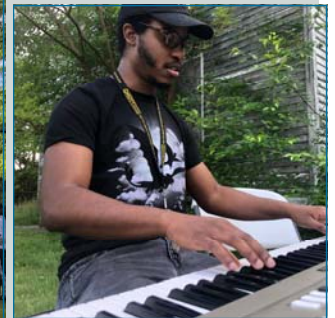
Since 2018, the Land Bank has supported neighborhood-based placemaking projects in the Durant Tuuri Mott target area. These initiatives have been a part of the broader coalition and planning efforts of the Flint Community Development Working Group. Thus far this summer, the Land Bank has partnered with the “What’s Up Downtown” initiative and Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association to host two free summer events. The Porch Fest utilized First Ave in the Carriage Town neighborhood to host musical acts on residents’ front porches and reuse vacant lots for pop-up yoga, poetry writing, and an art show. The University Square Community picnic hosted two bands, free drinks, and a food truck on a public greenspace for a socially distanced but safe neighborhood gathering. - By Moses Timlin



Porch Fest performance – Source: “What’s Up Downtown”



Porch Fest reusing vacant lots for poetry writing and seating – Source: “What’s Up Downtown”



Porch Fest performance - Source: “What’s Up Downtown”



Porch Fest reusing vacant lots for poetry writing and seating – Source: Moses Timlin



Porch Fest pop-up art show - Source: “What’s Up Downtown”



University Square Community Picnic Band Performance Source: Celeste Lord



Community Picnic Passing Out Drinks - Source: Moses Timlin

## 3rd Round of Demolition Funding Authorized by the Genesee County Treasurer and Board of Commissioners

In 2016, the Genesee County Treasurer and Board of Commissioners approved a request to make \$1 million dollars of funding available to enable the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) to demolish blighted and tax-foreclosed properties in Genesee County communities outside the City of Flint. In 2017, the Treasurer and Board approved an additional \$1 million for demolition. The GCLBA has used these grants to complete demolition of 95 residential structures and 13 commercial structures in 12 municipalities (see table below). To date, 21 properties remain to be released for sale, and of the 87 that have been released, 33 lots have been sold and one lot has been leased. That's 40% of released lots back in productive use!

The third installation of County-funded Demolition dollars was authorized at the end of 2019 for \$750 thousand, setting aside \$100 thousand to be used on emergency demolitions within the City of Flint and \$250 thousand to specifically fund commercial demolitions. GCLBA will reaching out to local municipalities to identify priority structures that meet the eligibility requirements. GCLBA anticipates completing these project through the Spring 2021.

- By Faith Finholm



Number and Type of Demolitions By Local Unit

Municipality	Commercial Demolition	Residential Demolitions	Total Demolitions
Clayton Township		2	2
Flint Township	1	13	14
Gaines Township	2	1	3
Genesee Township	5	24	29
Montrose Township		2	2
Mt. Morris Township	2	25	27
Thetford Township		3	3
Vienna Township		1	1
City of Flint	1	0	1
City of Flushing		1	1
City of Mt. Morris		5	5
Burton	2	18	20
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>108</b>



2164 Byrnes—Before



2164 Byrnes—After

# Chevy Commons: Past, Present and Future

Did you know that the Master Planning Process to guide the redevelopment of Chevy In The Hole began in 2008 with a plan titled: *The Reimagining of Chevy In The Hole*. The plan set a target date for completing the site redevelopment by 2020. We are pleased that we have nearly achieved that target!

Home to various industries since the 1800's, the last of General Motor's manufacturing facilities were demolished in 2004 and the site was acquired by the City of Flint in 2008. The site of the historic show of unity of the 1936-37 Sit Down Strike continues to make history in 2020 as the transformation of 72-acres of former industrial riverfront property into community greenspace is completed thanks to active collaboration by local, state, and federal partners. Chevy Commons has transformed a scar in the heart of Flint and Genesee County into a community asset that continues to act as a catalyst for millions of dollars of investment in the downtown area. In June 2020, Genesee County purchased Chevy Commons from the City of Flint, a crucial step towards the full realization of Flint Riverfront Restoration Project (FRRP) Master Plan which envisions the transformation of 2-mile stretch of Flint River through downtown into an activity hub.

Thanks to the momentum of development at Chevy Commons, the FRRP has made progress towards naturalization of the river by removing the Hamilton Dam and Fabri Dam, and increasing opportunities for community interaction with the site through the development of the Flint River, Genesee Valley, and Iron Belle Trails that unite at Chevy Commons. The City of Flint recently announced plans to complete the Grand Traverse Greenway Trail, completing Flint's portion of the Iron Belle Trail and connecting south Flint to Chevy Commons- the heart of Flint, the nerve center for community recreation connecting Flint to greater Genesee County. Looking back, Chevy Commons' historic highlight is unity. Its success was made possible through unity. The future of Chevy Commons is indivisible from the ideal of uniting the community with opportunities for enjoyment and engagement. As the final phase of construction begins in Fall 2020, may Chevy Commons continue to build a legacy of unity well into the future, whatever that future may hold.

- By Faith Finholm



# Land Bank Supports Choice Neighborhoods Redevelopment

#MyChoiceIsFlint - Genesee County Land Bank works to support transformative initiatives throughout Genesee County. As a partner to the City of Flint, GCLBA is assisting with the implementation of the \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Initiative- a grant the City of Flint received through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that is rooted in advancing social equity within the City. Over the next six years, GCLBA will support the Initiative and South Flint Community Plan through land sales in areas targeted for construction and through blight elimination efforts. Phase I construction of Clark Commons is already under way. GCLBA is continuing work to address blighted structures in Choice Neighborhoods areas with Community Development Block Grant dollars from the City of Flint and with generous support from the C.S. Mott

Foundation and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).

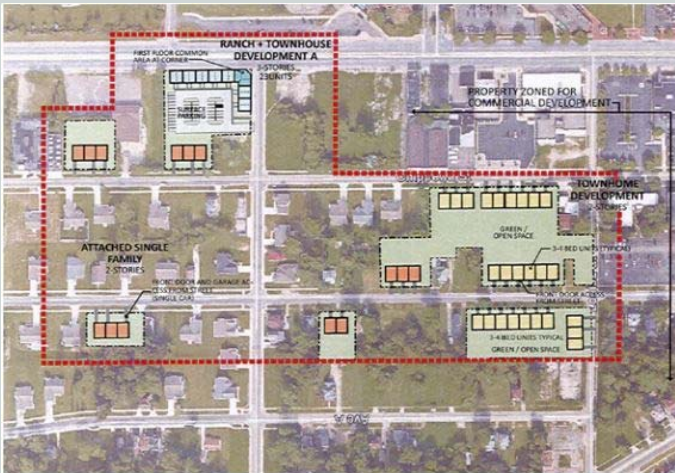
*-Faith Finholm*



1425 N Saginaw—Before



1425 N Saginaw—After



Clark Commons Neighborhood



1604 M L King Avenue—EGLE Investigation



## Featured Homes Program is Modified to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19



Featured Home: 326 W. Eighth St., Flint

We are now showing Featured Homes by appointment only due to COVID-19. To see the current list of Featured Homes, [click here](#). Call to schedule an appointment to view each home you are interested in. Please make your appointment before the showing date and arrive on time. We are not able to schedule appointments after 12pm on the showing date.

Check out this 1,308 sq. ft. house built in 1900 located at **326 W. Eighth St., Flint**. The house has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a deck, and basement and crawlspace. Purchaser may also be eligible to purchase the adjacent side lot.

We appreciate your assistance and understanding during these unprecedented times. Stay Safe.

Genesee County Land Bank Authority  
452 S. Saginaw Street  
Second Floor  
Flint, MI 48502-1832

To receive our e-newsletter please sign up  
on our website at:

[www.facebook.com/GCLBA](https://www.facebook.com/GCLBA)  
[www.thelandbank.org](http://www.thelandbank.org)

[http://thelandbank.org/news\\_rpts.asp](http://thelandbank.org/news_rpts.asp)

## Cleaning & Greening in Neighborhoods is Now Underway!

This year, 59 community groups will receive nearly \$515,000 to improve their neighborhoods by maintaining around 3,700 properties throughout the season. The Clean & Green Program start was delayed due to the Governors stay at home order. To keep staff and volunteers safe, we made program modifications, including hosting a curbside pickup of materials and requiring groups to take extra precautions to limit the spread of COVID-19.

All groups are now completing their second round of mowing for the season. Their mows (dark green) and mowing areas (light green) are depicted in the map.

Thank you program volunteers for the work you do to improve neighborhoods throughout the city and county.

- By Melissa Hertlein

### GENESEE COUNTY LAND BANK BOARD MEMBERS:

Hon. Deborah Cherry  
– Chair  
Hon. Brenda Clack  
– Vice Chair  
Hon. Patricia Lockwood  
– Secretary  
Hon. Bryant Nolden  
– Treasurer  
Hon. Ellen Ellenbug  
Hon. Santino Guerra  
Hon. Mark Young

### GENESEE COUNTY LAND BANK CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

Chris Del Morone – Chair  
Larry Petrella – Vice Chair  
Cheryl Christoff  
Tim Coleman  
Gerri Hall  
Rev. Jacob Hawkins  
Deborah Holmes  
Joe King  
Eric Loper  
Quincy Murphy  
Harry Ryan  
Edna Sabucco  
Anoopa Todd  
Larry Wright  
4 - Vacant Positions

Michael Freeman, Executive Director

