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Key Takeaways and Recommendations from Land Bank Assessment

Prince George's County
HOFA Workgroup

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About Us

Center for Community Progress

- **Mission:** To foster strong, **equitable** communities where vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties are transformed into assets for neighbors and neighborhoods.
- **Services:** Technical assistance, education and training, policy, and research. Focus on systems-level change.
- **Outreach:** Since 2010, Community Progress has provided technical assistance to more than 300 communities in 35 states and reached tens of thousands through national conferences and other education and training events.
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Why do we care?

The history of vacancy and abandonment in this country is deeply rooted in racist and unjust housing policies, and the racial wealth gap in this country continues to increase

A Story Map

Prince George's County Redlining Map

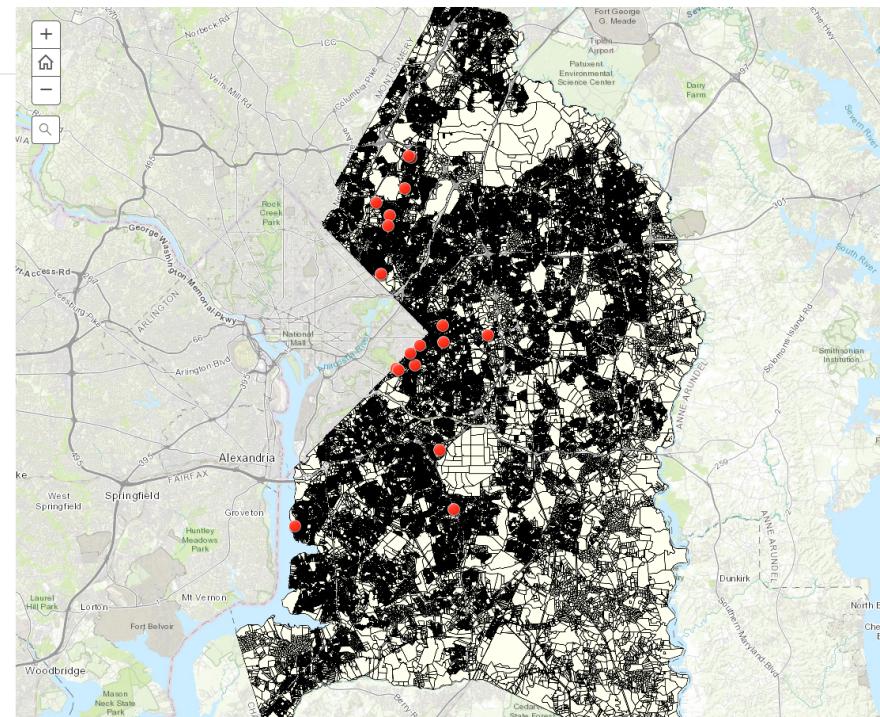


- The map was color-coded
 - Green(Best)
 - Blue(Still Desirable)
 - Yellow(Definitely Declining)
 - Red(Hazardous)
- Green and Blue neighborhoods usually had a majority white population, were considered good investments

Redlining in Prince George's County, 1890-1940

Trends

From the data collected so far, we can see that subdivisions near the D.C. line are more likely to have restrictions. As more data points are added, more trends can be seen. Additionally, adding subdivisions will aid in making more trends visible.



Source:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=8108032fa37d49d09bdc54158d32fc4d>

Why do we care?

Economic Costs

Code Enforcement

- 2 x Clean-ups @ \$3,200 each = **\$6,400**
- Estimated costs for inspector fees= **\$350**
- Plus admin and possible court costs

Tax delinquency

- \$3,100 in unpaid taxes

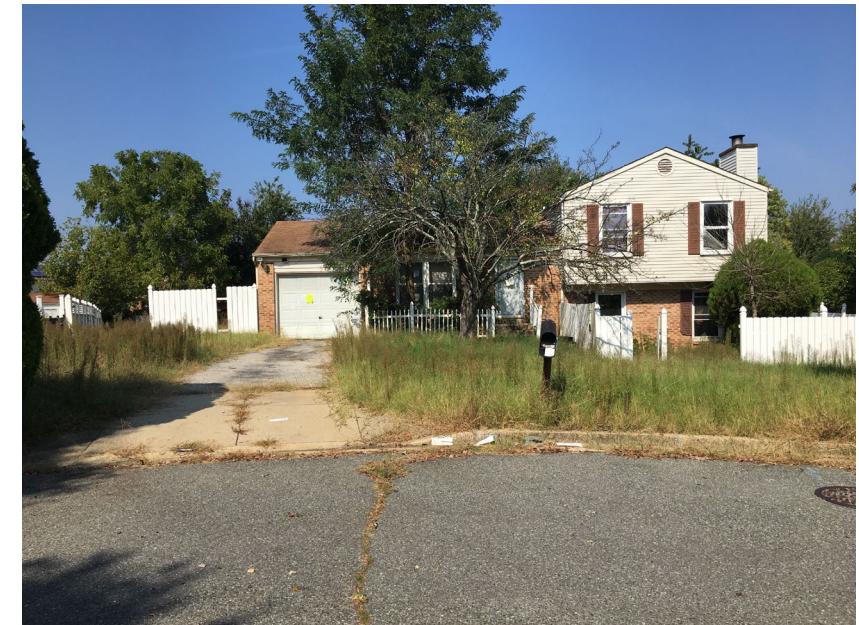


Photo Credit: Prince George's County Department of Permits, Inspections, and Enforcement

TOTAL = Est. \$10,000 per year*

* Does not include personnel costs for possible increased calls to Police or Fire

Scope of Work: Land Bank Assessment



When: August 2020 – March 2021, Ongoing Support throughout 2021

What: Land Bank Assessment Report

How: Data Collection, Legal and Policy Review, Interviews, Previous Land Bank Expertise

Who: DHCD, Land Bank Task Force, HOFA Workgroup, etc.

This work is funded through the generous support of Citi

What needs to happen now for a land bank to be a valued tool for Prince George's County?



A land bank could be a valuable tool for Prince George's County if the right elements are in place...

- **Leadership:** continued leadership from all levels of County government to create and prioritize a more comprehensive, collaborative, transparent approach to VAT properties.*

Recommendation

Renew support and expand focus and membership of Land Bank/Vacant Properties Task Force.

- **Data:** improve the collection of and centralize the current management of County data to get a better understanding of the inventory of VAT properties.

Recommendation

Standardize and centralize data collection to improve integration, mapping, and analysis.

A land bank could be a valuable tool for Prince George's County if the right elements are in place...

- **Toolbox:** improve coordination of *existing* tools and implementation of new tools available in state law.

Recommendation

Increase coordination of code and tax enforcement and stop the cycle of selling tax certificates for VAT properties.

- **Partnerships:** continue expanding partnerships with nonprofit and affordable housing community developers and creating an inexpensive and accessible pipeline of property.

Recommendation

Develop policy that would allow nonprofits preferred access to County surplus land for affordable housing.

- **Engagement with Municipalities:** continue engaging and building relationships with the municipalities and residents that are most impacted by VAT properties and facing increasing affordable housing



If the proper foundation is in place, what role can a land bank play and what steps should the County take?

If the County can begin the process of better utilizing and coordinating existing tools to address VAT properties, a new and separate land bank entity has the potential to:

- Ensure focus on specific subset of properties causing the most harm to residents and costing the County and its municipalities in public safety, lost taxes, and declining property values; and inaccessible to the private market given the various financial legal challenges
- Create a more inclusive governance structure to ensure that municipalities and residents most impacted by VAT properties have a seat at the table
- Provide more flexibility and transparency in site assemblage for nonprofits to support affordable housing and other community goals

Recommendations/Steps to Create Land Bank

1. *Meet with and learn from land bank leaders from across the country.*
2. *Decide how to create the land bank authority, weigh pros and cons of establishing an in-house County land banking program vs. establishing a separate entity as a land bank.*
3. *With the support of the Land Bank Task Force, identify initial inventory of the land bank.*
4. *Create policies and procedures to guide the acquisition and disposition decisions of the land bank that reflect priorities of the community.*
5. *Identify funding sources, hire dedicated staff.*



**Longer term, how could
existing tools be improved to
address VAT properties?**

As the County makes progress towards improving its approach to address VAT properties and creates a land bank, longer term ways to strengthen or expand existing tools could include:

→ Explore changes to existing state and local law related to addressing VAT properties generally

Recommended Topics

- *Implement vacant property registration*
- *Implement or amend authority to use receivership to advance housing interests*
- *Expand use of Judicial in rem Tax Foreclosure*

→ Explore changes to existing state and local law related to land banks

Recommended Topics

- *Expand pipeline of properties land bank can directly acquire*

What comes next?

**Final Report will be distributed to HOFA
Workgroup**

**Additional Technical Assistance Available to
Support Implementation**

Q+A



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