

Land Banking: Pathways Towards Sustainable Urban, Suburban and Rural Land Reclamation



12TH ANNUAL NEW PARTNERS FOR SMART GROWTH
CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 7, 2013

PRESENTED BY

CHRISTOPHER NORMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Fulton County/Atlanta LBA



- FCCALBA established in October 1991 as non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation pursuant to act of General Assembly. One of 1st four in the US.
- Interlocal Cooperation Agreement executed in January 1994 between City of Atlanta and Fulton County.
 - Atlanta is located within boundaries of Fulton County.
 - In light of mutual benefit, Interlocal Cooperation Agreement established to outline governance, powers, purpose and available resources.
- Self-contained decision making authority via Board of Directors appointed by Mayor of Atlanta/City Council and Fulton County Chairman/Board of Commissioners



Fulton County/Atlanta LBA



- **Mission Statement**

- The mission of the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority is to facilitate the transformation of the City and County into a vibrant community by:
 - ✦ Returning non-revenue generating, non-tax producing, or blighted property to an effective utilization status in order to provide market and affordable housing, public space, new industry and jobs for the citizens of the City and County.
 - ✦ Extinguishing past due tax liens from property foreclosed upon by Fulton County and the City of Atlanta in their tax collection capacities.



Existing Georgia Land Banks



Jurisdiction	County Population	City Population
Fulton County-Atlanta	949,599	432,427
<i>DeKalb County-Decatur</i>	<i>699,893</i>	<i>19,555</i>
Chatham County-Savannah	271,544	139,491
Muscogee County-Columbus	194,107	194,107
Richmond County-Augusta	192,142	192,142
Bibb County-Macon	156,433	91,856
Clarke County-Athens	117,344	116,084
Lowndes County-Valdosta	111,885	56,019
Whitfield County-Dalton	103,184	33,313
Floyd County-Rome	95,989	36,181
Spalding County-Griffin	64,033	23,628
Thomas County–Thomasville	44,702	18,407

GALBA



- Land banks throughout State created Georgia Association of Land Bank Authorities, Inc. (GALBA) in August 2011
- President – Christopher Norman
- Purpose:
 - To promote and market the concept and utility of land bank authorities to local governments, citizens and other stakeholders in the State of Georgia.
 - To educate interested local governments, citizens and other stakeholders in Georgia regarding the establishment and operation of land bank authorities in their respective communities.
 - To foster and promote the sharing of information amongst land bank authorities in Georgia and throughout the nation.
 - To provide technical assistance to land bank authorities in Georgia
 - To provide and support governmental relations to benefit and foster the mission of land bank authorities in Georgia.



Georgia Land Bank Act: SB 284



- Introduced Senate Bill 284 in 2012 Georgia Legislative Session for reform of existing Georgia land bank statute
- Sponsor: Senate - Sen. Tim Golden (R), Valdosta; House - Rep. Alan Powell (R), Hartwell
- Some Key Proposed Changes
 - Multi-jurisdictional land banks
 - Self financing mechanism: 5 year/ 75% tax recapture
 - Allowance for intergovernmental contracts
 - Ability to take on debt
- GALBA engaged Massey, Bowers & Hembree LLC to advocate for passage
- Law became effective on July 1, 2012



FCCALBA Programmatic Initiatives



- **Property Acquisition and Disposition**
 - Sheriff/Marshall Deed Conveyance
 - NSP
 - Land Banking Depository Program
 - Community Land Trust
- **Development**
 - Tax Abatement
 - Public/Private Development Partnerships
- **Alternative Property Usage**
 - Greenspace Assemblage
 - Community Gardening (Tentative)



NSP



- Purchased - 2010
 - 9 multi-family properties
 - 25 single family properties
- Currently banking/holding
 - 33 single family properties (includes 25 for CLT project)
 - 5 multi-family properties
- Completed RFP process and awarded properties to developers to complete rehab and disposition of banked properties
- NSP 3
 - \$4.4 from City of Atlanta allocation of \$4.9M
 - ✦ To be used primarily for rehabilitation and property acquisition with a minor portion for land banking holding costs



NSP



- LBA awarded \$4.4M of \$4.9M City of Atlanta grant allocation
- Obligated over 50% of funds to date
- Hired NSP3 Program Manager, Royal Randolph, in December 2011
- 50% of funds for rehabilitation of NSP1 multi-family properties
- 50% of funds for acquisition and rehabilitation of single family properties
 - 11 properties purchased to date

Land Banking Depository Program



- Board approved Land Banking Program Policy in December 2007 in response to needs expressed by non-profit and governmental stakeholders
- Launched Land Banking Program in July 2009
- Provides “banking” of eligible residential and commercial properties for three to five years for non-profit entities and governmental entities
- This is the only known program of this kind in the Country



Land Banking Depository Program



- Limited to non-profit or governmental entities. For-profits may participate via joint venture as minority partner.
- Entities must complete application and upon staff recommendation, Board of Directors approves Land Banking relationship
- Benefits
 - Allows for aggregation of properties and site control for large areas for future strategic purposes such as affordable housing, commercial development and open spaces and greenways
 - Enables advance acquisition of potential development sites in anticipation of rapidly rising land prices
 - Reduces holding costs during development phase
 - Reduces costs of property management and insurance due to economies of scale
 - Facilitate pre-development planning, financing and structuring
 - Minimize violations of housing and building codes and public nuisances on properties to be developed for affordable housing



Land Banking Depository Program



- **What constitutes banking?**
 - Master Land Banking Agreement executed that details responsibilities and mechanics of arrangement
 - Title transferred to LBA
 - Insurance provided by LBA
 - Property maintenance provided by LBA
 - Holding costs for insurance, property maintenance and solid waste fees absorbed by granting entity. Payment is made to LBA on real time basis and not accrued to end of banking period
 - Property is tax-exempt during banking period



Community Land Trusts



- Community Land Trusts provide permanent affordable housing and stewardship function
- LBA maintains standing Board seat on Atlanta Land Trust Collaborative
- LBA serves as property sourcing entity
 - Discounted property purchases
 - Donations
- LBA serves as acquisition agent on behalf of CLT
- Allows for aggregation of property prior to launch of neighborhood based CLT via Land Banking Depository Program
 - Currently holds 25 properties targeted for new CLT
- Utilizes tax abatement for clearing title



Tax Abatement



- Targeted tax abatement to assist development of affordable and mixed income housing projects
 - Abatement includes Fulton County, City of Atlanta, Atlanta Public Schools, and Fulton County Schools taxes
- Removes delinquent tax “overhang” that limits incentive of developers to focus on certain properties and areas
- Distressed areas can yield properties where tax delinquency exceeds market value of property
- Tax abatement considered soft equity investment in projects



Public/Private Partnerships

ACoRA / 345 Ashwood Ave.



- Purchased foreclosed 28 unit apartment building with ACoRA funds in Dec. 2009
 - Partnering with National Church Residences to produce 48 affordable senior and lower income apartments
 - Property has been demolished and property transferred to NCR



Public/Private Partnerships

ACoRA / 345 Ashwood Ave.

- Allowed City of Atlanta Fire Department to conduct training exercises prior to demolition
- Ground breaking for new project held on January 9, 2013



Greenspace Projects



- **Parks**
 - Assisted with clearing title for \$50 million MIMS Park project prior to conveyance to City from Invest Atlanta
 - Working on 2 strategic park assemblages
- **Community Gardens**
 - 5/4/12 – Team from Urban Land Institute completed mini-TAP that explored the role for LBA with urban farming/ community gardening
 - Reviewing and determining potential role of LBA in this space

Other LBA Activity



- **Lowndes County-Valdosta LBA**
 - Focused on developing affordable housing with Habitat for Humanity as sole development partner
- **Bibb County-Macon LBA**
 - Focused on redeveloping community surrounding local university community. Able to leverage powers and resources of LBA with activities of private and public sector. Part of an ongoing ten year project.

Contact



Christopher Norman

Executive Director

Main 404-525-9336

Direct 404-525-9130

cnorman@fccalandbank.org

www.fccalandbank.org

