



**DRAFT**

10/01/14

**PHILADELPHIA  
LAND BANK**

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YEAR ONE  
STRATEGIC PLAN

2015

DRAFT

## A LETTER FROM THE INTERIM LAND BANK BOARD

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The Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Land Bank is pleased to present this Draft Strategic Plan for public comment.

The Draft Strategic Plan is a comprehensive blueprint that, when implemented, will improve the quality of life in every neighborhood in Philadelphia. Through targeted strategies that address side yards, community gardens, affordable housing, private investment and other goals, this plan offers a road map for returning vacant and tax delinquent properties to productive reuse. By providing more information to the public and more effectively marketing properties, the Land Bank will match interested people with viable opportunities, and all of Philadelphia will benefit.

The Draft Strategic Plan is the result of a tremendous amount of data analysis and a tremendous amount of stakeholder engagement. It incorporates district and neighborhood plans that were developed with community involvement at the neighborhood level. No plan can be perfect. But a data-driven strategic approach that reflects the input of stakeholders – as, for the first time in Philadelphia’s approach to vacant property, this plan does – is a strong first step toward a successful land bank.

The Board wishes to thank the many people who made both the land bank and the Draft Strategic Plan a reality. The Land Bank would not exist without the leadership and commitment of Mayor Michael A. Nutter, City Council President Darrell Clarke, and prime bill sponsor Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez. Advocates in every neighborhood in the city provided the impetus to move the land bank legislation forward, and then remained engaged to provide input into the Draft Strategic Plan. The staff of the land bank and the team led by Interface Studio compiled and analyzed data, reached out to stakeholders and drafted and revised the plan in an inordinately short period of time.

The next step in the process is for the public to offer its input. We urge members of the public to review the plan and to provide comments, either at the public meeting or via letter or e-mail. The current draft is stronger because of stakeholder involvement, and it will be stronger still with additional public comment.

Philadelphia Land Bank  
2014 Interim Board of Directors

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

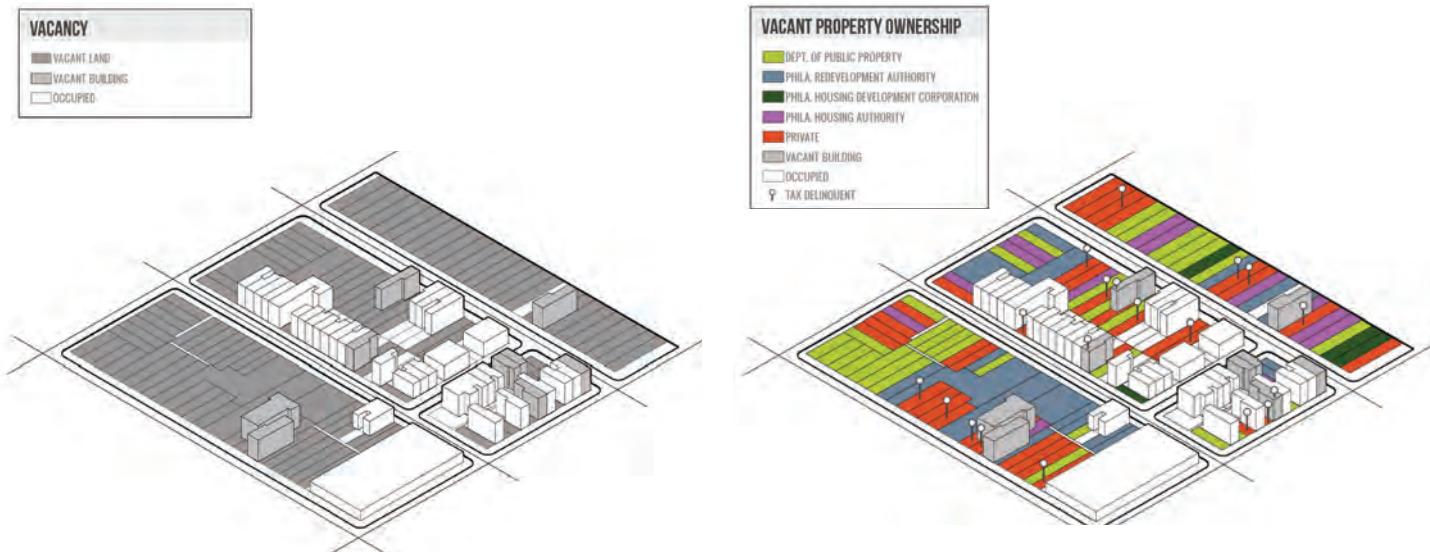
The Philadelphia Land Bank is a new agency whose mission is to return vacant and tax delinquent property to productive reuse. The Land Bank will consolidate many of the land acquisition and disposition processes of the City under one umbrella, making it easier for private individuals and organizations to acquire properties that contribute to neighborhood disinvestment and turn them into assets for the community in which they are located.

The Philadelphia Land Bank possesses a number of tools that will enable it to help return derelict properties to productive use. The Land Bank can

- › Acquire tax-delinquent properties through tax foreclosure
- › Clear the title to those properties so that new owners are not burdened by old liens
- › Consolidate properties owned by multiple public agencies into single ownership to speed property transfers to new, private owners
- › Assist in the assemblage and disposition of land for community, nonprofit and for-profit uses

This Year One Strategic Plan is intended to help set the ground rules for Land Bank activities by: identifying market conditions across the City, providing an inventory of vacant and tax delinquent properties that the Land Bank could take in, establishing goals to guide Land Bank activity, identifying priority acquisition areas, and defining annual targets against which to measure progress.

## THE CHALLENGE OF LAND ASSEMBLY



## PHILADELPHIA'S CURRENT INVENTORY OF "POTENTIAL LAND BANK PROPERTIES"

**A**t the outset of the Strategic Plan process, datasets from multiple City departments and other sources were collected in an effort to identify the best possible working inventory of properties that could be taken into the Land Bank; these "potential Land Bank properties" include vacant publicly-owned properties and vacant privately-held, tax-delinquent properties.

There are roughly 8,000 vacant properties in the public inventory that are not committed to a pending project. The data analysis identified an additional 24,000 privately-owned properties that are both vacant and tax delinquent. In total, there are an estimated 32,000 potential Land Bank properties. Of the 32,000, roughly 23,000 are individual lots, roughly 9,000 are vacant buildings; there are over 100 assemblage opportunities of more than 10 potential Land Bank properties.

As acquisition and disposition of property by the Land Bank requires financial resources and staff capacity, the Land Bank must be strategic in its activity; the Land Bank cannot and should not acquire all 32,000 potential properties.

As an implementation tool, the Land Bank must work closely with public and private partners to ensure that the acquisition and disposition of land has the greatest benefit to Philadelphia's neighborhoods.

### "POTENTIAL LAND BANK PROPERTIES"

INCLUDE VACANT LAND AND BUILDINGS THAT

ARE

1) PUBLICLY-OWNED OR

2) PRIVATELY-OWNED WITH TAX LIENS OR

OTHER MUNICIPAL LIENS ON THE PROPERTY.

THESE ARE THE PROPERTIES THAT COULD BE

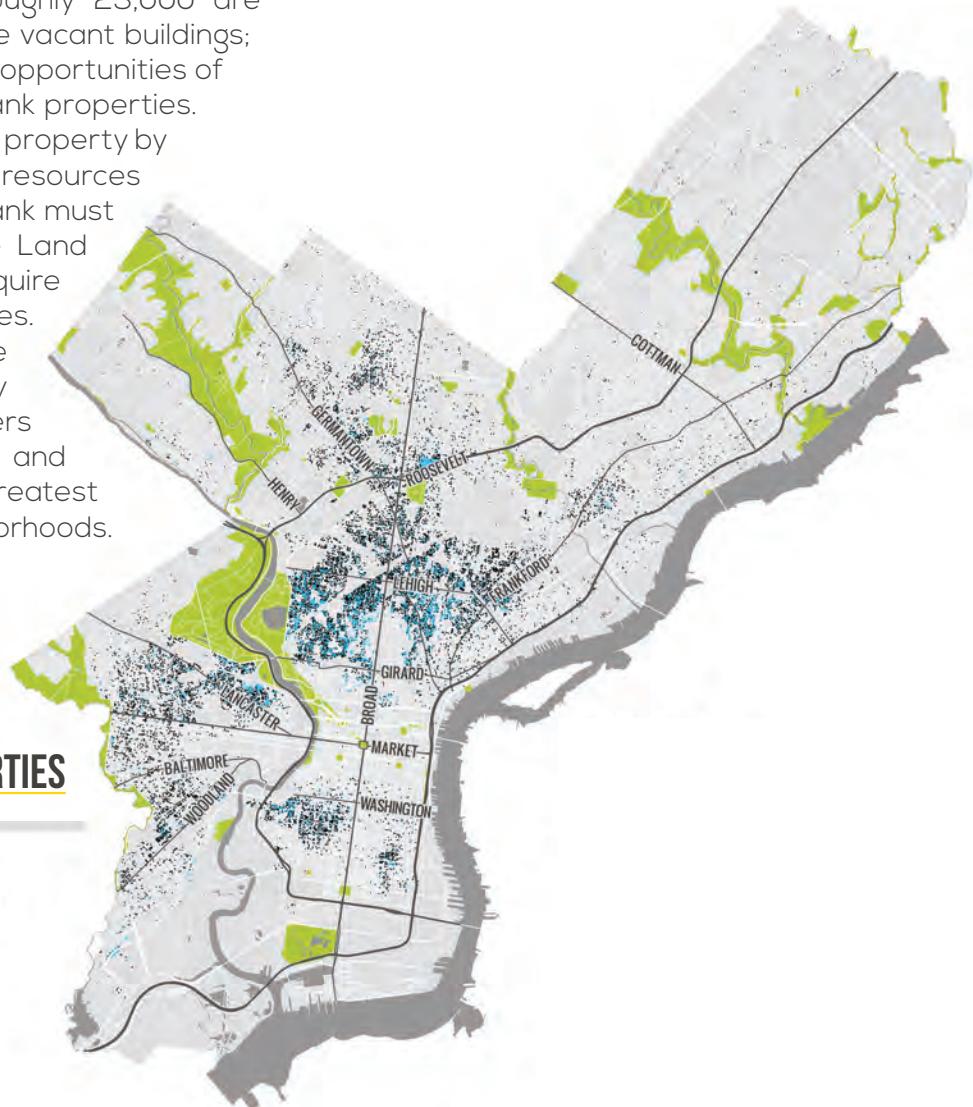
TAKEN INTO THE LAND BANK.

### POTENTIAL LAND BANK PROPERTIES

- Public Inventory ~8,000
  - Privately-Owned AND Tax Delinquent ~24,000
- PCPC District Plan Survey  
Interface Studio Survey  
Blend of PWD & OIT Data

TOTAL POTENTIAL PROPERTIES ~32,000

Source: LAMA, PCPC, Interface Studio, PWD, OIT



## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

From this research, seven primary goals emerged to guide Land Bank activity. Data analysis was undertaken to understand existing vacancy and tax delinquency in Philadelphia, market trends, socio-economic indicators, and other factors that influence opportunities for reuse, and conversations with stakeholders and interest groups provided additional input. These seven goals, which are based upon the inventory of potential Land Bank properties, are organized in three categories:

- › **Citywide Approach** – to ensure the effective use of the Land Bank to address nuisance properties and opportunities for redevelopment and reuse across all neighborhoods in Philadelphia
- › **Focus Zones** – to capitalize on the concentrations of vacant and tax delinquent properties as resources to support established objectives from equitable housing to economic development
- › **Operations** – to guide how the Land Bank will market properties, assess possibilities for the end use of Land Bank properties and work to improve the quality and accessibility of data sources



## GOAL 1:

### RETURN INDIVIDUAL VACANT LOTS & BUILDINGS ACROSS THE CITY TO PRODUCTIVE USE

Many vacant properties are isolated buildings or lots adjacent to active uses. Transitioning these scattered vacant lots and buildings back to productive use (either through residential rehabilitation or as sideneys, parking, or gardens) will help stabilize blocks and communities throughout Philadelphia and offer amenities that improve quality of life in neighborhoods across the City. Goal 1 includes three citywide objectives:

- › **Identify, Acquire, Market, and Convey Individual Development Opportunities (IDOs) Across the City**

In neighborhoods with stable markets, individual vacant buildings (or lots) threaten block conditions but also present opportunities for rehabilitation if placed in the hands of a developer or property owner willing to invest in the property.



- › **Identify, Market and Convey Land to Adjacent Homeowners**

There are over 2,100 opportunities to transfer vacant lots to adjacent homeowners for use as a sideneys or, in some cases, a parking space. The Land Bank will market and convey these properties to adjacent homeowners who are interested and tax-compliant.



- › **Preserve Existing Community Gardens and Identify Opportunities for Larger-Scale Food Production**

Citywide, the Land Bank will help preserve existing gardens that have community support and a track record of maintenance. It will consolidate property ownership where the garden sits atop land owned by multiple owners and work with garden organizers to determine the best entity for preservation.

**GOAL 1 IS**

**A CITYWIDE GOAL.**

**ALTHOUGH THE**

**MAJORITY OF VACANT**

**PROPERTIES ARE**

**CONCENTRATED IN**

**SPECIFIC REGIONS**

**IN THE CITY, THERE**

**ARE SPECIFIC**

**OPPORTUNITIES**

**TO TRANSFORM**

**SCATTERED VACANT**

**AND ABANDONED**

**PROPERTIES ACROSS**

**ALL PHILADELPHIA**

**NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**FOR MORE DETAILS,**

**SEE PAGE 42**

## GOAL 2: PROMOTE EQUITABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Land Bank will help address two separate but related equitable development issues in Philadelphia. Goal 2 includes two objectives to support affordable housing development:

- › **Support initiatives, including the City Council 2,000 New Affordable Housing Units Initiative, to expand housing choice and affordability in Philadelphia**

**FOR MORE DETAILS,  
SEE PAGE 50**

In Philadelphia, there is a need for quality, efficient and affordable housing units in locations that give tenants access to employment, transit, shopping and services. The Land Bank will help to assemble and convey sites in some of these locations.

- › **Preserve and enhance affordability in neighborhoods undergoing change**

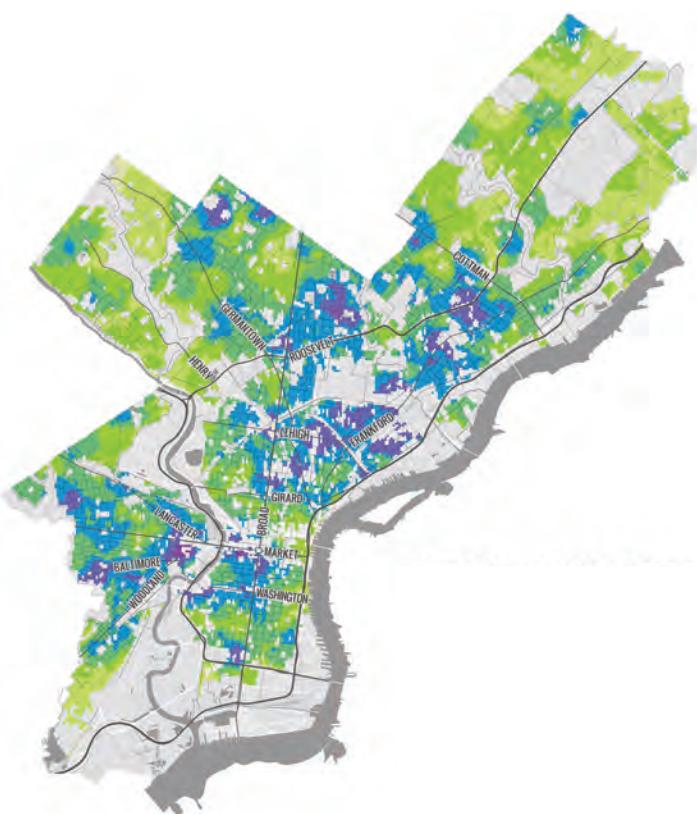
Equitable development also calls for preserving affordable housing opportunities in appreciating neighborhoods. The Land Bank is one of the tools poised to help provide opportunities for households at all income levels to benefit from positive neighborhood change.

### GOALS 2 – 5 ARE FOCUS ZONE GOALS.

**FOCUS ZONES ARE AREAS THAT CONTAIN CONCENTRATIONS OF POTENTIAL LAND BANK PROPERTIES. WITHIN THESE ZONES, THE LAND BANK WILL PROACTIVELY ACQUIRE, ASSEMBLE, AND DISPOSE OF PROPERTY FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES BASED ON DETERMINED NEED AND OPPORTUNITIES.**

**THE FOCUS ZONE GOALS AIM TO HELP THE LAND BANK STRATEGICALLY TARGET ITS ACQUISITION, MAINTENANCE, AND DISPOSITION ACTIVITIES IN DESIGNATED REGIONS OF THE CITY FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT.**

## EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT - COMPOSITE 1



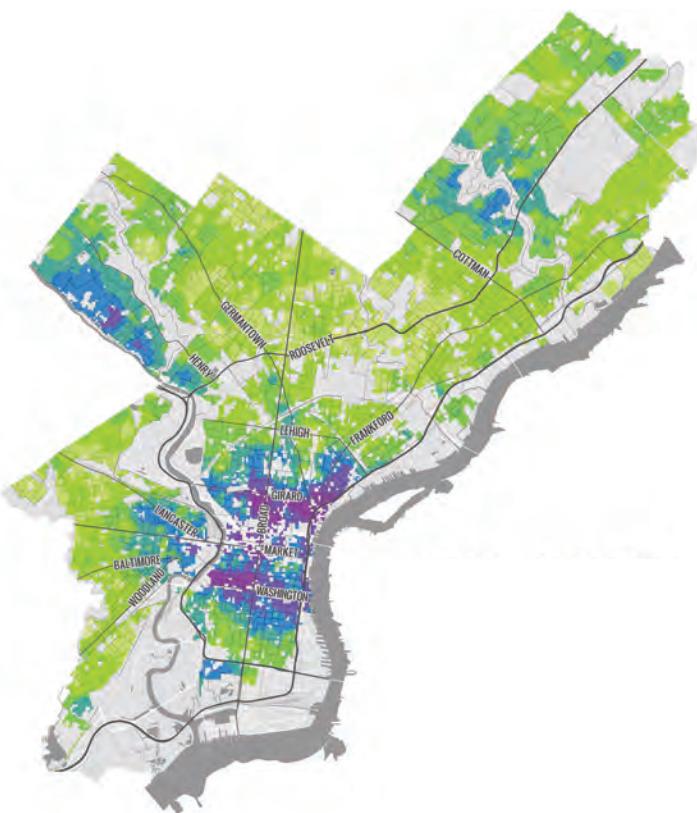
PURPLE AND BLUE HOT SPOTS INDICATE  
THE BEST LOCATIONS TO EXPAND  
HOUSING CHOICE AND AFFORDABILITY IN  
PHILADELPHIA.



TRANSIT-SERVED  
FOOD ACCESS, 2012  
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, 2010-14\*  
HOUSING COST BURDEN -RENTERS, 2010

Source: (multiple) \*also includes seven-year projection

## EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT - COMPOSITE 2



PURPLE AND BLUE HOT SPOTS INDICATE  
CHANGING NEIGHBORHOOD DYNAMICS  
THAT THREATEN AFFORDABILITY.



△ MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2000-10  
△ NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, 2000-10  
△ HH HEADED BY 25-34 YR OLDS, 2000-10  
△ MEDIAN SALE PRICE: 2009/10 - 2012/13  
# RES. NEW CONSTRUCTION -  
MARKET RATE UNITS, 2007-14

Source: (multiple)

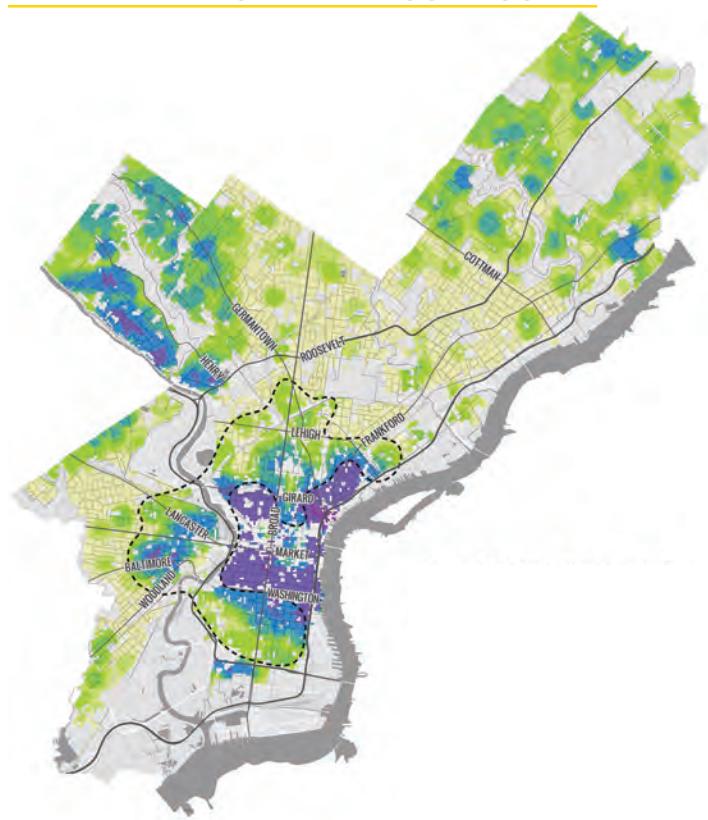
## GOAL 3: EXTEND PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Philadelphia's vitality depends in part upon private investment in rehabilitating the existing housing stock and constructing new market-rate units. The renewed interest in urban living has fueled a housing boom in parts of Philadelphia. Although developers and investors can include the cost of acquiring a lot or vacant building in their development budget, issues of fragmented ownership, tax liens, and clouded titles can create roadblocks impeding private investment. Goal 3 includes one objective for extending market-rate development:

- › **Assist in providing land for viable, market-rate investment, especially developments incorporating an affordable housing component.**

**FOR MORE DETAILS,  
SEE PAGE 66**

## PRIVATE INVESTMENT - COMPOSITE



**GREEN AND BLUE HALOS SURROUNDING  
STRONG MARKET AREAS IN PURPLE INDICATE  
WHERE THE LAND BANK SHOULD ACQUIRE,  
ASSEMBLE, AND DISPOSE OF LAND TO  
ENCOURAGE MARKET-RATE AND MIXED-  
INCOME DEVELOPMENT.**



FRINGE AREA WITH POTENTIAL TO  
EXTEND PRIVATE MARKET ACTIVITY

Source: (multiple)

## GOAL 4: CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM ECONOMIC VITALITY

Convenient access to goods and services is an important quality of life issue for residents. Businesses of all types offer jobs for Philadelphia residents and add to the City's tax base. Goal 4 includes two objectives for economic development:

**FOR MORE DETAILS,  
SEE PAGE 74**

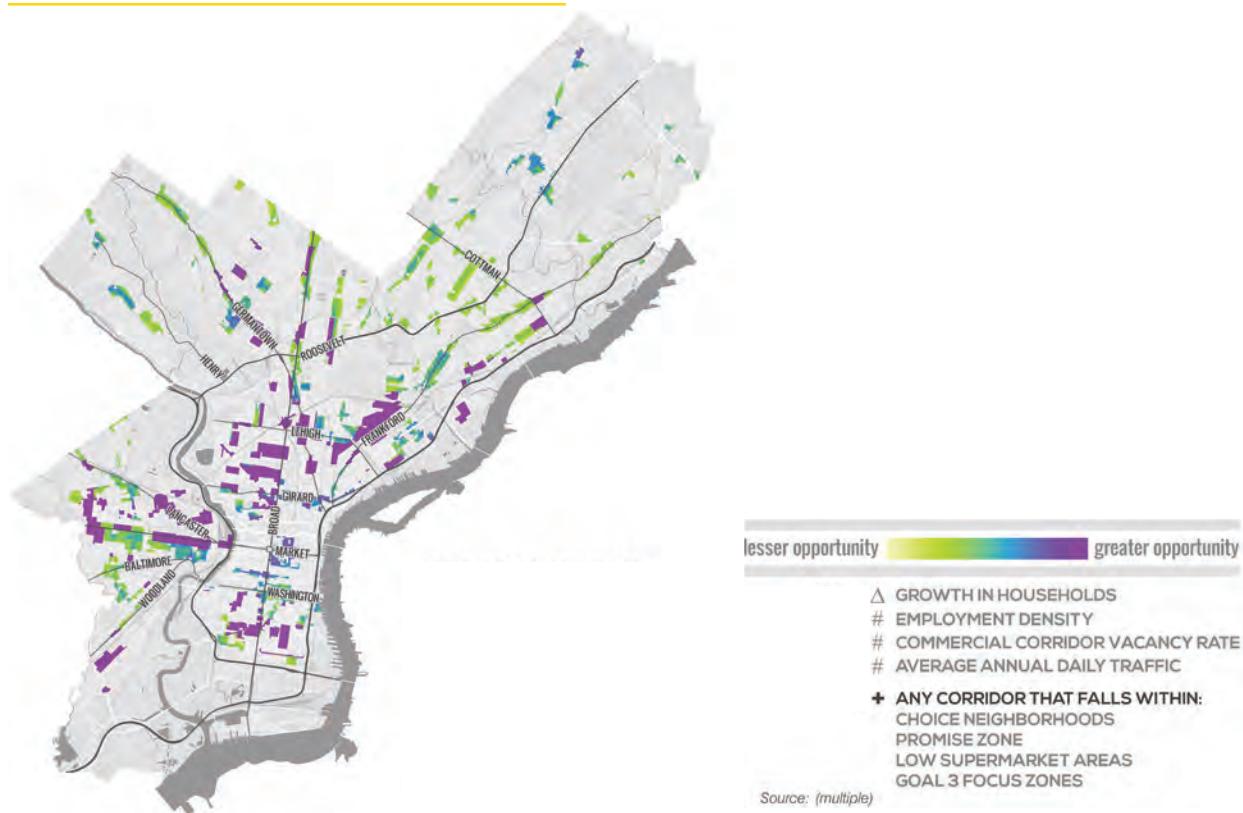
### › Support existing businesses and neighborhood commercial corridors

To continue to thrive, commercial corridors need blocks of contiguous business establishments. The Land Bank will contribute to long-term commercial corridor viability and new business development by assembling and conveying marketable sites for new commercial development. The Land Bank will also support existing Philadelphia businesses interested in expanding an existing establishment, opening a new location, or providing needed customer parking through conveyance of adjacent vacant property.

### › Initiate Land Bank activity in targeted commercial areas

The Year One Strategic Plan identifies 77 commercial corridors with potential Land Bank properties as well as opportunities for commercial investment.

## ECONOMIC VITALITY - COMPOSITE



## GOAL 5:

### REINFORCE OPEN SPACE INITIATIVES & URBAN AGRICULTURE

Open space is vital to the health and future of Philadelphia's neighborhoods. The Land Bank will help protect open spaces where necessary but also clear the way for a range of non-development reuse possibilities that meet City objectives and capitalize on local capacity. Goal 5 contains two objectives that pertain to greening:

- › **Maximize opportunities for partnerships in greening to improve and re-purpose vacant land**

The Land Bank should strongly consider acquisition and disposition of property to support community-driven open space and greening projects where there is both local greening capacity and a need to expand or preserve open space. New green spaces in these regions could be active or passive park spaces, community gardens / urban agriculture, and should incorporate green stormwater infrastructure.

- › **Identify and seek to acquire and/or dispose of vacant land where there is demonstrated need for more or improved open space**

The Land Bank should consider proposals for new open spaces. Target locations would be areas with limited access to open space, areas with poor food access, and areas with high population densities.

**FOR MORE DETAILS,  
SEE PAGE 96**



## OPEN SPACE - COMPOSITE 1

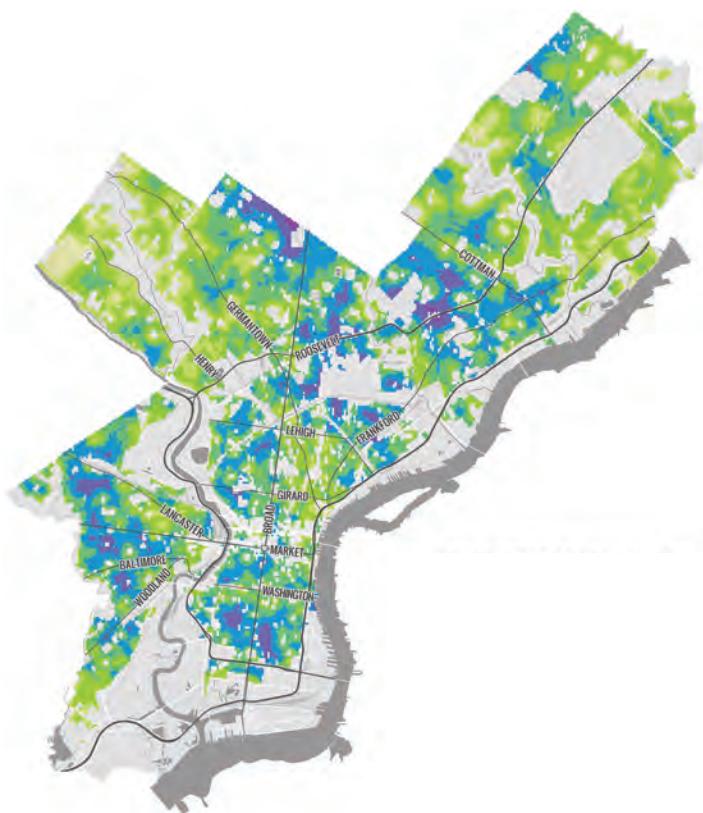


PURPLE, BLUE, AND TEAL INDICATE AREAS THAT MERIT CONSIDERATION OF LAND ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION FOR OPEN SPACE BASED ON LOCAL CONDITIONS AND CAPACITY.

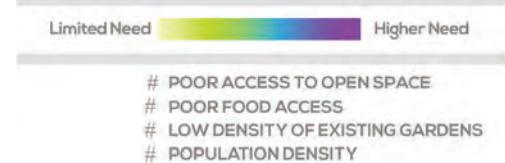


Source: (multiple)

## OPEN SPACE - COMPOSITE 2



MAGENTA AND PURPLE INDICATE AREAS THAT MERIT CONSIDERATION OF LAND ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION FOR OPEN SPACE BASED ON NEED FOR OPEN SPACE.



Sources: (multiple)

## GOAL 6:

# SUPPORT CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT LAND BANK OPERATIONS

The Land Bank will assist in revitalizing neighborhoods by reclaiming vacant property for reuse. Numerous organizations as well as many individual residents and business owners seek to obtain vacant property. Those willing to invest in the City should be welcomed to do so. For transparency, the Land Bank must establish and publicize criteria to guide all aspects of operations including the acquisition and disposition of property and determining appropriate end uses for Land Bank holdings.

- › **Follow the strategies set forth in Philadelphia2035 District Plans and “accepted” neighborhood plans**

The Philadelphia2035 Citywide Comprehensive Plan established an updated vision for the City as well as a process to develop District-specific plans for all parts of Philadelphia. In addition to District Plans completed by PCPC with much public input, private foundations and public agencies have supported the development of community-driven neighborhood plans, ten of which have been formerly accepted by PCPC. The Land Bank is a tool that will assist in implementing these prior plans and that will look to plan recommendations to inform decisions about acquisition, disposition, and end uses for Land Bank holdings.

- › **Reinforce major initiatives and proposed public investments**

To leverage development in the City, the Land Bank will support major initiatives and proposed investments by public, private, and institutional partners that reinforce recommendations in Philadelphia2035. The existing Promise Zone and funded Choice Neighborhoods are excellent candidates for Land Bank support, as are areas adjacent to planned capital investments. Similarly, the City's universities and hospitals often play a large role in nearby development. The Land Bank will be responsive to institutional requests for properties that support economic growth.

- › **Provide meaningful ways for the public to be engaged in Land Bank decision making**

Representatives from approximately 80 different organizations, many of which vigorously advocated for the Land Bank legislation, helped to shape the Year One Strategic Plan. To ensure transparency of Land Bank operations in future years, the public and key stakeholders will continue to have a voice in shaping Land Bank activities.

For individual properties, every property considered for disposition will be physically posted with a notice that includes contact information for the Land Bank. The Land Bank will notify Registered Civic Organizations that serve the area in which each property is located. Each month the Land Bank will publish its board agenda online and offer opportunities for public comment on pending decision at its monthly public meeting.

**GOALS 6 AND 7**

**SPEAK TO LAND**

**BANK OPERATIONS.**

**THESE GOALS AIM**

**TO HELP THE LAND**

**BANK ESTABLISH**

**EFFICIENT AND**

**TRANSPARENT**

**PROCESSES**

**TO GUIDE LAND**

**BANK ACTIVITY**

**AN UPDATED**

**DISPOSITION POLICY,**

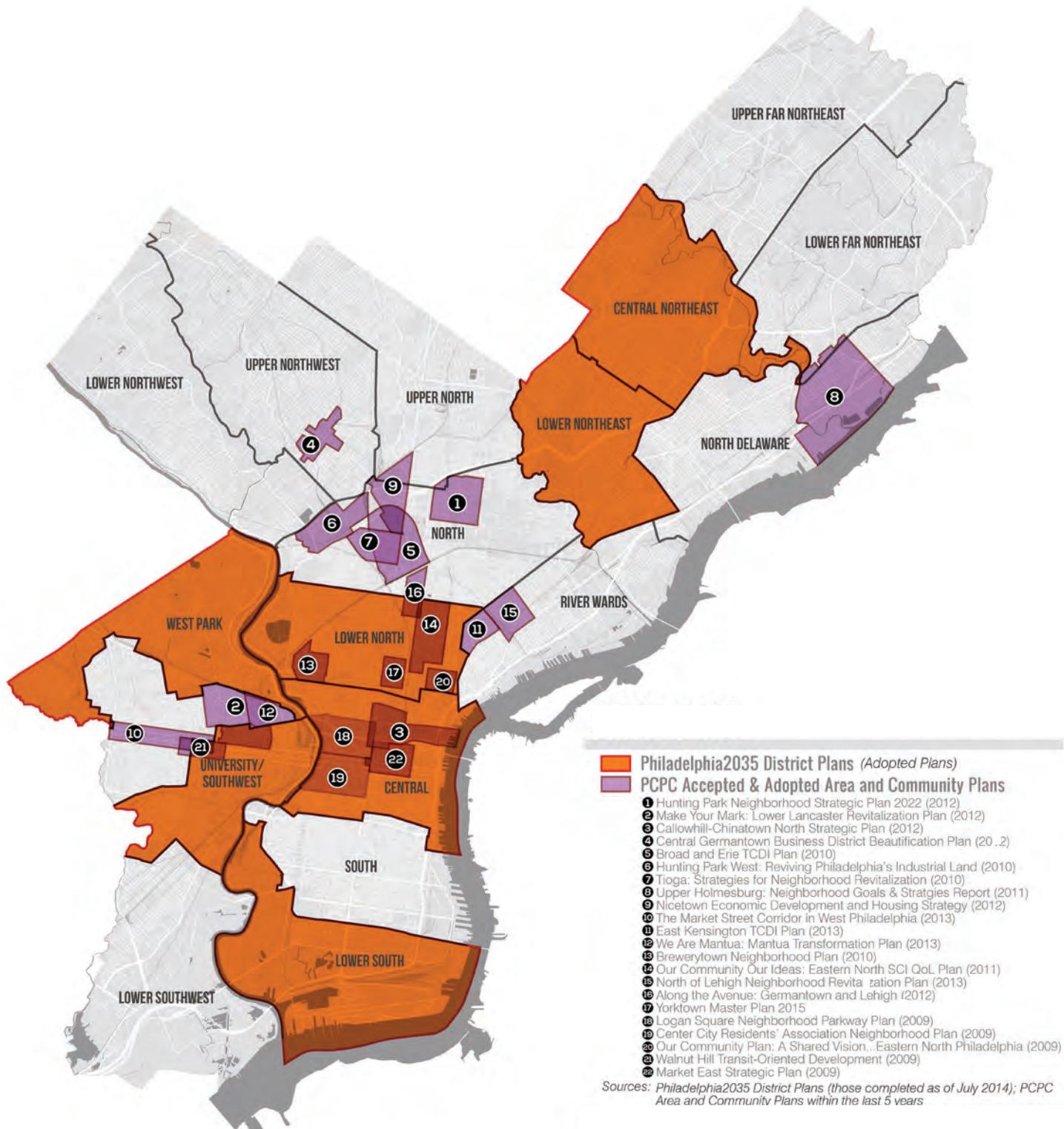
**INCLUDED IN THE**

**APPENDIX.**

**FOR MORE DETAILS,**

**SEE PAGE 104**

# RECENT PLANS IN PHILADELPHIA



- › Continue to use a data-driven mapping process to identify and visualize focus zones for acquisition and disposition

The Focus Zones identified for different opportunities are based upon a data-driven process designed to highlight areas where there is both vacant property and an opportunity to reinforce one or more of the key goals stated in the Land Bank legislation. The Focus Zone analysis will be updated each year taking into account current and potential Land Bank holdings.

- › Create clear criteria to help determine potential end uses for Land Bank property

The Land Bank must juggle many factors in decisions regarding potential Land Bank properties. The size of the property, the type of neighborhood it is located within, its adjacency to other vacant properties and other uses, and the level of interest in reusing the property expressed by private entities are just some of the factors that the Land Bank must evaluate. Given these factors as well as the limitations on what the Land Bank can acquire on an annual basis, the Land Bank must develop criteria to help answer two key questions:

1. For privately-owned tax-delinquent property, should the property be acquired by the Land Bank at this time?
2. If the property is in the Land Bank inventory, what is the appropriate end use?

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**FOR MORE DETAILS**

**SEE PAGES 110 – 121**

## GOAL 7:

### ACTIVELY MARKET LAND BANK PROPERTIES

Many vacant properties in the existing public inventory are the properties that no one wants. In contrast, many privately-owned vacant and tax-delinquent properties are difficult to acquire. The Land Bank can achieve success by acquiring property where appropriate and proactively marketing Land Bank holdings to potential end users.

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**FOR MORE DETAILS,**

**SEE PAGE 122**

- › Establish a track record of success

As a new organization faced with an enormous challenge, the Land Bank must establish a record of success that builds confidence in the tool. Opportunities for the Land Bank to play a key role in transferring vacant properties quickly for reuse include sideyards, infill or individual development opportunities, garden preservation, and properties that support a viable development proposal.

› **Utilize targeted acquisition to enhance the marketability of existing, publicly-owned vacant property**

Much of the existing publicly-owned vacant property is located within neighborhoods with significant deterioration and weak markets that do not financially support private investment. Here, the Land Bank will consider opportunities for targeted acquisition around existing publicly-owned vacant land to create larger, more marketable sites for the development of affordable housing or other uses such as urban agriculture as appropriate.

## NEXT STEPS

The publication of the Year One Strategic Plan marks one important step in launching the Philadelphia Land Bank. A great deal of work and public input has gone into the Plan thus far, but much work and many opportunities remain for the public to inform both the Strategic Plan and Land Bank activity in the coming years.

This Year One Strategic Plan is intended to establish the key goals and objectives that will guide decision making. It is grounded in a data-driven process to help identify areas across the City where the Land Bank can have a meaningful impact. However, this Strategic Plan does not identify specific properties for acquisition or disposition. The Land Bank must follow a detailed community process for each property considered for acquisition or disposition; for each property proposed, the Land Bank will provide formal public notice and invite public comment prior to taking action.

Indeed, with the ability to acquire vacant and tax delinquent land and offer a streamlined disposition process to people and entities interested in land, the Land Bank represents a powerful tool for returning vacant property back to productive use. Realizing the full potential of this new tool, however, will require sustained collaboration and effort by the Land Bank itself, City Council, the Administration, and all constituents.

In 2015, the Land Bank will establish a new website, Land Bank operations will begin, and initial publicly-owned properties will be transferred into the Land Bank. After the Land Bank has acquired its initial properties (those that are publicly-owned or those that are acquired by the Land Bank at Sheriff's Sale or through tax foreclosure), the Land Bank will begin to facilitate dispositions in partnership with those seeking to take ownership of the land as well as stakeholders and constituents empowered to help guide Land Bank activity.

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PHILADELPHIA  
LAND BANK  
YEAR ONE  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN

INTRODUCED



01



# WHAT IS THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK?

The Philadelphia Land Bank is a new agency, the mission of which is to return vacant and tax delinquent property to productive use. The Land Bank will consolidate much of the land acquisition and disposition processes of the City under one umbrella, making it easier for private individuals and organizations to acquire properties that contribute to neighborhood deterioration and turn them into assets for the community in which they are located.

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**THE MISSION IS TO RETURN VACANT AND  
UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTY TO PRODUCTIVE  
USE THROUGH A UNIFIED, PREDICTABLE, AND  
TRANSPARENT PROCESS.**



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The Philadelphia Land Bank possesses a number of tools that will enable it to help return derelict properties to productive use. The Land Bank can:

- › Acquire tax-delinquent properties through tax foreclosure
- › Clear the title to those properties so that new owners are not burdened by old liens
- › Consolidate properties owned by multiple public agencies into single ownership to speed property transfers to new, private owners
- › Assist in the assemblage of land for community, nonprofit, and for-profit uses

The Philadelphia Land Bank will work with a diverse array of partners to repurpose vacant or tax delinquent land into new uses, including:

- › Affordable housing
- › Market-rate housing
- › Business creation and expansion
- › Urban agriculture
- › Side yards
- › Green stormwater infrastructure
- › Community uses, such as gardens and green space

The consolidation of much of the publicly owned property in the City under the Philadelphia Land Bank will also result in better ongoing maintenance of those properties.

In addition, the Land Bank will implement land acquisition and disposition policies in a transparent fashion that will provide consistency to the individuals and organizations that seek to use vacant and tax delinquent properties.

It is important to note that the Land Bank will not solve every vacant property-related problem in Philadelphia. It cannot acquire vacant properties that meet the building code and are tax compliant, nor can it create a market for housing or commercial development where one does not exist.

However, the Philadelphia Land Bank can – and will – be an important partner in revitalizing Philadelphia's communities.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK

In 2012, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed the Pennsylvania Land Bank Act, which provided the framework for the creation of land banks in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. In 2013, Philadelphia City Council passed and Mayor Michael A. Nutter signed legislation that created the Philadelphia Land Bank and provided guidance for its operation.

Now in its first year of operation, the Philadelphia Land Bank has incorporated, developed and funded a budget, began to hire staff, and put in place the tools it will use to maximize its impact in Philadelphia's neighborhoods.

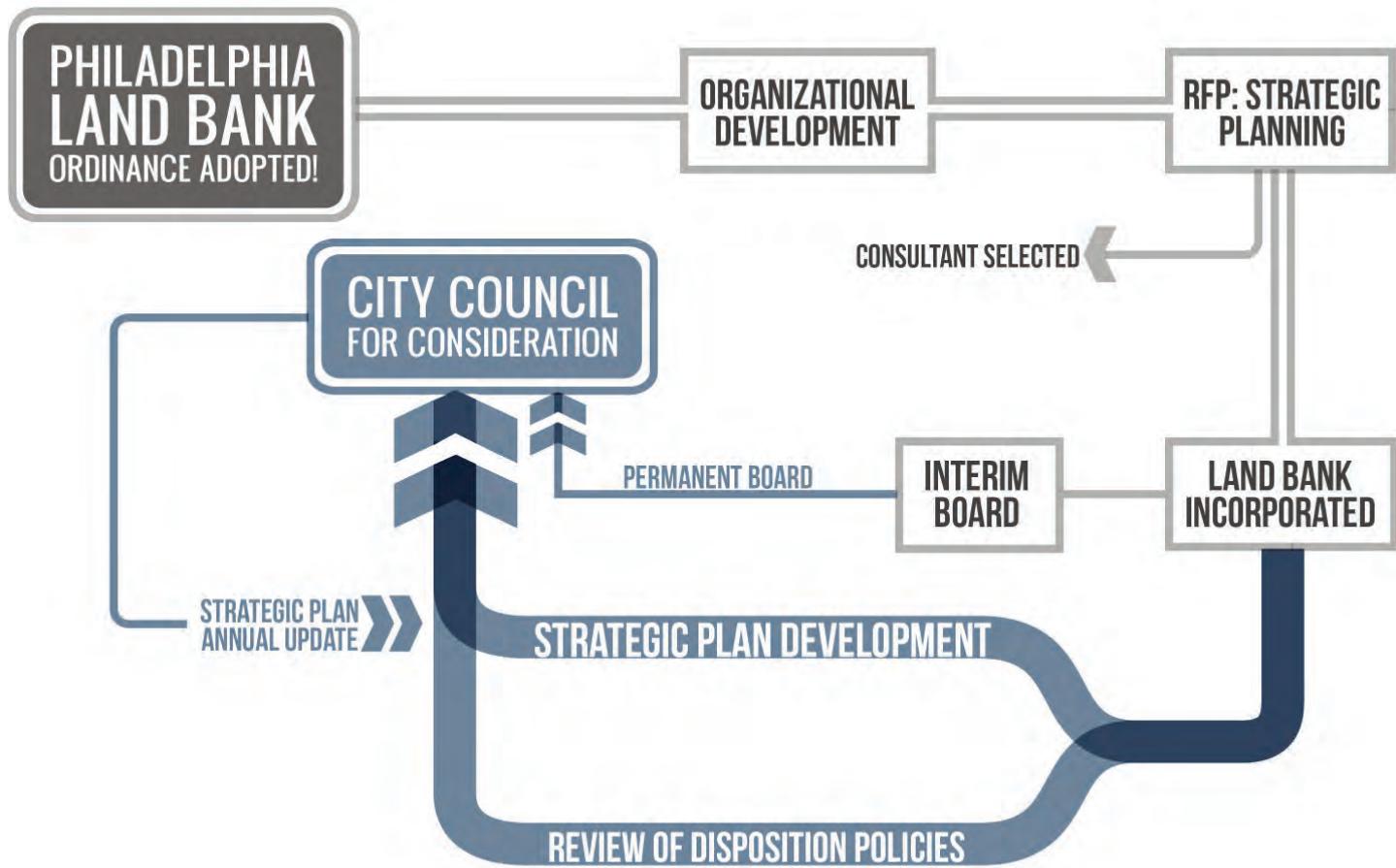
The first step is the development of this Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will provide a road map for the Land Bank, identifying opportunities for the Land Bank to support economic development, affordable housing, community gardens / urban agriculture, public green spaces, and other uses beneficial to Philadelphia's communities.

At the same time, the Land Bank staff and Board of Directors are developing policies that will offer predictability to those looking to acquire tax delinquent or publicly-owned land.

Each year the Land Bank will update its Strategic Plan and provide City Council with a performance report.



**FIGURE 1:** History of the Philadelphia Land Bank



IN 2013, PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL PASSED AND MAYOR MICHAEL A. NUTTER SIGNED  
LEGISLATION THAT CREATED THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK  
AND PROVIDED GUIDANCE FOR ITS OPERATION.

**ANTICIPATED NEXT STEPS FOR 2015, FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN:**

- WEBSITE LAUNCH
- LAND BANK OPERATIONS BEGIN WITH STAFF
- LAND TRANSFERS INTO LAND BANK BEGIN
- DISPOSITIONS FACILITATED BY LAND BANK BEGIN
- ACQUISITIONS AT TAX SALE BEGIN
- TAX FORECLOSURES INITIATED
- INITIATE YEAR TWO STRATEGIC PLAN
- FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

## PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

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Philadelphia is the largest city in the country to create a land bank, and as a result, the Philadelphia Land Bank is an unprecedented and significant undertaking. There has been, and continues to be, substantial interest in the potential of this tool. As stated in City Council Bill Number 130156-A (the Philadelphia Land Bank enabling legislation), "the Land Bank shall develop a Strategic Plan to guide its acquisition, maintenance, and disposition of property." As envisioned by City Council, the Strategic Plan is intended to help set the ground rules for Land Bank activities. It is grounded in a data-driven process to help identify areas across the City where the Land Bank can have a meaningful impact. However, this Strategic Plan does not identify specific properties for acquisition or disposition. The Land Bank must follow a detailed community process for each property considered for acquisition or disposition. For each property proposed, the Land Bank will provide formal public notice and invite public comment prior to taking action. Specifically, this Strategic Plan is required to:

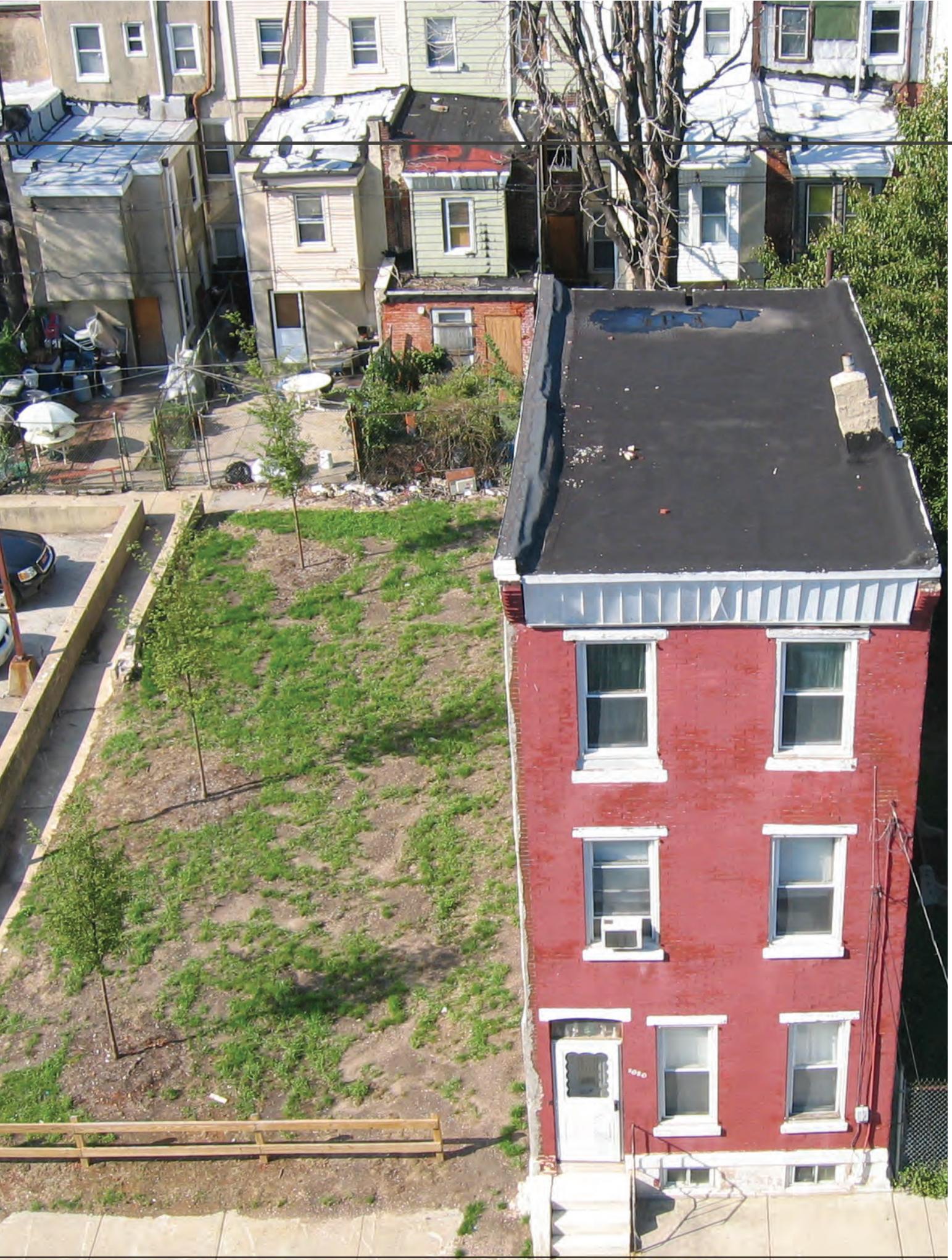
- › Identify the market conditions and neighborhood trends across Philadelphia – including "the relative need for affordable and mixed-income housing," "economic development that creates jobs for community residents," and "community facilities that provide needed services to residents; side and rear yards; food-producing urban agriculture; community open space; and any additional core beneficial land uses that may be identified by the Land Bank."
- › Provide an inventory of vacant and tax delinquent properties in Philadelphia – including those vacant properties that are publicly-owned and those that are privately-owned and tax delinquent.
- › Establish goals for the next five years – including criteria to guide the acquisition, maintenance and conveyance of properties and the identification of potential end uses for Land Bank properties.
- › Identify priority areas for acquisition, maintenance, and disposition.
- › Define annual targets for Land Bank properties – including defined targets for supporting equitable development, economic development, urban agriculture, open space, and other land uses; targets for the number of properties transferred; and annual targets for acquisition.

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The Strategic Plan will be updated every year. As the first Strategic Plan for the Philadelphia Land Bank, this Year One document utilizes existing (though imperfect) data to define the inventory of publicly-owned and privately-held, tax delinquent vacant land, and establishes goals and a strategic process for decision-making in Year One and each year going forward through Year Five. The Land Bank's strategic planning process is iterative; each year the Land Bank will update its Strategic Plan based upon new data and lessons learned to date.

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**THE LAND BANK SHALL DEVELOP A  
STRATEGIC PLAN TO GUIDE ITS ACQUISITION,  
MAINTENANCE, AND DISPOSITION OF  
PROPERTY.**



## **OUTREACH AND COORDINATION**

The Year One Strategic Plan had a compressed four-month planning process, which took place over the summer and early fall of 2014. The process began in mid-June with an immense data transfer from various City departments to the consultant team. The team spent the month of July digesting, mapping, and analyzing the data. The team also held initial meetings with key stakeholder groups, which have played important roles in shaping the public dialog and informing the enabling legislation for the Philadelphia Land Bank. These groups included:

› **Philly Land Bank Alliance**

The Philly Land Bank Alliance is a diverse partnership of city-wide allies who came together to support the creation of an effective land bank in Philadelphia. Convened by the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC), the group includes for-profit and non-profit builders, neighborhood civic associations, realtors, architects, environmental groups, and community revitalization organizations.

› **Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities**

The Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities, formerly known as the Campaign to Take Back Vacant Land, is a coalition of community, faith, and labor groups that joined together to advocate for land bank legislation that gives communities a voice in what happens to vacant land in their neighborhoods.

› **Urban agriculture advocates**

Urban agriculture advocates include representatives from the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia's Garden Justice Legal Initiative, Parks and Recreation, the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), and community gardeners and urban farm advocates from across the City.

› **Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors (GPAR)**

Representatives of the Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors (GPAR) speak on behalf of private market real estate interests.

› **Building Industry Association (BIA)**

Representatives of the Building Industry Association (BIA) speak on behalf of the private development community.

**TABLE 1:** Meetings

Individual Meetings with Stakeholder Groups:
Philly Land Bank Alliance
Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities
Urban Agriculture Advocates
Community Development Corporations
Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors
Building Industry Association of Philadelphia
Sessions with all Stakeholder Groups, Combined Bi-Weekly Meetings with the Strategic Plan Working Group
Monthly Meetings with the Administration's Land Bank Working Group
Monthly Meetings with a Committee of the Interim Land Bank Board
A Meeting with the Philadelphia Water Department
Briefings for City Council Members and Staff
Briefings for the Mayor and Staff
Public Hearing (October)



Late July marked a transition from analysis to the development of strategies. Meetings convened in the month of August included a preview of preliminary goals, objectives, and strategies informed by the data analysis conducted during July. A combined session for all stakeholder groups in mid-August invited initial feedback on the analyses, draft goals and objectives, and decision making processes for the Land Bank. The planning team also sought feedback from several groups within City government and the governing body of the Land Bank. Those sessions included:

- › **Strategic Plan Working Group**

The planning team had bi-weekly meetings with the Strategic Plan Working Group that served as the steering committee for the planning process. Representatives from the Land Bank, which is housed at the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC), the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA), the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC), the Office of Innovation and Technology (OIT), and the Finance Department comprised the working group.

- › **Land Bank Working Group**

The planning team met monthly with the Administration's Land Bank Working Group, charged with guiding the development of Land Bank operations and business administration. Leadership from the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC), Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD), Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA), the Department of Public Property, the Commerce Department, the Law Department, and the Mayor's Office comprised this working group.

- › **Land Bank Board Committee**

The planning team met monthly with a Land Bank Board Committee of members with an expressed interest in shaping the Strategic Plan.

- › **Philadelphia Water Department (PWD)**

The team met with the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) to discuss opportunities for Land Bank decisions about vacant property acquisition, maintenance, and disposition to support the *Green City, Clean Waters* program<sup>1</sup> to develop green stormwater infrastructure citywide.

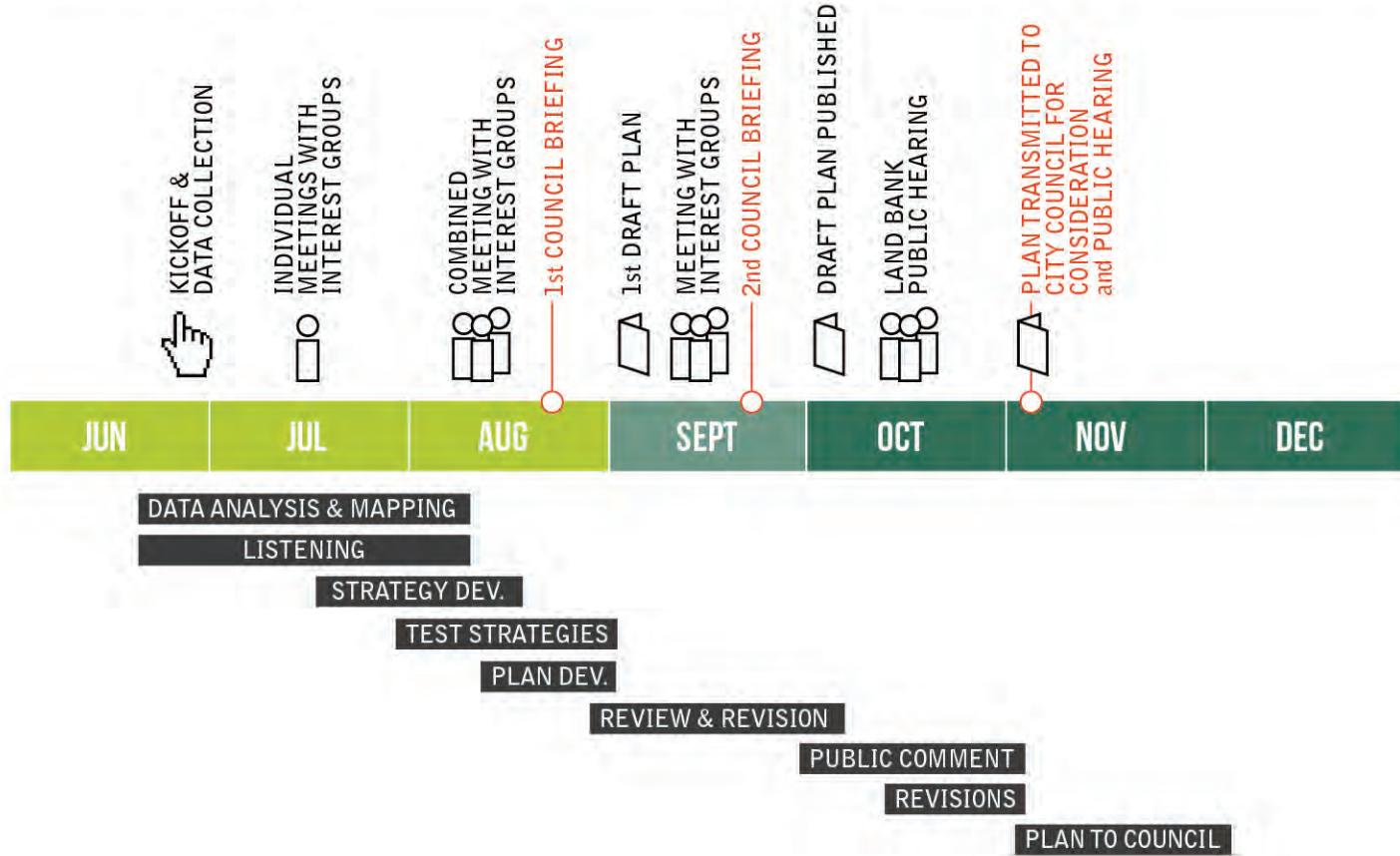
- › **Philadelphia City Council Members and Council Staff**

The team briefed Philadelphia City Council Members and Council Staff with an update on the planning process and progress to date.

<sup>1</sup> The *Green City, Clean Waters* program is being implemented to reduce combined sewer overflows and address the need to limit new development and encourage green space acquisition in flood-prone areas of the City.

REPRESENTATIVES  
FROM OVER  
80 DIFFERENT  
ORGANIZATIONS  
ACROSS  
PHILADELPHIA  
PARTICIPATED  
IN SHAPING THE  
STRATEGIC PLAN.

# SCHEDULE



**FIGURE 2:** Schedule for the Year One Strategic Plan

In all, the planning team met with 100 different people prior to drafting the Strategic Plan, all of whom had informed and unique perspectives, were qualified to offer input, and were poised to help shape the first Philadelphia Land Bank Strategic Plan. Together, those stakeholders represent at least 80 groups and organizations across Philadelphia and have been involved in the debate and discussions about the City's new tool for promoting the productive reuse of vacant property.

In early fall, the process shifted its focus on plan development. During the month of September, the planning team developed and refined a first draft of the Strategic Plan. The team shared this early draft with the stakeholders and City government entities who had participated in the planning process to date and welcomed feedback. In early October, the Land Bank issued a revised draft of the Year One Strategic Plan for public review, and in mid-October hosted an open Public Hearing at which it accepted comments on the draft for consideration and incorporation prior to transmission of the final draft of the Strategic Plan to City Council in early November 2014.

## **DATA & METHODOLOGY**

The Year One Philadelphia Land Bank Strategic Plan is data-driven: an immense amount of data informs this work. Generally, all of the primary data shared by the City and all of the supplementary data collected by the consultant team can be grouped in one of two categories: data used to determine the universe of vacant properties with potential to be taken into the Land Bank, and data used to understand the context within which vacant properties and assemblages of vacant properties will be re-used.

### **DETERMINING THE UNIVERSE OF VACANT PROPERTY IN PHILADELPHIA**

Because Philadelphia does not yet have a citywide survey of vacant property, the vacancy data reflected in the Year One Strategic Plan are a best estimate of **potential Land Bank properties**, which include vacant publicly-owned and vacant privately-owned, tax delinquent properties (both land and buildings) in the City. The estimate, based on multiple sources and indicators, reflects the following information:

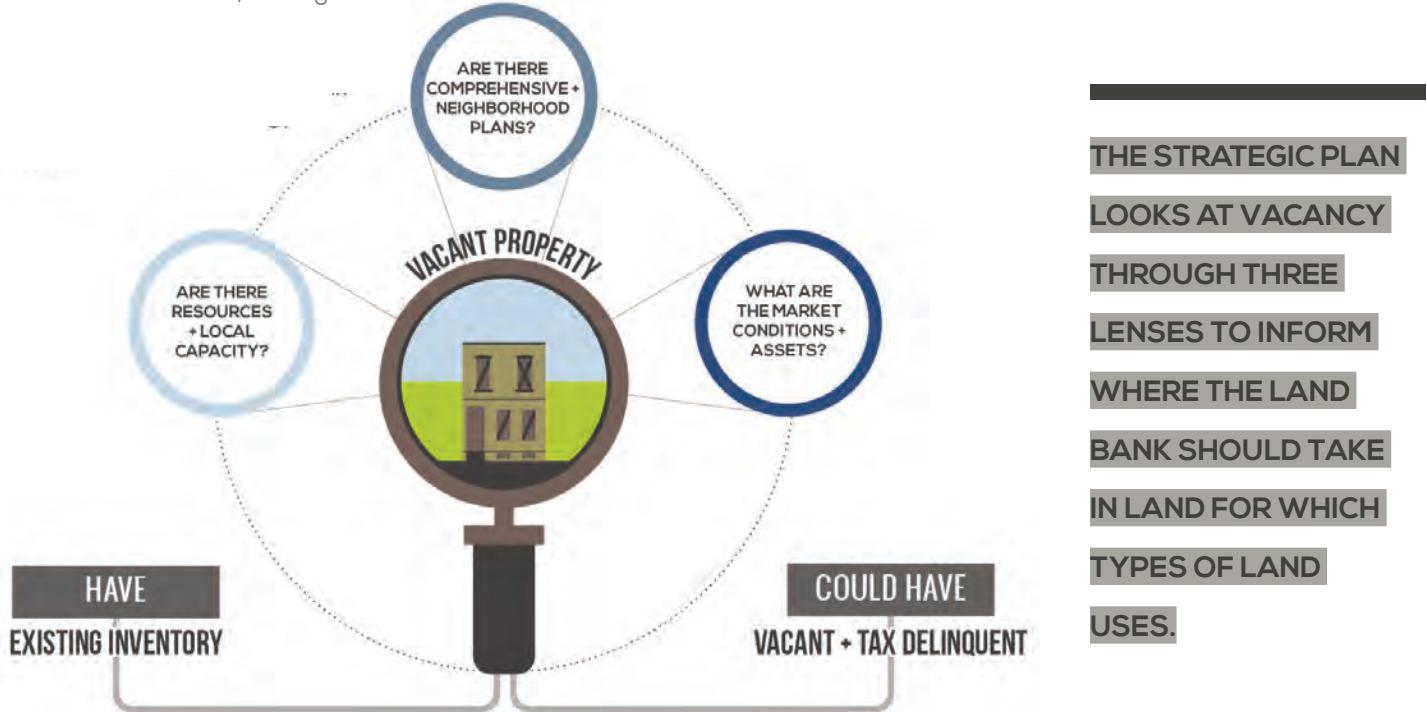
- Recent field survey data, where they have been collected by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) for the Philadelphia2035 District Plans, identified vacant lots and buildings in 44% of the City's non-industrial area<sup>2</sup>.
- Where no recent field survey data exist (56% of the City's non-industrial area), the Plan uses an informed estimate of vacancy that blends vacancy data from the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) with an analysis of vacancy indicators produced by the Office of Innovation and Technology (OIT). The OIT indicators took into account data from Licenses and Inspections (L&I), the Office of Property Assessment (OPA), the City Planning Commission, and the Redevelopment Authority. Greater inaccuracies in the data should be expected in areas where no field survey exists.
- Data on the public inventory of vacant land from the City's database
- Data on the inventory of surplus vacant or deprogrammed property owned by the Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Data on tax delinquency and liens from the Philadelphia Revenue Department for privately-owned vacant properties, including property tax liens and L&I liens

"POTENTIAL LAND  
BANK PROPERTIES"  
INCLUDE VACANT  
LAND AND BUILDINGS  
THAT ARE  
1) PUBLICLY-OWNED  
OR  
2) PRIVATELY-OWNED  
WITH TAX LIENS OR  
OTHER LIENS ON THE  
PROPERTY.  
---  
THESE ARE THE  
PROPERTIES THAT  
COULD BE TAKEN INTO  
THE LAND BANK.

The next chapter, **Vacancy in Philadelphia**, provides more detailed descriptions on the universe of vacant property identified for the Year One Strategic Plan.

<sup>2</sup> This Philadelphia Land Bank Year One Strategic Plan does not address vacant property in areas identified for industrial preservation and growth by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation's (PIDC) Industrial Land Use & Market Strategy for the City of Philadelphia. In those areas, PIDC is the lead agency charged with bringing vacant property back into productive use.

**FIGURE 3:** Vacancy through three lenses



## UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT IN WHICH VACANCY EXISTS

Beyond locating vacant property in the City that could be taken into the Land Bank for disposition and reuse, the Strategic Plan must understand the context in which the vacant property exists. The team analyzed many additional datasets to evaluate which properties the Land Bank could take in for which types of end-uses, including affordable housing, market-rate development, community gardens / urban agriculture, side yards, and new businesses. With these end-uses in mind, the evaluation of vacancy took place through three lenses. These lenses provide context and are posed as the following questions:

### Are there comprehensive and/or neighborhood plans?

The Land Bank Strategic Plan seeks to help implement recommendations from the following plans:

- › Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision, the City's Comprehensive Plan prepared and adopted by PCPC in June 2011
- › Philadelphia2035 District Plans prepared by PCPC, eight of eighteen of which were adopted at the time this plan was written
- › Area Plans, commissioned and adopted by PCPC as amendments to Philadelphia 2035
- › Independent Community Plans, commissioned by community groups and accepted by PCPC
- › Existing zoning and proposed changes to the Zoning Code

## **What are the market conditions, assets and liabilities in the area?**

To understand the residential and commercial market conditions influencing reuse of vacant property, the team researched and analyzed many factors, both positive and negative, including:

- › Demographic trends as recorded by the U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS) such as household growth, age of households, household income, and housing cost burdens
- › Market Value Analysis (MVA) produced by The Reinvestment Fund (TRF)
- › Affordable housing developments funded by OHCD and PHFA, 2003-2015
- › New residential construction based on L&I building permits
- › Substantial residential renovation/rehabilitation based on tax abatements
- › Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for vacant property received through Philly Land Works
- › Trends in sale volume and prices for single-family homes and condominiums based on OPA and MLS data
- › Rental market trends reported by REIS and HUD
- › Access to transit
- › Access to parks as documented by PennPraxis in Green2015
- › Proximity to recent and planned Capital Improvements based on data provided by the City and documented in The FY2015-2020 Capital Program
- › Proximity to planned private developments based on data provided by PCPC
- › Low Supermarket Access (LSA) areas defined by TRF
- › Food access determined by the Department of Health's 2012 Food Access Study

- Commercial vacancy
- Business Improvement Districts
- Proximity to high traffic volumes reported by PennDOT
- Employment density reported by the Census Bureau
- Violent crime and property crime hot spots based on data from the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD)
- Floodplains and non-floodplain flood-prone areas identified by PWD

### **Are there resources and local capacity?**

In many cases, the actual reuse of vacant properties and buildings will hinge on 1) the availability of additional sources of funds that could produce financially feasible new uses 2) the presence of non- and for-profit developers with the capacity to carry out development projects and 3) demonstrated local interest and capacity from residents and neighborhood organizations to transform lots for community use. To understand resources and local capacity, the following plans and datasets were taken into account:

- Consolidated Plan from OHCD
- Community development organization portfolios
- Gardens data provided by the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia's Garden Justice Legal Initiative
- Lots tended by Community LandCare organizations provided by PHS



PHILADELPHIA  
LAND BANK  
YEAR ONE  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN

A collage of four black and white photographs showing urban decay and vacant land in Philadelphia. The images include a paved road with a fence, a field of tall grass and debris, a dirt path through brush, and a view of power lines and trees under a cloudy sky.

VACANCY IN  
PHILADELPHIA



092

# THE IMPACTS OF VACANT & TAX DELINQUENT PROPERTY

Philadelphia's dual challenges of vacancy and tax delinquency affect all residents of the City.

Whether you live next door to a vacant structure or around the corner from a large vacant lot, the impacts of vacancy and abandonment – on the City's landscape as well as its tax base – are felt on a day-to-day basis. In most cases, the deterioration of a stable block into a blighted one is slow and is noticed primarily by long-time residents.

Along stable blocks, a home that is vacated is usually reoccupied relatively quickly by another family or tenant. But, as many Philadelphians are well aware, the presence of just one long-term vacant property can create a local nuisance and reduce property values. As noted in a previous study, the average household loses over \$8,000<sup>3</sup> in property value due to vacant property in Philadelphia. Over time and without action, one vacant building can snowball into a larger pattern of disinvestment, deteriorated housing, and additional vacant buildings, including some that require demolition.

Indeed, vacancy can be contagious, spreading quickly to the point that specific areas of the City have extreme concentrations of vacant property and declining market values.

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**HOMES WITHIN 150 FEET OF A VACANT PROPERTY LOSE MORE THAN \$7,690 IN VALUE.**

<sup>3</sup> Econsult Corporation, Penn Institute for Urban Research, May 8 Consulting. "Vacant Land Management in Philadelphia: The Cost of the Current System and the Benefits of Reform." 2010.

# VACANCY IN PHILADELPHIA: diary of a block



FIGURE 4: Diary of a Philadelphia block



Vacancy thus spurs a downward spiral that is difficult to arrest and address. In stable areas, properties that fall vacant are reabsorbed by the market. Residents, property owners, and developers all see value in investing in their properties. But in weak markets characterized by rising levels of vacancy and foreclosures, tax revenue and property values fall and the cost of providing essential services like policing, fire protection, and code enforcement rise.

For these and other reasons, there is significant overlap between crime hotspots in the City and concentrations of vacant property. As an important caveat, the correlation does not mean that vacant property causes crime, only that

there is a relation between these two factors. For anyone involved in community development, this is likely not a surprise. Vacant properties often attract illegal dumping and other illicit criminal activity.

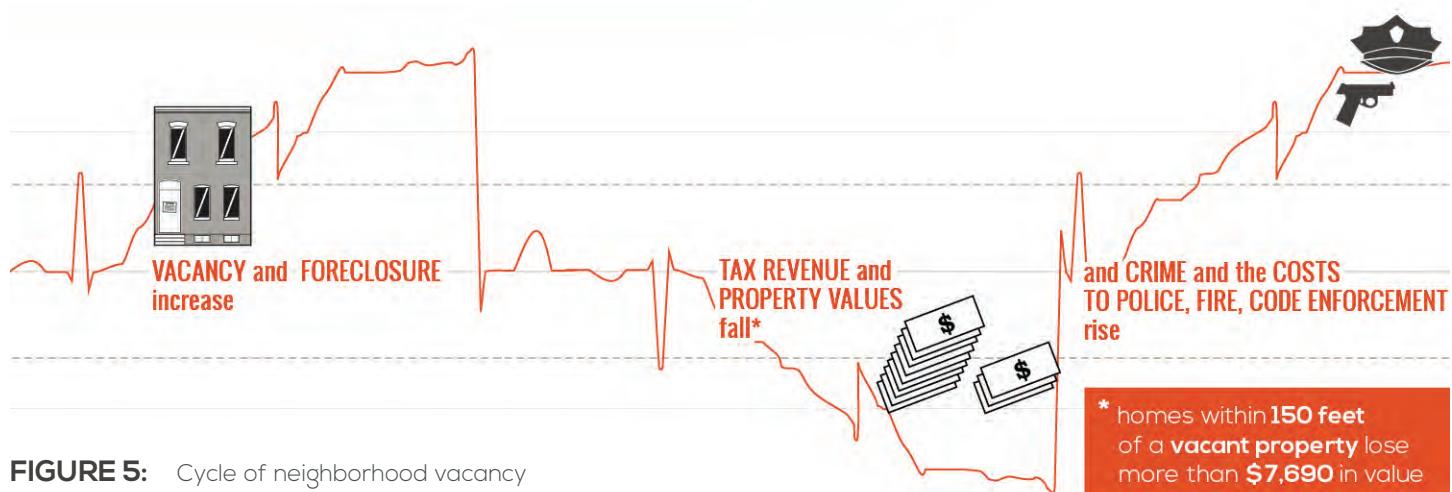
Vacancy and blight are therefore significant quality of life challenges – not just for neighborhoods beset by large amounts of vacancy, but also on blocks where residents are trying to address that one nuisance lot or building. A central objective of the enabling legislation for the Land Bank is to use this new authority to address single deteriorated properties as well as neighborhoods, whose very existence is at risk because of a pattern of vacancy and related issues.

## THE CYCLE BEGINS

In a stable neighborhood, vacant property is re-absorbed by the market.

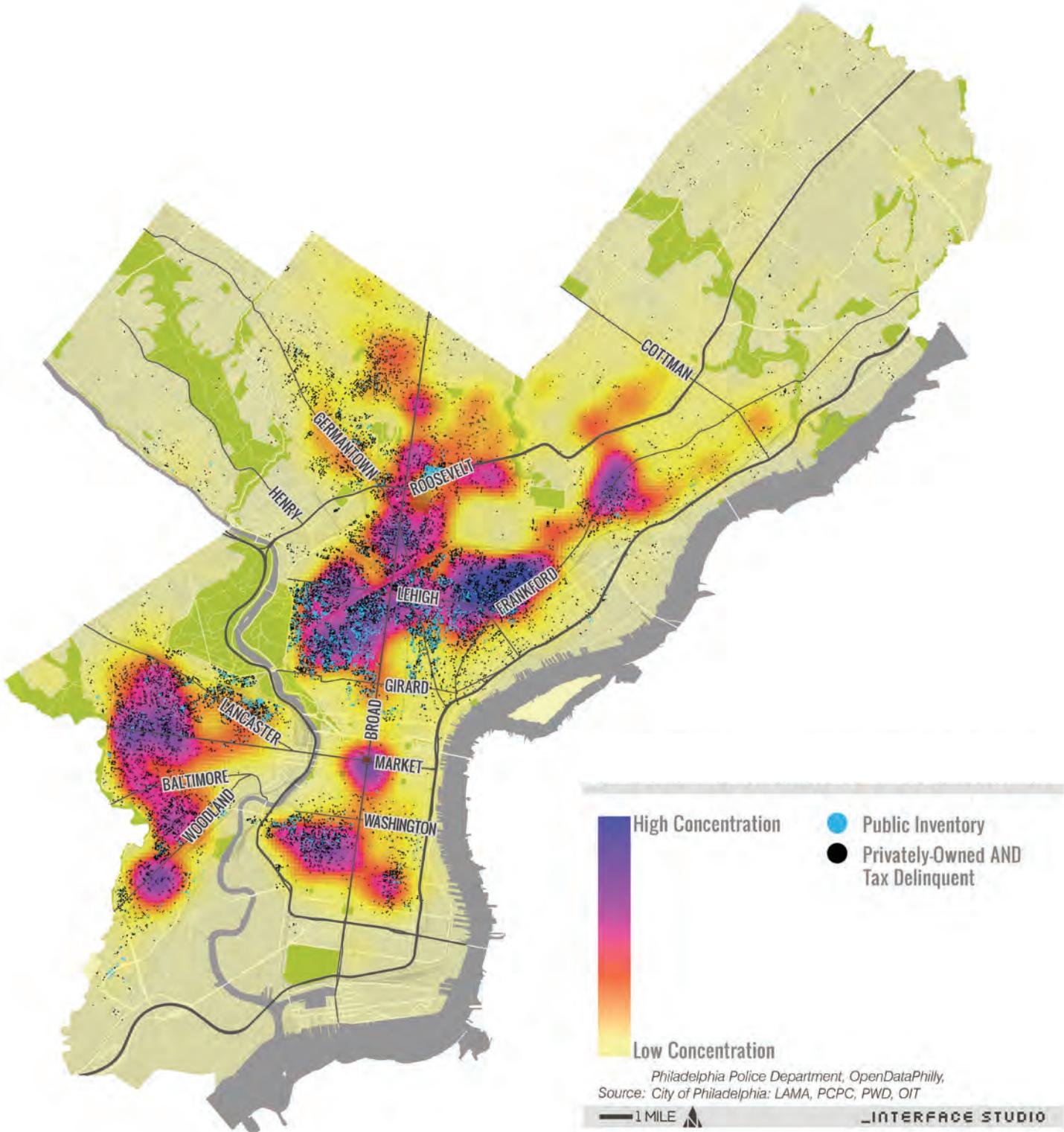


But in weak markets, when the balance tips too far:



**FIGURE 5:** Cycle of neighborhood vacancy

# CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS 2013, WITH VACANCY



**FIGURE 6:** Heat map of crimes against persons in 2012

# PHILADELPHIA'S CURRENT INVENTORY OF VACANT & TAX DELINQUENT PROPERTY

"POTENTIAL LAND  
BANK PROPERTIES"  
INCLUDE VACANT  
LAND AND BUILDINGS  
THAT ARE  
1) PUBLICLY-OWNED  
OR  
2) PRIVATELY-OWNED  
WITH TAX LIENS OR  
OTHER MUNICIPAL  
LIENS ON THE  
PROPERTY.

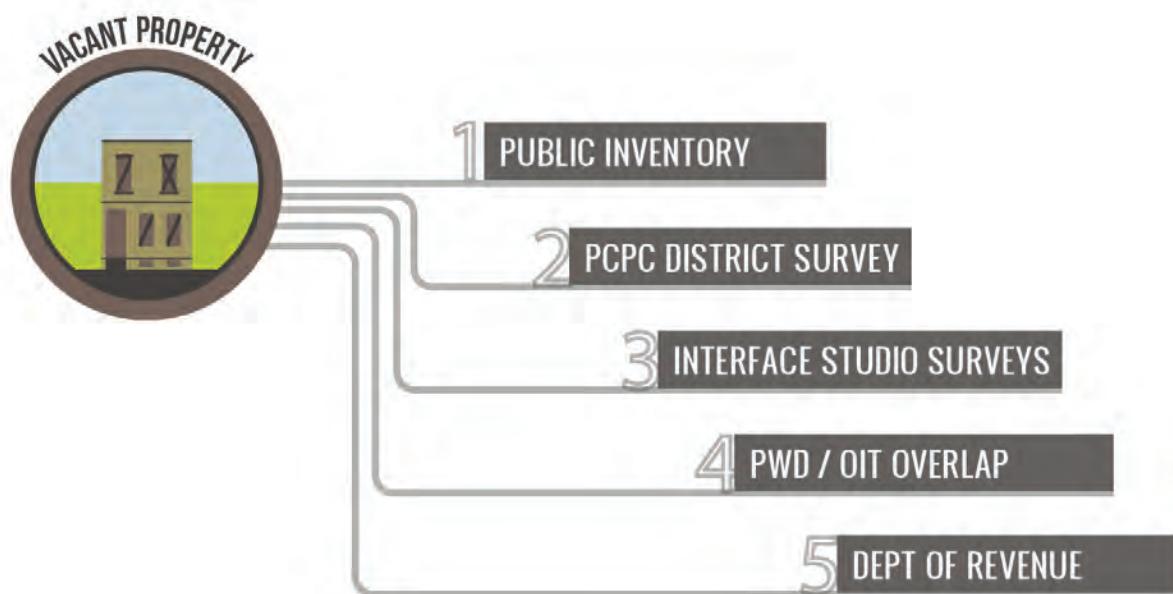
To address the systemic challenges associated with vacancy, the City's implementation of the Land Bank calls for a data-driven approach that is consistent with the legislation to identify the current inventory of vacant and tax delinquent land. At the outset of the Strategic Plan process, datasets from different City departments and other sources were collected, compared, and combined in an effort to identify the best possible working inventory of **potential Land Bank property**. The universe of potential properties defined for this Year One Land Bank Strategic Plan is a working inventory because there is no citywide survey of vacant property on which to build the plan, nor is there one dataset that tracks vacant properties in the City. Each department has collected and maintained its own data in accordance with its mission.

When the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority launched Philly Land Works, it published a dataset of vacant property owned by different City agencies, the PRA itself, the Department of Public Property, and the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation. However, the inventory of privately-owned vacant property remains in question. The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) maintains its own list of surplus vacant or deprogrammed PHA property. The Philadelphia City Planning Commission is conducting a citywide parcel-by-parcel land use survey as it develops the Philadelphia2035 District Plans. Currently, eight of the eighteen Districts have adopted plans that include land use data and an identification of vacant buildings and vacant lots, as well as actively-used properties. Similarly, the Philadelphia Water Department has an estimate of vacancy based upon its datasets as do both Licenses and Inspections and the Office of Property Assessment. In sum, these and other agencies have each collected information on vacancy separately and all use different indicators to determine what is vacant.



As more of the Philadelphia2035 District Plans are completed, the City's vacancy data will improve. In the meantime, the process of establishing a working inventory of potential Land Bank properties for the Year One Strategic Plan sought to use the best data currently available. The planning team, in consultation with representatives of the City agencies who created the data, applied five filters to arrive at an estimate of potential properties that could be taken into the Land Bank:

**FIGURE 7:** Hierarchy of data sets



› **1 The City's public inventory (also known as Land Management or "LAMA")**

–The publicly-owned vacant property database has been under close review for the past few years to correct inaccuracies and check title. This dataset spans the entire city and includes property owned by the Department of Public Property, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA), and the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is an independent agency. The Year One Strategic Plan analysis does take into account PHA's inventory of approximately 1,500 surplus properties, which includes vacant properties deemed non-viable, deprogrammed units that have been demolished or approved for demolition, and properties that have been approved for disposition. As the Land Bank would have to negotiate purchase of these properties through a separate process with PHA, the analysis of potential Land Bank properties does not include PHA's surplus properties among the total count of potential properties. Instead, data on PHA's surplus properties were used primarily to identify possible assemblages of vacant land that the Land Bank could acquire through coordination with PHA to create larger redevelopment sites.

- 
- › **2 Philadelphia2035 District Plan land use surveys** – Property-by-property field surveys by Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) staff have been conducted for the completed District Plans. These recent field surveys cover 42% of the City's non-industrial areas, but only one of the four Planning Districts with the greatest concentrations of vacancy has been surveyed.
  - › **3 Interface Studio neighborhood land use surveys** – Where Philadelphia 2035 District Plans have not been completed, the PCPC field survey data were supplemented with recent field survey data from Interface Studio. Only data collected by Interface Studio in the past two years were used. Once the Philadelphia2035 District Plans are completed in these areas, the Interface Studio data will be replaced with PCPC data. The Interface Studio surveys are applicable for portions of Point Breeze and Grays Ferry, Mantua and West Powelton, Tioga, and Hunting Park and covers just 2% of the City. The 44% of the City's non-industrial area<sup>5</sup> currently covered by a physical survey of property (by PCPC or Interface Studio) host 40% of the total estimated number of vacant and tax delinquent properties.
  - › **4 Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) & Office of Innovation and Technology (OIT)** – In the non-industrial area of the City not covered by a physical survey of property (56%), property presumed to be vacant by datasets from both PWD<sup>6</sup> and OIT<sup>7</sup> was included.<sup>8</sup> These sources are likely less accurate than vacancy recorded in property-by-property surveys.

Because the Land Bank can only take in vacant properties that are publicly-owned or privately-held and tax delinquent, a fifth dataset was used to identify the vacant properties that are both privately-owned and tax delinquent:

- › **5 Philadelphia Revenue Department** – Properties with property tax liens and/or L&I liens delinquent more than two years were joined to the estimated inventory of privately-held vacant land to locate the privately-held properties that are vacant and tax delinquent (longer than two years).

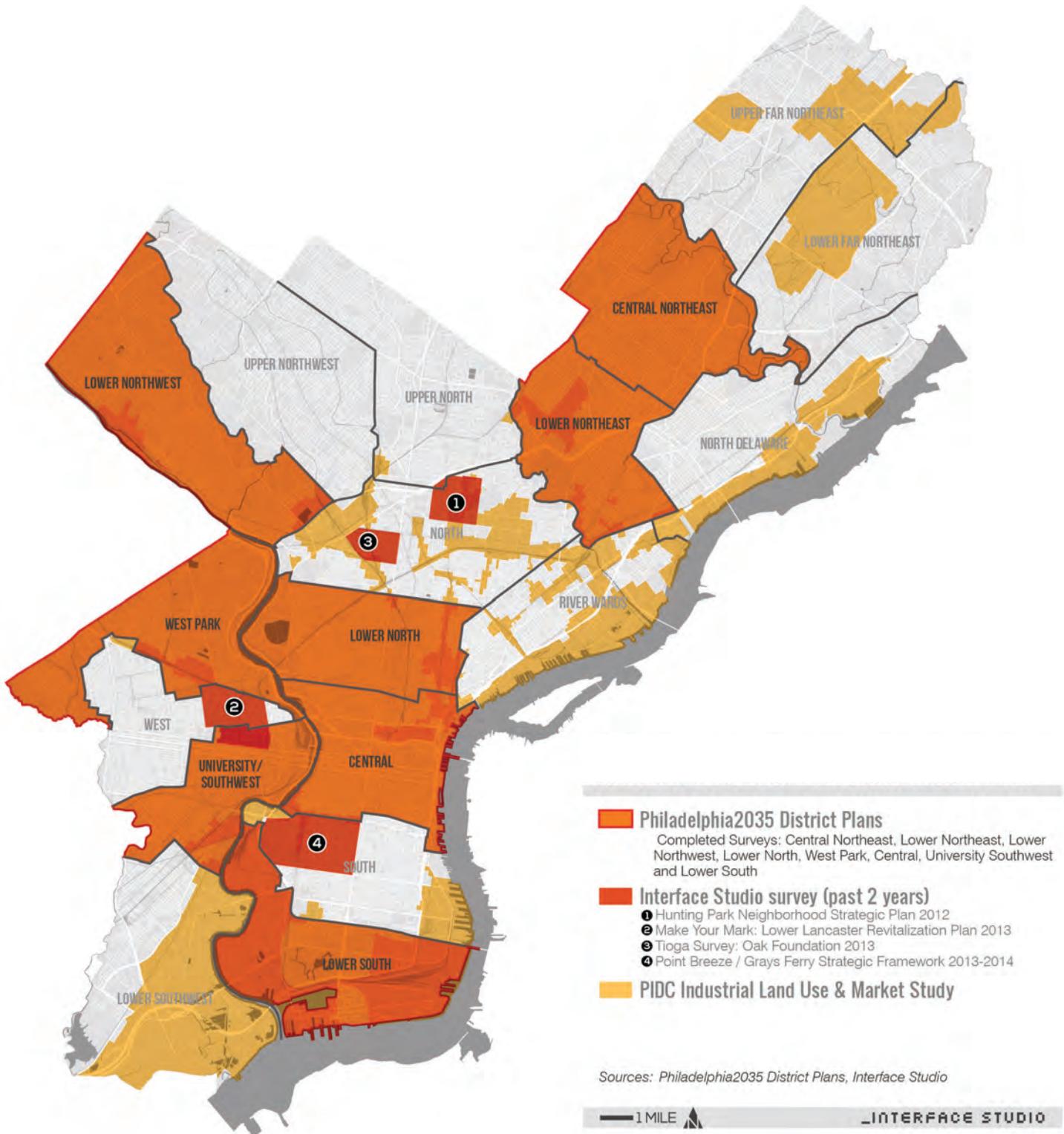
<sup>5</sup> As noted in footnote 2 on page 12, the Year One Strategic Plan does not address vacant property in areas identified for industrial preservation and growth by PIDC's Industrial Land Use & Market Strategy for the City of Philadelphia.

<sup>6</sup> Philadelphia Water Department vacancy data identifies vacant land where there is no service, service has been discontinued, or service has been suspended due to no activity. The dataset also identifies "developed" properties that may host a vacant building or as simple an improvement as a vacant shed or billboard, where service does not exist, has been shut off, discontinued, or suspended due to no activity.

<sup>7</sup> The vacancy dataset shared by the Office of Innovation and Technology blends vacancy data from the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and Planning Commission land use data that pre-dates the Planning District surveys with vacancy indicators collected or recorded by Licenses and Inspections and the Office of Property Assessment. Each property in the OIT dataset received a weighted score (based on accuracy and frequency of update of the data source) for each data source in which it registered. Scores for PRA (5), PCPC (2), L&I (2), and OPA (1) sources were then tallied for each property with a maximum result of 5, and properties with higher scores indicating presumed vacancy by multiple agencies are more likely to be vacant. Properties that had active rental licenses or major permits in the previous 2 years were removed from the data set.

<sup>8</sup> The blended vacancy dataset for areas with no survey included only parcels that registered as a vacant lot or vacant building in both the PWD dataset and the OIT dataset. All properties receiving scores of 2-5 in the OIT dataset that coincided with a vacant property in the PWD dataset were included. Properties that received a score of 1 in the OIT dataset were researched by PRA summer interns, and only those found to be vacant or in use as a garden, green space, parking area, or other informal use were included.

# RECENTLY SURVEYED AREAS OF PHILADELPHIA



**FIGURE 8:** Areas of Philadelphia with recent parcel survey data

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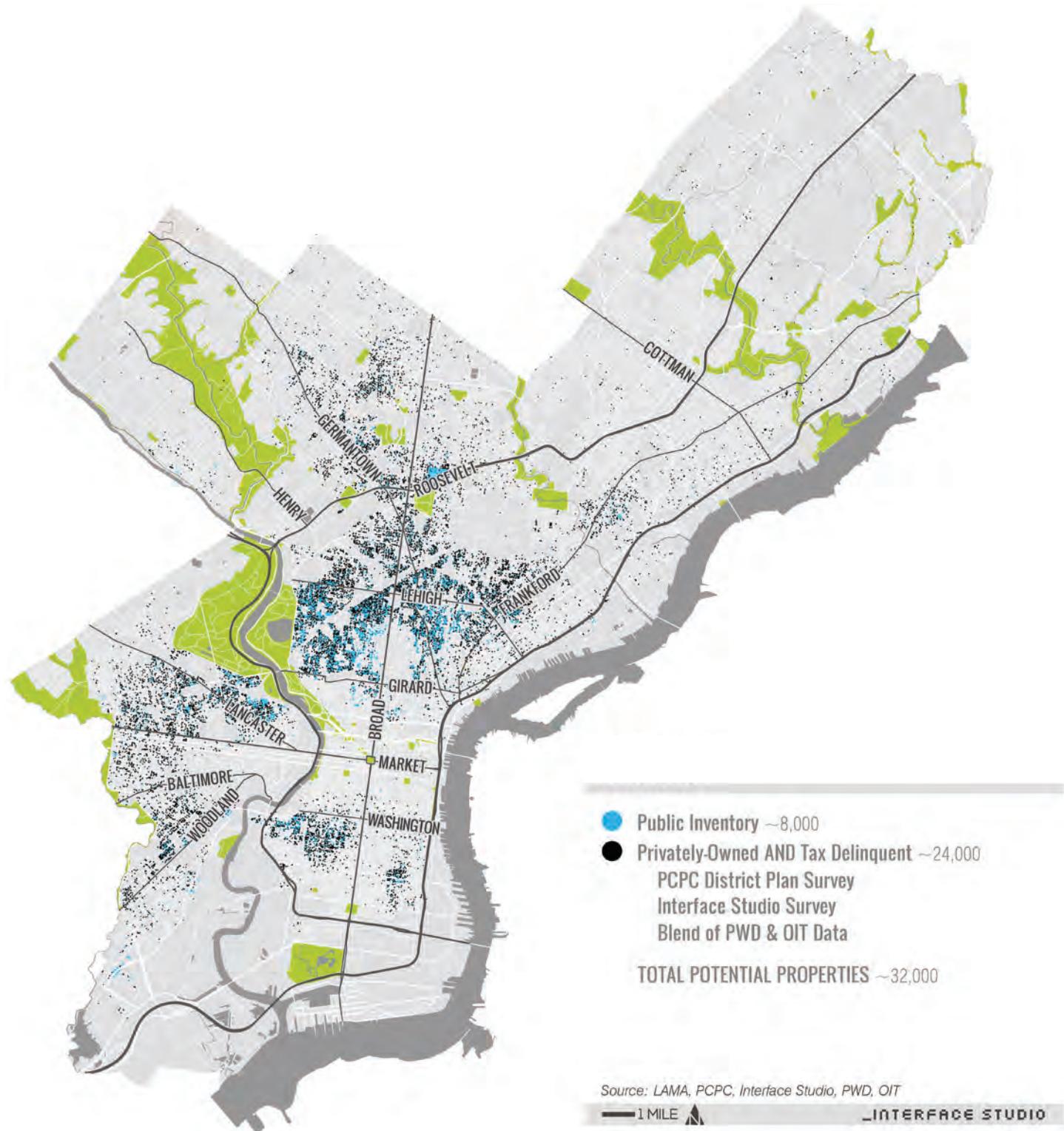
There are currently approximately 8,000 vacant properties in the public inventory that are not committed to a pending project. The data analysis identified an additional 24,000 privately-owned properties that are both vacant and tax delinquent. Therefore, in total, there are an estimated 32,000 potential Land Bank properties, not including PHA surplus property. 73% of these potential Land Bank properties are located within four Planning Districts. However, the challenge is wide-spread, as 35% of Census Blocks in the City have at least one vacant property.

Of the inventory, there are roughly 23,000 individual lots, roughly 9,000 vacant buildings. 46% of properties are single properties. 54% are adjacent to at least one other vacant property and thus present opportunities for land assembly to create larger sites. Over 100 assemblage opportunities, which consist of blocks with more than 10 potential Land Bank properties.

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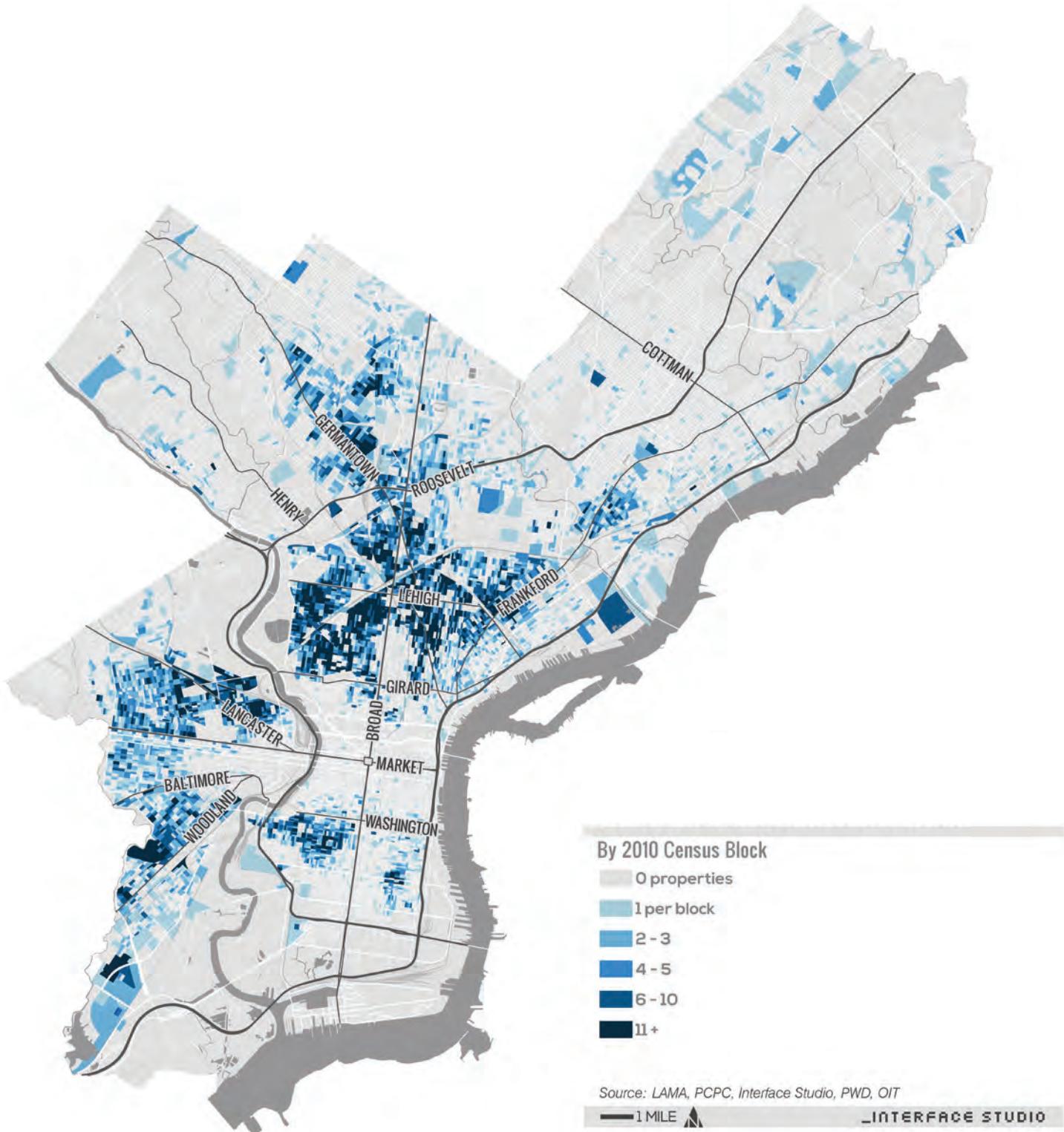
**THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED  
32,000 POTENTIAL  
LAND BANK PROPERTIES,  
WHICH INCLUDE VACANT PUBLICLY-OWNED  
OR PRIVATELY-HELD, TAX DELINQUENT  
PROPERTIES THAT ARE CANDIDATES FOR  
ACQUISITION BY THE LAND BANK.**

# POTENTIAL LAND BANK PROPERTIES



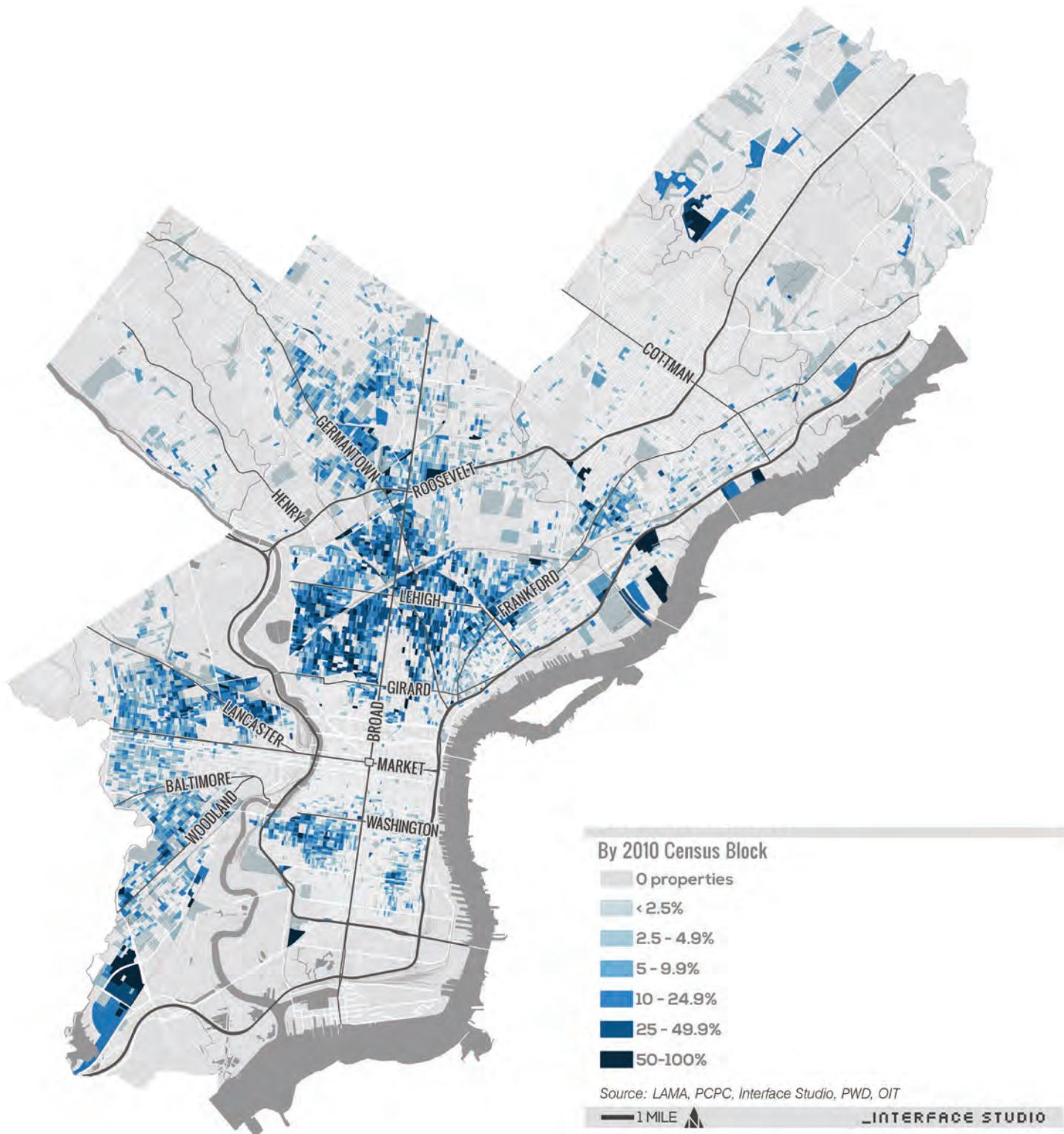
**FIGURE 9:** Potential Land Bank properties

# CITYWIDE VACANCY BY BLOCK - COUNT



**FIGURE 10:** Number of potential Land Bank properties aggregated by Census Block

# CITYWIDE VACANCY BY BLOCK - AREA



**FIGURE 11:** Percent of Census Block area covered by potential Land Bank properties

## THE CHALLENGE OF LAND ASSEMBLY

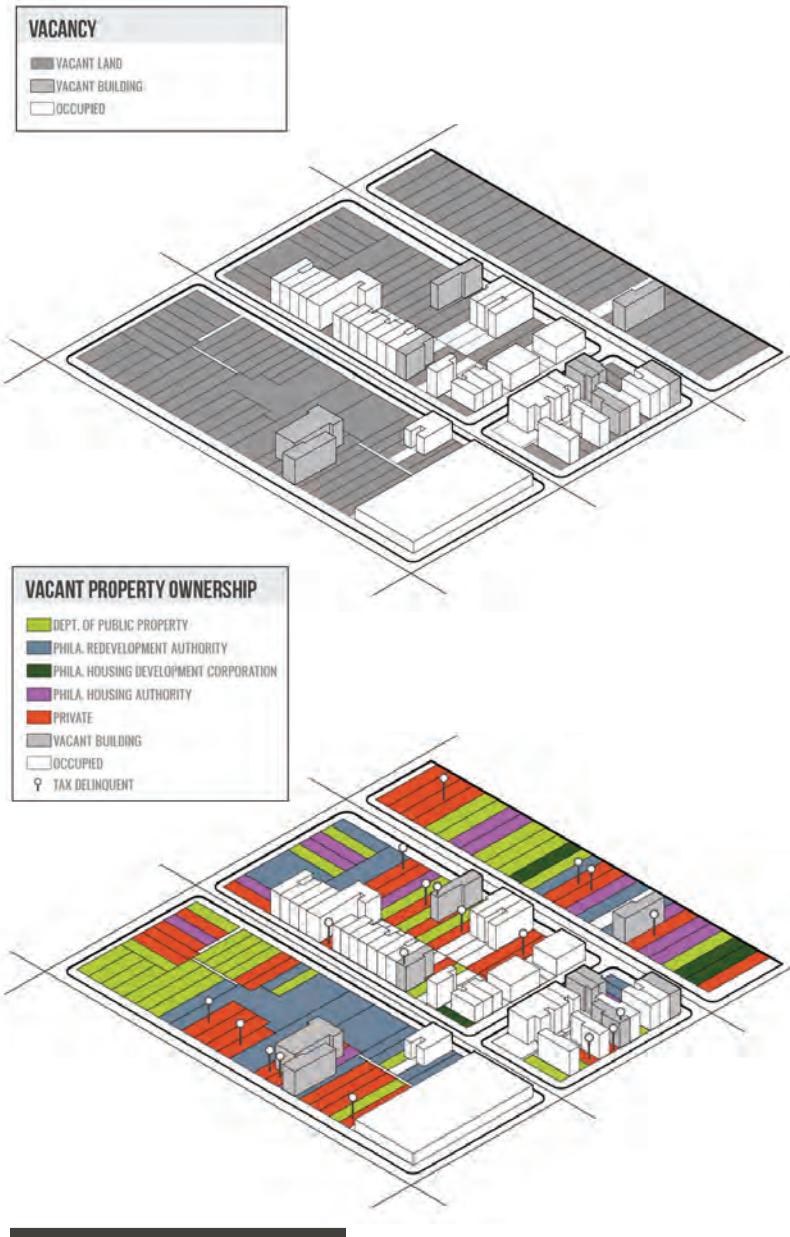
The Land Bank's powers to consolidate publicly-owned properties under one agency and foreclose on some of the estimated 24,000 privately-held tax-delinquent vacant properties present significant opportunities to reclaim control of deteriorated land and assemble larger sites better suited for redevelopment. Indeed, one of the greatest challenges in addressing vacant and tax delinquent land is the ability to obtain site control and clear title to the land. Some blocks appear to offer significant opportunities for redevelopment due to the amount and concentration of vacant land. However, ownership patterns reveal the underlying barrier. In an illustrative example, vacant property is owned by three separate City agencies, as well as the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA), which is its own, independent organization. Scattered among these publicly owned properties are a number of privately owned properties, only some of which are tax delinquent.

Whether the concept is to develop housing or create an urban farm, site assembly can be a critical first step to create a large enough site for reuse. In this example described, the process requires:

- › **1** Detailed property research
- › **2** Negotiations with three different City agencies for the land they control
- › **3** Purchase of vacant, tax delinquent land at auction
- › **4** Potentially, individual negotiations with PHA or purchase of their properties through PHA's own disposition process, and
- › **5** Negotiations with private, tax compliant owners if they can be found.

This complicated and time- and resource-intensive process is a real deterrent to even experienced developers and property owners who want to invest in the City. In contrast, when it is functioning the Land Bank will offer the opportunity to aggregate ownership in one location and then offer the assembled site for an acceptable end use.

**FIGURE 12:** The challenge of land assembly



**THE PROCESS FOR LAND ASSEMBLY IS MORE  
DIFFICULT THAN MEETS THE EYE FROM  
STREET LEVEL. VACANT LAND & BUILDINGS  
TYPICALLY HAVE MANY DIFFERENT OWNERS,  
AND NOT ALL PRIVATELY-HELD VACANT  
PROPERTY IS TAX DELINQUENT.**

## THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK: A NEW TOOL TO ADDRESS VACANCY IN OUR CITY

The Philadelphia Land Bank is designed to intervene, address issues of vacancy and facilitate vacant property recycling across the City.

Under the existing system, the owner of a vacant property defaults on local taxes and/or Municipal liens against the property and the foreclosure process is initiated, with the property put up for auction. Some properties are not sold and remain in the hands of the existing property owners. The reasons for this are numerous: the property is not in an area where the market is strong enough to support investment; the owed amount of the back taxes and/or liens is greater than what the property is worth; or, the title is not insurable, which prevents a new owner from obtaining a mortgage.

Some vacant, tax delinquent properties are acquired by City agencies for specific purposes such as the development of affordable housing. Other properties are auctioned and sold to private parties. Many of these auctioned properties are bought by speculators anticipating opportunities to capitalize on the low acquisition cost of the property and intending either to redevelop, or to "flip" the property to a new owner at a profit. Absent a real commitment toward investing in the property, however, the result too often is continued vacancy, ongoing tax delinquency, another auction, and the same cycle again. This cycle of vacancy is all too familiar to those invested in improving their blocks and neighborhoods.

The Philadelphia Land Bank is designed to break this cycle of vacancy. Instead of placing private, tax delinquent and vacant properties into the auction, the Land Bank can acquire properties, clear the title, improve the property (if needed)

### EXISTING CYCLE



**FIGURE 13:** Cycle of vacancy in Philadelphia

## LIMITATIONS OF THE LAND BANK

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and ultimately dispose of it for a productive use like housing, urban agriculture, commercial expansion, parking, etc. Through this process, the Philadelphia Land Bank can support the implementation of Philadelphia2035 District Plans and community-based neighborhood plans by providing land for planned uses already identified by residents and City leaders and considered critical to the future of the neighborhood.

The Philadelphia Land Bank functions primarily as an acquisition and disposition tool. Today, vacant and tax delinquent property across the City comes in many different shapes, sizes and conditions: an individual vacant building; a single vacant lot; a larger concentration of vacant land. Each brings different possibilities for its end use. In some cases, the Philadelphia Land Bank should convey property quickly because there is an identified end user. In other cases, the Land Bank may want to assemble a site and seek a capable end user. For example, if an organization is looking to protect an existing community garden, the property can be acquired by the Land Bank and provided to either the owner of the garden, or an organization dedicated to protecting gardens across the City such as the Neighborhoods Gardens Trust or Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. Similarly, the Philadelphia Land Bank can help to assemble and ultimately provide parcels suitable for the development of affordable housing as promoted by City Council's report "Building an Affordable Future."

There are significant limitations that must be acknowledged. Acquiring and disposing of property requires financial resources and staff capacity. This means that the Philadelphia Land Bank cannot, and should not address all of the 32,000 potential Land Bank properties. A high performing land bank like Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) processed about 3,500 of the County's 26,000 vacant properties in 2013.<sup>9</sup> That same year, the Cuyahoga Land Bank was able to demolish 2,200 unsafe structures and transfer 1,400 lots to productive uses.

As in other cities, it is important that the Philadelphia Land Bank be viewed as what it is --an implementation tool and just one of many such tools available in the City. Code enforcement, the CLIP program and the demolition of imminently dangerous structures by L&I, among other tools, remain commitments of the City to address the problem of vacant property. The Philadelphia Land Bank has a limited but powerful mandate focused on making vacant land and nuisance properties available for new uses.

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<sup>9</sup> Vacant Property Research Network. "Cleveland and Cuyahoga County, Ohio: A Resilient Region's Responses to Reclaiming Vacant Properties." May 2014

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**THE LAND BANK FUNCTIONS AS AN  
ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION TOOL BY  
WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO IDENTIFY  
REUSE POSSIBILITIES FOR DIFFERENT TYPES  
OF VACANT PROPERTY AND HELPING TO  
RECLAIM AND REDISTRIBUTE THAT LAND.**

## OTHER AVAILABLE TOOLS

The Philadelphia Land Bank will be one of several tools used by the City to address the problem of distressed properties.

### COMMUNITY LIFE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Community Life Improvement Program, or CLIP, works to clean and secure private properties, either through voluntary owner compliance or by doing so itself when an owner is not responsive. Run by the Managing Director's Office, the CLIP program cited and cleaned more than 7,000 vacant lots in fiscal year 2013.

### COMMUNITY LANDCARE & PHILADELPHIA LANDCARE

The Community LandCare and Philadelphia LandCare programs clean and mow more than 8,100 key vacant parcels across the City from spring through fall; together, these parcels comprise more than 10 million square feet of land. Funded by the City's Office of Housing and Community Development and managed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, these programs eliminate acres of blight and often stimulate investment in the neighborhood.

### DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES + INSPECTIONS

The City's Department of Licenses and Inspections cleans and secures thousands of properties each year. In addition, it enforces requirements for functional windows and doors on vacant properties.

### PHILADELPHIA REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority has the ability to use eminent domain to acquire property and assemble it, often with other publicly owned land, for redevelopment. This ability has been a key element in public initiatives across the City.

The Philadelphia Land Bank, working with these partners, will be a critical tool as Philadelphia works to turn deteriorated properties into housing, economic development and neighborhood amenities.



THE LAND BANK IS JUST ONE TOOL IN THE CITY'S TOOLBOX FOR ADDRESSING VACANCY.

## **MARKET LIMITATIONS IN REPURPOSING VACANT PROPERTY**

Philadelphia's real estate market is continuing to recover from the Great Recession, and new residential construction and substantial rehabilitation of existing structures is apparent in many City neighborhoods. However, market demand for residential and commercial real estate is not unlimited, and not every Land Bank asset will be marketable or suitable for development. Over time, Land Bank operations will be impacted by a number of factors including real estate market cycles, resource constraints, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of individual Land Bank properties.

### **Market Demand**

Demand for new and rehabilitated housing units is generated by growth in the number of households,<sup>10</sup> the need to replace deteriorated, damaged or functionally obsolete residential units, and changes in household age and income patterns. Similarly, commercial demand is impacted by increases in households, rising incomes, and additional employment in a surrounding trade area. Philadelphia2035 projects growth of approximately 1,500 households per year over the 25-year comprehensive planning period. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in Philadelphia increased an average of 966 per year; the Philadelphia 2035 projections reflect new preferences for urban living and the momentum of growth and revitalization currently taking place in the City.

From 2000 through 2013, an average of 1,832 new housing units per year were built in the City of Philadelphia, but the actual number of units produced in a given year varied widely. During the height of the pre-recession building boom – from 2003 through 2007 – the number of new construction units produced averaged 2,433 per year. During the recent downturn, annual production dropped to just over 1,000 units annually.

With its authority to assemble marketable parcels, the Land Bank will capture a percentage of overall Philadelphia demand. However, disposition to private parties, including owners and developers, will be influenced by cyclical market conditions and limited demand for land.

### **PHILADELPHIA2035 PROJECTS**

**GROWTH OF APPROXIMATELY 1,500  
HOUSEHOLDS PER YEAR OVER THE  
25-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING  
PERIOD.**

<sup>10</sup> The U.S. Census defines households as "all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence." A housing unit is "a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters."

## Resources

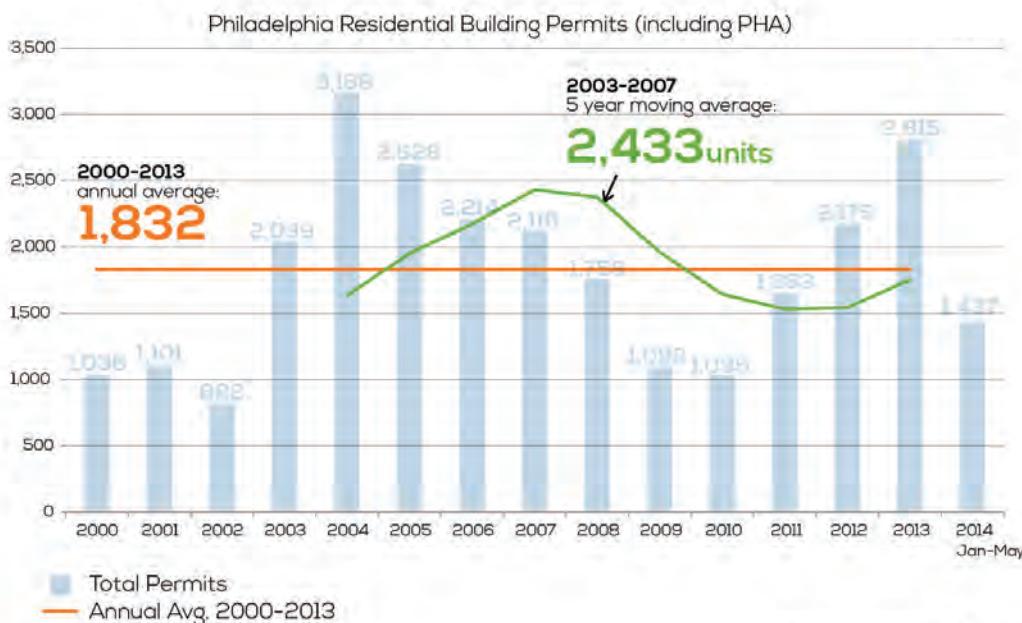
From 2001 through 2013, the number of new construction and substantially rehabilitated affordable housing units produced annually in Philadelphia has averaged approximately 1,050, of which two-thirds are rental units financed under the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC). During recent years, HUD's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) helped to subsidize new and rehabilitated homeownership units in targeted neighborhoods. Because federal and state government funding for affordable homeownership development is now severely constrained, the recently released City Council 2,000 New Affordable Housing Units Initiative has proposed local funding mechanisms for development of 1,000 new homeownership units. The initiative also proposes development of 1,000 additional affordable rental units using a combination of local and LIHTC funding.

## Site Characteristics

Many factors impact the marketability and suitability of land for residential and commercial development including parcel size, location, visibility, accessibility, environmental and geotechnical conditions, and adjacent and surrounding land uses. The Land Bank can assemble individual lots to create parcels of a marketable size, but is limited in its ability to influence other site-related characteristics. As a result, certain Land Bank assets will be more suitable than others for disposition and residential or commercial reuse.

# NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

**...has averaged over 1,800 units/year since 2000**



Source: Censtats, PHFA, PHA

**FIGURE 14:** New residential construction trends in Philadelphia

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Improving neighborhood conditions and sustaining improvements over time requires a tremendous amount of human, financial, and technical resources. Neighborhood residents, and community-based institutions play critically important roles in this process, as do the public and private sectors. Philadelphia's collective capacity as a "city of neighborhoods," and the capacity of its individual neighborhoods have grown steadily, particularly over the past decade. Through grassroots activism, community-driven revitalization plans, and neighborhood involvement the Planning Commission's Philadelphia2035 District Plans, residents have become increasingly adept at articulating shared visions and priorities for their neighborhoods and working cooperatively with public and private sector partners to transform visions into reality. In addition, community development corporations, financial and technical intermediaries, and other nonprofit service organizations, act as valued partners, supporting residents in their place-making and neighborhood revitalization work. Often augmenting this neighborhood-scale work are for-profit developers combining financial and social missions.

Philadelphia's Land Bank must take advantage of the substantial local capacity that exists. Among the principal processes that define capacity are the abilities to develop skills through work experiences, education, and training opportunities, and apply those skills. In the context of transforming urban neighborhoods, capacity is held and exercised by residents, community groups, and their partners. Sharing knowledge and the confidence gained through supportive networks is critical to growing and sustaining local capacity. In addition, developing organizational infrastructure and institutional affiliations helps build in accountability and attract outside resources to support a mission and the programs and projects that advance that mission – from housing and land care, to community facilities and commercial retail.

Among the principal characteristics of organizations that demonstrate "capacity" is the ability to access and mobilize capital to achieve desired outcomes. For private, non-profit, and volunteer-based organizations poised to work in coordination, collaboration, or partnership with the Philadelphia Land Bank, there are two principal forms of capital that should carry equal weight in defining capacity: financial capital and social capital, as described on the following page.

## **Financial Capital**

- › Access to predevelopment funds to help establish program or project feasibility
- › Access to development financing to build or cultivate the asset
- › Cash equity
- › Sweat equity
- › Debt financing
- › External subsidies
- › Cash flow to support operations of the asset over time
- › Work flow to manage the asset over time
- › Internal systems to protect the underlying value of the asset over time

In repurposing and redeveloping vacant land in many of Philadelphia's neighborhoods for housing, greening, or commercial end uses, Philadelphia's Land Bank can take advantage of the substantial and significant local capacity that exists – especially in neighborhoods that have high concentrations of underutilized property. Part of the research in developing this Strategic Plan included identifying the significant local resources across the City and in areas characterized by higher concentrations of vacant properties. These resources are described in the context of the Strategic Plan goals tailored to the specific range of end uses identified in the plan.

## **Social Capital**

- › Informed constituency
- › Engaged citizenry
- › Skilled operations
- › Accountable individual leadership
- › Accountable institutional leadership

PHILADELPHIA  
LAND BANK  
YEAR ONE  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN



A photograph of a park-like setting with green grass, purple flowers, and trees in the background. The image is partially obscured by several thick white diagonal bars that intersect across the page.

# STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



03

# STRATEGIC PLAN

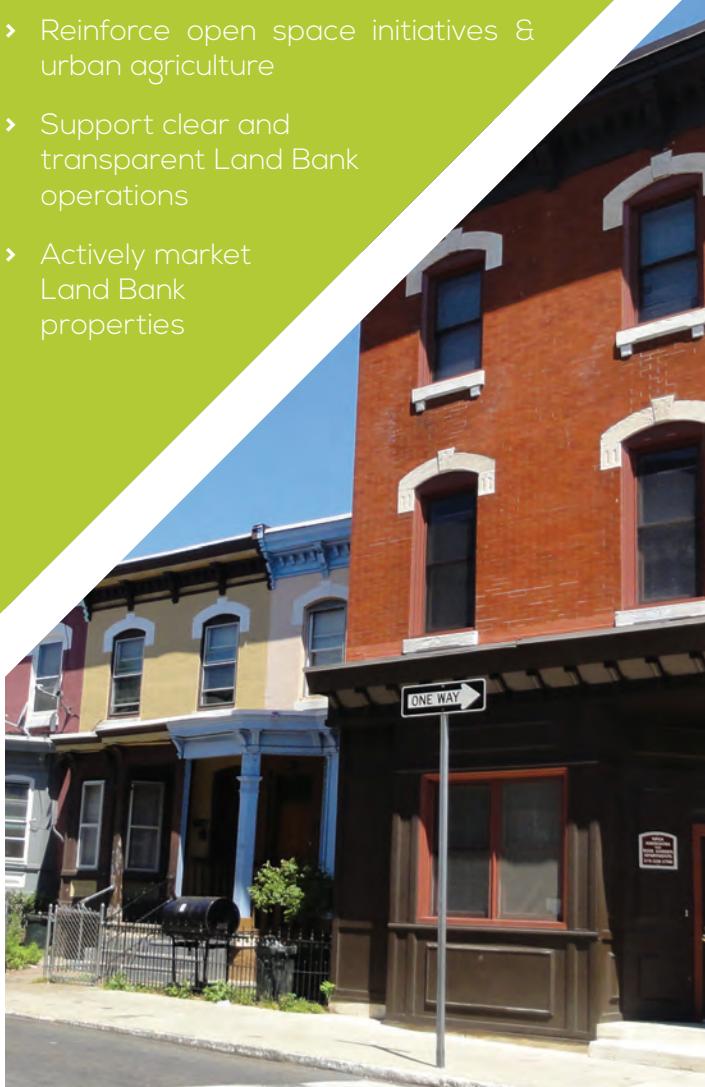
## GOALS

Based upon the data analysis undertaken to understand existing vacancy and tax delinquency in Philadelphia, market trends, socio-economic indicators and other factors that influence the opportunities for reuse as well as conversations with different stakeholders and interest groups, seven (7) primary goals emerged to guide Land Bank activity.

- › Return individual vacant lots & buildings across the City to productive use
- › Promote equitable community development
- › Extend private investment
- › Contribute to long-term economic vitality
- › Reinforce open space initiatives & urban agriculture
- › Support clear and transparent Land Bank operations
- › Actively market Land Bank properties

These seven goals, which respond to the inventory of potential Land Bank properties, are organized in three categories:

- › **Citywide Approach** – to ensure the effective use of the Land Bank to address nuisance properties and opportunities for redevelopment and reuse across all neighborhoods in Philadelphia;
- › **Focus Zones** – to capitalize on the concentrations of vacant and tax delinquent property as resources to support established objectives from equitable housing to economic development; and
- › **Operations** – to guide how the Land Bank will market properties, assess possibilities for the end use of Land Bank properties, and work to improve the quality and accessibility of data sources.



# CITYWIDE APPROACH

Challenges associated with vacancy are widespread. Although the majority of vacant properties are concentrated within specific areas in the City, there are specific opportunities to transform scattered vacant and tax delinquent properties across all Philadelphia neighborhoods. The Land Bank is a potential tool to help residents, homeowners, and others put such isolated vacant properties back into use.

Citywide, the Land Bank will continue to be responsive to requests for vacant property regardless of location. As with the existing Expression of Interest (EOI) system offered by Philly Land Works, viable requests for vacant land and buildings, including project-driven requests for land to support development projects, will be considered by the Land Bank. The database of potential Land Bank properties will be placed online when the Land Bank updates its web presence.

Beyond the project-driven or constituent-initiated requests for property citywide, the Land Bank will proactively seek opportunities to stem the tide of scattered vacancy encroaching on stable blocks in accordance with the following goal.

**ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY OF VACANT  
PROPERTIES ARE CONCENTRATED WITHIN  
SPECIFIC REGIONS IN THE CITY, THERE ARE  
SPECIFIC CITYWIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO  
TRANSFORM SCATTERED VACANT AND TAX  
DELINQUENT PROPERTIES ACROSS ALL  
PHILADELPHIA NEIGHBORHOODS.**

## **GOAL 1:**

### **RETURN INDIVIDUAL VACANT LOTS & BUILDINGS ACROSS THE CITY TO PRODUCTIVE USE**

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#### **WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT FOR PHILADELPHIA**

Many vacant properties are isolated buildings or lots adjacent to active uses. There have been many formal Expressions of Interest for just the 8,000 properties currently within the public inventory of vacant properties. In addition, local Council members have received multiple requests from homeowners regarding the acquisition of lots next door to their properties in order to create a sideyard or additional space for parking. Transitioning these scattered vacant lots and buildings to productive use will help stabilize many blocks and communities throughout Philadelphia and offer amenities that improve quality of life in neighborhoods across the City. At the same time, some individual "vacant lots" are not actually vacant but used as community gardens. Ensuring land security for gardens is an important goal for the health of Philadelphia neighborhoods. This goal includes three supporting objectives related to infill development, sideyards, and community gardens / urban agriculture.

#### **OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFY, ACQUIRE, MARKET, AND CONVEY INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE CITY**

In neighborhoods with stable markets, individual vacant buildings (or lots) threaten the stability of the block but also present opportunities for rehabilitation if they can be placed in the hands of a developer or property owner willing to invest in the property. These properties represent infill or individual development opportunities.

Areas of Philadelphia where there are opportunities to either rehabilitate a vacant building or develop an infill home on a vacant lot include Regional Choice, High Value and Steady Market areas as defined by The Reinvestment Fund's (TRF) Market Value Analysis (MVA)<sup>11</sup> (see Figure 29 on page 69) or any location where the potential sales price of the property is greater than the cost of construction. There are currently over 300 vacant buildings that meet this criteria, roughly 20 of which are publicly-owned, and over 800 vacant lots that are infill opportunities, including approximately 120 that are publicly-owned. The Land Bank will be proactive in identifying, acquiring, and marketing these properties for redevelopment.

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<sup>11</sup> TRF defines Regional Choice, High Value and Steady Markets in the following way:

Regional Choice (A): Highest home prices, low number of foreclosure filings relative to sales volume, lowest owner occupancy rate, highest level of new construction activity.

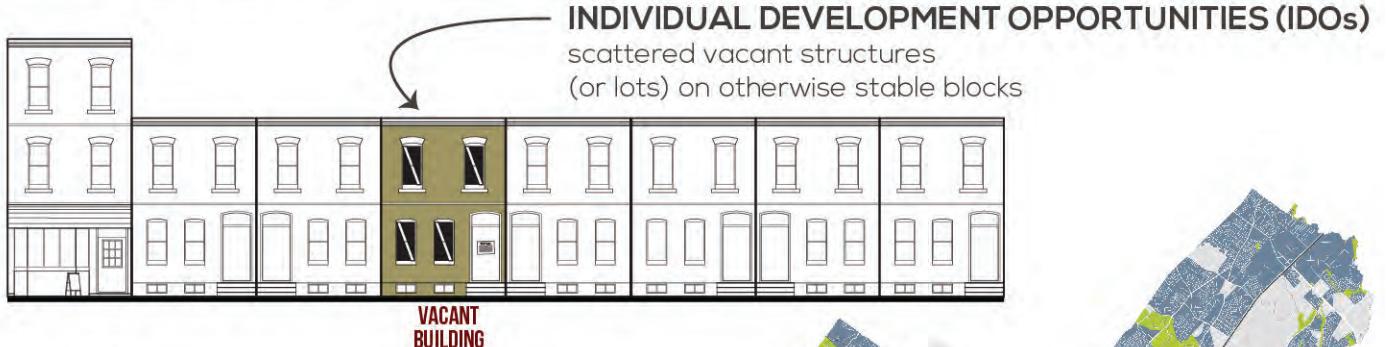
Regional Choice (B): High home prices, lowest foreclosure rate relative to sales volume, relatively low percent owner occupied compared to the citywide average, highest percent commercial mix.

High Value (C): Relatively high home prices, high level of new construction, relatively low ownership rate compared to the citywide average.

Steady 1 (D): Relatively high home prices compared to the citywide average, fairly active level of new construction, substantially higher foreclosures as a percent of sales than Regional Choice and High Value categories.

Steady 2 (E): Second lowest level of vacancies, second highest homeownership rate, lower level of new construction compared to previous categories, lowest coefficient of variance in sale prices.

# SCATTERED VACANCY:



## IDO Areas:

- TRF's Regional Choice,  
High Value & Steady Markets
- OR
- Sale Price > Construction Costs

**300+** vacant structures  
~20 IN PUBLIC INVENTORY

**800+** vacant lots  
~120 IN PUBLIC INVENTORY

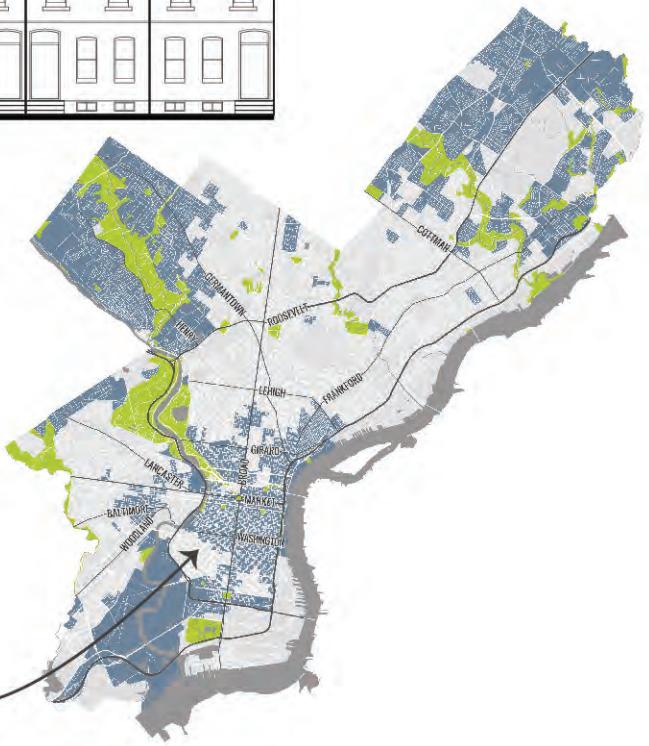


FIGURE 15: Individual Development Opportunities

## SALE PRICE > COST TO BUILD

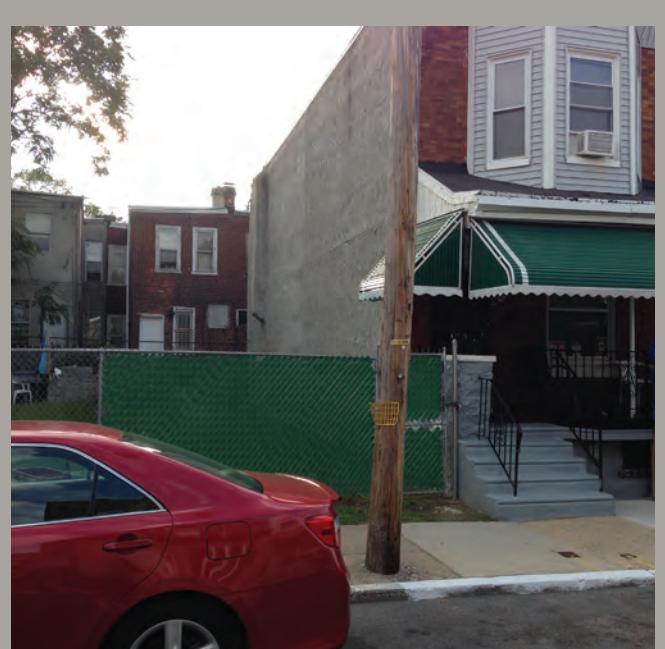
MVA: Regional Choice, High Value and Steady  
&  
Housing sales greater than \$275,000 or \$200  
per square foot

## **OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFY, MARKET AND CONVEY LAND TO ADJACENT HOMEOWNERS**

In neighborhoods of all types, there are opportunities to transfer vacant lots to adjacent homeowners for different uses. In most cases, homeowners request side or rear lots for either a yard or parking space. Side and rear yards are acceptable uses in all cases, but parking should only be considered an acceptable use if the curb cut does not take away current on-street parking.

To be eligible to acquire a potential Land Bank lot next door, a homeowner must be in good standing with the City: current on all taxes and with no current liens regarding the property of interest and as well as any additional properties held by the owner. There are currently about 2,100 potential Land Bank lots next to homeowners in good standing, roughly 400 of which are already publicly-owned. As with the individual development opportunities, the Land Bank will be proactive in identifying, acquiring, marketing and conveying properties to interested, tax-compliant homeowners.

### **TRUE STORY**

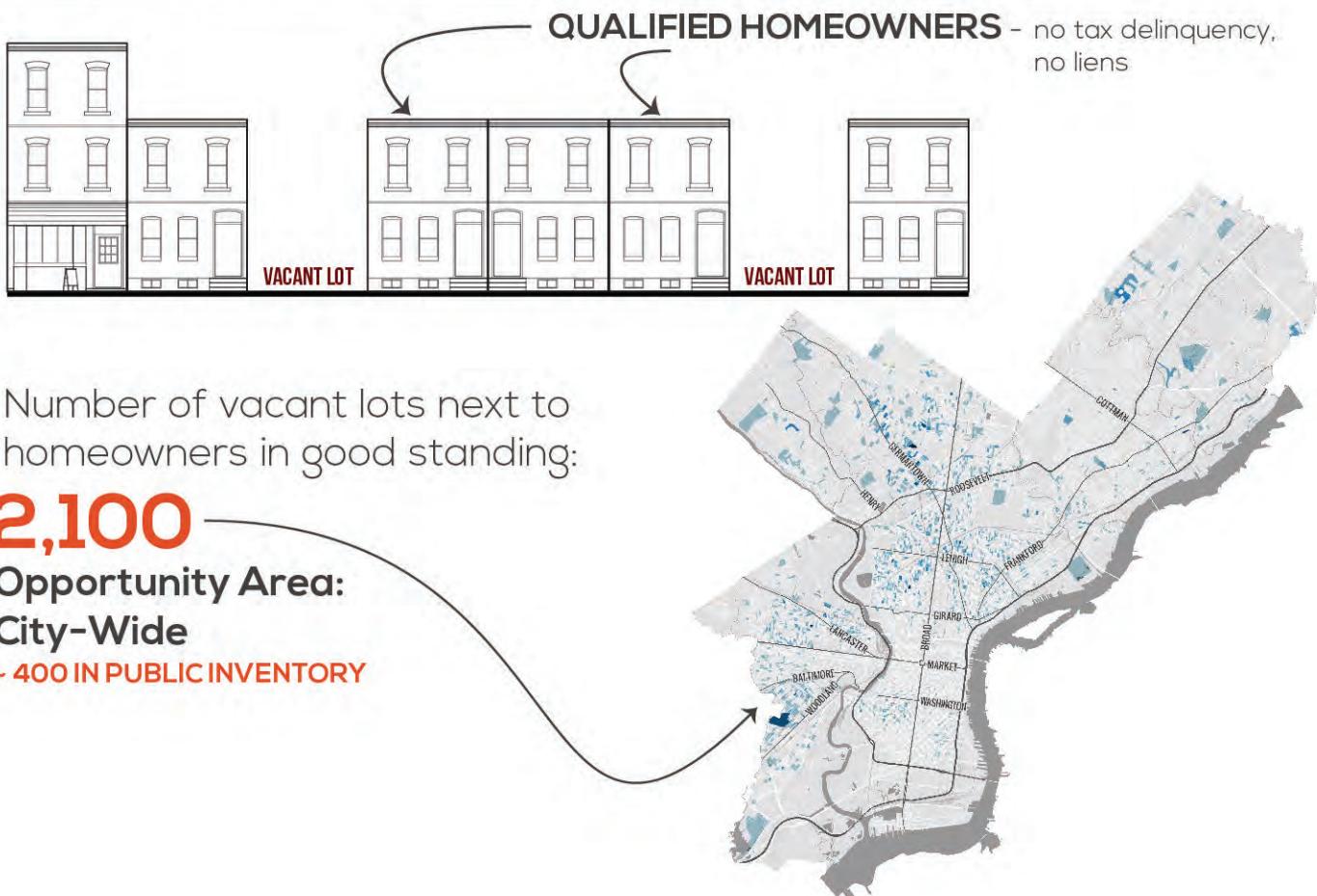


"Jackie" has been living in her home for 24 years, paying her taxes and caring for her home. After her next-door neighbors passed away several years ago, the taxes on their house went unpaid and the home the estate left behind deteriorated until the City demolished it when it became dangerous.

Jackie and her husband fenced the resulting lot in and planted and maintained grass and a garden. However, they have been unable to acquire it for themselves.

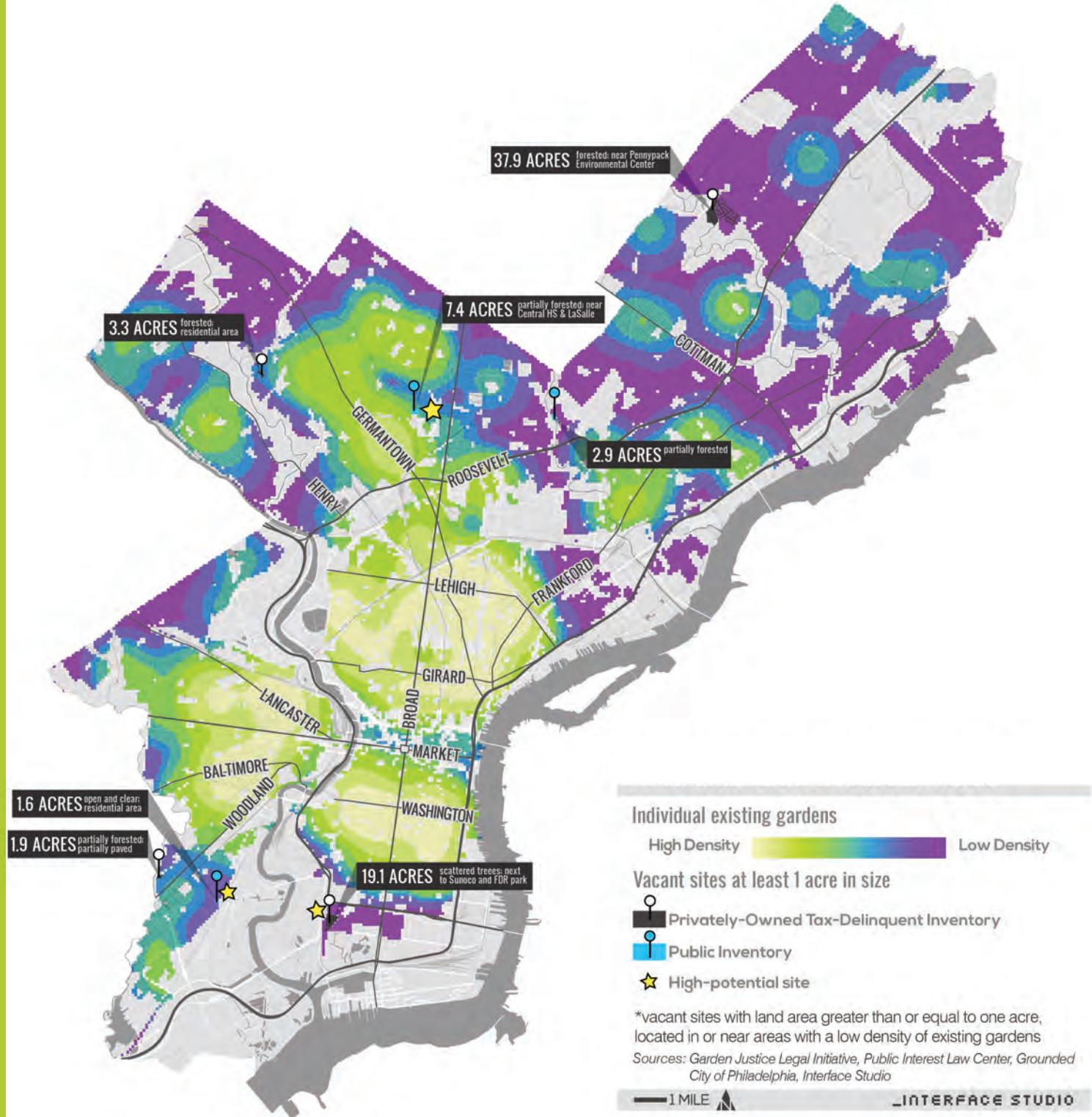
Because the City is owed nearly \$8,000 in back taxes and more than \$25,000 in demolition liens, the Land Bank will be able to acquire the property, clear the back taxes and liens, and transfer ownership of the lot to Jackie. As a result, Jackie and her husband will have a **sideyard**, her home will be more valuable, and a property will be returned to the City's tax rolls.

# SIDEYARDS:



**FIGURE 16:** Census blocks with potential sideyard opportunities

# POTENTIAL LARGE OPEN SPACE SITES\*



**FIGURE 17:** Potential large open space opportunities

## **OBJECTIVE: PRESERVE EXISTING COMMUNITY GARDENS AND IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR LARGER-SCALE FOOD PRODUCTION**

With the large amount of vacant land in the City, many residents have taken it upon themselves to transform the vacant lot on their block into a small-scale community garden. Others have taken a few lots and created larger opportunities for food production designed to engage and educate residents as well as improve local health. In many cases, these activities are taking place without the permission of the owner of the property, which threatens the future of these community-tended spaces. The Land Bank can help to preserve existing gardens that have community support and a track record of maintenance by consolidating ownership and working with the organizers to secure a lease for the property, or, determine the best long-term preservation option including conveyance to a private individual, business (in the case of a working farm), a land trust such as the Neighborhood Gardens Trust, or the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation. In accordance with Figures 48 and 50, initial opportunities for the preservation of existing gardens should focus on rapidly developing areas including Brewerytown, East Passyunk, Fishtown, Mantua, Point Breeze and west of Temple University.

Existing community gardens are somewhat concentrated in areas where both interest in and real capacity for the management of these spaces has developed. Many other locations in Philadelphia currently have no existing community gardens and limited, organized resources available to create them. However, there is still an expressed interest in larger-scale market farms and/or destination gardens in the City. The vacancy data reveal that in areas of the City without existing gardens there are opportunities, some of which are very large in size, to create large-scale food producing uses. Some of these sites are already in the public inventory and others have significant development constraints, including floodplain restrictions. The Land Bank will support opportunities to convey key properties for use as destination gardens or market farms to organizations that can demonstrate capacity to finance and maintain the improved sites.

### **SAINT BERNARD COMMUNITY GARDEN**



The **Saint Bernard Community Garden** in West Philadelphia is an actively used garden that has been in existence for about 15 years. The garden currently serves 50 families and has a waiting list of interested gardeners seeking a plot.

The Saint Bernard Community Garden originally emerged atop two privately-owned properties, both tax-delinquent and with liens. When one of the lots went up for Sheriff's Sale, gardeners organized and successfully obtained Council support; that half of the garden was brought into the City's inventory of land and will soon be transferred to the Neighborhood Gardens Trust for preservation.

The other half of the garden remains in limbo; still held by a private owner, the property is tax-delinquent and has liens. The Land Bank is, therefore, a unique tool, well-positioned to acquire the remaining half of the garden and then transfer title to the Neighborhood Gardens Trust, thus preventing the possible displacement of a beloved community asset.

# FOCUS ZONES

The Focus Zone goals aim to help the Land Bank strategically target its acquisition, maintenance, and disposition activities in designated regions of the City for maximum impact. There are four Focus Zone goals, each of which relates to a specific element of the Strategic Plan as described in the enabling legislation:

- › **PROMOTE EQUITABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (Affordable Housing)** – This Focus Zone goal identifies areas in the City where the Land Bank should work to preserve affordability and expand housing choice by acquiring, assembling, and disposing of land for affordable housing, some of which may be accessible or visitable. The Focus Zones identified under this goal, including appreciating areas, will support implementation of the City Council 2,000 New Affordable Housing Units Initiative to provide a range of housing options for all residents.
- › **EXTEND PRIVATE INVESTMENT (Market-Rate Housing)** – This Focus Zone goal highlights areas on the fringes of strong residential markets in the City where the Land Bank should take strategic actions to acquire and dispose of land for redevelopment by private market developers building mixed-income and market-rate housing.
- › **CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM ECONOMIC VITALITY (Economic Development)** – This Focus Zone goal speaks to economic development and thus targets commercial corridors in the City where the activities of the Land Bank could support economic development, including the development or expansion of retail services to provide access to needed goods, job creation for community residents and, the development of community facilities that provide needed services to residents.
- › **REINFORCE OPEN SPACE INITIATIVES and URBAN AGRICULTURE (Greening)** – The final Focus Zone goal identifies areas in the City where the Land Bank should seek to support a range of open, green spaces, including the preservation and creation of community gardens / urban agriculture or parks, the expansion of urban agriculture and food-producing market farms, and the construction of green stormwater infrastructure.

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**FOCUS ZONES ARE AREAS THAT CONTAIN**  
**CONCENTRATIONS OF POTENTIAL LAND BANK PROPERTIES.**  
**WITHIN THESE ZONES, THE LAND BANK WILL PROACTIVELY**  
**ACQUIRE, ASSEMBLE, AND DISPOSE OF PROPERTY FOR**  
**SPECIFIC PURPOSES BASED ON DETERMINED NEED AND**  
**OPPORTUNITIES.**

The order of these goals in the Year 1 Strategic Plan does not indicate their relative importance. The Land Bank recognizes all of these goals as essential and equally important for community revitalization across Philadelphia's neighborhoods. There will, however, be different priorities within different communities. Each community has its own distinct market conditions, physical characteristics and resident concerns. These factors, along with the recommendations from previous plans and the data analysis completed in this document help to highlight the varying needs and opportunities across the City.

To determine the Focus Zone of each goal, the planning team first analyzed a range of different variables. The team then selected a group of variables, thereby creating an index that best represented the challenges and opportunities established in the enabling legislation that were associated with each of the goals. The variables within each index were then weighted to determine areas of need and opportunity for the Land Bank to be proactive and take action to achieve the goal. In addition to the spatial distribution of need and opportunity across the City, as informed by these indices, each Focus Zone also seeks to capitalize on the concentrations of potential Land Bank properties as resources to support each goal.

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**THE FOCUS ZONE GOALS AIM TO HELP  
THE LAND BANK STRATEGICALLY TARGET  
ITS ACQUISITION, MAINTENANCE, AND  
DISPOSITION ACTIVITIES IN DESIGNATED  
REGIONS OF THE CITY FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT.**



## GOAL 2: PROMOTE EQUITABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (AFFORDABLE HOUSING)

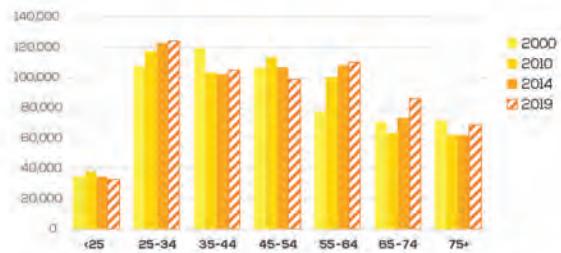
### WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT TO PHILADELPHIA

The Land Bank is a tool that can help to address two separate but related equitable development issues in Philadelphia. First, the Land Bank can work to assemble and convey sites for affordable housing development that are in locations convenient to transit, shopping and other neighborhood amenities. Second, the Land Bank can make sites available to preserve housing affordability in neighborhoods undergoing rapid change.

**FIGURE 18:** Household income  
Source: HUD CHAS database 2007-11 data



### PHILADELPHIA'S POPULATION IS AGING...



...and many seniors want affordable, low-maintenance housing options in their own neighborhoods.

**FIGURE 19:** Philadelphia households by age trends and projections  
Source: U.S. Census and Esri

Many Philadelphia households have incomes too low to afford safe, decent, and sanitary housing units. More than 60 percent of households in the City have incomes below 80 percent of the metropolitan area median income (AMI) and are defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as low-income; 43 percent earn less than 50 percent of AMI. Conversely, fewer than 40 percent of the City's households meet HUD's definition of moderate income, middle income, or above.

In low-income neighborhoods in many parts of the City, the achievable rents or home purchase prices are too low to incentivize property owners to invest in upgrading rental units or to construct new homes for rent or sale without public subsidy. As a result of this disinvestment, the older existing housing stock deteriorates, leaving neighborhood households with few options beyond substandard, often hazardous units. Not-for-profit groups and private developers seeking to offer affordable housing options for Philadelphia residents are faced with the constraints of limited funding and program resources. Further, it can be challenging to gain site control of well-located development parcels due to fragmented ownership patterns of individual lots and issues regarding titles.

These challenges are occurring at a time when U.S. cities are seeing a renewed interest in urban living with accompanying spikes in the number of young workers and older empty-nester households. Philadelphia has benefited from this trend. Between 2000 and 2010, the City's population grew, reversing a five-decade decline. The number of "Millennial" households -- those headed by someone age 25-34 -- grew at a faster rate than in any other major U.S. city.

Neighborhoods that are convenient to employment hubs in Center City and University City and that have historically been affordable places to live have seen significant rehabilitation of existing housing, construction of new residential units, and an influx of new residents. Change in these neighborhoods has had benefits, including increased equity from home sales by long-time homeowners, additional customers for existing and new businesses, and decreases in the number of vacant and deteriorated properties. Absent some intervention, rising rents and property values threaten to price many long-time residents out of the neighborhood, especially renters. Housing advocates, representatives of CDCs, and City officials have emphasized the critical need to preserve affordable housing in neighborhoods undergoing these changes.

The City has put safeguards in place to protect current homeowners from dramatic increases in property taxes in these revitalizing areas. These programs include the homestead exemption and the Longtime Owner Occupant Program (LOOP). Because of rent increases, renter households are more likely to be displaced in neighborhoods with rapidly increasing demand for housing. Land Bank assistance for the production of affordable housing units in changing neighborhoods can be one of the tools used to facilitate equitable development, thus helping to provide opportunities for households at all income levels to benefit from positive neighborhood change.



## **OBJECTIVE: SUPPORT INITIATIVES, INCLUDING THE CITY COUNCIL 2,000 NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS INITIATIVE, TO EXPAND HOUSING CHOICE AND AFFORDABILITY IN PHILADELPHIA**

Vacant land can be an important incentive for affordable housing development. Affordable housing developments completed in Philadelphia typically have subsidy funding from a variety of sources including sites provided at low or no cost. In order to qualify for funding under local, state and federal programs, CDCs and non-profit affordable housing developers need to propose attractive, efficient buildings in locations that give residents access to employment, transit, shopping and services. The Land Bank should assist with the assemblage and conveyance of sites in quality locations that meet the demand for affordable housing and provide a high quality of life for low-income residents.

Four indicators were combined to identify areas where the Land Bank could focus efforts to assemble sites for affordable housing development:

- › **Moderate to good food access** - Convenient access to supermarkets and other healthy food sources is an important quality of life factor for residents. Funders give priority to proposed developments that will have good food access.
- › **Transit-served** - Good accessibility to transit options with frequent service allows affordable housing residents to access a wider range of employment options. Funding programs often prioritize transit-served developments.
- › **Capital improvement expenditures** - Concentrations of public capital investments in neighborhoods can help to leverage funding in affordable housing and create momentum toward overall neighborhood revitalization.
- › **Presence of cost-burdened renters** - Areas with large percentages of renters paying more than 50 percent of their income for rent and utilities have proven and measurable demand for additional affordable housing.

# COST-BURDENED RENTER HOUSEHOLDS

## EXAMPLE INDICATOR MAP

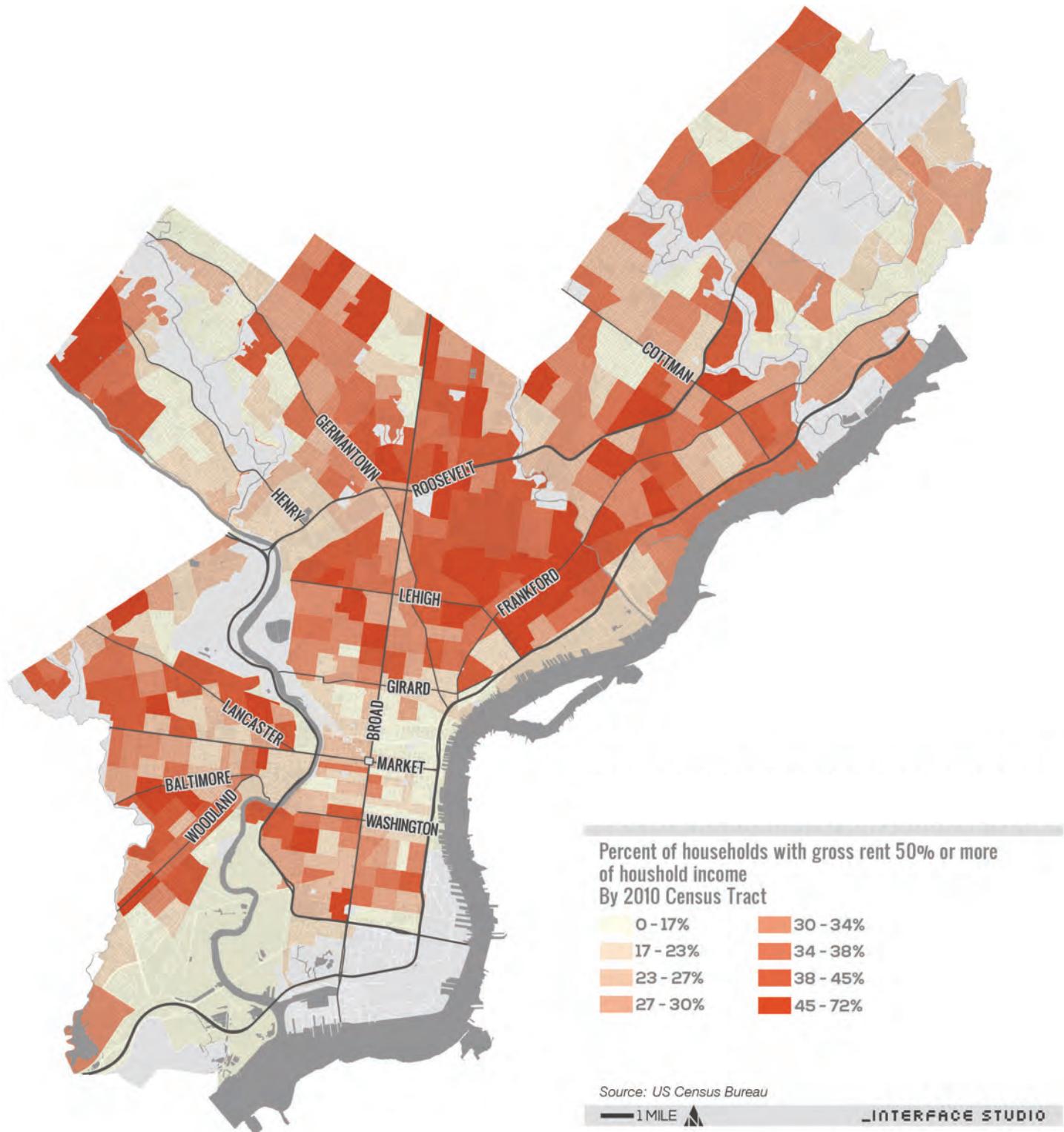
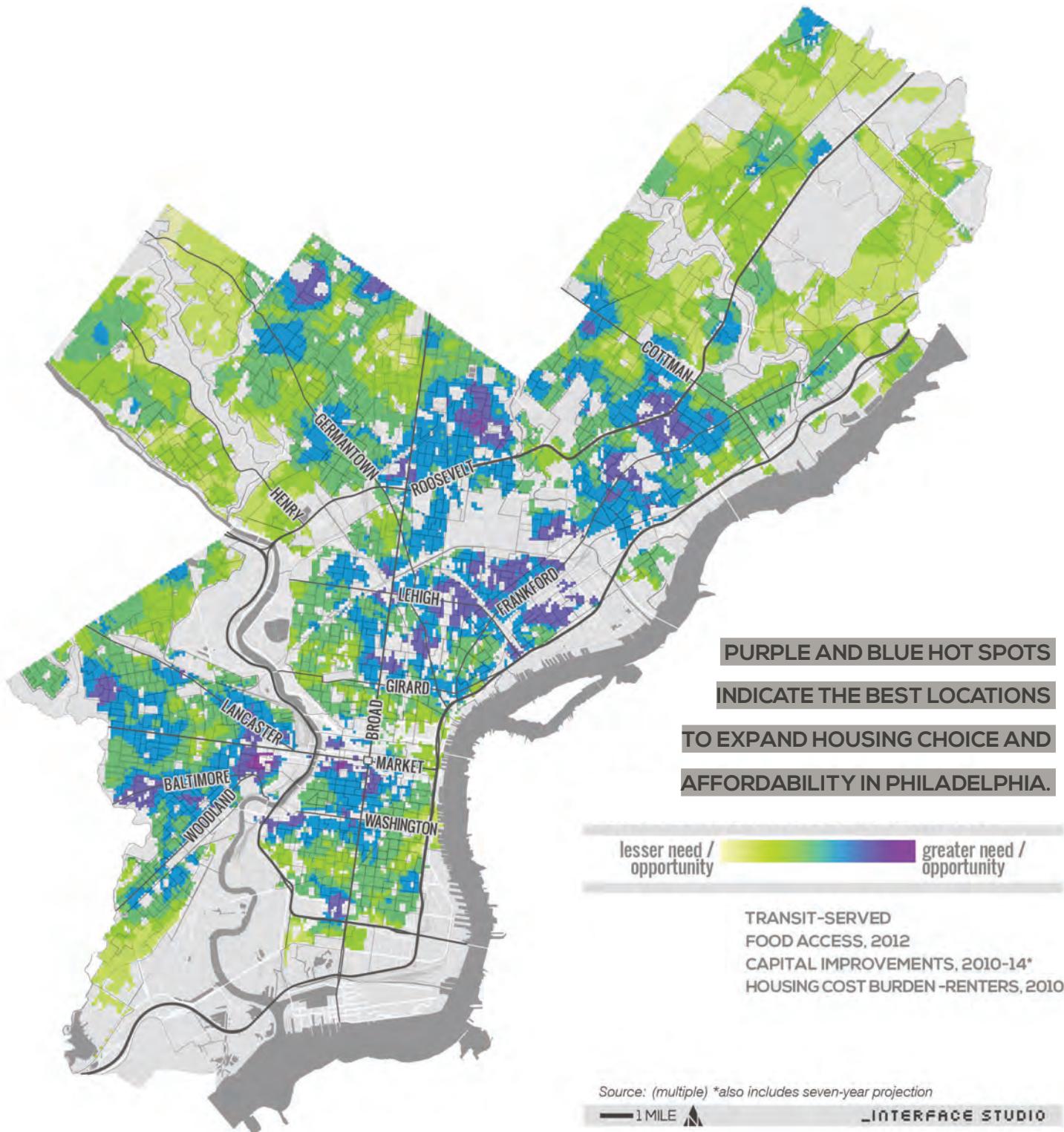


FIGURE 20: Cost-Burdened Renter Households

# EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT - COMPOSITE 1

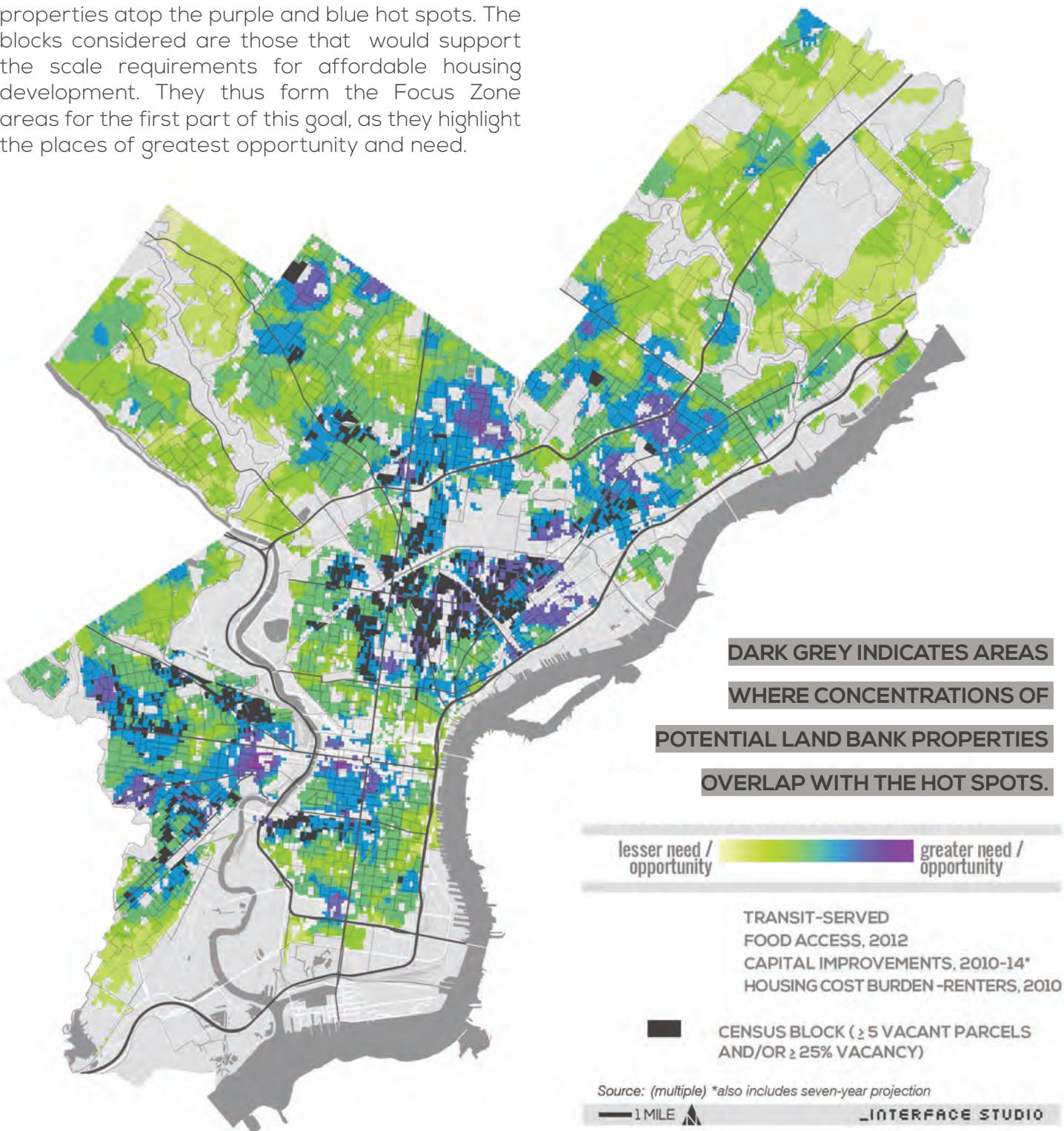
The composite map for this objective highlights in purple and blue the best locations to expand housing choice and affordability in Philadelphia based upon the above listed indicators.



**FIGURE 21:** Equitable Development - Composite 1

# EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT - FOCUS ZONE 1

Because the Land Bank can only act upon vacant properties that are publicly-owned or privately-held and tax delinquent, this map overlays blocks with concentrations of potential Land Bank properties atop the purple and blue hot spots. The blocks considered are those that would support the scale requirements for affordable housing development. They thus form the Focus Zone areas for the first part of this goal, as they highlight the places of greatest opportunity and need.



**FIGURE 22:** Equitable Development - Focus Zone 1

## **OBJECTIVE: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE AFFORDABILITY IN NEIGHBORHOODS UNDERGOING CHANGE**

**E**quitable development also involves preserving affordable housing opportunities in changing neighborhoods. As discussed previously, the Land Bank can be one of the tools used to provide opportunities for households at all income levels to benefit from positive neighborhood change.

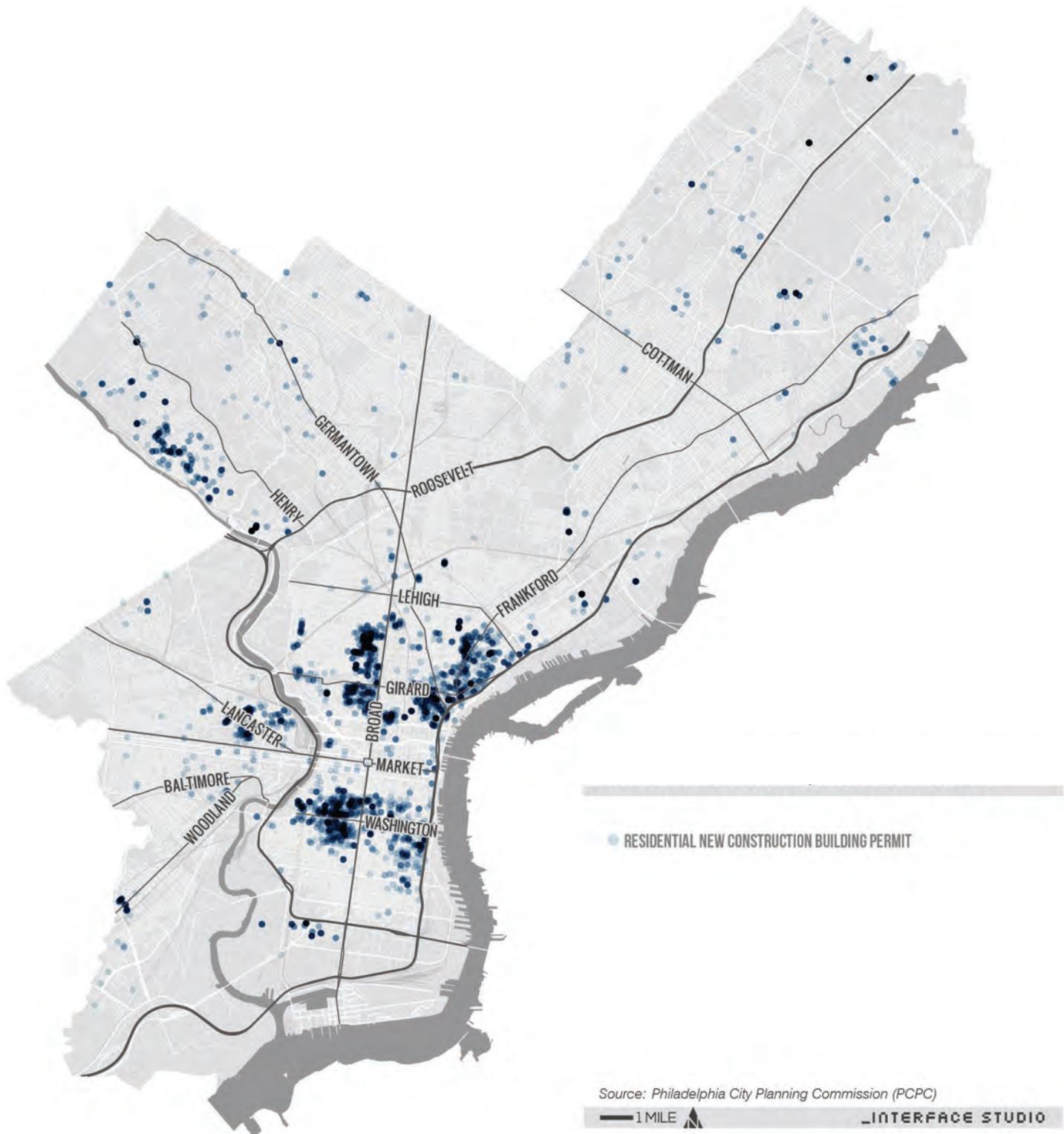
Five indicators were used to identify neighborhoods undergoing change and offering opportunities for the Land Bank to assist in creating sites for affordable and mixed-income housing:

- › **Growth in the median home sales price** - The growth in sales prices is a factor that can be measured and used as a proxy for increases in housing costs for both renters and new homebuyers in a given area.
- › **Growth in number of households** - An increase in the number of households living in an area, particularly when occurring at the same time as increases in household income, is an indicator that the neighborhood has become more competitive as a place to live. This can result in increased housing costs for low-income households, most notably renters.
- › **Positive change in median income** - An increase in household median income, particularly when occurring at the same time as increases in the number of households, is another sign that an area is changing and that housing affordability could be at risk.
- › **Market-rate building permit activity** - A concentration of new market-rate housing construction in a given area can indicate that residential prices are escalating and ongoing affordability is threatened.
- › **Growth in households headed by 25-34 year olds** - Growth in the number of so-called "Millennial" households is a signal of neighborhood change in many Philadelphia neighborhoods.

# MARKET-RATE BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

2007 - PRESENT

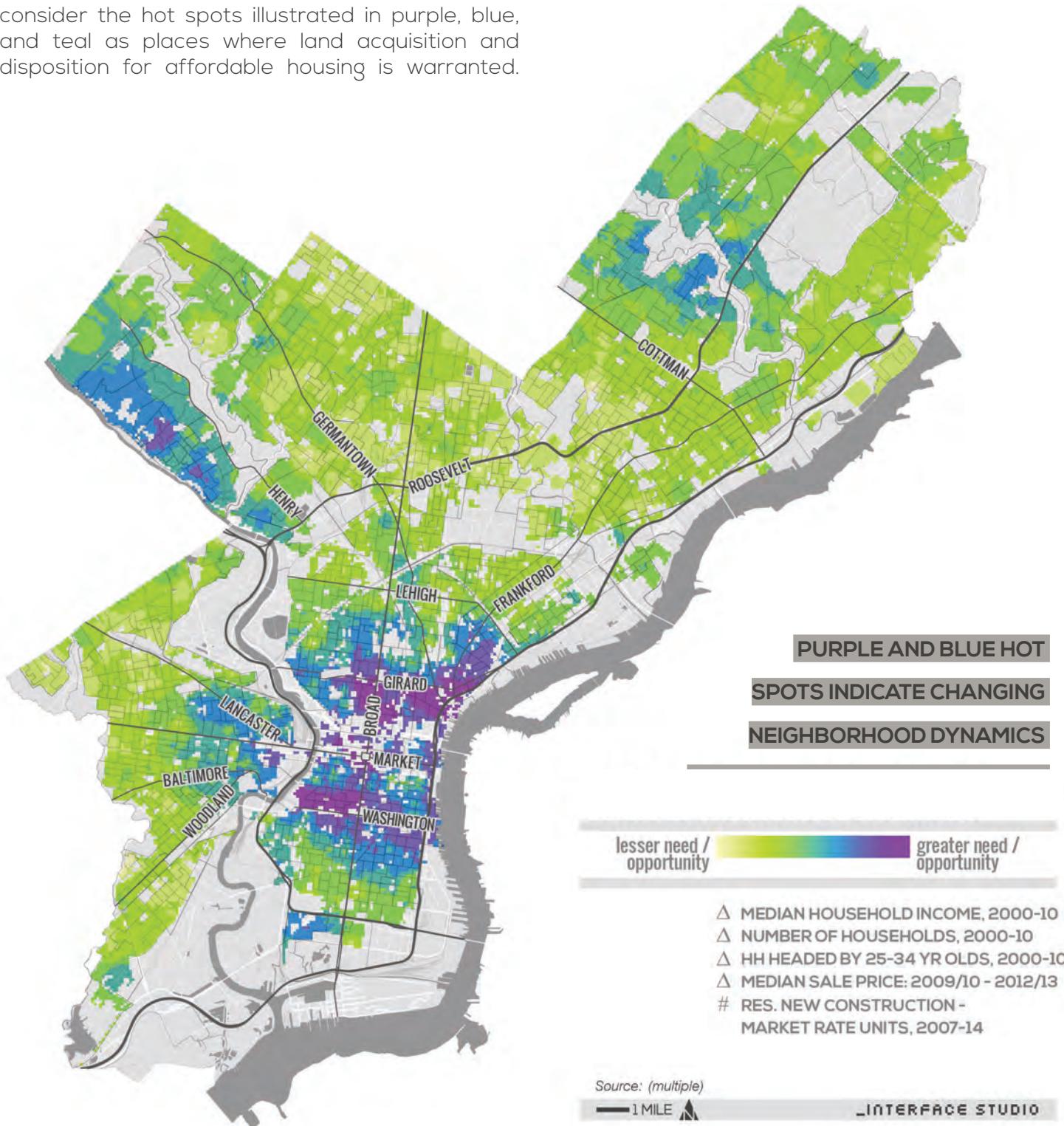
EXAMPLE INDICATOR MAP



**FIGURE 23:** Residential new construction building permits, 2007 - present

# EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT - COMPOSITE 2

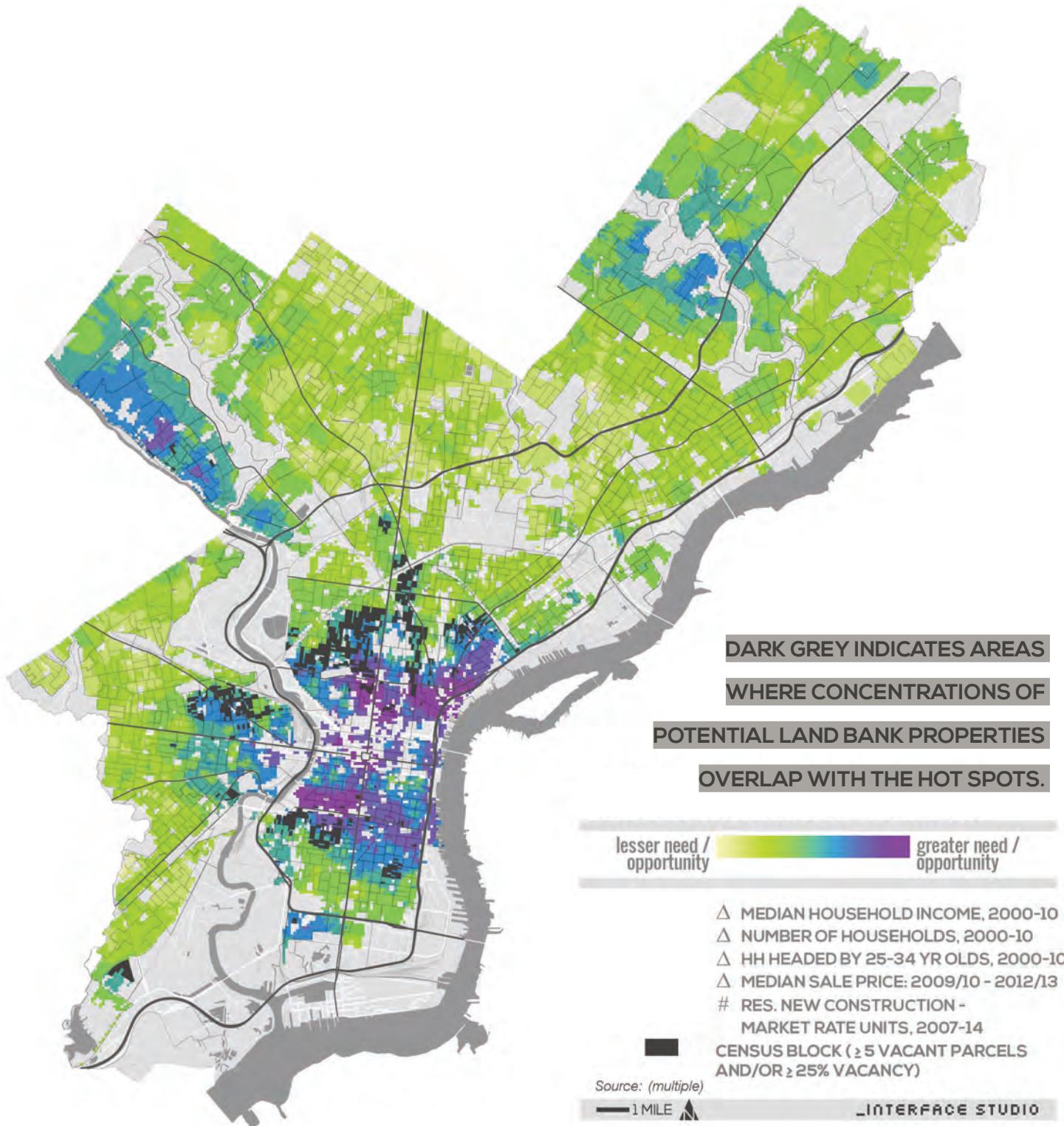
The composite map highlights additional areas where the data suggest that changing neighborhood dynamics threaten affordability. The Land Bank should thus also consider the hot spots illustrated in purple, blue, and teal as places where land acquisition and disposition for affordable housing is warranted.



**FIGURE 24:** Equitable Development - Composite 2

# EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT - FOCUS ZONE 2

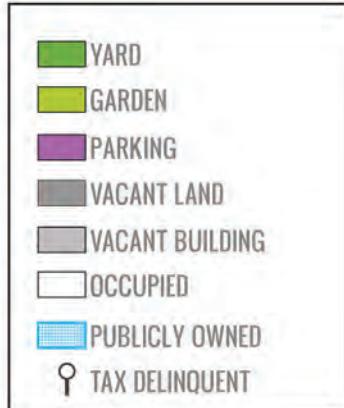
These Focus Zone areas complement those in Figure 22 and together form the combined Focus Zone for promoting equitable development.



**FIGURE 25:** Equitable Development - Focus Zone 2

## **GOAL 2: EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT** **SAMPLE SITES**

Roughly two-thirds of the potential Land Bank inventory lies within one of the two Focus Zones for equitable development. These two sample blocks illustrate the potential of the Land Bank to assemble sites for concentrated or scattered site affordable housing developments by consolidating publicly-owned land under one agency's control and adding privately-held vacant properties to create larger assemblages through tax foreclosure.



**QUALITY  
AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING BUILT  
ATOP ASSEMBLED,  
FORMERLY VACANT  
SITES.**



**POTENTIAL OF THE LAND BANK**

**TO HELP ASSEMBLE SITES FOR**

**EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**FIGURE 26:** Sample Site 1

**PUBLIC-OWNERSHIP: 12 PROPERTIES**

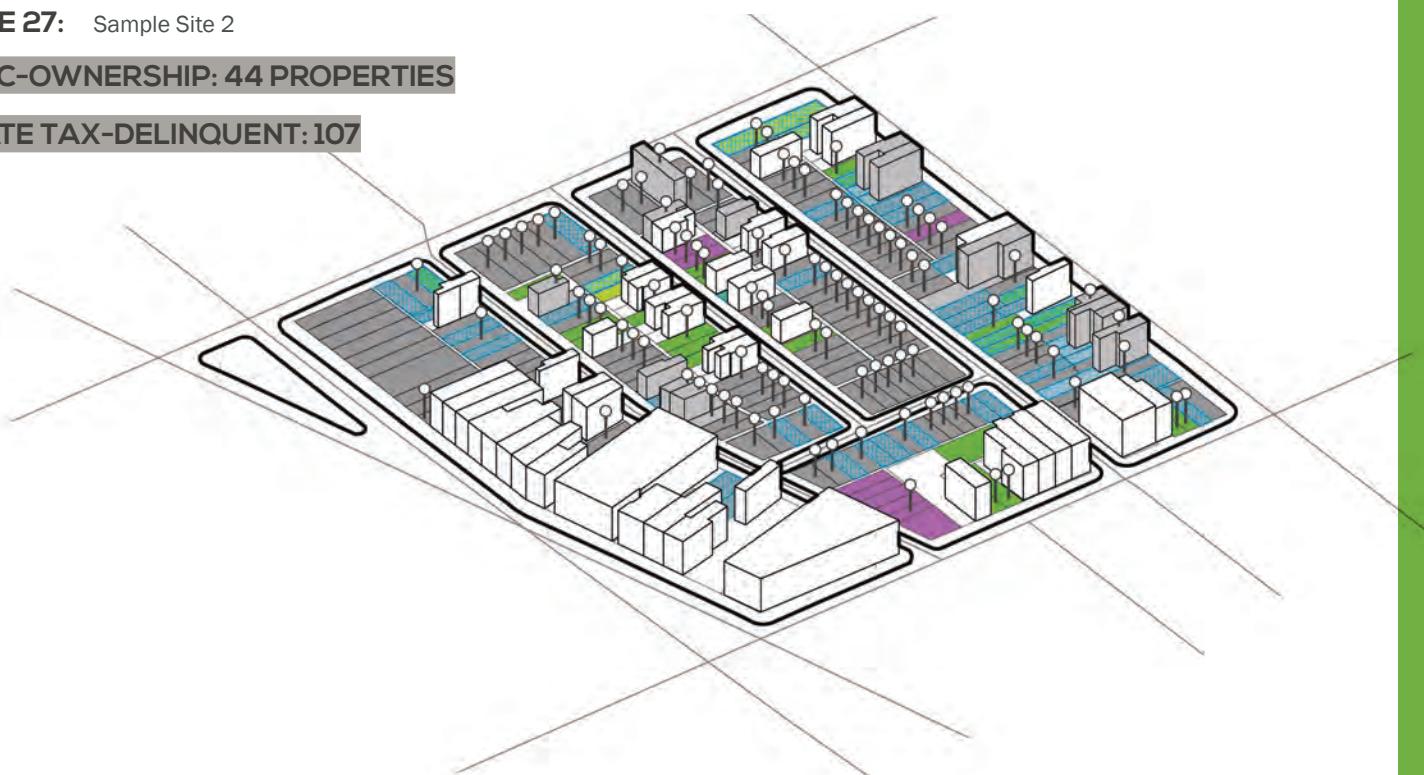
**PRIVATE TAX-DELINQUENT: 59**



**FIGURE 27:** Sample Site 2

**PUBLIC-OWNERSHIP: 44 PROPERTIES**

**PRIVATE TAX-DELINQUENT: 107**



## **LOCAL PARTNERS IN ADVANCING EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Many developers are involved in the production of affordable housing across the city. The task is to understand the total annual production of affordable housing units and understand the activity of the highest producing entities that would greatly benefit from Land Bank assistance.

From 2004 to 2014, approximately 80 nonprofit and 10 for-profit developers of affordable housing sponsored 195 projects resulting in the production of just over 6,600 units, a pace of 600 units per year on average as shown to the right.<sup>12</sup>

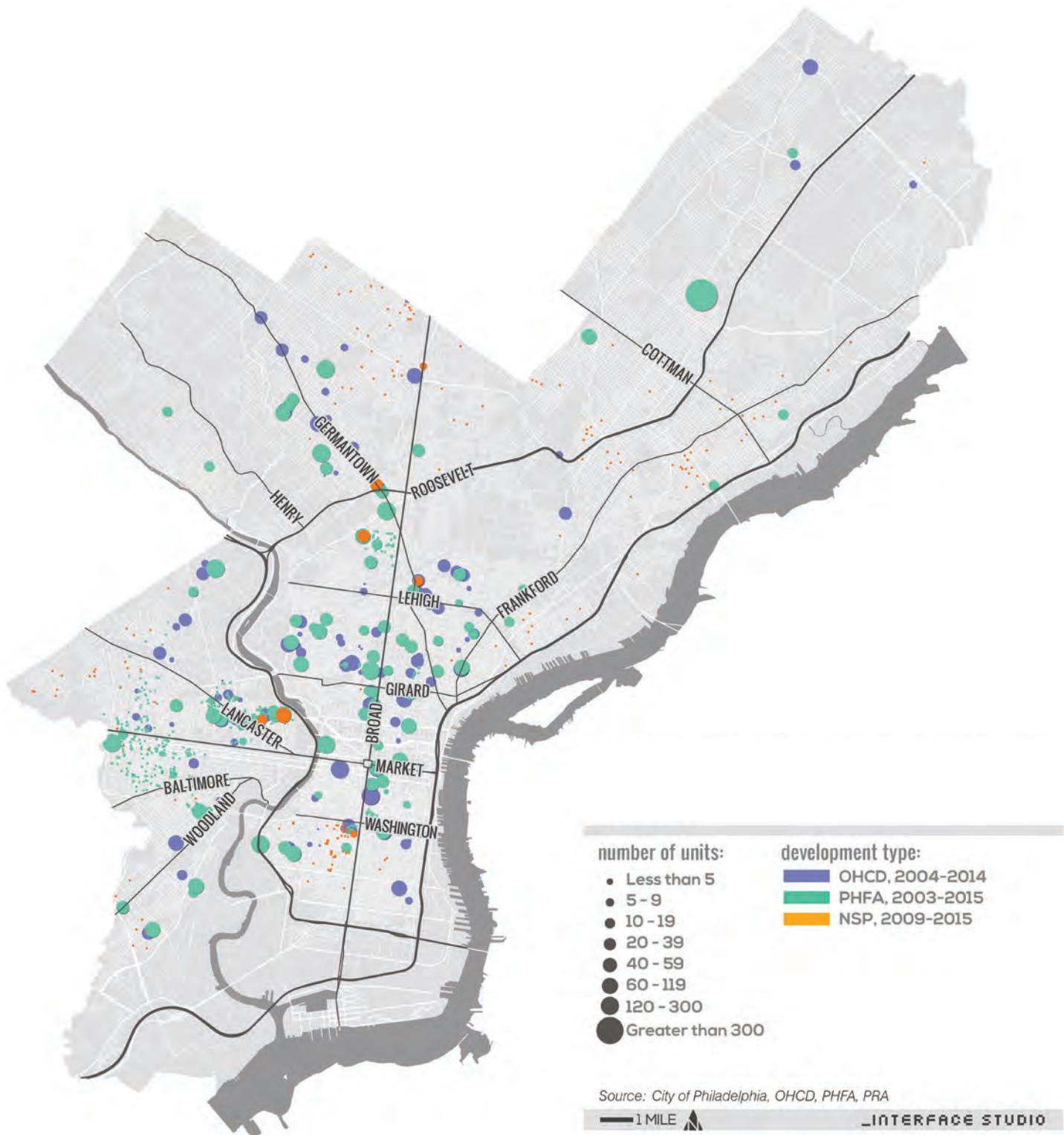
Many developers have a specific place-based focus and therefore concentrate in and serve a defined neighborhood. Others operate in and serve multiple neighborhoods and, as such, have built a more citywide portfolio. In a few instances, some have grown their capacity and broadened their footprint to serve other neighborhoods while continuing the work started in what they consider their base of operations. The common denominator is that these projects have benefitted from one or more sources of public investment, including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund (HTF), Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), and others. Each demonstrated capacity in project predevelopment and development to complete the transactions. Through the process of conceptualizing projects and gaining public and neighborhood approvals, they each exercised in one way or another accountability to their stakeholders or stockholders. It is critical that the Land Bank continue to partner with developers and coordinate the conveyance of vacant property with available resources for affordable housing.

**TABLE 2:** OHCD and NSP funded Housing Production, 2004-2014

OHCD and NSP-funded Housing Production, 2004-2014	
OVERALL PRODUCTION	
<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>6,634</b>
per year	603
<b>PROJECTS</b>	<b>195</b>
units per project	34

Source: City of Philadelphia, CDBG Year 40 Consolidated Plan

# PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING



**FIGURE 28:** Public Investments in Affordable Housing

The 6,600-unit production number reflects a mix of housing types and tenure, physical configuration, and project scope and scale, as shown below. In addition, this volume constitutes a portfolio responding to the market and one that proved capable of leveraging public and private capital:

### **Type and Tenure**

- Single-family
- Multi-Family
- Special Needs
- Homeownership
- Rental

These developers operate from a place-based and/or citywide focus and have provided a mix of housing types. The importance of this from a Philadelphia Land Bank and strategic plan perspective is that it confirms that there is a cadre of developers with both the mission and the capacity to accept publicly owned land and to build affordable housing (and, in some cases, mixed-use developments) on it. Identification of these specific developers is not meant to suggest that there are not other developers with similar mission and capacity to redevelop vacant properties for affordable, market-rate and mixed-income housing, or mixed-use residential/commercial.

Moreover, the City has a long history of issuing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) through the Office of Housing and Community Development and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority that seek to identify and engage developers to build affordable housing or mixed-use developments on publicly owned land. The Land Bank, when operational, will be in a strong position to support that process not only by streamlining the property disposition process, but also through the targeted acquisition of tax-delinquent parcels to create assemblages that make development more cost effective and realistic. Far less frequently vacant land is conveyed to a specific developer for equitable development; here too the Land Bank can play a key supportive role.

Note that the ability of the Land Bank to acquire and dispose of land for affordable or equitable developments will not in and of itself overcome a significant decline in resources for such projects. Federal and state funding supporting affordable housing and neighborhood economic development in Philadelphia was reduced by 37 percent between the City's 2011 and 2014 Fiscal Years. A more streamlined means of making land available will be an important benefit the Land Bank will bring to the process. It will not, however, replace lost funding resources.

**TABLE 3:** Most Active Developers, 2004 - 2014

<b>Most Active/High Production Developers 2004-2014</b>	
<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>2,676</b>
per year	243
% of total units	40%
 <b>PROJECTS</b>	 <b>75</b>
units/project	36
 <b>DEVELOPERS (non-duplicating)</b>	 <b>20</b>
projects/developer	4

Source: City of Philadelphia, CDBG Year 40 Consolidated Plan



**GOAL 3:**  
**EXTEND PRIVATE INVESTMENT**  
**(MARKET-RATE HOUSING)**

### **WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT TO PHILADELPHIA**

According to the American Community Survey, half of Philadelphia's residential units were built before 1946. Without ongoing investment, older properties fall into disrepair, property values decline, and once stable neighborhoods are no longer locations of choice for new households. Private investment in rehabilitating the existing housing stock and constructing new market-rate units is critical to Philadelphia's vitality. Moreover, new private investment is essential to accommodate the projected growth of almost 38,000 households anticipated in the City between 2010 and 2035. After tax abatements expire, new and rehabilitated housing units increase the real estate tax base in the City while also offering a wider range of housing options for current and new residents.

---

**HALF OF  
PHILADELPHIA'S  
RESIDENTIAL UNITS  
WERE BUILT BEFORE  
1946.**



The renewed interest in urban living has fueled a housing boom in downtown Philadelphia. The population of Center City living between Vine and Pine Streets increased by more than 9,000 between 2000 and 2010. This growth created demand for new and rehabilitated apartments, condominiums and townhouses in neighborhoods in and around Center City, where rents and housing prices have risen to levels that make it feasible to build new housing. Although developers and investors can include the cost of acquiring a lot or vacant building in their development budget, issues of fragmented ownership, tax liens and clouded titles can create roadblocks for private investment. In areas offering market support for new construction and substantial rehabilitation that is financially feasible, the Land Bank can help facilitate private investment and move vacant properties back to productive use. Moreover, revenue generated by land sales can be used for vacant property stabilization and costs related to Land Bank operations.

Private development does not have to be 100 percent market rate. In other U.S. cities, mixed-income housing is common. A ratio of 80 percent market-rate units and 20 percent affordable units offers access to special financing but developments may have different mixes of market-rate and affordable units and many different income tiers. Paseo Verde, a mixed-use, mixed-income development recently completed next to the Temple University SEPTA station, is the first recent example of a development with income tiers ranging from very low-income to completely market-rate residential units. Encouraging the production of additional mixed-income housing helps to maintain affordability while also providing housing for households at all income levels in revitalizing neighborhoods. Assembled sites and, if warranted, discounted land prices offered by the Land Bank can be incentives when developers agree to incorporate an affordable component in a market-rate development. While the Land Bank can be a powerful tool to encourage mixed-income development, other public resources may be required to make these project financially achievable.

## **OBJECTIVE: ASSIST IN PROVIDING LAND FOR VIABLE, MARKET-RATE INVESTMENT, ESPECIALLY THOSE INCORPORATING AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPONENT.**

Four indicators were used to identify areas where the opportunity to extend private investment exists:

- › **2011 Regional Choice, High Value, or Steady classifications in TRF's Market Value Analysis (MVA).** These are areas where the private market has been functioning effectively and where the need to clear title may be the only impediment to private investment. Because the MVA is now three years out-of-date, additional indicators were used to identify areas where private market activity has advanced subsequent to the 2011 analysis.
- › **New construction market-rate residential building permit activity.** The analysis includes building permits issued between 2007 and spring 2014. Building permits issued for market-rate housing units are an indicator that private investment is occurring in the area.
- › **New construction home sales prices support the cost to build.** Philadelphia home sales that took place in 2013 and exceeded either a sales price of \$275,000 or a price of \$200 per square foot are used to identify areas where the market supports new residential construction without the need for subsidy.
- › **MVA Transitional areas with growth in households and household income.** Areas classified by TRF as Transitional in 2011 but in close proximity to stronger markets experiencing increases in the number of households and median household income between the 2000 Census and the 2008-12 American Community Survey.

# TRF MARKET VALUE ANALYSIS

## EXAMPLE INDICATOR MAP

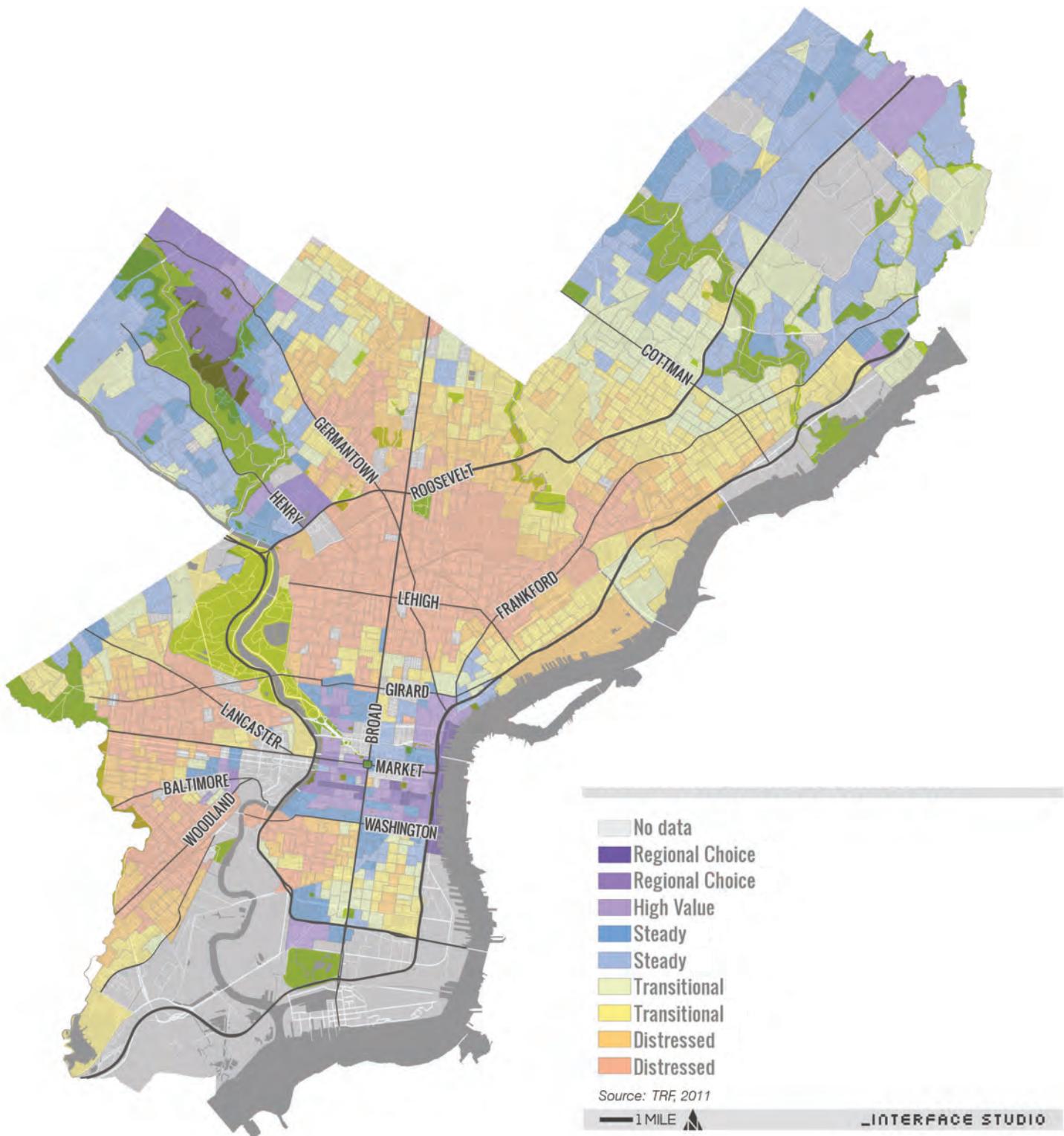
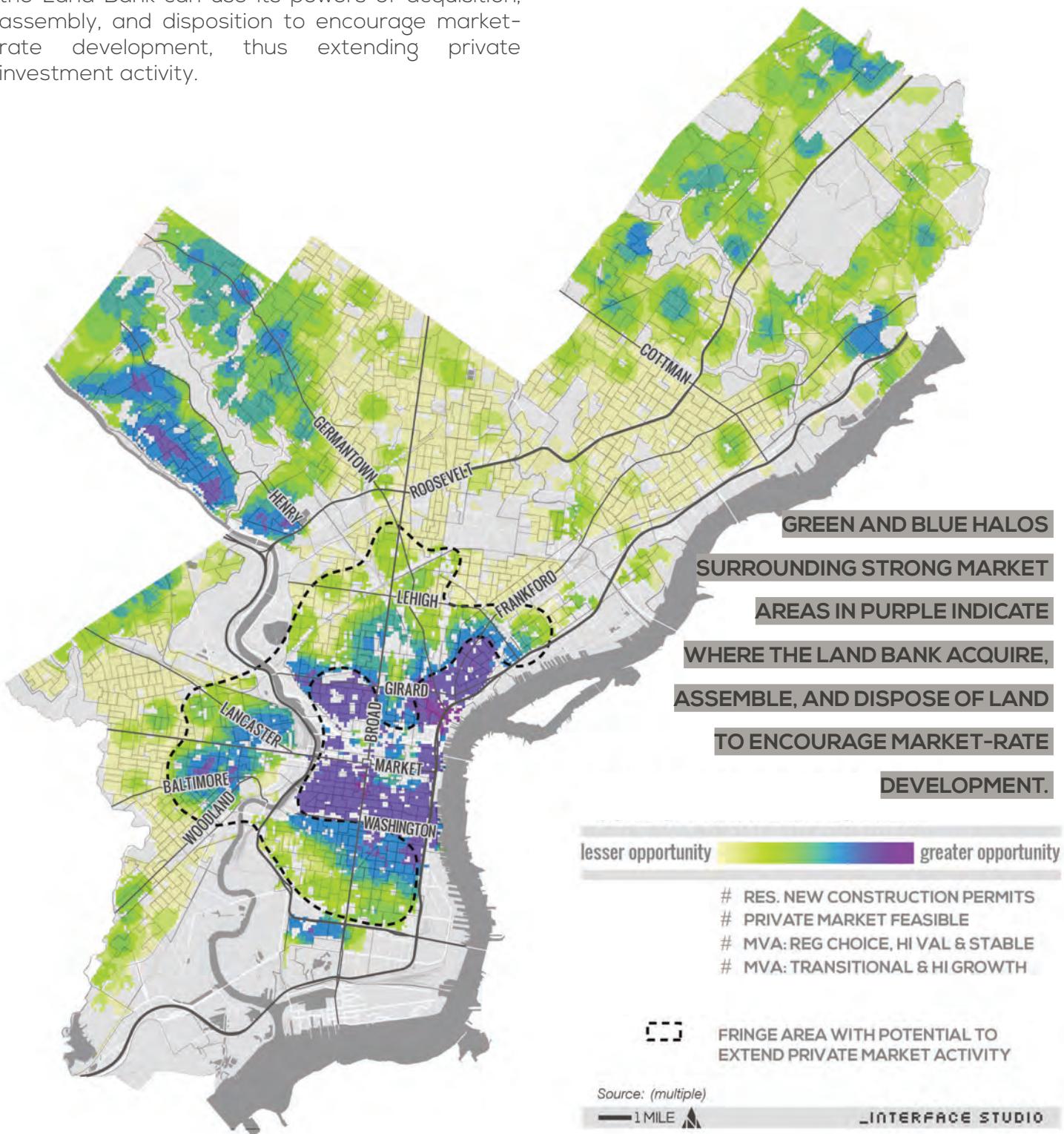


FIGURE 29: TRF Market Value Analysis

# PRIVATE INVESTMENT - COMPOSITE

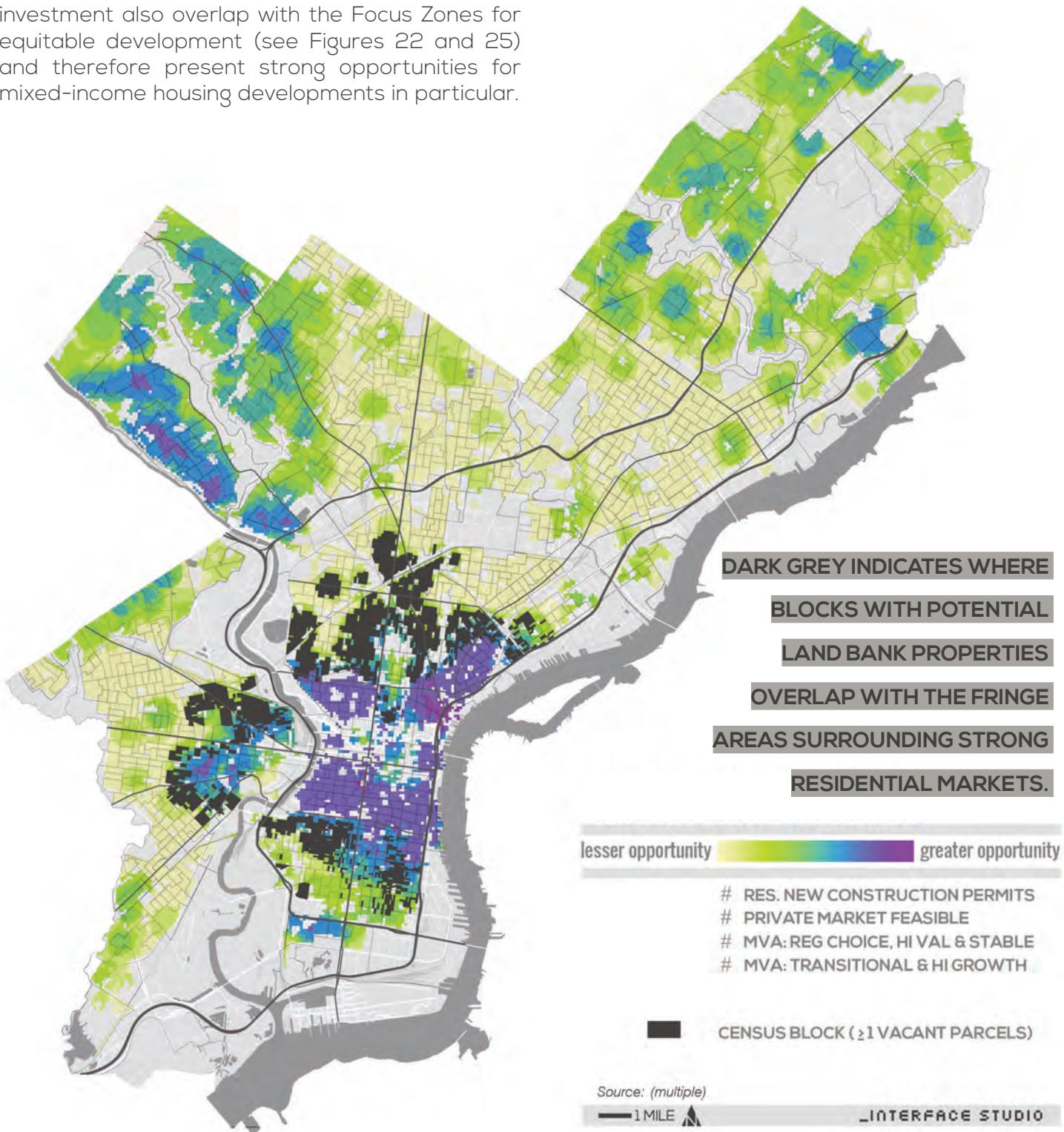
The composite map for extending private investment highlights areas at the fringe of strong residential real estate markets where the Land Bank can use its powers of acquisition, assembly, and disposition to encourage market-rate development, thus extending private investment activity.



**FIGURE 30:** Private Investment Composite

# PRIVATE INVESTMENT - FOCUS ZONE

The hot spots or fringe areas are highlighted in purple and blue, and the overlay of potential Land Bank properties indicates the areas of greatest opportunity. 50% of these Focus Zones for private investment also overlap with the Focus Zones for equitable development (see Figures 22 and 25) and therefore present strong opportunities for mixed-income housing developments in particular.



**FIGURE 31:** Private Investment Focus Zone

## **GOAL 3: PRIVATE INVESTMENT**

### **SAMPLE SITE**

Roughly half of the potential Land Bank inventory lies within the Focus Zones for private investment. This sample block illustrates the potential of the Land Bank to assemble sites to spur market activity while also supporting proposals documented in a neighborhood plan accepted by the City Planning Commission. As this site falls within both the private investment and the equitable development Focus Zones, it is also a candidate for mixed-income housing.

**MARKET-RATE**

**DEVELOPMENT ATOP  
A LARGE, FORMERLY  
VACANT SITE.**



**POTENTIAL OF THE LAND BANK**

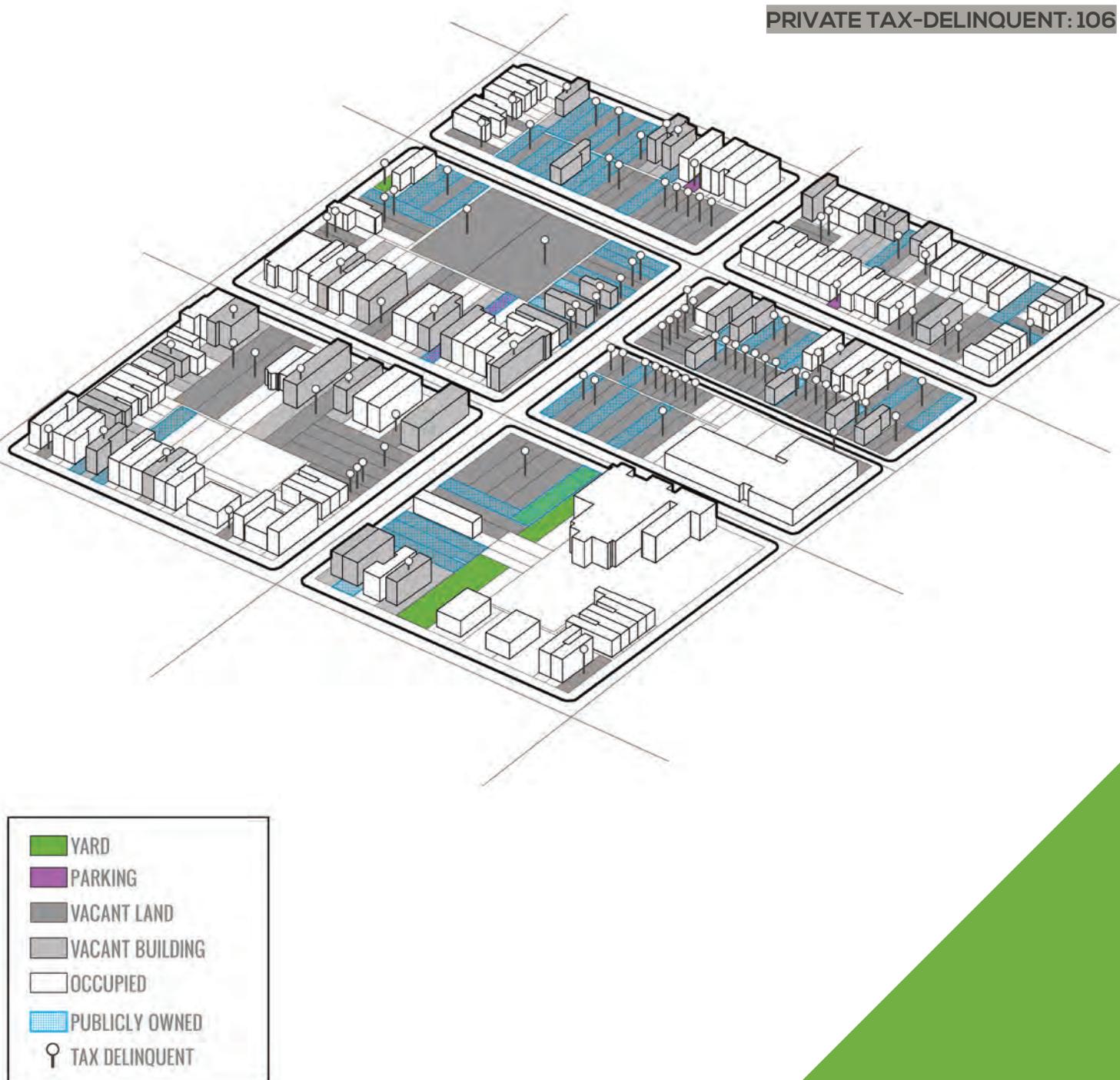
**TO HELP ASSEMBLE SITES FOR**

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT**

**FIGURE 32:** Sample Site 3

**PUBLIC-OWNERSHIP: 49 PROPERTIES**

**PRIVATE TAX-DELINQUENT: 106**



**GOAL 4:**  
**CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM**  
**ECONOMIC VITALITY**  
**(ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)**



**WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT TO PHILADELPHIA**

A thriving business base is important to the neighborhood in which it is located and also to the City as a whole. Convenient access to goods and services is an important quality of life issue for residents. Businesses of all types offer jobs for Philadelphia residents and add to the City's tax base. The Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) has the capacity to assemble and market large sites in Philadelphia's industrial areas, but the Land Bank is a more appropriate tool to assemble and convey smaller scale parcels in the City's over 260 commercial centers, corridors and districts.

In the U.S., the retail sector is undergoing major restructuring, as consumer preferences and the competitive environment change and on-line sales diminish consumer purchases in stores. Chain stores such as Walmart and Target offer lines of goods previously offered in multiple individual store types; new formats by both of these former "big-box" only retailers are intended to respond to demand in urban areas. The home improvement megastores have put pressure on neighborhood hardware, plumbing supply, lighting and garden stores. Service providers, such as health care and social service providers, child care centers, gyms, and tax preparers now rent space in retail storefronts. Many of Philadelphia's traditional commercial corridors are changing and/or shrinking to meet the challenges of this new commercial environment.

## **OBJECTIVE: SUPPORT EXISTING BUSINESSES AND NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

To continue to thrive, commercial corridors need blocks of contiguous business establishments. In pedestrian-oriented commercial corridors, vacant properties - whether buildings or land - discourage customers from patronizing the full range of establishments in the corridor or district. In auto-oriented corridors, larger parcels are essential to accommodate store types with bigger footprints while also providing ample parking.

Commercial developers and business owners may avoid commercial corridors where the only available sites have fragmented ownership, tax liens, and clouded titles. The Land Bank can contribute to long-term commercial corridor viability and new business development by assembling and conveying marketable sites for new commercial development. The Land Bank can support existing Philadelphia businesses interested in expanding an existing establishment, opening a new location, or providing needed customer parking through the conveyance of adjacent vacant property.

## **OBJECTIVE: INITIATE LAND BANK ACTIVITY IN TARGETED COMMERCIAL AREAS**

Four indicators were used to identify areas where the Land Bank likely has a strong opportunity to contribute to economic development for commercial corridor vitality and revitalization.

- › **Growth in the number of households** - Households are the major driver of demand for most retail and service businesses located in commercial corridors. Household growth generates additional demand for goods and services.
- › **Employment density** - Workers employed in and around commercial corridors are potential customers for area businesses. Generally, higher employment density indicates higher demand for commercial space.
- › **High traffic locations** - Philadelphia has commercial corridors that are primarily pedestrian-oriented, primarily auto-oriented, and those that are mixed. Most businesses considering a new location are interested in visibility to potential customers, and automobile traffic counts represent both visibility to those passing by and the possibility of appealing to customers from a broader trade area.
- › **Low commercial vacancy** - Vacant properties and buildings will be more marketable in commercial corridors with relatively low overall vacancy rates.

In addition to these indicators, commercial corridors in other areas that have been specifically targeted for redevelopment activity should be a focus of activity by the Land Bank under this goal. These include:

- › **The City's designated Promise Zone and Choice Neighborhoods.** Areas with these designations can receive priority for funding under a variety of federal programs. The Land Bank should assist in leveraging these funds by facilitating the assembly of sites and disposing of vacant property in these areas.
- › **Commercial corridors located in areas identified under the "Extend Private Investment" goal.** These neighborhoods are showing strong signs of revitalization, which should result in expanded demand for goods and services in adjacent commercial corridors.
- › **Low Supermarket Access areas (LSAs).** TRF has conducted an extensive analysis of so-called "food deserts" in Philadelphia and has identified LSAs, which are areas with limited access to a full-line supermarket. Supermarkets require larger sites than many other retail business, and the lack of suitable sites is often cited as an impediment to supermarket development in urban neighborhoods. The Land Bank can play an important role in assembling sites for new supermarkets in underserved areas.

# PERCENT CHANGE IN NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

2000 - 2010

EXAMPLE INDICATOR MAP

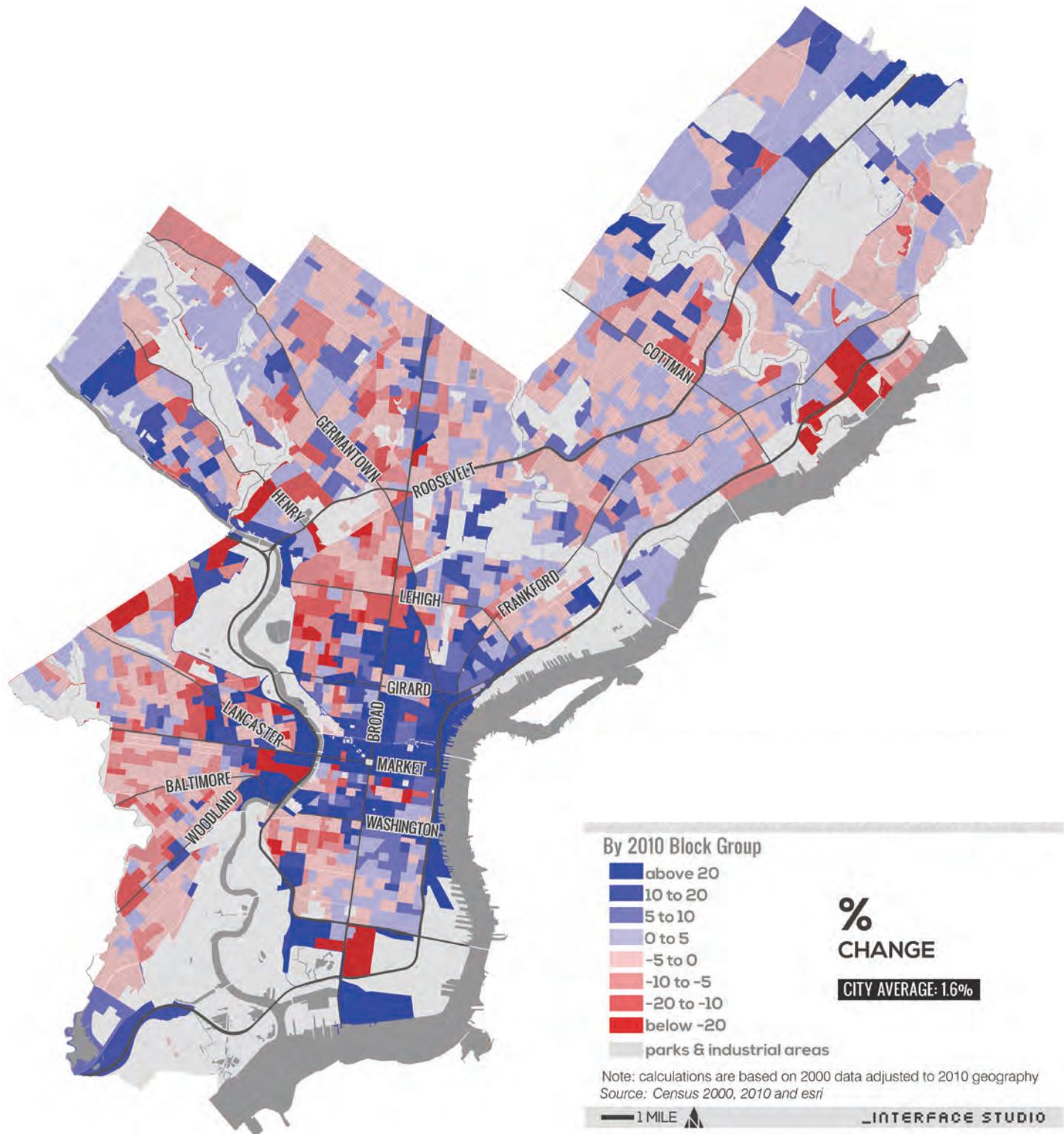
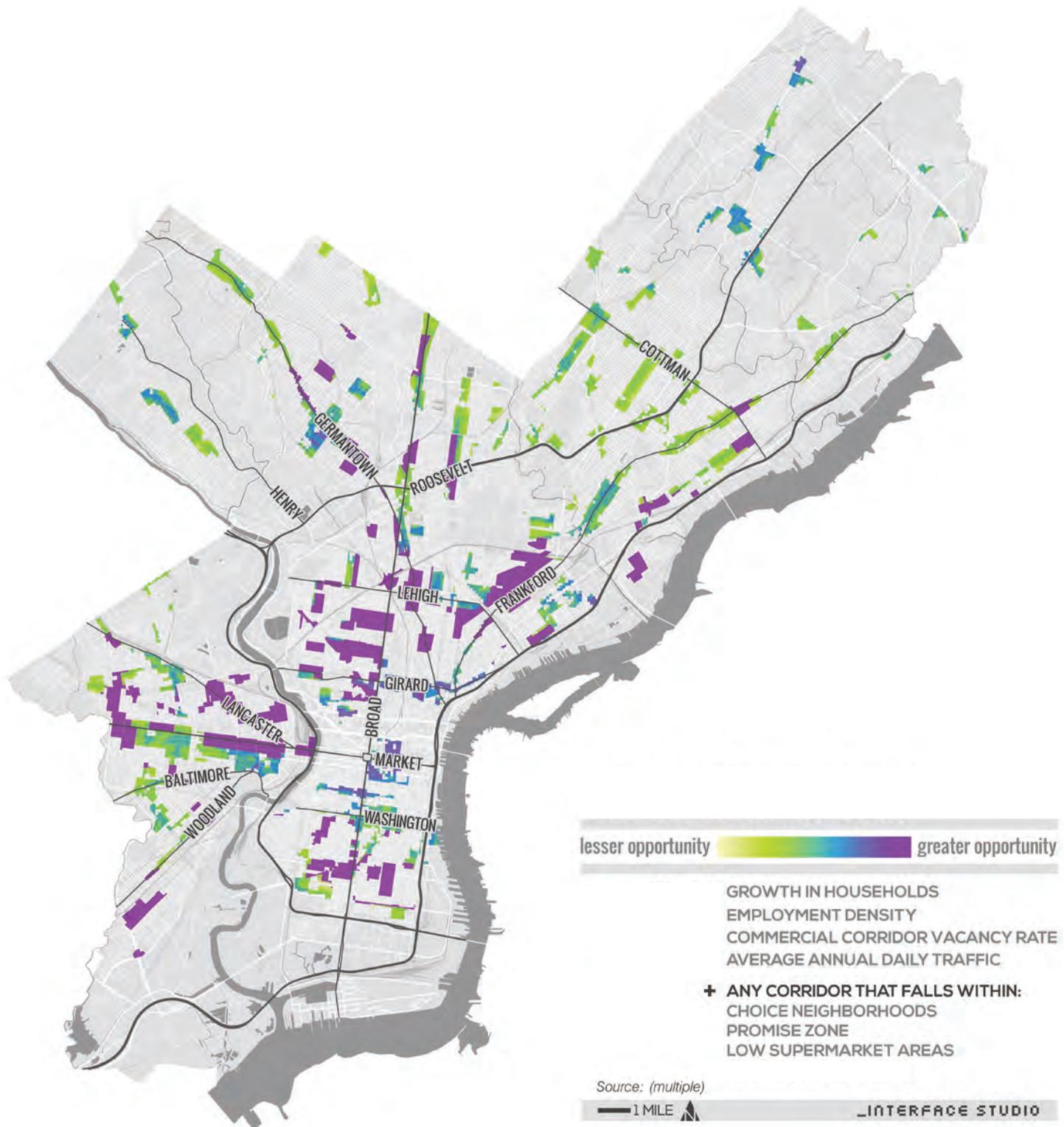


FIGURE 33: Change in households, 2000-2010

# ECONOMIC VITALITY - COMPOSITE

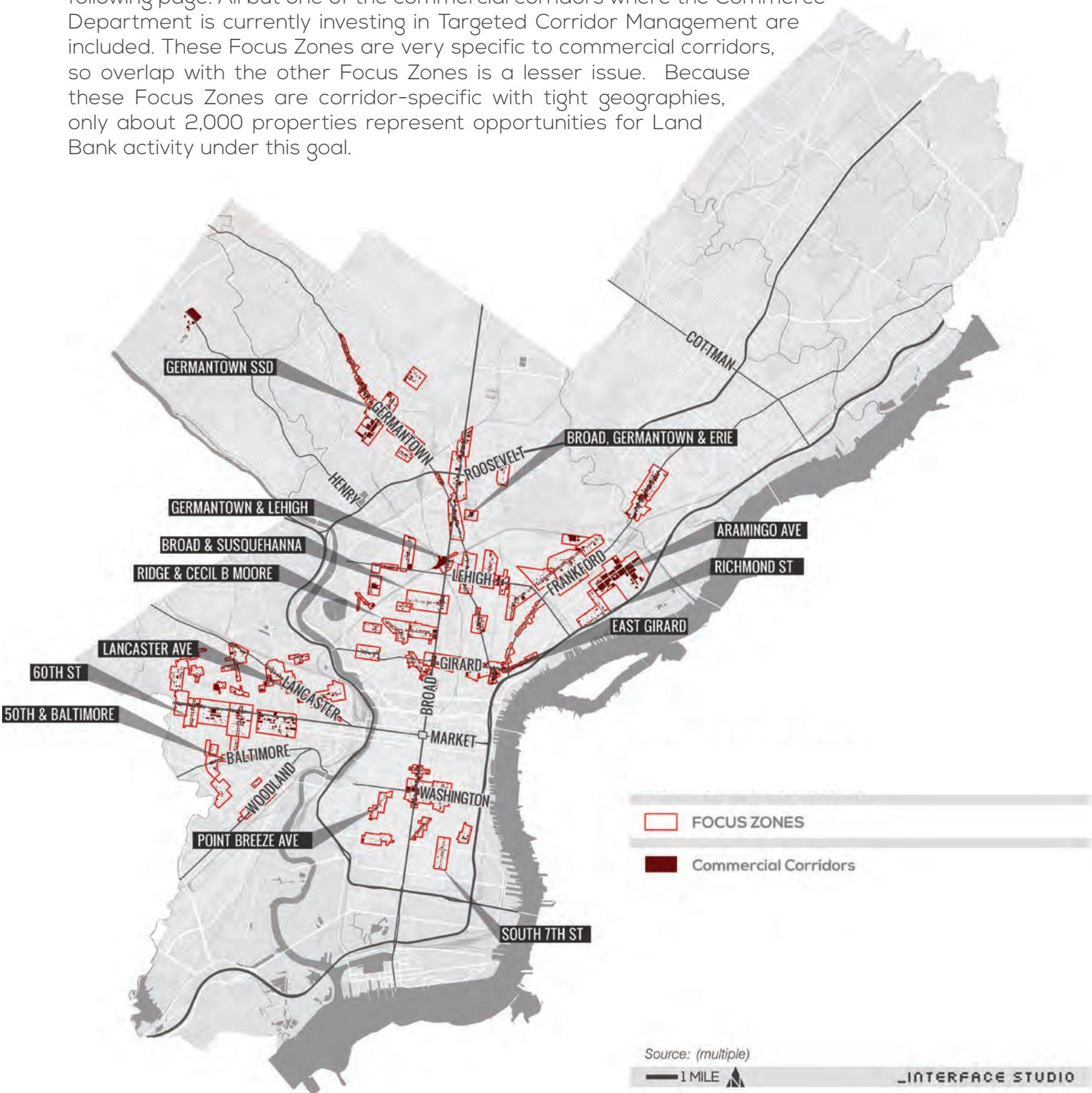
The composite map for contributing to long-term economic vitality highlights commercial corridors that best meet the criteria listed above.



**FIGURE 34:** Economic Vitality - Composite

# ECONOMIC VITALITY - FOCUS ZONE

This map identifies the 77 commercial corridors (out of the more than 260 commercial centers, corridors and districts citywide) that also have potential Land Bank properties. For a full listing, see Table 4 on the following page. All but one of the commercial corridors where the Commerce Department is currently investing in Targeted Corridor Management are included. These Focus Zones are very specific to commercial corridors, so overlap with the other Focus Zones is a lesser issue. Because these Focus Zones are corridor-specific with tight geographies, only about 2,000 properties represent opportunities for Land Bank activity under this goal.



**FIGURE 35:** Economic Vitality - Focus Zones

**TABLE 4:** Commercial Corridors of Greatest Opportunity (77 total)

1025 West Erie and Vicinity	Broad and Wingohocking
22nd and Diamond	Broad, Germantown, and Erie
26th and Lehigh	Central Germantown & Vicinity
27th & Cecil B Moore	Chew and Chelten
29th and Lehigh	*East Girard Avenue
2nd and Girard	East Passyunk
31st and Norris	*Frankford Ave/Girard to Lehigh
35th and Haverford	Frankford and Allegheny
36th and Lancaster	Frankford Ave./Church St.
40th and Girard	Frankford Ave./Margaret-Orthodox
40th and Lancaster	*N. Front and Kensington
42nd-49th/Market-Locust	*Germantown & Lehigh
48th and Brown Streets	Germantown Ave./Gorgas-Upsal
50th and Baltimore	Germantown Ave./High-Upsal
52nd and Chester	*Germantown/Staub-St. Paul
52nd and Haverford	Girard & Marshall
52nd Street	*Girard and Ridge
52nd Street-South	Harrowgate Plaza
54th and Woodland	Kensington & Somerset
55th and Baltimore	*Kensington and Allegheny
56th and Cedar	Kensington Ave/Harrowgate
56th and Market	Lansdowne Avenue
58th and Florence	*Lehigh and North 22nd St: Hope Plaza
*5th and Lehigh	*Lehigh and American
5th and the Boulevard	Lower Germantown
60th and Girard	Ninth Street - Italian Market
60th Street	North 52nd Street
63rd and Girard	Pennsport Mall/South Second Street and Vicinity
63rd and Market	*Point Breeze Avenue
6th and Germantown	*Progress Haddington Plaza
*Aramingo Avenue	Richmond and Allegheny
Broad & Lindley - Logan	Ridge & Cecil B Moore
Broad and Cecil B. Moore	Ridge and Diamond
Broad and Girard	Snyder Ave/17th-23rd
Broad and Ridge	South Seventh Street
Broad and South	Station Center
Broad and Susquehanna	Strawberry Square
Broad and Washington	*Wayne Ave/SW Germantown
	West Girard

\* = Commerce Department Targeted Commercial Management and/or Business Improvement District support 2013-14

## **GOAL 4: ECONOMIC VITALITY**

### **SAMPLE SITE**

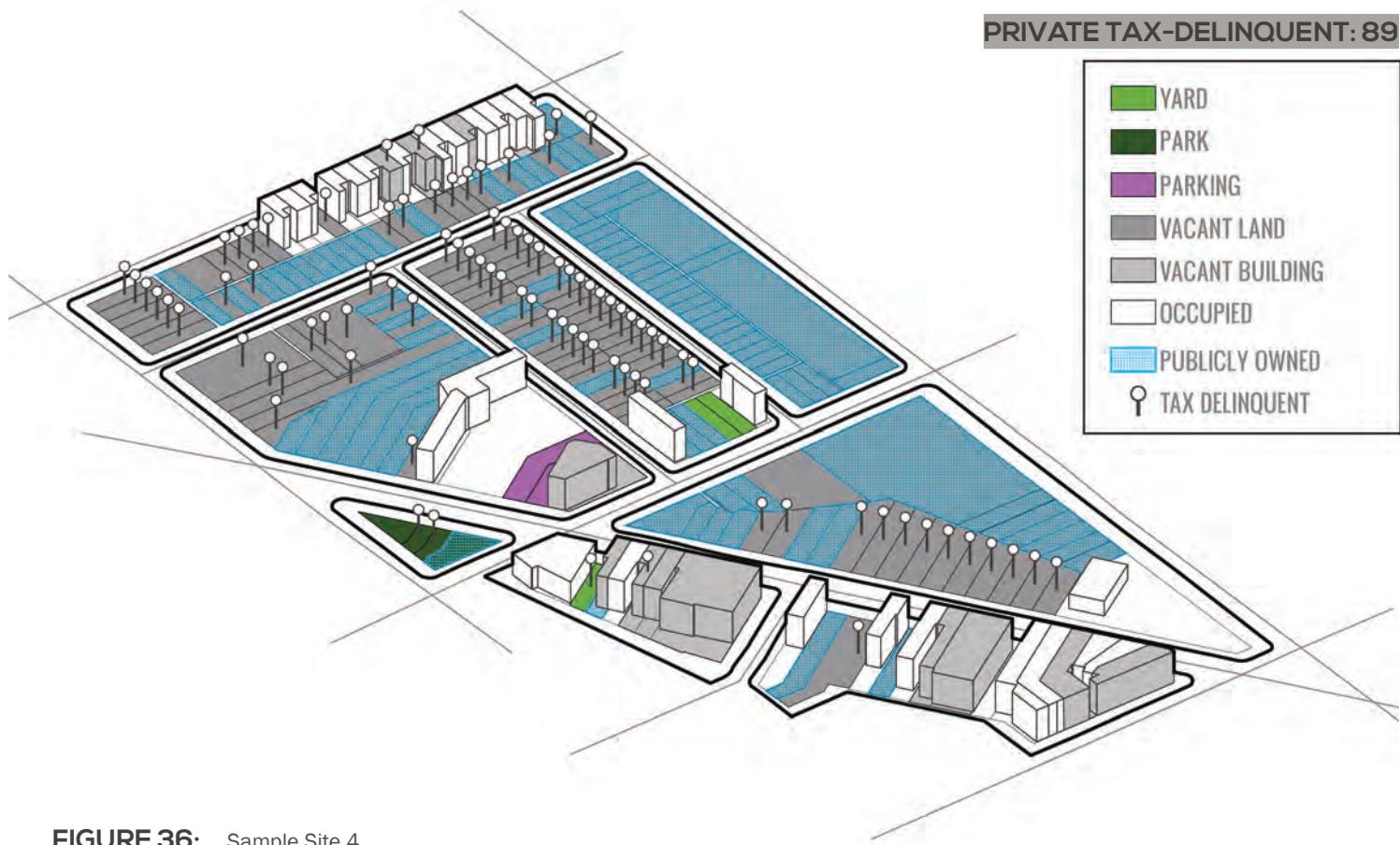
POTENTIAL OF THE LAND BANK

TO HELP ASSEMBLE SITES FOR

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

**PUBLIC-OWNERSHIP: 86 PROPERTIES**

**PRIVATE TAX-DELINQUENT: 89**



**FIGURE 36:** Sample Site 4

These sample blocks are within an area of the City covered by an adopted Philadelphia 2035 District Plan, which can help guide decisions about end use for properties that the Land Bank acquires and seeks to dispose. The District Plan identifies this area for a mix of residential and commercial uses, with the opportunity to host larger footprint retail due to the sizable vacant sites.

## **LOCAL PARTNERS IN ADVANCING ECONOMIC VITALITY**

The two most recent Commerce Department Program Allocations to the City's Targeted Corridor Revitalization Management Program (TCMP) and the Restore Philadelphia Corridors Initiative identified a set of community-based development organizations funded to serve commercial corridors. Some of these non-profits have active real estate development programs -- commercial retail and mixed-use -- and others provide technical services working with merchant associations to help attract new businesses, support existing ones, and clean, green and beautify corridors they target. The list of groups shown in Table 5 represents a sample of local, neighborhood-based capacity the Land Bank can and should draw on to facilitate reuses of vacant land and buildings situated on commercial corridors throughout the City that are consistent with the priorities articulated in the Philadelphia2035 District Plans and neighborhood strategic plans to the greatest extent possible.

The range of activities under each program includes, but is not limited to:

- › Strengthening neighborhood commercial corridors through planning and research;
- › Making commercial corridors more welcoming and viable through revitalization and elimination of vacant property;
- › Increasing availability of jobs and retail goods and services through business development and retention; and
- › Strengthening businesses through marketing and technical assistance

Through these entities, the Commerce Department provides targeted commercial corridor management and public services to commercial corridors in many commercial corridors and districts across the City, including:



**TABLE 5:** Targeted Commercial Management and/or Business Improvement District Support 2013-14

<b>Targeted Commercial Management and/or Business Improvement District support 2013-14</b>	<b>Corridor</b>
Archdiocese of Philadelphia CDC	Front Street/Kensington Avenue/Lehigh Avenue
ACHIEVEability	
Allegheny West Foundation	Lehigh Avenue/North 22nd Street
	Fox Street/Hunting Park Avenue
Diversified Community Services	Point Breeze Avenue
Enterprise Center	
Fairmount CDC	Girard Avenue (25th Street-31st Street)
Francisville NDC	Girard Avenue/Ridge Avenue
Frankford CDC	
Germantown United CDC	
HACE	North Fifth Street/Lehigh Avenue/North Front Street
Impact Services	Kensington Avenue/Allegheny Avenue
Korean Community Development Services Center	North Fifth Street
Logan CDC	
Mt. Airy USA	Germantown Avenue
New Kensington CDC	North Front Street/Kensington Avenue
	Allegheny Avenue/Richmond Street
	Frankford Avenue (Delaware Avenue-Lehigh Avenue)
	East Girard Avenue (Front Street - I-95)
Nicetown CDC	Germantown Avenue (Venango Street-Cayuga Street)
Nueva Esperanza	
People's Emergency Center CDC	Lancaster Avenue
Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation	
Southwest CDC	Woodland Ave
Tacony CDC	
Village of Arts and Humanities	Germantown Avenue/Lehigh Avenue

Source: City of Philadelphia; CDBG Year 39-40 Consolidated Plan

## **WHY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT/BID CAPACITY IS IMPORTANT**

For commercial corridor management groups (and non-profits with active real estate development programs and capacity to attract new businesses to serve their markets), there is an opportunity for the Land Bank to have a significant impact, quickly. The groups listed in Table 5 are among those which deliver services to businesses and facilitate infrastructure improvements along commercial corridors. The corridors they help to manage, along with areas the Commerce Department is actively engaged in revitalizing, represent the greatest opportunities to support economic development and transfer vacant property for reuse. Targeting and assembling vacant sites for reuse and redevelopment in coordination with these service providers will help further the goals of the corridors and those of the Land Bank.

To the extent capacity is insufficient or not present in a Focus Zone where a corridor sits, the Land Bank should work with the Commerce Department and local capacity from outside of the zone to pursue and develop the proposed end use or uses. Encouraging collaborations or joint-ventures between outside providers and potential sponsors from within Focus Zones can be an effective way to start the process of building capacity on the part of the sponsor for future projects.

---

**TARGETING AND ASSEMBLING VACANT  
SITES FOR REUSE AND REDEVELOPMENT  
IN COORDINATION WITH THESE SERVICE  
PROVIDERS WILL HELP FURTHER THE GOALS  
OF THE CORRIDORS AND THOSE OF THE LAND  
BANK.**



## GOAL 5: REINFORCE OPEN SPACE INITIATIVES & URBAN AGRICULTURE (GREENING)



### WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT TO PHILADELPHIA

Open space is vital to the health and future of Philadelphia's neighborhoods. Across the City, there are many agencies, organizations, and residents dedicated to greening the City in various ways from improving parks, planting trees to tending gardens. In recent years, the City has launched a number of initiatives that seek to improve and expand open space in Philadelphia. The new zoning code recognizes gardening and urban farming as a viable end use. Green2015 identified the need for additional park space across the City and set a goal of 500 acres of new park space. The Philadelphia Water Department has emerged as a national leader in green stormwater infrastructure, which creates visible, functional and attractive open spaces in the City.

These green initiatives and many others require land to meet their objectives. In some neighborhoods, redevelopment pressures threaten informal open space created by residents. In other neighborhoods, the ownership patterns and title issues inhibit the full use of the land for open space. The Land Bank can help to protect open spaces when necessary but also clear the way for a range of reuse possibilities that meet City objectives and capitalize on local capacity.

## **OBJECTIVE: MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIPS IN GREENING TO IMPROVE AND RE-PURPOSE VACANT LAND**

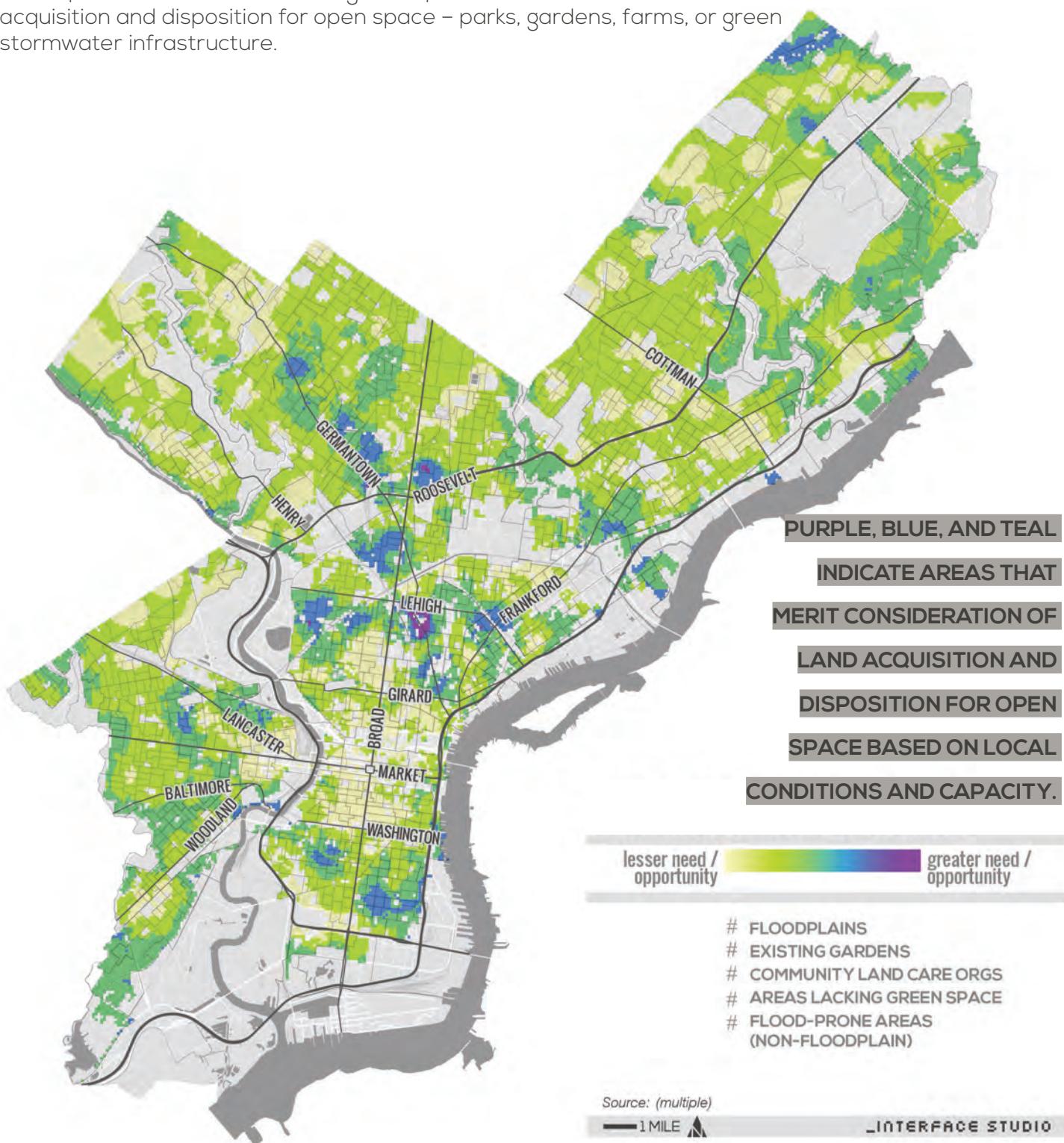
**F**ive indicators were used to identify areas where the Land Bank should strongly consider acquisition and disposition of property to support community-driven open space and greening projects where there is both local greening capacity and a need to preserve or expand open

space. New green spaces in these regions could be active or passive park spaces, community gardens, / urban agriculture, greenhouses, orchards, and where flood risk is an issue, these lush and programmed spaces could serve the dual purpose of green stormwater infrastructure.

- **Floodplains** – The 100-Year and 500-Year Floodplains identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are locations adjacent to waterways that are at risk of being inundated during flood events. Prioritizing green space development in these areas and limiting development will help reduce flooding impacts and reestablish natural drainage patterns.
- **Existing gardens** – Existing gardens across the City, mapped using data provided by the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia's Garden Justice Legal Initiative, were used to locate gardening capacity – places where community residents or green-thumbs willing to travel beyond their neighborhoods are actively tending to gardens, often atop once-vacant land. In these locations, existing gardens should be preserved, and the creation of additional gardens may be warranted given sufficient interest and demand.
- **Community LandCare organizations** – As with existing gardens in this analysis, vacant parcels tended by Community LandCare organizations were used to locate local greening and land stewardship capacity. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) funds Community LandCare organizations across the City that together tend roughly 2,100 vacant parcels. These organizations represent potential local partners for the Land Bank in land maintenance and greening.
- **Areas lacking green space** – Using data from PennPraxis and Green2015, the analysis factored in areas with limited access to park space, defined as a travel time of greater than ten minutes by foot to the nearest park. Where these places intersect with local capacity and available land, opportunities exist for new green spaces to help meet the Greenworks Philadelphia goal of 500 acres of new park space citywide.
- **Non-floodplain flood-prone areas** – Some areas outside the floodplain are nonetheless flood-prone during heavy rains, due to topography, the water table, and underground streams and sewer infrastructure. In these places additional greening, which is more resilient than development to flood events, is a recommended end use.

# OPEN SPACE - COMPOSITE 1

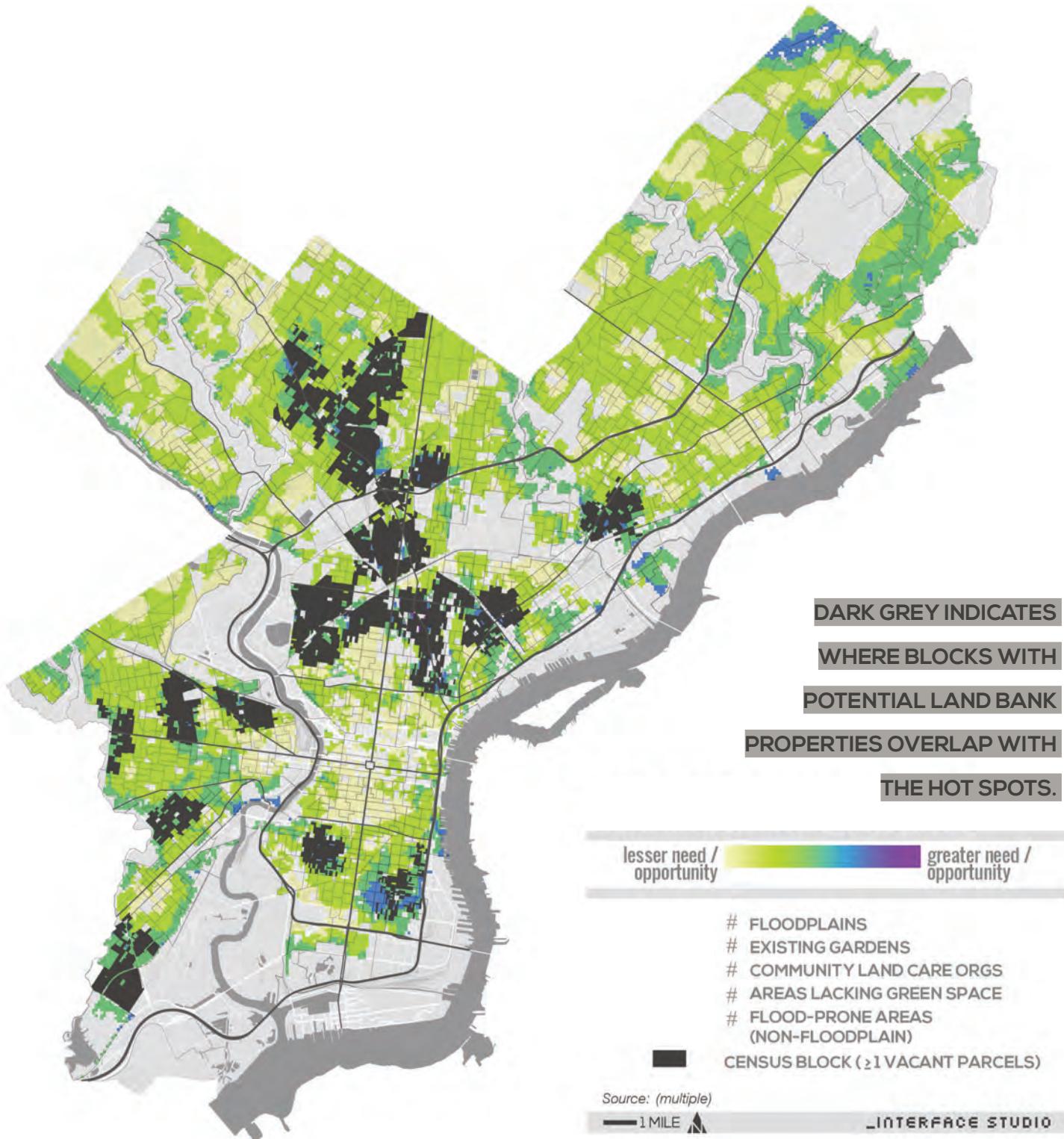
The first composite map for reinforcing open space and greening initiatives highlights areas in purple, blue, and teal where local conditions – poor park access, higher flood risk, and/or existing community capacity to develop and maintain additional green space – merit consideration of land acquisition and disposition for open space – parks, gardens, farms, or green stormwater infrastructure.



**FIGURE 37:** Open Space - Composite 1

# OPEN SPACE - FOCUS ZONE 1

As green space can be large or small, the second map overlays all Census blocks with at least one potential Land Bank property that coincide with the hot spots for this Focus Zone. Roughly half of the potential Land Bank parcels fall within this open space Focus Zone.



**FIGURE 38:** Open Space - Focus Zone 1

## **GOAL 5: OPEN SPACE**

### **SAMPLE SITE**

This sample block highlights a case where an established community organization has transformed vacant lots into thriving gardens and orchards with support from various resources and programs. Some of the land currently in use as community gardens / urban agriculture is publicly-owned; some is privately-held and tax delinquent. These small blocks in a dense Philadelphia neighborhood fall within one of the open space Focus Zones and represent one example of a place where the Land Bank could help grant land security to a community organization and its constituents who have demonstrated capacity, commitment, and support from the neighborhood.

**POTENTIAL OF THE LAND BANK**

**TO HELP ASSEMBLE SITES FOR**

**GARDEN PRESERVATION OR**

**OTHER OPEN SPACES.**

**FIGURE 39:** Sample Site 5





## **OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFY AND SEEK TO ACQUIRE AND/OR DISPOSE OF VACANT LAND WHERE THERE IS DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR MORE OR IMPROVED OPEN SPACE**

While the potential to build upon demonstrated greening capacity is one lens through which the Land Bank should evaluate open space opportunities, the need for more or improved open spaces is a second and very important lens. While community stewards poised to serve as partners in creating and maintaining new green spaces over time may not yet be identified in these high-need locations, such demonstrated need suggests that the Land Bank can collaborate with park, greening, garden, and farm advocates to broaden the horizons of existing actors and help cultivate local capacity for greening work.

Four indicators were used to identify areas where the Land Bank consider proposals for new open spaces in response to the need for more or improved green space. As in the prior objective, new green spaces in these regions could be active or passive park spaces, community gardens / urban agriculture, and green stormwater infrastructure could be an element integrated in the project design where it would have an impact.

- › **Lack of green space** – As in the prior composite map, this analysis also takes into account areas lacking green space, prioritizing areas more than ten minutes on foot from the nearest park according to PennPraxis data from Green2015.
- › **Lack of gardens** – While the prior composite map prioritized the presence of gardens to locate greening capacity, this composite analysis prioritizes areas with few or no gardens as areas in need.
- › **Low food access** – The Department of Health conducted a Food Access Study in 2012 that accounted for farmers' markets, food-producing gardens, and healthy corner stores as well as more traditional grocery and convenience stores. Areas with low or no food access are prioritized in this analysis, in support of community gardens and urban agriculture that could help meet the need for access to fresh produce.
- › **Population density** – The final factor in this composite analysis is population density, with priority given to areas of high population density, particularly where there is limited access to parks, gardens, and/or healthy food.

# GREEN SPACE ACCESS

## EXAMPLE INDICATOR MAP

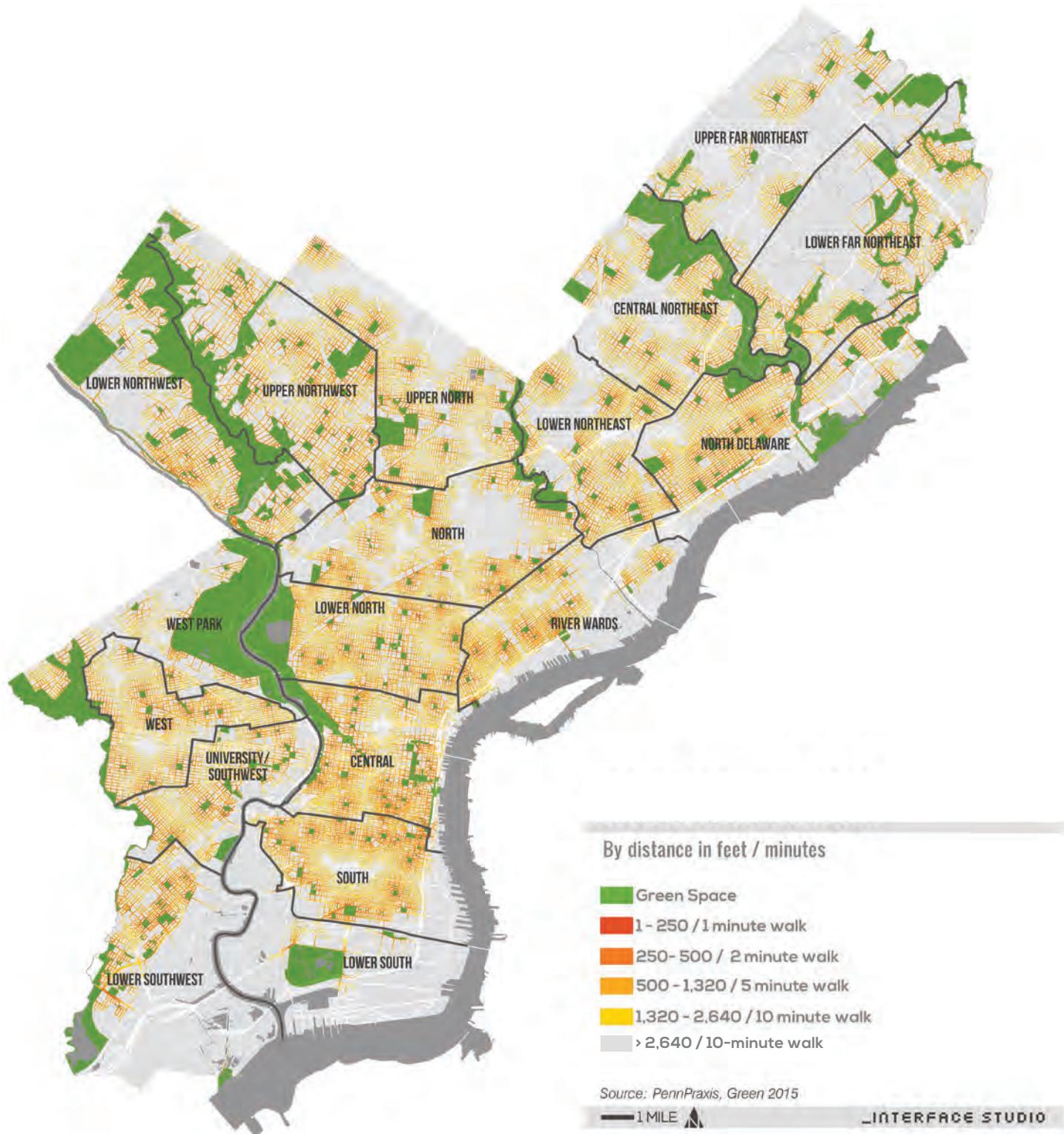


FIGURE 40: Green Space Access

# OPEN SPACE - COMPOSITE 2

This need-based lens generates a second composite map for reinforcing open space and greening initiatives, highlighting areas of demonstrated need in purple and blue.

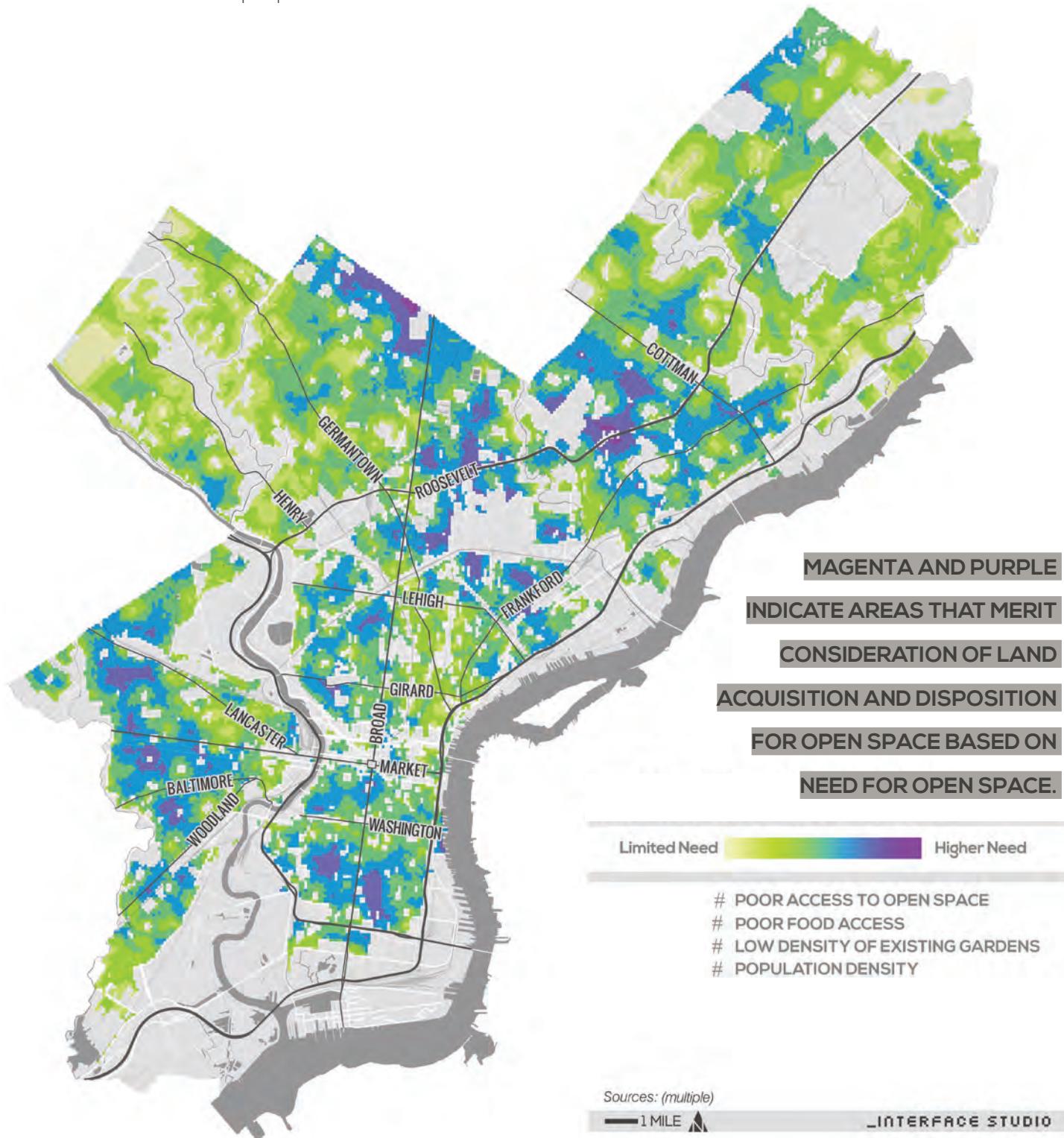


FIGURE 4I: Open Space - Composite 2

## OPEN SPACE - FOCUS ZONE 2

As green space can be large or small, the second map again overlays all Census blocks with at least one potential Land Bank that coincide with the hot spots for this Focus Zone. Roughly 20% of the potential Land Bank parcels fall within this second open space Focus Zone.

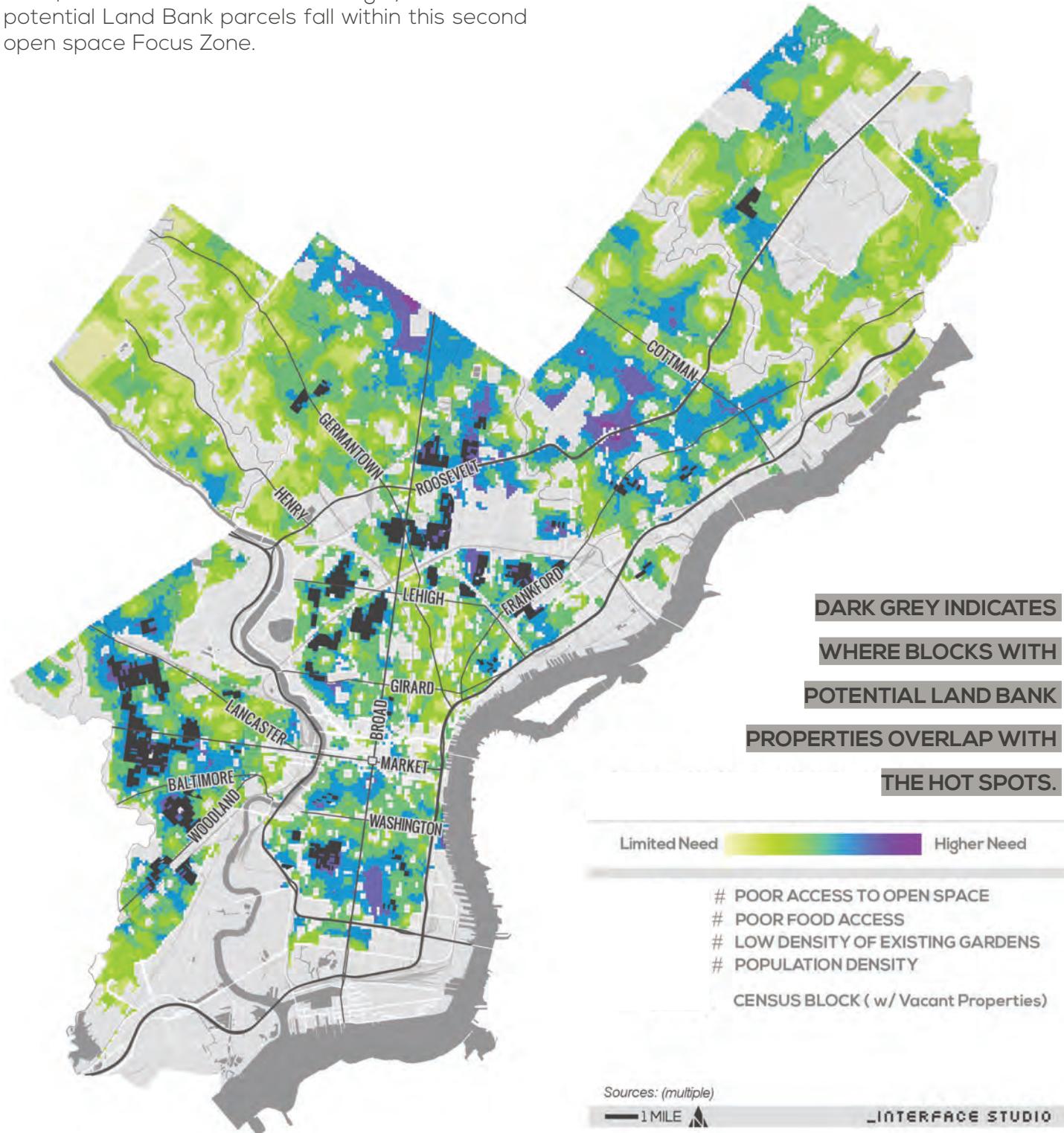


FIGURE 42: Open Space - Focus Zone 2

## **LOCAL PARTNERS IN ADVANCING OPEN SPACE INITIATIVES**

**A**s with other uses, Philadelphia contains many established organizations and committed residents dedicated to improving, expanding and maintaining open space in their neighborhoods for a range of specific uses including the creation of small play spaces, gardening, or food production. As these organizations and residents bring both an interest and significant knowledge to this activity, it is important to understand the current environment of community-based initiatives targeted toward open space.

### **Greening, Gardening, Growing**

The “land care” action categories for reuse of vacant public owned land in Philadelphia should focus on and give high priority to the preservation, creation, and maintenance of green space or open space for the purpose of:

- › Community gardens / urban agriculture
- › Residential side yards
- › Recreation/play spaces
- › Community-managed open space

Two existing and widely-recognized land care activities have been underway in Philadelphia over varying periods of time. Each in their own way - and collectively - contributes to a higher quality of life in the neighborhoods they serve and throughout the city as a whole. They include the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s (PHS) LandCare Program and a number of organizations involved in advocating for urban agriculture.

## **PHS LandCare Programs**

The LandCare programs has over 10 million square feet of vacant land under custodial management, distributed between two different components: Philadelphia LandCare and Community LandCare.

- › **Philadelphia LandCare:** Under this component of the program, sites are selected annually through a process that includes PHS consultation with OHCD, the Commerce Department, and City Planning Commission. PHS also consults with City Council and community based organizations. Approximately 10 million square feet—184 acres, the equivalent of 139 football fields—are under custodial management.

PHS constructs a lists of sites that are in violation of blight statutes and submits to L&I and OHCD for consideration; violation notices are issued and permission is requested to abate the nuisance(s). Bid packages are created and caretaker groups are selected by geographical location. The scope of “cleaning and greening” can include specifications for fence installation and tree plantings. On average, four in every five contractors hired for this work are minority-owned companies, which transform on average 400-600 parcels a year, dependent upon funding availability. To address ongoing maintenance, 15 contractors are selected annually, of which 60-80% are minority-owned or community-based groups acting as contractors. Approximately 6,200 parcels are monitored and maintained annually, of which 1,500 to 2,500 (24 to 40%) at any given time are publicly-owned. Historically, 850 parcels have transitioned over time to new housing or businesses.

**TABLE 6:** Philadelphia LandCare Maintenance Contractors

All Seasons Landscaping Inc.
Amir Landscaping
Brothers of Nature Lawn Care Services
Cherry Blossoms Landscaping
C & H Landscapes
Dooley's Landscaping and Tree Care Service
Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation*
Moon Site Management
Budget Landscaping
I.C.C.G
Mercado's Landscape & Tree Service LLC
New Kensington Community Development Corporation*
Rogan Landscaping
Nicetown CDC*

\* Nonprofit, neighborhood-based development organization  
Source: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 2014

- **Community LandCare:** Under this component, approximately 2.9 million square feet of land is under custodial management – representing 66 acres, the equivalent of 50 football fields. As reflected in the table below, 70% of the land area managed by the community under this program component is privately owned and represents 47 acres or the equivalent of 35 football fields. The balance is owned by different local public sector entities as shown below.

PHS contracts with 13 community organizations annually to clean and mow 2,100 parcels of vacant land not yet cleaned and greened for an average of 50 to 200 parcels per group. Eighty (80) community residents are now employed in the program that provides an opportunity for them to play a direct role in keeping their own neighborhoods clean and safe. PHS sponsors workshops for resident participants on many subject areas to support their work, including team management, equipment maintenance and safety, tree care, and building capacity.

**TABLE 7:** Philadelphia LandCare Component (as of July 2014)

Public Ownership	Sq. Ft.	% of Total	Acres	Football Fields	Parcels	% of Total
City of Philadelphia	380,140	13%	8.7	6.6	552	10%
PRA	280,201	10%	6.4	4.9	329	6%
PHA	102,879	4%	2.3	1.8	194	4%
PHDC	54,931	2%	1.2	1.0	102	2%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>818,151</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>1177</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Privately Owned</b>	<b>2,040,585</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>4114</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,858,736</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>65.4</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>5291</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS); Parcel and ownership data based on Philadelphia Water Department parcels and community groups who maintain the parcels.

**TABLE 8:** Community LandCare Vacant Land Under Management by Community-based Group (July 2014)

Community-Based Groups	Sq. Ft.	% of Total	Acres	Football Fields
Nicetown CDC	438,420	15.3%	10	7.6
Tioga United	329,214	11.5%	8	5.7
Francisville NDC	268,157	9.4%	6	4.6
Mantua Community Improvement Council	255,632	8.9%	6	4.4
Village of Arts & Humanities	255,074	8.9%	6	4.4
New Kensington CDC	254,538	8.9%	6	4.4
Strawberry Mansion CDC	214,358	7.5%	5	3.7
South Kensington Community Partners	213,993	7.5%	5	3.7
Men of Mill Creek	193,203	6.8%	4	3.3
South Philadelphia H.O.M.E.S.	121,199	4.2%	3	2.1
Susquehanna Pick Up Clean Up	117,671	4.1%	3	2.0
Greater Philadelphia Asian Social Service Center	111,858	3.9%	3	1.9
Mount Airy Business Improvement District	85,419	3.0%	2	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,858,736</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>49.5</b>

Source: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS); parcel and ownership data based on Philadelphia Water Department parcels and community groups who maintain the parcels

## Urban Agriculture<sup>13</sup>

PHS and the Penn State Extension have been instrumental in creating many of the City's most well-established gardens. These organizations continue to be critical partners through PHS's Garden Tenders and City Harvest Growers Alliance and, Penn State Extension's Master Gardener and High Tunnel Alliance programs. In addition, other organizations have been on the cutting edge of gardening and urban agriculture across the City including the Urban Tree Connection, JASTCH/Overbrook Environmental Education Center, Agatston Urban Nutrition Initiative, Teens4Good, Philadelphia Urban Roots Collective, Early Bird Farm, Norris Square Neighborhood Project, The Village of Arts and Humanities PhillyEarth program, Philly Urban Creators and the Nationalities Service Center program Growing Home Gardens. These groups and many others will all play an important and continuing role in greening initiatives across the City.

The Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia works to promote the interests of community gardeners and urban farmers in marginalized Philadelphia neighborhoods. In 2011, the Center the Garden Justice Legal Initiative (GJLI), with support from the Skadden Fellowship Foundation, established an initiative to provide pro bono legal support, policy research and advocacy, and community education and organizing to community gardeners and market farmers in the Philadelphia region. By promoting urban agriculture and helping to reclaim vacant land, GJLI helps vulnerable communities secure reliable sources of healthy food, revitalize their economies, and exercise greater control of their neighborhoods' futures. Community gardens provide reliable sources of healthy food and income and help communities revitalize and reclaim their neighborhoods. But even established sites of urban food production face legal difficulties that can make them difficult to sustain -- not the least of which is the difficulty faced by community groups and individuals seeking to grow food on public and private vacant and abandoned property.

<sup>13</sup> From the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia's Garden Justice Legal Initiative Program Report, 2011-2013.

## Food Producing Gardens

There are approximately 500 food-producing gardens on record in Philadelphia managed by over 35 collaborative partner groups.<sup>14</sup> In the aggregate, they encompass 22.5 million square feet of land that represents 518 acres, the equivalent of 392 football fields. A breakdown of gardens of their members by Philadelphia City Planning Commission District is tabulated below and shows that every district enjoys the benefits of these important community-based resources.

**TABLE 9:** Food Producing Gardens by Planning District, July 2014

Planning District	#	%
Lower North	125	26%
South	61	12%
University Southwest	52	11%
North	48	10%
West	48	10%
Central	41	8%
Upper Northwest	35	7%
River Ward	20	4%
Lower Northeast	12	2%
Lower Northwest	11	2%
Upper North	9	2%
West Park	9	2%
Central Northeast	5	1%
Lower Southwest	5	1%
North Delaware	5	1%
Lower Far Northeast	3	1%
Upper Far Northeast	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: City of Philadelphia, 2013

<sup>14</sup> See list in Appendix.

## SAMPLE PROJECTS

### FARM 51



**Farm 51** is a small urban farm and educational center that provides affordable, fresh food to the local community in southwest Philadelphia.

SOURCE: FARM 51

### PLOTLAND



**Plotland** is a small garden on a West Philadelphia corner lot. Neighbors worked together to transform this trash-strewn, abandoned lot into a viable community garden and meeting space.

SOURCE: westphillylocal.com

### VIOLA STREET GARDEN



The **Viola Street Garden** is a 30-year-old community garden that now has a year-to-year Urban Garden Agreement and is seeking assistance with preservation for the long term.

SOURCE: thesanguineroot.com

## **WHY LAND CARE/GREENING CAPACITY IS IMPORTANT**

For land care groups having feasible plans and the capacity to both bring gardens or green spaces to life and maintain them over the long haul, there are several benefits: (1) good for the Land Bank's disposition of the land knowing it will return to productive use and remain so; (2) good for the immediate neighborhood and surrounding community in replacing vacancy with vibrancy; and (3) good for the land care provider in growing their capacity and expanding their portfolio.

Where neighborhood-based capacity is insufficient or not present in a particular focus zone, the Land Bank has a different but no less important opportunity: to invite local capacity that lies outside of the zone to pursue, develop, and manage the proposed end use. Encouraging collaborations or joint ventures between the outside provider and a potential sponsor from within the zone is a way to start building capacity on the part of the sponsor for future projects in that zone.



# LAND BANK OPERATIONS



The Year One Philadelphia Land Bank Strategic Plan sets the baseline for updates to the Plan in the coming years. As such, the stakeholder groups that participated in this planning process strongly echoed the Land Bank legislation that calls for efficient and transparent operations to guide Land Bank activity. The remaining goals are focused on operations with respect to how the Land Bank addresses vacant and tax delinquent land in the City. An updated disposition policy, also required by City Council, is included in the Appendix with a focus on criteria for land sales. Other Land Bank operations such as staffing, revenue, and other organizational items will be developed in the first year of operation of the Land Bank and refined based upon available resources and the experience gained from each year of activity.

## **GOAL 6: SUPPORT CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT LAND BANK OPERATIONS**

### **WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT TO PHILADELPHIA**

The Land Bank is an important tool that can assist in the process to revitalize neighborhoods by offering vacant property for reuse. There are a significant number of organizations (both private and non-profit) as well as many more residents and business owners that seek to obtain vacant property for varying reasons. Those willing to invest in the City should be welcomed to do so. To maximize the use of this tool, the Land Bank must establish and publicize criteria to guide all aspects of operations. This includes the acquisition and disposition of property, making data readily available, and determining appropriate end uses for Land Bank holdings.



## **OBJECTIVE: FOLLOW THE STRATEGIES SET FORTH IN THE PHILADELPHIA2035 DISTRICT PLANS AND “ACCEPTED” NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS**

There has been a lot of valuable, community-based planning across the City with a focus on engaging residents about their concerns and ideas for the future of their communities. The Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision, the City's new comprehensive plan, established an updated vision and zoning code as well as a process to develop district specific plans for all parts of Philadelphia. As of 2014, the City has completed plans for eight of the eighteen Planning Districts with two more underway. In addition, private foundations and public dollars have sponsored neighborhood plans usually led by a local community development corporation. To support this work, PCPC established a formal "acceptance" process to ensure these plans meet City criteria. To date, ten independent plans have been accepted by PCPC.

The Land Bank is an implementation tool that can assist in realizing elements of these plans. Given the public outreach utilized to create the plans themselves, the Land Bank will follow the documented recommendations not only to guide the potential acquisition and disposition of property but also to identify appropriate end uses. As more plans are completed, there will be more available guidance for Land Bank activity. In areas that are currently without either a Philadelphia 2035 District Plan or an independent community plan, the Land Bank will consult older plans for the area and discuss strategies with City Planning Commission staff, local Council representatives and identified community leaders.

## **OBJECTIVE: REINFORCE MAJOR INITIATIVES AND PROPOSED PUBLIC INVESTMENTS**

To leverage and extend development in the City, the Land Bank will support major initiatives and proposed investments by public, private, and institutional partners that reinforce the Philadelphia 2035 citywide vision. The existing Promise Zone, the funded HUD Choice Neighborhood, and the proposed Choice Neighborhood (in the planning stages) are excellent candidates for Land Bank support and activity as these initiatives move forward. Similarly, the City's universities and hospitals are significant economic development and educational resources that often play a large role in nearby development. The Land Bank will be responsive to institutional requests for property that support economic growth.

The Year One Strategic Plan identified capital projects (from the City's Capital Program) projected over the next six years that are place-specific and have the potential to improve the surrounding community. Data were also collected on private investments, public expenditures for housing, and planned institutional investment. All of these patterns of investment will be reviewed and updated annually to determine appropriate opportunities for Land Bank assistance.

# RECENT PLANS IN PHILADELPHIA

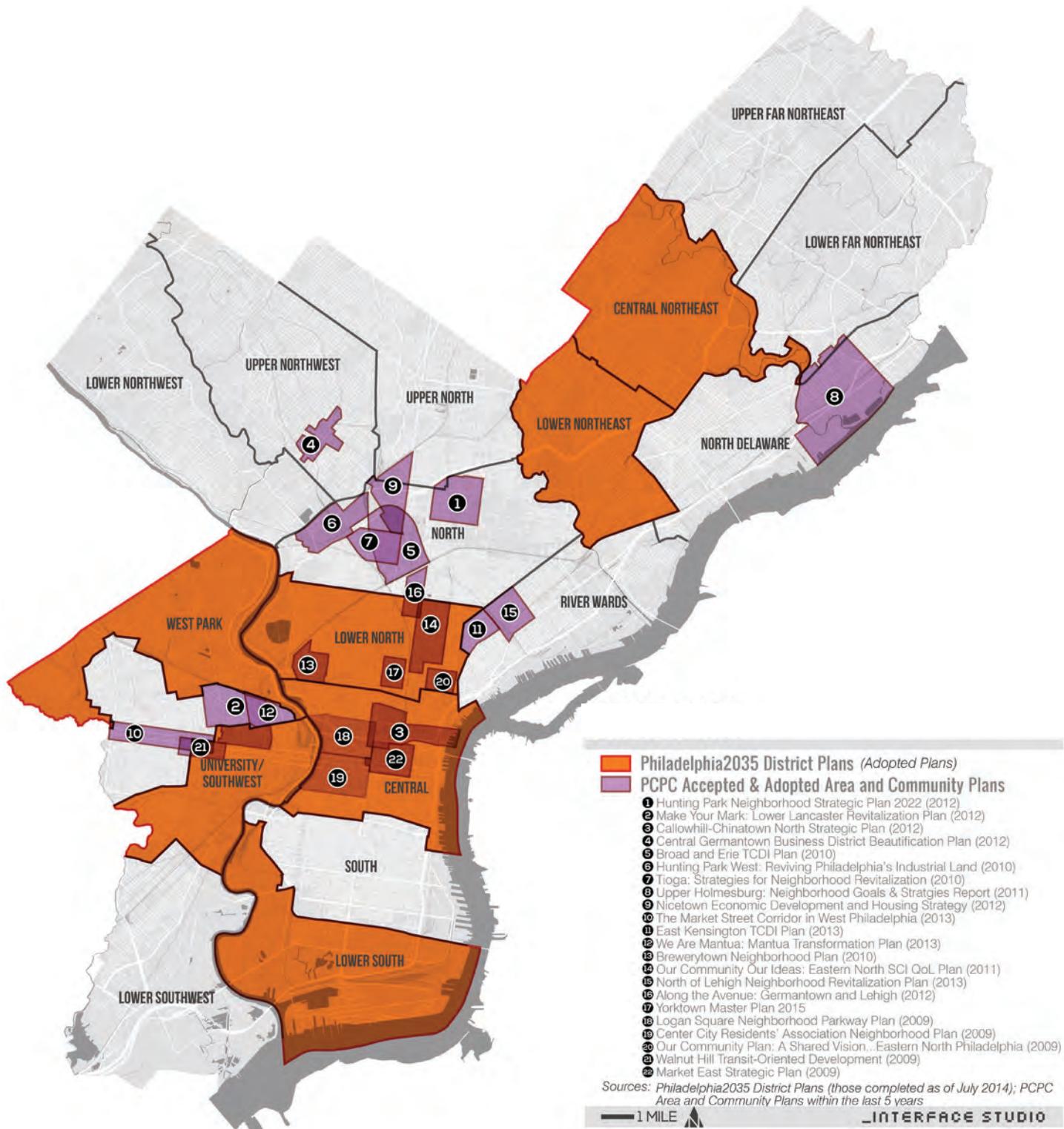
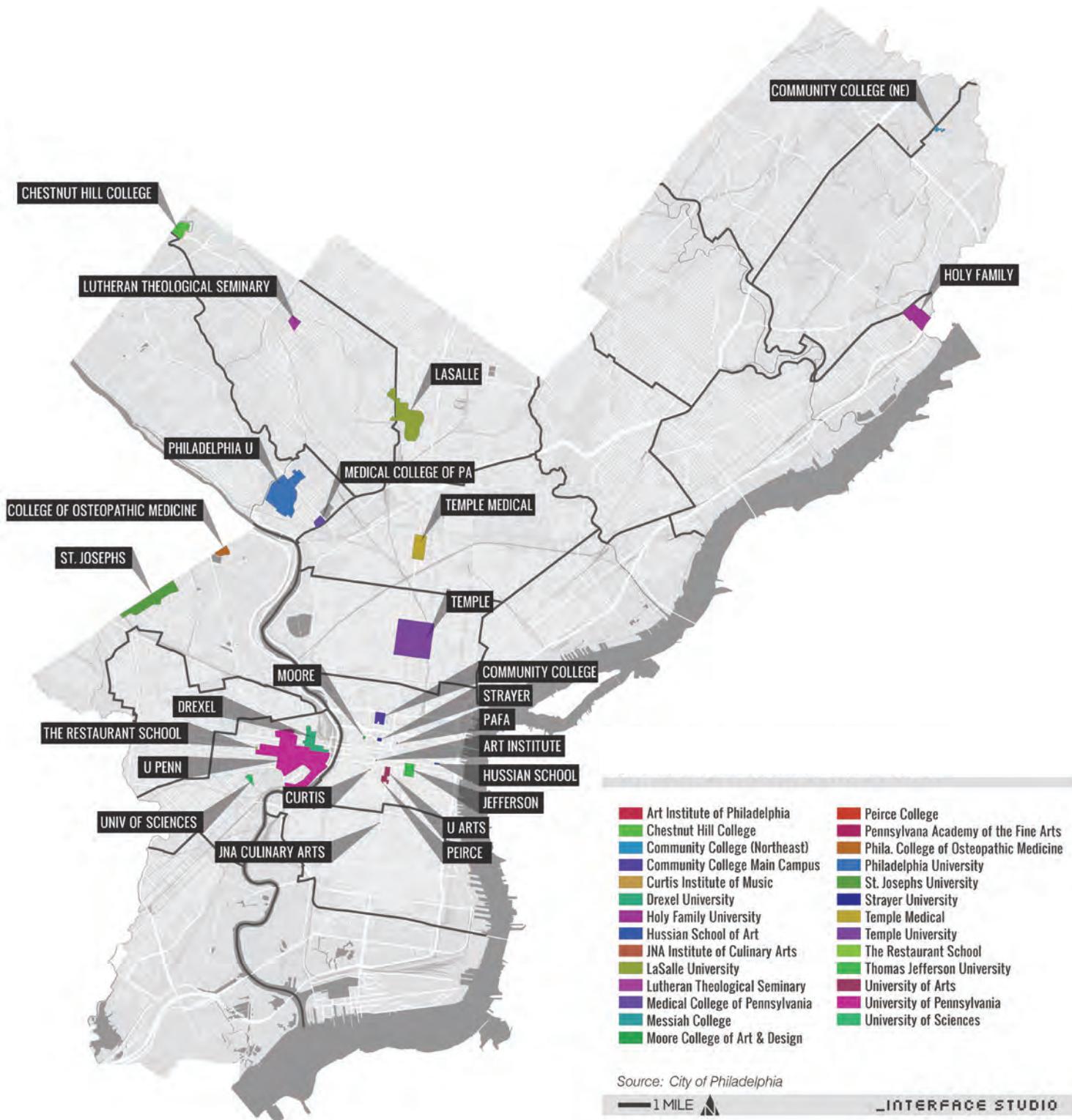


FIGURE 43: Recent plans in Philadelphia

# COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES



**FIGURE 44:** Philadelphia colleges & universities

## **OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE MEANINGFUL WAYS FOR THE PUBLIC TO BE ENGAGED IN LAND BANK DECISION MAKING**

The Land Bank is designed to support and help implement the Philadelphia 2035 District and neighborhood plans that were created in neighborhoods across the City with significant public input. In addition, representatives from approximately 80 different organizations, many of which vigorously advocated for the land bank legislation, helped to shape the methodology, goals, and objectives of the Year One Strategic Plan. After release of the draft Strategic Plan for public review, additional public forums will invite others to review the direction in which the Land Bank is moving. To ensure transparency in Land Bank operations and the updating of the Strategic Plan in future years, the public and key stakeholders will continue to have a role and voice in shaping Land Bank activities.

For individual properties, the Land Bank will have a strong process for public input during its decision making process. The online application process will be strengthened and improved over time. Every property being considered for disposition will be physically posted with a notice that includes contact information for the Land Bank. The Land Bank will notify Registered Civic Organizations that serve the area in which each property is located. Each month the Land Bank will publish its board agenda online and offer opportunities for public comment on pending decision at its monthly public meeting.



**FIGURE 45:** The current disposition process for the Land Bank

## **OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFY SIMPLE, MANAGEABLE DATA CRITERIA THAT CAN BE UPDATED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS**

The data analysis for the Year One Strategic Plan evaluated a large number of datasets. To ensure the analysis is replicable, readily available datasets were chosen as key indicators to guide the overall need and geographic opportunities for specific Land Bank activity. The process for analysis will be updated annually to establish benchmarks and measure change. As local datasets improve, they should be considered to help refine the analysis in subsequent years.

## **OBJECTIVE: UTILIZE THE BEST DATA SOURCES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE, AND DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO UPGRADE DATA EACH YEAR**

The data used for the Year One Strategic Plan are imperfect. Built from different sources, the inventory represents the best currently available source of data on vacant and tax delinquent property. The Land Bank will work with PCPC, OIT, and other partners to improve and integrate new data each year. Specifically, the Land Bank will consider opportunities to update PCPC district survey data in future years to ensure that vacancy data is up-to-date. The Land Bank is working with City administrative agencies, City Council and other partners to find better ways of identifying and tracking vacancy using up to date data and modern analytical tools. Over time the Land Bank expects to have increasingly more precise and current information on the state of vacant property in Philadelphia.

## **OBJECTIVE: CONTINUE TO USE A DATA-DRIVEN MAPPING PROCESS TO IDENTIFY AND VISUALIZE FOCUS ZONES FOR ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION**

The Focus Zones identified for different opportunities are based upon a data-driven process designed to highlight areas where there is both: 1) vacant property and 2) an opportunity to reinforce one or more of the key goals stated in the land bank ordinance. The Focus Zone analysis will be updated each year, taking into account current and potential Land Bank holdings.

## **OBJECTIVE: SHARE USEFUL DATA WITH PARTNERS FOR CRITICAL IMPROVEMENT AND PLANNING PURPOSES**

The Land Bank will develop a website that will help the Land Bank share its data with its partners and the general public. This will help the land bank improve its data over time, and will allow partners to use the data to identify opportunities and plan future development more effectively. The Land Bank will also produce an annual performance report that shares both summarized and detailed information about its work of the previous year.

## **OBJECTIVE: CREATE CLEAR CRITERIA TO HELP DETERMINE POTENTIAL END USES FOR LAND BANK PROPERTY**

The Land Bank must juggle a large number of factors in its decisions regarding the potential acquisition of vacant and tax delinquent property across the City. The size of the property, the type of neighborhood in which it is located, adjacency to other vacant properties and other uses, and the level of interest in reusing the property by private entities are just some of the factors that the Land Bank must evaluate. Given these factors as well as the limitations on what the Land Bank can acquire on an annual basis, the Land Bank must develop criteria to help answer two key questions:

### **1 For privately-owned tax-delinquent property, should the property be acquired by the Land Bank at this time?**

While the Land Bank will respond to requests for land and market-available properties for infill development and sideyards citywide, it must also focus its activity to be truly impactful while working within financial and staff constraints. The purpose of identifying Focus Zones for equitable development, private investment, economic vitality and open space is to help the Land Bank make strategic decisions about where and why to acquire land.

### **2 If the property is in the Land Bank inventory, what is the appropriate end use?**

In some cases, the recommended end use of a specific property is explicitly defined in a District Plan or neighborhood plan, but in many other cases, determining an appropriate end use requires additional analysis. As stated in the enabling legislation, development as well as community uses will be considered. This calls for expanding the traditional definition of "highest and best use" and assessing the true potential for reuse guided by the analysis completed for this Strategic Plan, the characteristics of the land, and local interest and capacity in reusing the property.

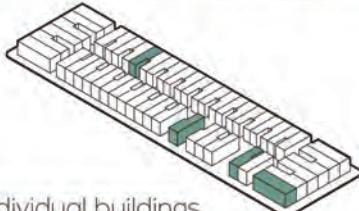
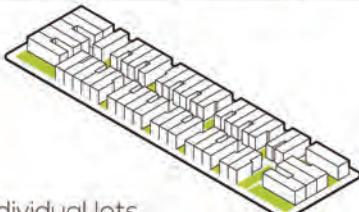
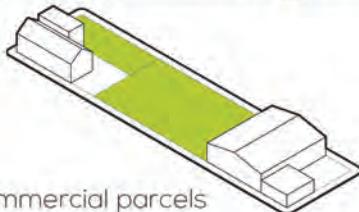
The starting point for making these decisions is in looking at property characteristics. In general terms, the reuse potential and decisions for a vacant building, an individual vacant lot, a large assemblage of vacant property, and a vacant commercial property are all very different. The possibilities also vary depending on the type of neighborhood in which the property is located. Due to strong market forces as well as the extremely limited supply of vacant property in what The Reinvestment Fund refers to as "Regional Choice" / "High Value" neighborhoods, the focus is on helping to guide Land Bank decision-making for other Philadelphia neighborhood conditions.

## DECISION TREES

To help organize the range of possibilities for different types of vacant property, a series of general decision trees were created (Figures 47-51). The decision tree approach simply asks a series of questions to help narrow the range of possibilities.

A few caveats are necessary. While these decision trees are useful in capturing the range of considerations that must be reviewed about any given property in one image, they cannot include every single consideration that may arise. Every vacant property has its own story, and sometimes the nature of the property or a proposed reuse cannot be anticipated. These diagrams serve as guides only.

## VACANCY BY TYPE

VACANT & TAX DELINQUENT PROPERTIES	GENERAL PROPERTY TYPE	CITYWIDE OPPORTUNITIES
	<b>BUILDINGS</b>  individual buildings	building decision tree FIGURE 48
	<b>INDIVIDUAL LOTS</b>  individual lots	individual lot decision tree FIGURE 49
	<b>PARCELS</b>  assemblages	FOCUS ZONE OPPORTUNITIES residential assemblages decision tree FIGURE 50
	 commercial parcels	commercial property decision tree FIGURE 51

**FIGURE 46:** Vacancy typologies

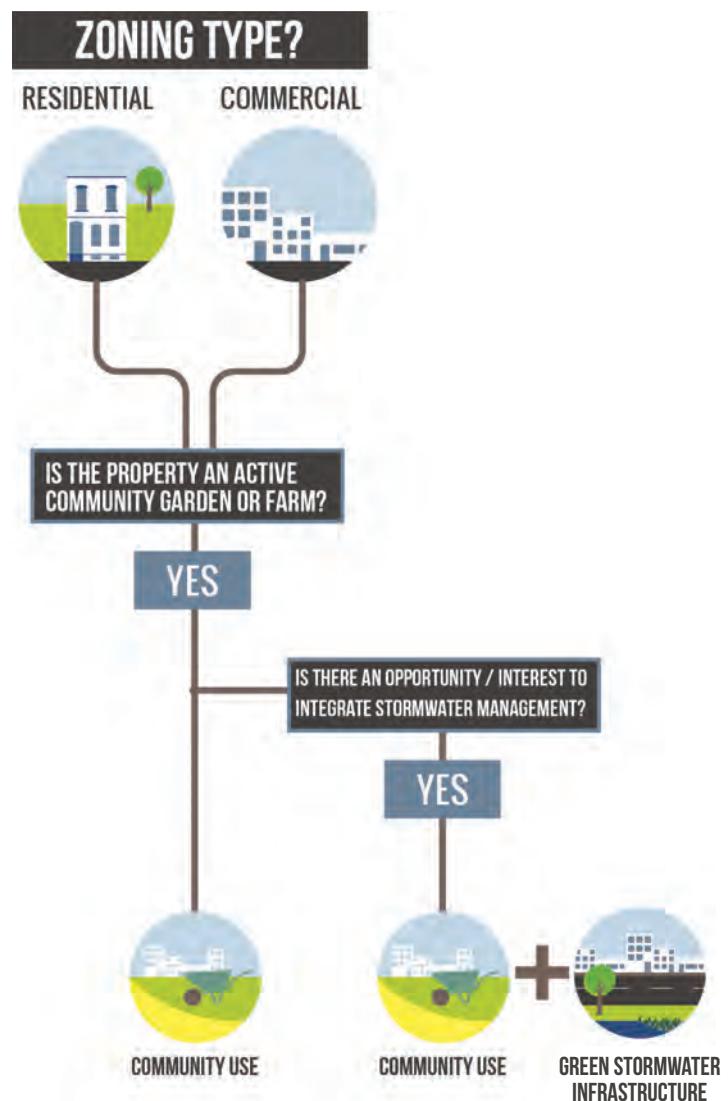
In addition, the decision trees cannot in and of themselves determine the best reuse option between two or more competing proposals for a single property. Additional review will be required to truly assess the merits of each proposal in line with City's disposition policies and goals outlined in this Strategic Plan. All of that said, the decision trees serve as an effective tool for guiding discussions and decisions about reuse opportunities.

## Guiding Criteria

Consistent with Land Bank disposition policies and comments from key stakeholders, the following criteria intend to provide guidance for specific issues that can arise in assessing the potential acquisition and conveyance of vacant and tax delinquent property as described in the decision trees that follow. (Note: updated disposition policies are included in the Appendix.)

- › If properties are already in use as an active and maintained community garden, this use will be protected. The Land Bank can acquire and consolidate ownership and then work with the organizers to determine the best owner, including a private individual, business (in the case of a working farm), Neighborhood Garden Trust, or the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation.
- › If the decision is to convey properties for community use, the Land Bank will work with potential partners to determine what type of community use is appropriate, potentially including community gardens / urban agriculture, recreation space, community-managed open space, or other activities. The data analysis completed for the Year One Strategic Plan can be used to ask a few questions,<sup>15</sup> including:

**FIGURE 47:** Decision tree: garden preservation



- Are the properties located in an area in need of better access to fresh food?
- Are the properties located outside of a 10-minute walk to a park?
- Are the properties potentially large enough to support a commercial farm?
- Are the properties an opportunity to provide space for both green stormwater infrastructure and either passive open space or gardening?

<sup>15</sup> PHS, the Department of Parks & Recreation, PILCOP, and the Neighborhoods Garden Trust among others are developing a detailed decision tree regarding proposals for new gardens, natural features and other green initiatives. Once finalized, this work will further help the Land Bank to assess reuse possibilities.

- › If the decision is to convey properties for housing or hold and assemble for housing, the Land Bank will work with partners to determine whether the ultimate conveyance should be to support the development of affordable, market-rate, or mixed-income housing. Subsequent questions include:
  - Are the properties located in an area that can support market-rate development?
  - What are the neighborhood market trends?
  - What is the percentage of rental housing versus homeownership in the community?
  - Is there an opportunity to assemble additional property for a mixed-income development that includes both affordable and market-rate units?
  - Within what time frame could the property be redeveloped based upon available resources and the level of interest of private and non-profit developers?
- › If the properties have two or more competing proposals for different end uses, the Land Bank will assess the following:
  - Is one of the proposed reuses meeting an identified need in the community (for instance addressing a lack of open space or providing new affordable housing units)?
  - Is each proposal economically feasible? Do the buyers have, or are very likely to have, the capacity and resources to improve the property?
  - Does each proposal have an effective plan to maintain the property both in the short-term and over the long-term after reuse?
  - Do the buyers own other vacant property in the City that has remained unimproved for a significant amount of time?
  - Within what time frame could the property be redeveloped / reused based upon available resources and the level of interest of private and non-profit developers?
  - Are there opportunities to combine the proposals or assemble additional vacant and tax-delinquent property in order to do so?

**FIGURE 48:** Decision tree: vacant buildings

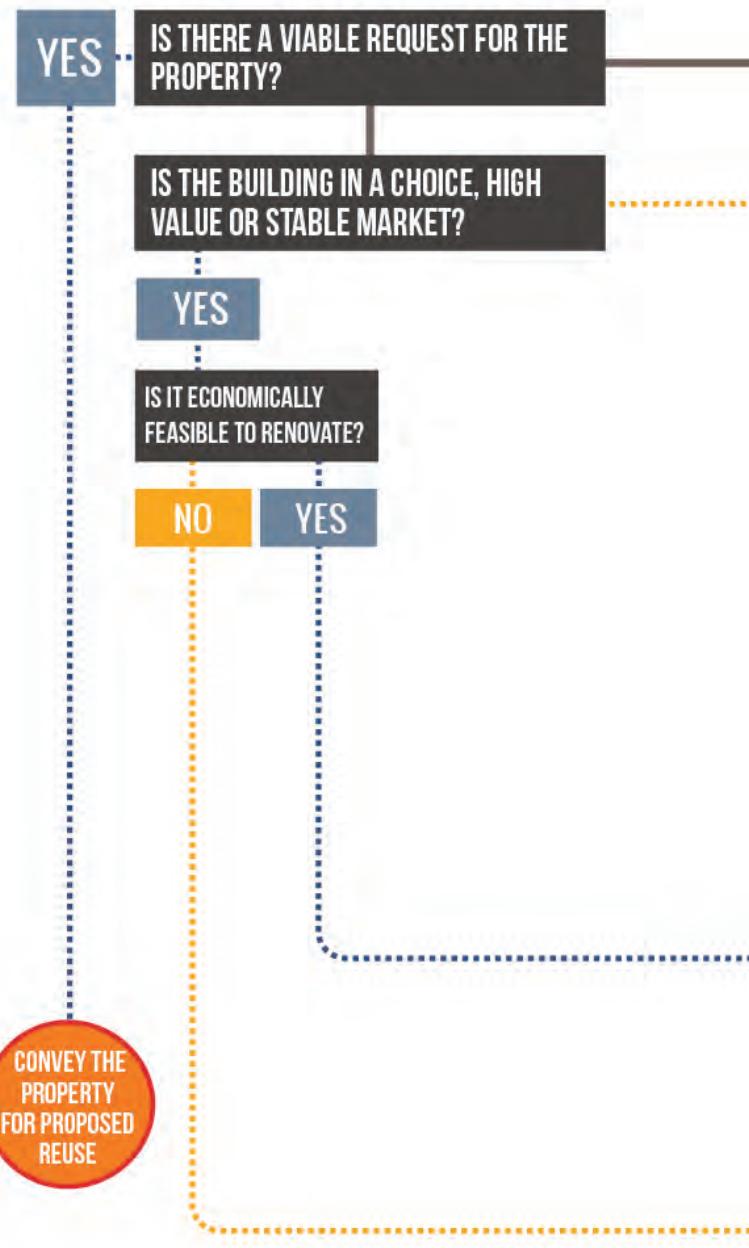
### **Individual Vacant Building**

Individual vacant buildings are scattered across neighborhood blocks and represent a particular challenge with respect to reuse. In stronger markets, the building may be a candidate for rehabilitation. If renovation is economically feasible, the property is a candidate for an individual development opportunity. If not, the building should not be accepted into the Land Bank, as demolition will be necessary. L&I is responsible for the demolition of imminently dangerous structures, and once the land is cleared, the lot is a likely candidate for infill development given strong market forces.

In other neighborhoods, the Land Bank needs to ask additional questions about the structure, including:

- › Is the building located in an identified Focus Zone?
- › What is the condition of the building?
- › Is there local capacity or a viable request to rehabilitate the structure?
- › Is the structure adjacent to other vacant and tax-delinquent parcels?

To be strategic about where the Land Bank will acquire property, if the structure is neither in a Focus Zone nor requested for rehabilitation with a feasible development proposal, it should not be accepted into the Land Bank. If the property is within a Focus Zone and in fair to good condition, it is a candidate for stabilization and assembly with nearby vacant and tax-delinquent property. Vacant buildings that are in poor condition and are adjacent to other vacant and tax-delinquent property should be prioritized for acquisition to help create larger assemblages of land for reuse.

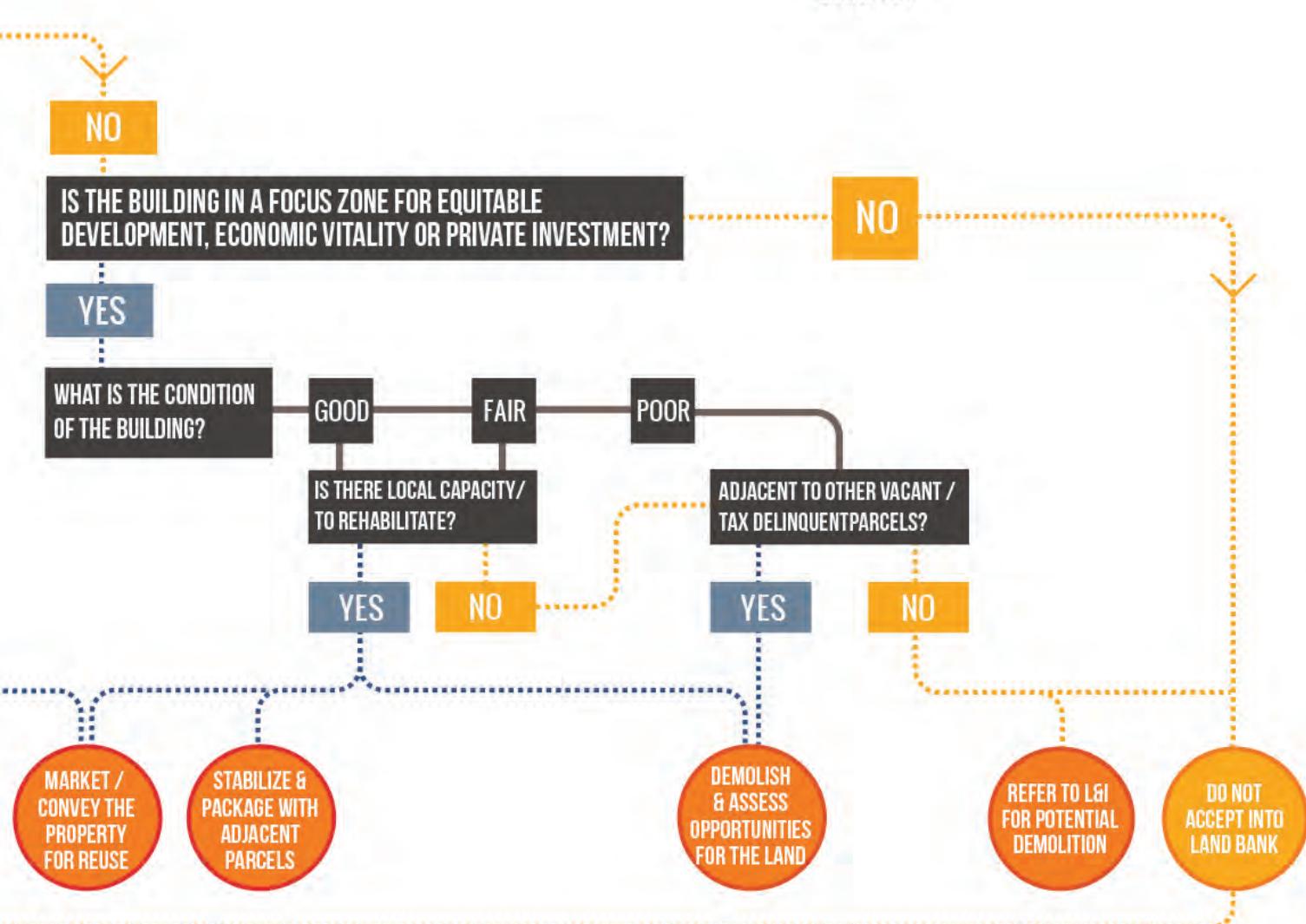




## << VACANT BUILDING

### RESIDENTIAL

SIZE: INDIVIDUAL VACANT, TAX DELINQUENT RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES  
NOTES: REQUIRES A PHYSICAL INSPECTION TO ASSESS CONDITION



## **Individual Vacant Lot**

Individual vacant lots, often referred to as “missing teeth,” can be found in neighborhoods across the City. The most frequent request for these properties is for reuse as either a sideyard or for parking. To determine the possibilities, the Land Bank must ask the following questions:

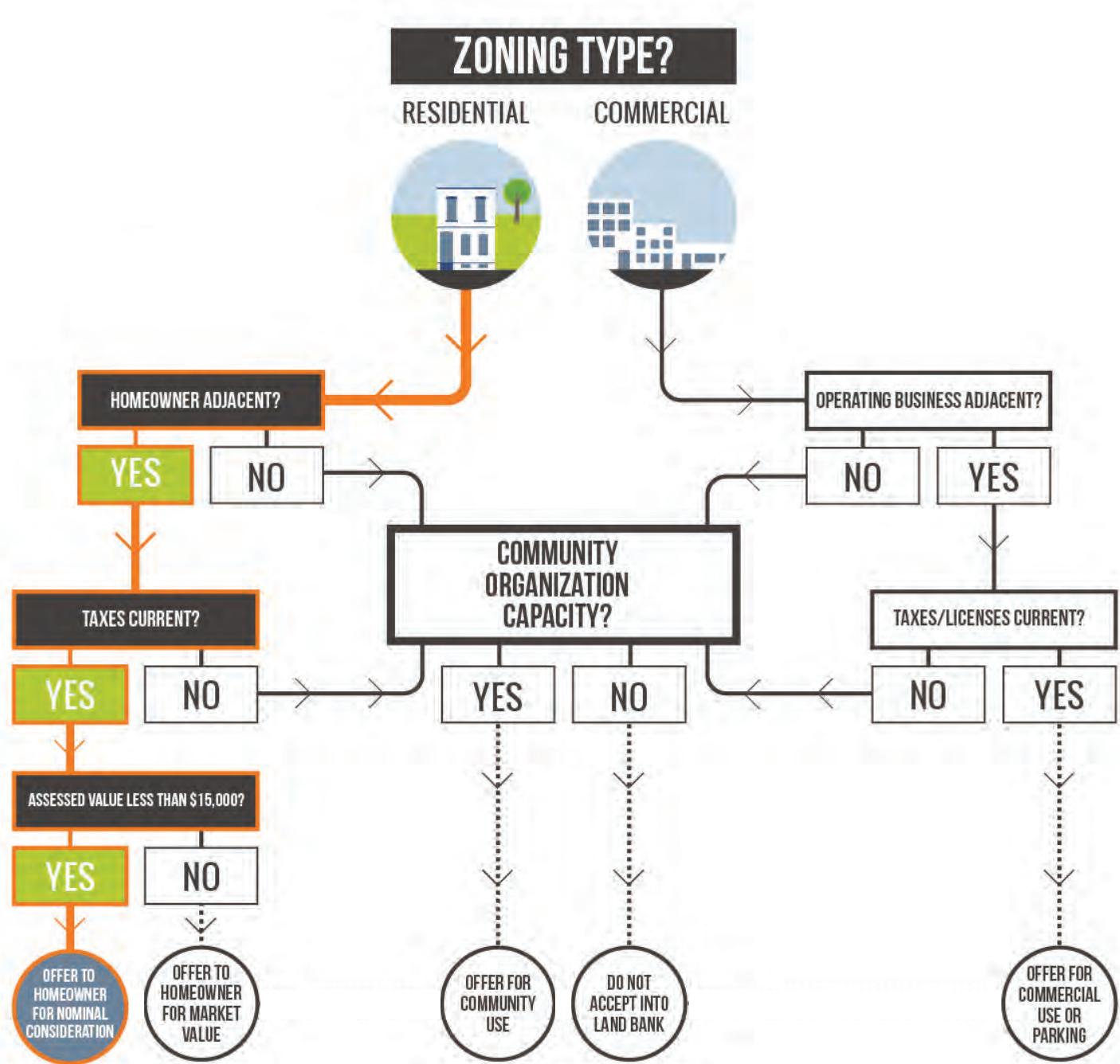
- › What is the current zoning of the parcel (residential or commercial)?
- › Is there a homeowner or operating business adjacent to the parcel?
- › Is the homeowner or operating business current on their taxes?

If the answer is yes to these questions, the lot is a candidate for acquisition and conveyance for a sideyard or parking for the homeowner, or commercial expansion or parking for the operating business. Consistent with other City policies, a vacant residential lot proposed for parking should only be allowed if the curb cut does not eliminate an existing on-street parking space.

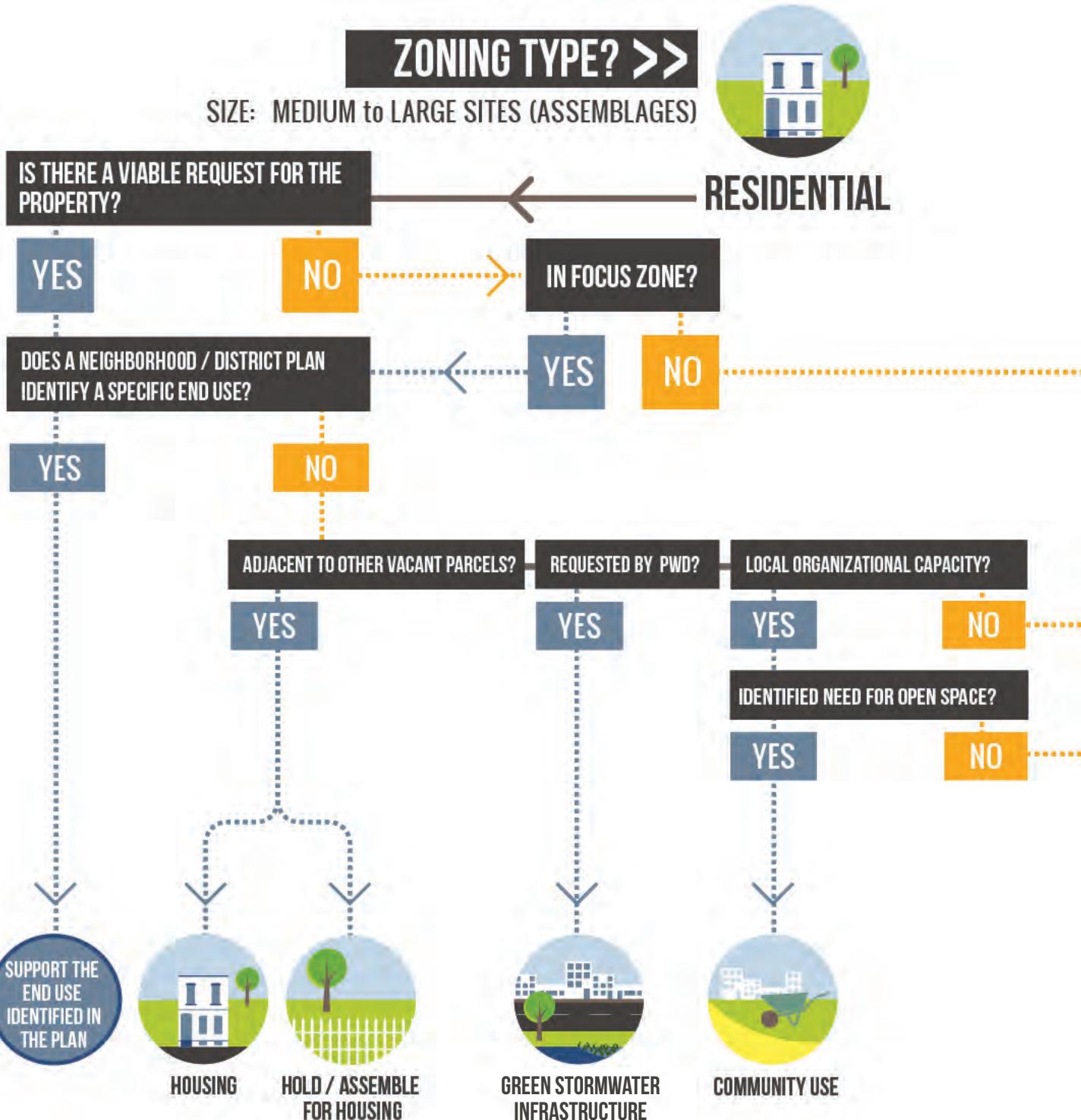
If the answers to any of these questions is no, the Land Bank should assess whether there is local community capacity with a viable interest in reusing the lot for community use. If yes, the lot can be offered for community use as determined by the community organization. If no, the lot should not be taken into the Land Bank.



**FIGURE 49:** Decision tree: vacant lot



**FIGURE 50:** Decision tree: residential assemblages



\* NOTE: In areas where zoning has not yet been remapped by the City Planning Commission, there may be instances where former industrial and/or commercial sites are more suitable for different uses. These sites should also be considered assemblage opportunities for residential or community use if supported by the Commerce Department and PIDC.

## **Residential Assemblages**

In some neighborhoods, there are concentrations of vacant properties that offer different opportunities for reuse. In many cases, the vacant property is a mix of publicly-owned vacant property as well as privately-owned vacant property, of which a portion is tax-delinquent property. The Land Bank can play a key role in these instances by targeting the acquisition of privately-owned vacant and tax-delinquent property to create larger sites for reuse. To help determine where and for what use the Land Bank should assemble property, the following questions should be asked:

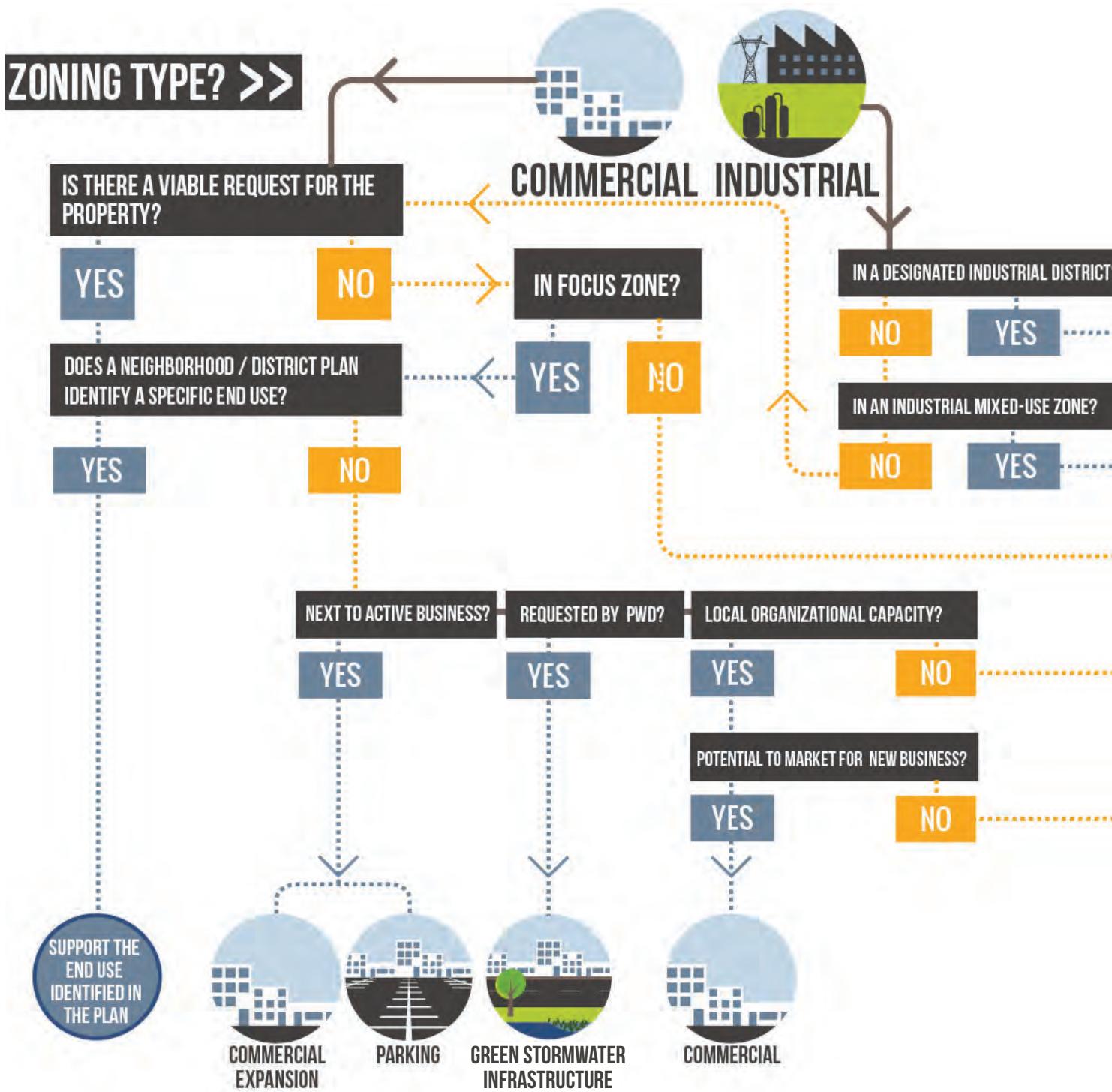
- › Is there a development request for the properties with financing in hand or a plan to obtain financing? Or, has the property been requested for Open Space that includes a financing and maintenance plan? If either answer is yes, the properties should be acquired and conveyed for that use. If no, subsequent questions must be asked.
- › Do the properties support a specific recommendation in a Philadelphia 2035 District Plan or neighborhood plan?
- › Are the properties within a Focus Zone?
- › Is the assemblage adjacent to other vacant and tax delinquent properties?
- › Have the properties been requested by the Philadelphia Water Department for green stormwater infrastructure?
- › Is there local capacity in the neighborhood?

If there are no financially-feasible requests for the properties, and the properties are neither located in a Focus Zone nor in an area with local capacity, then the property should not be accepted into the Land Bank. If the properties are in an area with local capacity and adjacent to other vacant and tax delinquent properties, they are candidates for acquisition and conveyance for an end use as specified in the local neighborhood or Philadelphia 2035 District Plan. If there is no local plan completed or the plan does not identify a specific end use for the properties, the Land Bank can choose to convey for housing, hold and assemble for future housing development, or convey for community use or green stormwater infrastructure in line with the related Focus Zone within which the properties are located as well as its respective criteria.



**DO NOT  
ACCEPT INTO  
LAND BANK**

**FIGURE 51:** Decision tree: commercial/industrial properties



## **Large Commercial / Industrial Properties**

The Land Bank will also address specific opportunities with vacant and tax delinquent commercial and industrial properties. This activity will support the goals of City Council to promote economic development and job creation in the City. Because commercial and industrial properties are larger and more costly to address, the Land Bank will need to be strategic in the acquisition of these properties. Key questions include:

- Is the property zoned for commercial or industrial use?
- If zoned for industrial use and located within an identified industrial expansion district by PIDC, the Land Bank should not acquire the property unless requested by PIDC for a specific purpose. If located in an industrial mixed-use zone as defined by PCPC, the Land Bank should coordinate with PIDC and PCPC to determine the best approach.
- If zoned commercial, is there a development request for the properties with financial resources already in hand? If yes, the property should be acquired and conveyed for that use if consistent with Commerce Department and PCPC expectations.
- Are the properties within a Focus Zone for economic vitality?
- Is there a local business organization or business improvement district?
- Do the properties support a specific recommendation in a Philadelphia 2035 District Plan or neighborhood plan?
- Is the property next to an existing business or proposed for a new business?
- Has the property been requested by the Philadelphia Water Department for green stormwater infrastructure?

If there are no financially feasible requests for the properties, and the properties are neither located in a Focus Zone nor in a commercial area with local capacity, then the property should not be accepted into the Land Bank. Properties within a Focus Zone and along commercial corridors with capacity should be considered strong candidates for acquisition to support an end use identified in a local plan. If there is no local plan completed, the Land Bank can choose to convey for new commercial development, commercial expansion, parking, green stormwater infrastructure, or if requested by the community, business organization and Commerce Department, a community use.



## **GOAL 7:** **ACTIVELY MARKET LAND BANK PROPERTIES**



### **WHY THIS GOAL IS IMPORTANT TO PHILADELPHIA**

**M**any publicly-owned vacant properties are the properties that no one wants. They have not sold and there have not been viable reuse opportunities. Similarly, many privately-owned vacant and tax-delinquent properties are simply hard to acquire. The Land Bank can achieve success not only by acquiring the property where appropriate but also by proactively marketing Land Bank holdings to potential end users. Effective marketing will help the Land Bank transfer more properties for reuse more quickly.

---

**MUCH OF THE EXISTING PUBLICLY-  
OWNED VACANT PROPERTY IS LOCATED  
WITHIN NEIGHBORHOODS THAT FACE  
SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES WITH REGARD TO  
DISINVESTMENT. THESE NEIGHBORHOODS  
HAVE VERY WEAK MARKETS AND DO NOT  
FINANCIALLY SUPPORT PRIVATE INVESTMENT.**

## **OBJECTIVE: ESTABLISH A TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS**

**A**s a new organization faced with an enormous challenge, the Land Bank must establish a record of success that builds confidence in the tool. There are a number of opportunities for the Land Bank to play a key role in transferring vacant properties quickly for reuse. These include:

- › The identification, marketing, acquisition and conveyance of eligible properties for sideyards;
- › The identification, marketing, acquisition and conveyance of eligible properties for infill or individual development opportunities;
- › The acquisition and conveyance of existing gardens to an appropriate owner for preservation; and
- › The acquisition of properties to support a proposed and viable development that has already raised predevelopment dollars.

## **OBJECTIVE: UTILIZE TARGETED ACQUISITION TO ENHANCE THE MARKETABILITY OF EXISTING, PUBLICLY-OWNED VACANT PROPERTY**

**T**he first step is to identify existing publicly-owned vacant property that can be used to meet one or more of these opportunities in the next year. Additional acquisition will be considered based upon the level of interest and the resources available to manage the transference of property.

Much of the existing publicly-owned vacant property is located within neighborhoods that face significant challenges with regard to disinvestment. These neighborhoods have very weak markets and do not financially support private investment. In this context, larger concentrations of contiguous land are often necessary to provide adequate space for the development of affordable housing or other uses such as urban agriculture. In this context, the Land Bank will consider opportunities for targeted acquisition around existing publicly-owned vacant land to create larger, more marketable sites available for reuse.

PHILADELPHIA  
LAND BANK  
YEAR ONE  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN

The background of the cover is a high-angle photograph of a residential area in Philadelphia. It shows a dense cluster of houses with various roof colors (shingles, metal, solar panels), streets with parked cars, and some greenery. In the distance, larger commercial buildings are visible.

# 5-YEAR TARGETS FOR LAND BANK



04

# 5-YEAR TARGETS FOR LAND BANK ACTIVITIES

The enabling legislation for the Philadelphia Land Bank requires that targets are established to guide Land Bank annual goals for acquisition and disposition. With 32,000 potential properties for Land Bank activity, the targets are not constrained by the amount of land but, rather, the available financial resources, market conditions and staff capacity to manage the work.

In setting targets for the next five years, the Land Bank faces the additional challenge of being a new, untested tool in the City. As with other Land Banks across the Country, it will take time to fine-tune the process for acquiring and disposing of land. For this reason, the immediate priority for the Land Bank is to plan for the current inventory of publicly-owned vacant property. This includes testing the Land Bank's tools to address some key citywide opportunities including individual development opportunities, side yard conveyance and preserving existing gardens.

We expect to test the systems for using tax foreclosure as an acquisition tool in the first year of Land Bank operations, but cannot yet predict the volume of this activity.

The goal is for the Land Bank to operate on a calendar year time frame beginning in 2015. The first two years of operation will enable the Land Bank to track and report its activity to City leadership and key stakeholders. In year three (2017), targets will be established based upon a combination of the experience of the first two years and the resources and capacity available at that time. By year three, it is expected that the Land Bank will be able to expand its holdings and transference of vacant and tax delinquent property to address the goals established in the Year One Strategic Plan.

## TARGETS

The targets established in the Year One Strategic Plan are organized around total acquisition and disposition. In year three, specific targets will be established for the acquisition and disposition targets for each type of end use at specific geographies across the City. The end use categories established in the table, though empty in this version of the plan, will provide a framework for reporting performance at the end of the Land Bank's first year of operations.

**TABLE 10:** Reporting Framework and Eventual Targets

	<b>YEAR 1</b> (2015)	<b>YEAR 2</b> (2016)	<b>YEAR 3</b> (2017)	<b>YEAR 4</b> (2018)	<b>YEAR 5</b> (2019)
Side Yard / Parking					
Individual Development Opportunities					
Existing Garden Preservation					
Equitable Development (Affordable Housing)					
Private Investment (Market-Rate Housing)					
Economic Vitality (Economic Development)					
Open Space (Greening)					
<b>ACQUISITION</b>					
intra-agency transfer	4,500	3,500			
tax foreclosed (1)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>TOTAL ACQUISITION</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>3,500</b>			
<b>DISPOSITION</b>					
existing inventory (2)	350	450	600	600	750
recently tax foreclosed inventory (3)					
<b>TOTAL DISPOSITION</b>	<b>350 (4)</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>750</b>

## NOTES:

- 1 The Land Bank use of tax foreclosure will be further detailed in the final version of this plan. The plan will assume that the Land Bank is able to successfully use tax foreclosure as an acquisition tool.
- 2 The land holdings of PHDC, PRA, the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Land Bank are included in these targets and goals.
- 3 This plan assumes that new property acquired by Land Bank is generally conveyed to a new user within one year of acquisition.
- 4 In FY 2013 the three existing agencies conveyed approximately 250 properties.

PHILADELPHIA  
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PLAN

APPENDIX

05



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO DEDICATED TIME AND THOUGHT FIRST IN SHAPING THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK ENABLING LEGISLATION AND, MORE RECENTLY, IN SHAPING THIS YEAR ONE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK.

## KEY LAND BANK STAKEHOLDERS AND INTEREST

### GROUPS INCLUDING:

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha  
APM's Neighborhood Advisory Committee  
Building Industry Association of Philadelphia  
Campaign to Take Back Vacant Land  
Community Design Collaborative  
Dale Corporation  
Design Advocacy Group  
Early Bird Farm  
East Park Revitalization Alliance  
Farm 51  
Farm Philly  
Farm to City  
Food Policy Advisory Committee  
Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors  
Greensgrow  
Liberty Resources  
Master's Work Community Garden  
Mill Creek Farm  
Neighborhood Gardens Trust  
New Kensington CDC  
Penn State Extension  
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society  
People's Emergency Center  
Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations

Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities  
Philadelphia Orchard Project  
Philly Food Forests  
Philly Land Bank Alliance  
Preston's Paradise  
Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia Garden  
Justice Legal Initiative  
Regional Housing Legal Services  
Right Sized Homes LLC  
Sustainable Business Network  
The Merchant's Fund  
United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1776  
Viola Street Residents Association/Viola Street Garden  
West Philly Food Hub  
Women's Community Revitalization Project

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Paul Badger  
Jennifer Kates  
Michael Koonce  
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Majeeddah Rasheed  
Rick Sauer  
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Courtney Voss  
Herb Wetzel

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Mark Squilla, District 1  
Kenyatta Johnson, District 2  
Jannie Blackwell, District 3  
Curtis Jones, Jr., District 4  
Bobby Henon, District 6  
Maria D. Quiñones-Sánchez, District 7  
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Brian J. O'Neill, District 10  
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W. Wilson Goode, Jr., At-Large  
William K. Greenlee, At-Large  
James Kenney, At-Large  
Dennis O'Brien, At-Large  
David Oh, At-Large

**HONORABLE MICHAEL A. NUTTER,****MAYOR OF PHILADELPHIA****and representatives of his administration from:**

Department of Commerce  
Department of Public Property  
Office of Housing and Community Development  
Office of Innovation and Technology  
Office of Sustainability  
Office of the Director of Finance  
Office of the Mayor  
Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation  
Philadelphia Law Department  
Philadelphia Parks and Recreation  
Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority  
Philadelphia Water Department

**CONSULTANT TEAM:**

Interface Studio LLC  
Real Estate Strategies, Inc. / RES Advisors  
V. Lamar Wilson Associates, Inc.

# PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK

## ENABLING LEGISLATION

# City of Philadelphia



(Bill No. 130156-A)

## AN ORDINANCE

Repealing Chapter 16-500 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Councilmanic District Development Program,” and replacing it with a new Chapter 16-500, entitled “Philadelphia Land Bank,” that authorizes the creation of a land bank and provides for its appointment, powers, and duties, all under certain terms and conditions.

WHEREAS, Evidence demonstrates that a persistently high rate of vacant lots and structures harms the safety and economic strength of individual blocks and neighborhoods, as well as the City of Philadelphia as a whole; and

WHEREAS, A municipal land bank would ensure clear, transparent, and efficient operations by serving as a single entity to acquire, hold, and dispose of vacant property with the participation and approval of City Council; and

WHEREAS, The consolidation of ownership of all publicly-owned surplus property in a municipal land bank is expected to increase efficiency, and allow a greater proportion of public funds to be invested directly into community revitalization; and

WHEREAS, Extensive grassroots community planning over the last decade by local Community Development Corporations and advocacy groups, with the support of the private sector, has found that creation of a municipal land bank is necessary for the strategic redevelopment of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, A municipal land bank should prioritize long-term community and economic development, promote the economic vitality of communities and Philadelphia as a whole, and should adopt disposition policies that encourage a range of beneficial uses by permitting nominal or reduced price disposition of property for development of: affordable or mixed-income housing that is accessible or visitable; economic development that create jobs for community residents; community facilities that provide needed services and enrichment opportunities; side- and rear-yards; urban agriculture; and community open space; and

WHEREAS, A municipal land bank should ensure that communities affected by vacant land have substantial and meaningful involvement in its decisions relating to those communities, with this goal strongly informing the land bank’s governance, structure, and operations; and

# City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 130156-A continued

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WHEREAS, A municipal land bank should seek to promote development that ensures permanent or long-term affordability and socioeconomic diversity within all neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia recognizes housing preservation as an integral part of neighborhood stabilization and development, and seeks to balance the use of powerful new tools to acquire tax-delinquent properties with protections for low-income owner-occupants of tax-delinquent property; and

WHEREAS, A process of deliberate and sustained public discussion should precede any actions to define the policies of a municipal land bank, given that issues related to the City's acquisition and disposition of vacant properties vary according to the needs and characteristics of different neighborhoods, and significant interests are at stake; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has enacted 68 Pa. C.S. § 2101, *et seq.* authorizing the creation of municipal land banks and granting to them certain powers; now, therefore

## *THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:*

SECTION 1. A new Chapter 16-700 is added, to read as follows:

### *CHAPTER 16-700. PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK.*

#### *§ 16-701. Preliminary Provision.*

(1) *This Chapter is in accordance with the provisions of Act 153 of 2012, codified at 68 Pa. C.S. § 2101, et seq.*

(2) *The Philadelphia Land Bank, hereinafter the “Land Bank”, shall possess all powers and duties permitted to it under state law, except where expressly limited in this Chapter.*

#### *§ 16-702. Creation.*

(1) *Council finds and declares that there is a need for a land bank to function within the territorial limits of the City and County of Philadelphia.*

(2) *Accordingly, pursuant to 68 Pa. C.S. § 2104, the Council of the City of Philadelphia hereby authorizes the creation of a public body corporate and politic, to be named the “Philadelphia Land Bank.”*

# City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 130156-A continued

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*§ 16-703. Mission. The mission of the Land Bank is to return vacant and underutilized property to productive use through a unified, predictable, and transparent process, thereby to assist in revitalizing neighborhoods, creating socially and economically diverse communities, and strengthening the City's tax base.*

*§ 16-704. Board of Directors.*

(1) *Permanent Board. The Land Bank shall be governed by a Board of Directors, comprised of eleven (11) members. Five (5) members of the Board shall be appointed by the Mayor; five (5) members of the Board shall be appointed by majority vote of all the members of City Council; one (1) member shall be appointed by majority vote of the other members. All members shall serve terms concurrent with the appointing authority, and shall serve at the pleasure of their appointing authority. Members shall continue to serve until their successors have been appointed. Any individual or organization may submit recommendations for board membership to be considered in making appointments.*

(2) *Qualifications. Members shall include individuals with expertise in relevant areas, including but not limited to planning, real estate development, open space, and architecture; may not be elected public officials; and shall live or have a primary office in the City of Philadelphia.*

*At least four (4) members of the Board must be employees, members, or board members of nonprofit or advocacy organizations working in the field of housing or community development, or of civic associations, with each appointing authority to appoint two (2) such members. These members shall have particular knowledge of conditions and needs in neighborhoods with significant rates of vacant and/or publicly-owned properties.*

(3) *The Board of the Land Bank shall hold monthly public meetings, shall make each meeting's agenda available on the Land Bank's website at least ten (10) days in advance of such a meeting, and shall allow for public comment on matters under deliberation at each such public meeting.*

*§ 16-705. Acquisition.*

(1) *A primary purpose of the Land Bank is to acquire and consolidate surplus property of the City of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, and the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, which it shall endeavor to accomplish with due speed and diligence.*

(2) *The Land Bank is authorized to acquire real property or interests in real property through donation, gift, purchase, or any other legal means, provided that, with*

# **City of Philadelphia**

BILL NO. 130156-A continued

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*respect to the acquisition of tax delinquent properties, the Land Bank shall follow the procedures and limits set forth in subsection (3).*

(3) *Acquisition of tax delinquent properties.*

(a) *Tax Sale Actions initiated by the Land Bank.*

(.1) *Assignment of liens and claims to the Land Bank. The Land Bank is authorized to enter into agreements with the City of Philadelphia and the School District of Philadelphia to assign and transfer a lien or pre-judgment claim to the Land Bank, and to exercise the rights, privileges, and remedies of an assignee as stated in 53 P.S. § 7101 et seq., provided that the Land Bank shall not accept assignment of any liens or pre-judgment claims against an owner-occupied property.*

(.2) *Certifications for tax sale actions requested by the Land Bank. The Land Bank is authorized to request the City of Philadelphia certify for upset or judicial sale a property that is both vacant and delinquent as to municipal taxes or claims, provided that the Land Bank determines that the acquisition is consistent with its mission and policies. Application for such certification may be made to the Land Bank by an individual or organization, and such applicants shall be entitled to explanation in writing if denied.*

(b) *Tax sale actions initiated by the City of Philadelphia. The City of Philadelphia shall provide to the Land Bank notice of potential upset and judicial sales listing properties by address. Before any upset or judicial sale of real property initiated by the City of Philadelphia, the Land Bank shall elect whether to seek acquisition of the property. The Land Bank shall not seek to acquire such owner-occupied properties without first confirming that an appropriate payment plan has been offered for any municipal taxes or claims, including evaluation for an income-based payment agreement.*

(4) *Subject to the prior approval of the Finance Director, the Land Bank is authorized to discharge liens and other municipal claims, charges, or fines against the properties it acquires to the extent permitted by law.*

(5) *For the duration of the time a property is held by the Land Bank, the Land Bank is authorized to exempt such property from all real estate taxes, water and sewer charges, and other municipal charges to the extent permitted by law.*

(6) *The Board shall maintain a preference, wherever feasible, for keeping former owner-occupants in any residences acquired by the Land Bank, in addition to any other policies the Board may adopt in this regard.*

§ 16-706. Inventory.

# City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 130156-A continued

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(1) *The Land Bank shall maintain and make publicly accessible on its website, and at its offices during normal business hours, the following information:*

- (a) *An up-to-date inventory of property owned by the Land Bank;*
- (b) *A map showing the properties in the Land Bank's inventory, as well as other relevant information about land use conditions within the City of Philadelphia including vacancy and tax delinquency to the extent reasonably available;*
- (c) *A record of all property conveyed by the Land Bank to other parties, including, but not limited to: the sale price for which the property was conveyed; the party to whom the property was conveyed; a summary of any terms or conditions of the conveyance, including the intended use of the property; and the approximate income of the households that will benefit from the intended use, if the sale price was less than fair market value; and*
- (d) *Copies of its Policies, Strategic Plans, and Performance Reports.*

(2) *The Land Bank shall provide a mechanism through which individuals may request and receive ongoing notifications as to changes in the status of any property owned by the Land Bank.*

(3) *The Land Bank shall provide to members of the interagency Vacant Property Review Committee and City Council electronic access to relevant information maintained by the Land Bank regarding all properties owned by the Land Bank. The Land Bank shall additionally provide to these members a mechanism to receive according to their preference either periodic aggregate reports or ongoing notifications as to changes in the status of those properties or of a subset thereof, such as an individual Planning District or Council District.*

## § 16-707. Disposition of Property.

(1) *The Land Bank is authorized to convey, exchange, sell, transfer, lease, grant, or mortgage interests in real property of the Land Bank in the form and by the method determined to be in the best interests of the Land Bank, subject to approval by the Vacant Property Review Committee and City Council by Resolution, under the following terms and conditions:*

- (a) *Certification of compliance. Applicants for properties must provide the Land Bank with certification from the Department of Revenue that the applicant has no tax or water delinquencies, and from the Department of Licenses and Inspections that all other properties owned by the applicant are in compliance with the provisions of The*

# City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 130156-A continued

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*Philadelphia Code or under agreement to come into compliance, which certifications shall not be untimely withheld.*

*(.1) The certification shall additionally record if the applicant has a significant history of tax or water delinquencies, or of owning property maintained in a condition that violates The Philadelphia Code.*

*(.2) Certification shall not be denied when a property with tax or water delinquency was acquired by the applicant from the City of Philadelphia or other local public agency and the delinquency predates the transfer of title to the applicant.*

*(b) Consistency with planning provisions. The Land Bank shall strongly consider the Philadelphia Comprehensive Plan and any applicable community plans accepted by the Philadelphia Planning Commission, as well as any recommendation provided by the Commission, when the Land Bank disposes property.*

*(c) Public notice and opportunity to comment. The Land Bank shall provide public notice of proposed dispositions as early as practicable and at least ten (10) days before any final action will be taken, which shall include posting a notice conspicuously on the subject property. Final action for the purposes of this Section shall include approval by City Council, review by the Vacant Property Review Committee and the Land Bank board, or a decision by staff who have been delegated board disposition authority. The Land Bank shall also provide notice to those registered community organizations as defined in Section 14-303(12)(a) whose registered geographic area of concern contains a property proposed for disposition.*

*(.1) Any individual or organization may submit comment in writing to the Land Bank regarding a proposed disposition. The Land Bank shall transmit, or otherwise make available, all such comments to the interagency Vacant Property Review Committee.*

*(d) Approval by Vacant Property Review Committee. Proposed transfers of interest in real property owned by the Land Bank shall be scheduled for review at a public hearing of the interagency Vacant Property Review Committee, as set forth in Section 16-404(1). The Vacant Property Review Committee shall provide at least ten (10) days prior notice of the public hearing by posting on the City Council and Land Bank websites the time, date, location and agenda for the public hearing. In addition, the Vacant Property Review Committee shall make publicly accessible on the City Council and Land Bank websites a list of all regularly scheduled hearings and the transcript for all completed hearings.*

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(2) *Monitoring.* *The Land Bank shall set goals for time frames applicable to each stage of the disposition process, and shall develop processes to monitor its performance.*

(3) *The Board of Directors may delegate its disposition authority to the staff of the Land Bank except in the following circumstances:*

(a) *The proposed terms of the transaction conflict with the Land Bank's published policies or procedures;*

(b) *The transferee has a significant history of: tax or water delinquencies; owning property maintained in a condition that violates The Philadelphia Code; or failing to redevelop properties previously acquired from the City of Philadelphia or other local public agencies;*

(c) *The value of the property is in excess of \$50,000 (fifty thousand dollars); or*

(d) *When otherwise required by state law.*

(4) *The Land Bank shall make available an appeals process wherein an individual or an organization may request reconsideration of a decision made by the Land Bank and submit evidence relevant to determinations made by the Land Bank on matters including: general eligibility; eligibility for reduced or nominal pricing; the value of a property; and compliance with terms or conditions of sale.*

(5) *The Land Bank shall coordinate with the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority where a project involves properties acquired by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority through eminent domain as well as properties acquired and/or owned by the Land Bank, and shall strive to ensure a synchronized disposition process.*

## § 16-708. Pricing.

(1) *The Land Bank shall use the most current data reasonably available to determine different neighborhood market conditions and property market values. In determining market values for individual properties the Land Bank shall use the valuation method that it deems most appropriate given the particular conditions of the property and surrounding market, as well as the cost of redevelopment. Applicants may submit information that is relevant to the value of a property for consideration by the Land Bank.*

(2) *The Land Bank may offer properties at less than fair market value where the Land Bank finds that the proposed use would create beneficial community impact, such as affordable or mixed-income housing that is accessible or visitable; economic*

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*development that creates jobs for community residents; community facilities that provide needed services to residents; side and rear-yards; innovation in design and sustainability; urban agriculture; community open space; and any goals established under § 16-710. The Land Bank shall allow applications for less than fair market value, including nominal disposition, for any property owned by the Land Bank.*

*(a) In calculating a reduced sales price, the Land Bank shall consider the benefit provided by the proposed use and, if applicable, the amount of discount needed to make the project both initially financially feasible and continually sustainable.*

*(b) To encourage mixed-income housing projects, the Land Bank may count the number of very low-, low- and moderate-income households served and provide partial discounting.*

*(3) The Land Bank shall develop policies regarding employment of legal mechanisms to make land and buildings accessible to those applicants who cannot afford immediate payment in full.*

*(4) Conditions of sale between the transferee and the Land Bank shall be imposed using legally binding mechanisms, including but not limited to deed restrictions, restrictive covenants, and mortgages. The Land Bank shall monitor compliance with such provisions, including by requiring periodic reporting by transferees.*

## § 16-709. Policies, Strategic Plan, and Performance Report.

*(1) The Land Bank shall develop policies consistent with the requirements of this Ordinance. These policies shall be guided by the Land Bank's mission and purposes as set forth in this Ordinance.*

*(2) Ethics and Conflicts of Interest. The Land Bank shall be governed by the State Adverse Interest Act of July 19, 1957 (P.L.1017, No.451) and 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 11 (relating to ethics standards and financial disclosure). The Land Bank shall also be governed by § 20-600 (Philadelphia's "Standards of Conduct and Ethics") and § 20-1200 ("Lobbying"). As part of its policies, the Land Bank shall adopt strict ethical guidelines for Land Bank board members and employees, and promulgate rules addressing and protecting against potential conflicts of interest. These guidelines and rules shall supplement any applicable state and local laws.*

*(3) Strategic Plan. Within one year following the effective date of this legislation, and annually thereafter, the Land Bank shall develop a Strategic Plan to guide its acquisition, maintenance, and disposition of property. The Strategic Plan shall address the following elements, and be developed in coordination with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission:*

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(a) An analysis to determine market conditions and trends in neighborhoods where the Land Bank holds or is likely to hold property, according to census tract or grouping of census tracts that are determined by the Land Bank to have similar characteristics. To the extent feasible, this analysis shall specifically evaluate the relative need and availability for affordable or mixed-income housing that is accessible or visitable; economic development that creates jobs for community residents; community facilities that provide needed services to residents; side and rear-yards; food-producing urban agriculture; community open space; and any additional core beneficial land uses that may be identified by the Land Bank.

(b) An inventory and mapping of vacant properties in each census tract or grouping of census tracts, including properties that are owned by the Land Bank and properties that are privately owned and delinquent as to municipal taxes or claims.

(c) Proposed goals for the five-year period following adoption or revision of this plan for acquisition, maintenance, and conveyance of properties that support the City's Comprehensive Plan and the goals of community plans accepted by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, and which encourage equitable redevelopment. This shall include, but is not limited to, items such as defined targets for the share of future housing units to be built on public properties affordable to different income ranges of very low-, low-, and moderate-income households, as well as economic development/job creation projects, urban agriculture, open space, and additional core beneficial land use needs that were identified pursuant to (a) of this subsection. These goals shall be based on the analysis of each census tract or grouping of census tracts that were identified pursuant to (a) of this subsection, taking into account the existing inventory of the Land Bank as well as the universe of vacant and tax delinquent or City-lien properties, and demand for land based on requests received in the previous year. The Land Bank may also consider the anticipated availability of funding, and the feasibility of inclusionary housing requirements if applicable.

(d) Recommendations for uses of properties in each census tract or grouping of census tracts that advance the Land Bank's goals.

(e) Defined annual targets for the overall number of properties transferred.

(f) Defined annual goals for acquisition including identifying the geographic areas where the Land Bank would seek to acquire properties and for what purpose.

(4) Performance Reports. On an annual basis, the Land Bank shall prepare a performance report that will include at a minimum the following items:

(a) A list of all properties acquired by the Land Bank;

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(b) *A list of all properties conveyed by the Land Bank that includes: the price; name of the buyer; proposed use; a summary of any special terms and conditions of the conveyance; and the approximate income of the households that will benefit from the intended use, if the sale price was less than fair market value;*

(c) *A list of all properties held or reserved for an applicant, including the term of the hold period;*

(d) *An aggregated analysis of all maintenance activities;*

(e) *An aggregated analysis of all requests received including their proposed use, duration and status, and reason for termination if applicable, with reference to the monitoring set forth in Section 16-707(2);*

(f) *An aggregated analysis of any efforts related to monitoring and enforcing compliance with provisions agreed upon as conditions of past sales; and*

(g) *An aggregated analysis demonstrating the Land Bank's yearly progress towards fulfilling the goals set forth in its Strategic Plan, and if achievement or reasonable progress towards such goals is not achieved, a revised plan to be executed during the following year.*

(5) *Public Comment, Review, and Approval. The Land Bank shall hold a public hearing prior to the adoption of its Strategic Plan and Policies. The Strategic Plan and Policies shall be reviewed and adopted annually by the Land Bank board, and approved by resolution of City Council. A prior Strategic Plan and prior Policies shall remain in force until a successor plan is approved. The Strategic Plan, Policies, and annual Performance Report shall be published on the Land Bank's website.*

## § 16-710. Financial provisions.

(1) *To the extent allowed by law, the Land Bank shall retain proceeds from the sale of any properties to cover operating costs, maintenance of inventory, and to support additional strategic property acquisition, up to whatever amount shall be approved by Council.*

(2) *The Land Bank may also be financed through any other means authorized in 68 Pa. C.S. § 2101 et seq.*

## § 16-711. Dissolution; distribution of assets in case of dissolution.

(1) *The Land Bank may be dissolved according to the requirements of 68 Pa. C.S. § 2114.*

# **City of Philadelphia**

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SECTION 2. Initial Board of Directors. The Land Bank shall initially be governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the following members, who shall serve terms of three (3) months, or until all the members of the Permanent Board have been appointed pursuant to Section 16-704: Michael Koonce, Brian Abernathy, Herbert Wetzel, Jennifer Kates, Courtney Voss, Rick Sauer, Bill Salas, Majeedah Rasheed, Ken Scott, Don McGrogan, and Paul Badger.

SECTION 3. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately.

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**Explanation:**

*Italics* indicate new matter added.

# City of Philadelphia

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Bill, Passed by the City Council on December 12, 2013. The Bill was Signed by the Mayor on December 18, 2013.



Michael A. Decker  
Chief Clerk of the City Council

# DRAFT DISPOSITION POLICIES

City of Philadelphia

POLICIES FOR THE SALE AND REUSE OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY

Draft for Discussion

DRAFT

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## **Overview and General Information**

In the interest of providing predictability and transparency to the sale and reuse of City-owned property, the City has adopted this policy document. This policy will provide guidance to those city agencies disposing of surplus property as well as information to individuals and organizations considering the acquisition of City-owned property.

### **Guiding Principles**

The goals of this policy and the disposition of City-owned land are to:

- Encourage the development and reuse of vacant properties consistent with the City of Philadelphia's Comprehensive Plan (Philadelphia2035), and other City-approved and accepted plans
- Eliminate blight and revitalize neighborhoods
- Strengthen the City's tax base
- Sell properties at fair market value if the proposed use is a strictly private one
- Support City goals by conveying properties at a discount if the proposed use will provide significant community benefits
- Convey land through a predictable, timely and transparent process
- Encourage timely development and discourage real estate speculation

City agencies will consider these goals when making decisions regarding the disposition of City-owned land.

### **Applicability**

These policies apply to the real property inventories of the Philadelphia Land Bank, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, and the City of Philadelphia's Department of Public Property. (For ease of use these agencies

are collectively referred to as “The City” throughout this document.) Each agency is responsible for its own decision-making and adherence to this policy during the disposition process.

All applications for property will be made through the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA) until the Philadelphia Land Bank is established and has a functioning process to accept applications.

The City may elect not to convey a requested property. Under such circumstances, the City will provide a reason for this decision.

### **Qualified Purchasers & Bids**

All purchasers of City-owned property must fulfill their commitments to the City and to their neighbors, which includes paying property taxes and maintaining properties in accordance with all municipal codes and ordinances.

A Qualified Purchaser is defined as an individual or organization who

- Does not owe back taxes to the City
- Is current with all City-related obligations (i.e. PGW, Water Department)
- Does not own any property that is subject to any significant unremediated violation of City codes and ordinances
- Has not owned a property that was involved in a completed Philadelphia tax foreclosure proceeding within the previous five years

All purchasers must submit disclosures as required by the City. Failure to submit disclosures or to provide accurate information in the form requested will result in the denial of the application.

A Qualified Purchaser has submitted a Qualified Bid if the application adequately describes the purchaser’s plans for the property and the applicant has demonstrated financial and operational capacity. The detail required of the applicant will be different depending on the proposed use. For example, the use description and capacity required will be different for the purchase of a side yard as compared to a large commercial or residential development.

### **Appropriate & Timely Development of Properties**

The City expects that properties will be developed in an appropriate and timely manner according to a written agreement. Generally, Construction should commence within six months from the date of conveyance and should be complete as defined by agreement. To ensure that these expectations are met, the City will place conditions on land it conveys to achieve the agreed upon outcome and will monitor these agreements until construction is complete. Proposed uses must be consistent with the City of Philadelphia’s Comprehensive Plan

(Philadelphia2035) and other City-approved and accepted plans, and all new owners are required to comply with all City, state and federal codes, regulations and statutes.

### **Site Control: Options, Property Reservations and Holds**

The City recognizes that developers often require legally recognizable site control as part of the development process. The City may execute contingent agreements of sale, property reservation letters or option agreements to allow developers to pursue financing and other approvals necessary for development.

Agreements or contracts for this purpose must meet the following conditions:

- The applicant must be a Qualified Purchaser
- The agreement or contract must be limited to one year or less and may be renewed solely at the City's discretion
- The applicant may not use or move into the property without the City's authorization
- An option fee will be due upon execution (not-for-profits and city-supported projects may be exempt from a fee)
- The contract terms will be public information
- The applicant must demonstrate support of the District Council Member

### **Public Information**

In addition to standard property transaction records that are available to the public, the City will maintain and make available for public review and inspection an inventory of real property owned by the City and a record of all real property conveyed to other parties, including the price for which the property was conveyed, the party to whom the property was conveyed, and the use for which the property was acquired.

### **Real Estate Review Committee**

Prior to the establishment and full operation of the Philadelphia Land Bank, the Real Estate Review Committee is the means by which the City will review applicant requests related to pricing and non-conforming proposed property uses. The committee will make a recommendation to the agency that owns the requested property. Any final decision will be made by the agency and, when required by law, City Council.

The Committee is comprised of representatives of the following agencies: Office of Housing and Community Development, Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, Department of Public Property, Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, Philadelphia City Planning

Commission, and the Mayor's Integrity Office. Each agency has one vote for the purpose of making a recommendation.

The City will consult with the land-holding agency and the appropriate City Council district office before an application is presented to the Real Estate Review Committee.

When appropriate, applicants may be asked to attend the Committee to speak on their own behalf.

### **Ethics**

#### **Home Rule Charter and Philadelphia Code requirements**

The City of Philadelphia is committed to ethical and transparent processes for the disposition of vacant land. All real estate transactions are governed by City and State laws and rules that generally prohibit, among other things, conflicts of interest, the disclosure of confidential information, and the representation of a person or organization by a City official or employee in a transaction with the City.

#### **Financial Assistance**

Any grant, loan, tax incentive, bond financing subsidy (for land purchase or otherwise), or other form of assistance that is realized by or provided to a person in the amount of \$50,000 or more through the authority or approval of the City is by law considered Financial Assistance under Chapter 17-1400 of the Philadelphia Code. Financial Assistance recipients must meet eligibility requirements by disclosing their political contributions. Financial Assistance includes the transfer of City property for less than market value. Recipients of Financial Assistance must comply with campaign contribution limits and must disclose campaign contributions for five years after receiving Financial Assistance. They must also disclose solicitations for any reason from any City official.

For more information on these requirements, please see [www.phila.gov/integrityworks](http://www.phila.gov/integrityworks). Any person inside or outside of City government with a concern that the disposition or administration of City property is unethical or violates the City's Financial Assistance requirements should contact the City's Chief Integrity Officer at (215) 686-2178 or Inspector General at (215) 686-1770.

#### **Legal Issues**

In accordance with Section 16-207 of The Philadelphia Code, certain properties 10,000 square feet or larger will be subject to a public notice posting on the property that will include pertinent information concerning the potential sale and potential buyer.

### **City Council Approval**

The law requires that all sales of property owned by the City of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, and the Philadelphia Land Bank be approved by Philadelphia City Council.

### **Public Notice of Land Bank Board Actions**

The Philadelphia Land Bank will provide public notice of proposed transactions before those transactions are considered at its board meeting. This notice, as required by the ordinance that authorized the creation of the Land Bank, includes the physical posting of a notice at each property, electronic notice to Registered Civic Organizations, and publication of proposed decisions on the land Bank's website. All of these notices will be provided at least ten days before any action is taken.

## **Property Sales**

The City uses several processes to sell property.

### **General Sales**

The City will publish its property inventory on the City website [www.PhillyLandWorks.org](http://www.PhillyLandWorks.org) or [www.philadelphialandbank.org](http://www.philadelphialandbank.org)), generally with a listing price. Individual requests for properties will be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

If the City receives more than one Qualified Bid for a property, the City will provide first preference to any applicant that provides for a public purpose (see below). If no public purpose is proposed, the City will determine the most qualified applicant or may use a Competitive Sales approach to obtain the best offer for the property.

When a purchaser offers less than the asking price for a property, the City may negotiate a final sales price. The City's Real Estate Review Committee must approve the final sales price.

### **Competitive Sales**

Competitive Sales such as broker listings, the use of the Multiple Listing Service, web sites or other recognized method of advertising may be used to encourage broad participation in the sale of selected properties.

Asking prices may be established using an Automated Valuation Model (AVM; see page 11 for more information), a competitive market analysis or an appraisal.

Properties will be placed on the market long enough to allow for broad engagement by potential buyers.

The City retains its rights to approve or reject the best Qualified Offer based on clear criteria, including price.

Competitive Sales may be used where the property's AVM is \$50,000 or more or where there are multiple applicants for a single parcel.

### **Direct Sales**

The City may determine that certain properties will be sold to a predetermined party. This decision and its rationale will be reviewed by the Real Estate Review Committee. The price will be determined by an appraisal.

### **Requests for Proposals/Qualifications**

If the City has a specific planned use for a parcel, a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Qualifications (RFQ) may be issued to identify and select a potential developer. This format

allows the City to explain the planned use and any restrictions that might be placed on the developer or successive owners of the property. An RFP/RFQ may be issued by any appropriate city agency and may be developed in consultation with City Council, the City Planning Commission or other stakeholders, as appropriate. It will be advertised to encourage broad participation. Selection criteria will be included in the RFP/RFQ and may include factors such as developer capacity and proposed development outcomes as well as the price. The price established through this process will be considered the market value of the property. The issuance of an RFP/RFQ does not obligate the City to select a developer or a purchaser.

### **Side Yards**

When the proposed property use is as a side yard, additional criteria apply and there are additional steps in the process.

First, an applicant must be the owner of an adjacent property and be using that property as a primary residence. The property to be acquired must share a common boundary at either the side or back of the applicant's property, and it may not be larger than 3,000 square feet. The block on which the applicant and the property are located must be predominantly occupied.

An applicant may acquire up to two adjacent lots, as long as one of those lots shares a common boundary with the applicant's primary residence.

The City reserves the right not to convey properties that are part of larger assemblages.

Once an application for property for a side yard is submitted, the City will give notice to other property owners whose property shares a common boundary with the proposed side yard. Those property owners will have the opportunity to submit an application for the side yard property. If more than one adjacent property owner is interested in purchasing the property, the City may sell the property to the highest bidder, subdivide the lot (if the applicants and the City Planning Commission agree and if the applicants agree to pay the expense of subdivision), or develop an alternate solution in consultation with various stakeholders.

In certain circumstances a side yard may be purchased at a discounted price. Please see the "Pricing" section for more information.

### **Discontinued Programs**

Although no new property sales will be initiated under the terms of discontinued programs (such as the "dollar house" program), property may be conveyed under the terms of discontinued programs to those applicants who applied for and were awarded property under previous program guidelines, and who can demonstrate continuous effort and completion of their obligations under the original program terms. Applicants will be subject to the Ethics provisions of these policies. Individual cases will be considered by the Real Estate Review Committee.

# Pricing

## **Listing Price**

If a property's value is \$50,000 or less as determined by the City's Automated Valuation Model (AVM), the value will be publicly listed. If the AVM determines the property value to be more than \$50,000, the property may be individually appraised. The City may use an appraisal to establish the price of any property that has a structure on it.

## **Discounted Pricing**

The City may choose to support certain projects that serve a public purpose by conveying a property at a discounted price. If a property is identified for one of the following uses, the City will evaluate the proposal and property request to determine if the proposed project provides significant, visible community benefits that would merit city support in the form of the reduction in price.

The following programs qualify for discounted pricing:

### Affordable Housing

Developments that provide affordable housing as defined under federal guidelines may acquire property for a discount. Affordable housing projects do not have to be directly subsidized by the City, state or federal government to qualify for discounted pricing.

### Economic Development Projects

Developments that advance the City's economic development goals as articulated in the City's Comprehensive Plan (Philadelphia 2035) and other City-approved and accepted plans may be eligible for discounted pricing. Eligible projects include but are not limited to:

- Leveraging of previous public investments in infrastructure, job creation, and economic development
- Projects with the potential to spur additional private investment in underperforming commercial corridors, neighborhood centers, and areas of regional economic significance as identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan (Philadelphia2035) and other City-approved and accepted plans
- Projects that return industrial land to productive use in areas identified as appropriate for industrial development
- Projects that share costs or make investments related to significant public improvements, including but not limited to the upgrading of public utilities and the rehabilitation or provision of new public infrastructure

- Projects that meet other criteria as recommended by the Commerce Department

### Community Development Projects

Developments that propose significant incremental community benefits may be eligible for discounted pricing. Community benefits may include:

- Support for existing community facilities or provision of space for new community facilities such as libraries, recreation centers, health centers, computing centers, and playgrounds
- Significant improvements to community infrastructure including the greening of schoolyards or recreation center yards to achieve stormwater management, public recreation, or community gardening goals
- Creation of new infrastructure or support for existing infrastructure to improve safety and mobility for children, seniors, and other pedestrians, including sidewalk improvements, pedestrian plazas, traffic medians, or easements for trails
- Urban agriculture – the growing of fruits, herbs, and vegetables – may be accompanied by complementary activities, such as processing and distributing food, collecting and reusing food waste and rainwater, and educating, organizing, and employing local residents

(Because the City recognizes the special needs and requirements of Urban Agriculture activities, the PRA and the Land Bank will work with the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation to manage urban agriculture on public land and a separate policy will be issued for these purposes.)

### Side Yards

For properties priced at \$25,000 or less that are proposed to be used as side yards, up to \$15,000 of the value may be deferred or forgiven.

### Discounted Pricing and Self-amortizing Mortgages

For properties conveyed at a discounted price to be used for community development purposes or side yards, a self-amortizing mortgage for the difference between the value and the discounted price will be executed by the purchaser to ensure that if the property is resold to another party within 10 years, the buyer will not unduly benefit from the discounted price agreed to by the City. The Real Estate Review Committee may recommend self-amortizing mortgages for other projects that meet public purposes.

The characteristics of the self-amortizing mortgage are:

- The length of the mortgage will be 10 years from the date of conveyance

- The value of the mortgage is the amount of the price reduction agreed to by the City
- The purchaser does not need to make any payments on the mortgage if the property is used in conformance with the originally agreed upon terms for the 10-year period
- The amount of the obligation will decrease by 10% every year for 10 years (for example, after one year the amount remaining on a \$10,000 mortgage will be \$9,000, after two years it will be \$8,000, and so on)
- Upon completion of the 10-year time frame the City will satisfy the mortgage
- If the purchaser wants to sell the property before the 10-year expiration date of the mortgage, the City must receive the remaining amount owed on the mortgage before the mortgage will be satisfied
- The City will determine the market value of the property on which the mortgage is placed
- This mortgage may be assumed by heirs to the original purchaser

### **Price Differences between PhillyLandWorks and Other Agencies**

The City uses an Automated Valuation Model (AVM) to determine the listing price of most properties available for sale. This AVM differs from the Office of Property Assessment's Assessed Value (sometimes called the Actual Value Initiative or AVI). The models have two different purposes and use two different methodologies.

The City's listing prices for the sale of property are prices for land and land only. Because nearly all structures on city-owned surplus property must be demolished or significantly renovated for proper reuse, the value of those structures is not accounted for in the model. OPA's model, however, includes values for structures.

Additionally, the City's listing prices for the sale of property are based on the likely use of the property in the future. OPA's model is based on the current use of the parcel.

Because the models were designed for different purposes, they should not be compared. One does not directly relate to the other.

## **Urban Agriculture**

The City supports the use of vacant land for urban agriculture that improves the quality of life in the City's neighborhoods.

## **Individual Garden Licenses**

An individual garden is defined as a publicly-owned property for which a person is given temporary access to farm or garden and maintains for their personal use. The intent is to provide an interim use for the land to eliminate blight and improve safety until development is possible. The City expects that the majority of individual gardens will be temporary, and the land will still be available for development.

The Individual Garden Agreement (IGA) will last for one year, and may begin and end at any time throughout the year. IGAs are time-limited agreements that both the City and gardener may terminate at any time, with or without cause, upon prior written notice to the other party. The City will use reasonable efforts to avoid terminating the urban garden agreement between April 1 and November 1. IGAs may be renewed annually at the discretion of the City.

The City expects that individual gardens will be maintained throughout the term of the IGA. Maintenance standards will be provided in writing to all applicants.

### ***Acceptable Uses***

The gardener may enter and use the property only for the following non-commercial, gardening purposes:

- To grow food, flowers, ornamental plants, and other landscaping.
- To compost in rodent-resistant containers.
- Certain construction improvements as allowed by the City and agreed to in writing.

## **Community Garden Licenses**

A community garden is defined as an area managed and maintained by a group of individuals to grow and harvest food crops or non-food crops (such as flowers) for personal or group consumption, for donation, or for sale that is incidental in nature. A community garden area may be divided into separate garden plots or orchard areas for cultivation by one or more individuals or may be farmed collectively by members of the group. A community garden may include common areas (such as hand tool storage sheds) maintained and used by the group. Community gardens may be used for recreational purposes, and improvements to facilitate such purposes may be allowed on a case by case basis upon review by the City and with community support.

Community Gardens must be sponsored by a local organization and are eligible for up to five year Community Garden Agreements (CGA), to be administered by the City and may be renewed at the discretion of the City and as authorized by the respective district Councilperson.

Additional Requirements for Community Gardens:

- Secure and maintain insurance acceptable to the City

- Provide maintenance plan and description of community benefits / programming

### **Acceptable Uses**

The gardeners may enter and use the property only for the following non-commercial, gardening purposes:

- To grow food, flowers, ornamental plants, and other landscaping.
- To compost in rodent-resistant containers.
- Certain construction improvements as allowed by the City and agreed to in writing

### **Market and Community-Supported Farms**

A market farm is defined as an area managed and maintained by an individual or group of individuals to grow and harvest food crops or non-food crops (such as flowers) for sale or distribution that is not incidental in nature.

Lease terms are variable and will be established by the City on an individual basis.

Additional Requirements for Market and Community-Supported Farms:

- Secure and maintain insurance acceptable to the City
- Submit a business plan / feasibility study
- Provide the applicable neighborhood/district councilperson letter of support Any additional constructed improvements must meet the terms of the City of Philadelphia's Zoning Code and must be approved by the City in writing.

### **Other Uses**

The City reserves the right to license the use of property for a temporary use such as a community event, pop-up activity, farmers market or other such use. The terms of such a license will be determined on a case by case basis, and may require insurance coverage and other costs.

# DATA INVENTORY

DATA RECEIVED/COLLECTED		SOURCE
<b>Parcel Geography &amp; Base Data</b>		
	ULRS (Unified Land Record System) City parcels	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	City Parcels for PWD stormwater billing (as of June, 2014)	Philadelphia Water Department, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	BRT Active Accounts	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	BRT Real Estate Locations	Department of Finance
<b>Current &amp; Future Land Use</b>		
	Philadelphia Land Use	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Philadelphia Zoning Base Districts (As of February, 2013)	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Zoning, proposed as of June 2014	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
	Prior Plans	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
<b>Vacancy</b>		
	City owned assets advertised on PhillyLandWorks	Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Expression of Interests for City owned properties available for sale	Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
	District Plan Land Use	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Vacancy Analysis	Office of Innovation and Technology
	PWD Vacant Properties	Philadelphia Water Department
	PHA Unoccupied SS Units	Philadelphia City Council - Office of the President, Philadelphia Housing Authority
	Supplemental Vacant Property Survey Data for Hunting Park, Mantua, Point Breeze/Grays Ferry, and Tioga	Interface Studio LLC
<b>Municipal Liens &amp; Tax Delinquency</b>		
	Real Estate Tax Delinquency (As of May, 2014)	Department of Revenue
	Agency receivables (L&I Liens) (As of June, 2014)	Department of Revenue
<b>Ownership</b>		
	City owned Building Facilities	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	City owned Buildings	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	OPA Active Accounts (As of May, 2014)	Office of Property Assessment
	OPA property assessment 2014	Office of Property Assessment
	OPA property assessment 2015	Office of Property Assessment

DATA RECEIVED/COLLECTED		SOURCE
<b>Housing</b>		
	Philadelphia Market Valuation Assessment, 2011	The Reinvestment Fund
	Residential Sales 2009-2013	Office of Property Assessment
	Sales Extract for Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (June, 2014)	Department of Records
	Residential New Construction Building Permits 2001-2014	Licenses and Inspections, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
	Residential Tax Abatements (As of September, 2014)	Philadelphia City Council - Office of the President, Office of Property Assessment
	Affordable Housing Expenditures	Office of Housing and Community Development, Consolidated Plan, Philadelphia Housing Finance Agency
	PHA developments (As of May 2012)	Philadelphia Housing Authority, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Adaptive Modification Program: Beneficiary report - Year 38	Office of Housing and Community Development
	Basic System Repair Program Completed Properties FY 2013	Office of Housing and Community Development
	Foreclosure Prevention	Office of Housing and Community Development
	NSP Properties (New construction, Demolished, Single family REO Rehab)	Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
	Housing Counseling Addresses (Year 40)	Office of Housing and Community Development
<b>Commercial</b>		
	Commercial Corridors	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Pennsylvania Traffic Counts	PennDOT/ PASDA
	Storefront Improvement Program complete and paid (July'09 - June'14)	Department of Commerce
	Philadelphia Improvement Districts	Department of Commerce
<b>Open Space</b>		
	Community Land Care Properties (2014)	Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
	Philadelphia Land Care Program (2013)	Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
	CLIP Abated Properties (FY '13)	City of Philadelphia
	Community Gardens Database (2013 and 2014)	Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia Garden Justice Legal Initiative, Grounded, Department of Parks and Recreation
	Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map Database, City Of Philadelphia	Federal Emergency Management Agency, Philadelphia Water Department

DATA RECEIVED/COLLECTED		SOURCE
<b>Demographics</b>		
	Census 2010 - Census Blocks	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Census 2000 - Census Block Groups	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Census 2010 - Census Block Groups	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	American Community Survey 2012	The Reinvestment Fund
	2014 Estimates & 2019 Projections	Esri
<b>Assets &amp; Investments</b>		
	Capital Program, Recommended FY2015-2020	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
	Capital Program, Expended FY2007-2013	Office of Innovation and Technology
	Development Projects	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
	Access to healthy food stores	Department of Health
	Location of Produce Carts, Corner Stores, Farmers Markets and Supermarkets	Department of Health
	Philadelphia Hospitals	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Philadelphia Health Clinics	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Universities and Colleges	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	FPC KEYSPOT Locations	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Police Athletic League Centers	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Philadelphia Playgrounds	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Philadelphia Recreation Facilities	City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation
	Access to Open Space	PennPraxis, Green2015
	Philadelphia Railstations	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	PhillyRising areas	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Philadelphia development certified areas	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Energy Centers (Year 39)	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
<b>Geographies</b>		
	2016 Philadelphia Council Districts	Open Data Philly
	Philadelphia Planning Districts 2035	Philadelphia City Planning Commission, City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Mantua Promise Zone	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Neighborhood Stabilization Program Zones(NSP1, NSP2, NSP3)	The Reinvestment Fund
	Registered Community Organizations	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
<b>Issues</b>		
	L&I Licenses	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	L&I Violations	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	L&I Permits	City of Philadelphia geodatabase
	Police crime incidents (As of July, 2014)	Philadelphia Police Department
	Limited Supermarket Access	The Reinvestment Fund

## LIST OF 2004-2014 PUBLICLY-FUNDED DEVELOPERS/CDCS

**TABLE 11:** List of 2004-2014 Community Development Block Grant-Funded Non-Profit Developers/  
CDCs and For-Profit Developers

ACHIEVEability	HELP USA	Octavia Hill
ActionAIDS	HERB	Orens Brothers
Allegheny West Foundation	Horizon House	Peoples Emergency Center
Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha	Impact Services Corp	Phil Preservation
Arab American CDC	Inglis House	Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corp
Autism Living-Working	Intercommunity Action	Phillip Murray
Beaumont Initiative	Iron Stone	Pilgrim Gardens Senior
Calcutta House	Jefferson Square CDC	Philadelphia NHS
Casa Farnase	Jewish Federation	PRD Management Inc
Cashel	Liberty Housing Development	Presby Inspired Life
CATCH	Liberty Resources	Presbyterian Homes
Catholic Charities	MCAP	Project HOME
Catholic Social Services	Methodist Services	Raise of Hope
Community Ventures	Mission First Housing Group	Resources for Human Development
Covenant House	Mt Airy USA	Salvation Army
Depaul USA	Mt. Tabor	Simpson Senior Services
Dignity Housing	Mt. Vernon Manor	Southwest Philadelphia District Services
Elon/Altman	Mt. Zion CDC	Spring Garden CDC
Food for Life, Inc.	NCC Neumann Senior Corp	St. Ignatius
FOP	New Courtland	Universal Companies
Friends Rehabilitation Program	New Covenant	Women's Community Revitalization Project
Gaudenzia	Nicetown CDC	WES Corporation
Germantown Homes Corp	New Kensington CDC	Women Against Abuse
GGHDC	Nolen Properties	Women of Excellence
Habitat for Humanity	Norris Square Civic Association	WPRE
HACE	North Star	Yorktown CDC
Haven Peniel DC	Northern Home for Children	

## LIST OF GREENING & URBAN AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

**TABLE 12:** List of Urban Agriculture Advocates

<b>Collaborative Partners:</b>	<b>Collaborative Partners:</b>
African American United Fund	Philadelphia Backyard Chickens
Agatston Urban Nutrition Initiative	Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation
Boat People SOS	Philadelphia Orchard Project
Community Health Collaborative	Philadelphia Urban Roots Collective
Early Bird Farm	Philadelphia Water Department
East Park Revitalization Alliance	Philly Urban Creators
Farm to City, LLC	Teen4Good
Federation of Neighborhood Centers	Temple University
Friends of the St. Bernard Community Garden	The Merchant Fund
Growing Home Gardens	University of Pennsylvania
Healthy Foods Green Spaces Coalition	Urban Tree Connection
HIAS PA	Village of Arts & Humanities PhillyEarth Program
JASTCH/Overbrook Environmental Education Center	Weavers Way Community Programs
Lawncrest Community Garden	Weavers Way Coop
Lindy Center for Civic Engagement	WeNurturies
Mayor's Food Policy Advisory Council	West Philly Fresh Food Hub
Mayor's Office of Sustainability	
Mill Creek Farm	
Nation of Islam Ministry of Agriculture	
Neighborhood Gardens Trust	
Norris Square Neighborhood Project	
Partners for Sacred Places	
Penn State Extension	
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society	

**LIST OF PHILLY LAND  
BANK ALLIANCE MEMBER  
ORGANIZATIONS**

**TABLE 13:** List of Land Bank Member Organizations

<b>Member Organizations:</b>
Building Industry Association
Campaign to Take Back Vacant Land
Community Design Collaborative
City Wide NAC Alliance
Design Advocacy Group
The Food Trust
Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors
LISC Philadelphia
Next Great City
PennFuture
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations
Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia
Regional Housing Legal Services
Sustainable Business Network

## LIST OF PHILADELPHIA COALITION FOR AFFORDABLE COMMUNITIES MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

**TABLE 14:** List of Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities Member Organizations

Member Organizations:	Member Organizations:
Action United	Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia/ Garden Justice Legal Initiative
Advocates for West Fairhill Community	Queen Village Neighbors Association
AFSCME 1199c Training and Upgrading Fund	Service Employees International Union 32BJ
AFSCME 1199c	Service Employees International Union Healthcare PA
AFSCME District Council 47	South Philadelphia EPIC Stakeholders
AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power	Temple Presbyterian Church
Arab American Community Development Corporation	Temple University Hospital Nurses Association (TUHNA/PASNAP)
Campaign for Working Families	Unite HERE
Christ Centered Housing Ministries	United Communities of Southeastern Philadelphia
Circle of Hope Church	United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1776
Disabled in Action	Viola Street Residents Association
District 1199c Training and Upgrading Fund	Weavers Way Co-op
East Kensington Neighbors Association	West Central Germantown Neighbors
East Park Revitalization Alliance	West Poplar CDC
Faculty and Staff Federation of Community College of Philadelphia	West Poplar NAC
Fight for Philly	Women's Community Revitalization Project
Firm Hope Baptist Church	
Food Organizing Collaborative	
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania	
Kensington Renewal	
Liberty Resources	
Love Loving Love	
Mariposa Food Co-Op	
My Place Germantown	
Neighborhood Networks/Philly MoveOn	
Norris Square Civic Association	
Northern Liberties Neighbors Association	
Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance	
Philadelphia Orchard Project	
Philadelphia Unemployment Project	
Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign	
Port Richmond West Community Action Network	



PREPARED FOR THE PHILADELPHIA LAND BANK

**INTERFACE STUDIO LLC**

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