

2018-2020

STRATEGIC PLAN

NEWBURGH
COMMUNITY
LANDBANK



PREPARED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
THE NEW YORK COUNCIL OF NONPROFITS

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NEWBURGH COMMUNITY LAND BANK
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*NEWBURGH PLANNING BOARD;
RESIDENT WARD 4*

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NEWBURGH BREWING COMPANY

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*CITY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT;
RESIDENT WARD 2*

MICHAEL CIARAVINO
*CITY MANAGER;
RESIDENT WARD 2*

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STAFF

MADELINE FLETCHER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BURKE BLACKMAN
PROJECT DIRECTOR

AMY BLAIR
ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

DIANA MANGASER
ARTIST-IN-VACANCY PROGRAM MANAGER

VIRGINIA KASINKI
*COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH MANAGER
FOR COMMUNITY GARDENS*

INTRODUCTION:

For almost a decade I have worked to improve the quality of life and standard of housing in downtown Newburgh. The people here are inspiring, the challenges both daunting and invigorating, and the continual progress is motivating. We have all watched and participated as the City has taken steps both small and large toward converting its distressed property into community assets.

Among these steps was the creation of the Newburgh Community Land Bank in 2012 by the City Council and municipal leaders, following the recommendation of Pace Law School's Land Use Law Center and the Center for Community Progress in the City of Newburgh's 2010 distressed property remediation plan. This action signaled the City's commitment to adapting and applying progressive ideas being implemented on the national stage to its own unique challenges and to changing the paradigm of vacant properties as symbols of blight into meaningful opportunities to improve the lives of its residents. Rather than continuing the cycle of cheap sale to speculators followed by eventual tax foreclosure, NCLB provided an avenue for making strategic decisions and setting long-term priorities.

Newburgh Community Land Bank's unique statutory authority to take abandoned properties and make thought-

ful decisions about their most beneficial use is a powerful tool. Throughout NCLB's five years of operation, the Board of Directors has strived to respond to a range of community needs and interests, and the results are starting to show. We have raised over \$7 million in grant funds, from the NYS Office of the Attorney General and other public and private sources, which we directly invest into vacant and abandoned properties to facilitate the rebirth of a vibrant downtown with different types of housing, commercial uses, community gardens and other creative spaces.

Through our work, previously undevelopable structures have been restored, in the process facilitating local job creation, new business development, and new opportunities for families in Newburgh. Almost sixty properties have been returned to the tax rolls, and from that more than one hundred units of new, high quality housing will result for homeowners and renters.

As we look ahead, we are seeking to engage the community in new ways as we consider and strengthen our role in equitable and sustainable community development. This Strategic Plan solidifies our organizational values and reasserts our guiding principles as we look to the next three years of growth and opportunity for Newburgh.

MADELINE FLETCHER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



ABOUT NEWBURGH COMMUNITY LAND BANK

Newburgh Community Land Bank (NCLB) acquires vacant and abandoned properties, eliminates barriers to redevelopment, and transfers renovated properties to new owners in a way that supports community needs and priorities. Properties are typically purchased from the City of Newburgh or donated from banks, institutions, or individuals. Using the funding secured to date, NCLB has eliminated environmental hazards and stabilized buildings that need more work than the private market would support. This subsidy ensures the creation of affordable home ownership and rental opportunities, and helps revitalize neighborhoods and the city at large.

Through 2017, NCLB acquired 101 distressed properties, generating 117 housing units, three-fourths of which are affordable to middle and low income households. NCLB's total investment of over \$4.1 million leveraged approximately \$15 million of private investment and returned \$3.3 million in pre-rehab assessed value to the tax rolls.

To accomplish its goals, NCLB partners with the city of Newburgh, developers, individuals and community-based organizations. NCLB has worked with Habitat for Humanity to build 10 homes, with skilled and resourceful individual home buyers with capacity to restore vacant shells, with PathStone to provide first time home buyer counseling and training, and with

RUPCO to create affordable rental and homeownership units. NCLB has also facilitated numerous community-based place-making initiatives including projects such as the Artist-in-Vacancy program, the Broadway Corridor Demonstration Project, and the Downing Park Urban Farm.

New York's first land banks were established in 2012, pursuant to the passage of the New York Land Bank Act. The Act allows foreclosing governmental units (local units of government that foreclose on real property for delinquent taxes) to form land banks. Land banks are local public authorities, accountable to the units of government which created them, designed to acquire, stabilize, assemble, and facilitate the redevelopment of blighted and abandoned properties, in order for them to be returned to productive use. Returning these formerly abandoned properties to productive use improves quality of life for surrounding residents and helps to grow the community's local property tax base by encouraging renovation that improves the value of the property the land bank sells, as well as surrounding property values. NCLB is one of 23 land banks across the state working to pro-actively intervene and take control of abandoned properties.

Funding for NCLB has largely come from mortgage crisis settlement funding through the Attorney General's office. It is anticipated that this funding is finite. To continue serving Newburgh, NCLB must diversify its funding and programs.



MISSION

Our mission is to improve the quality of life in Newburgh by stabilizing and revitalizing abandoned properties.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PLANNING

Thoughtful deliberation that is cognizant of current conditions, historical roots, and a broadly shared collective vision promotes just and equitable outcomes. We strive to ensure that each project is responsive to present needs and expected growth, complementing the City's existing fabric and contributing to a prosperous future for all residents.

PRESERVATION

We recognize that Newburgh's storied past and unique built environment are part of what makes it a community of choice. With that in mind, our work focuses overwhelmingly on the stabilization and preparation of properties for full rehabilitation.

PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration and cooperation form the foundation of our success. We support and rely on our municipal, non-profit, and private partners to implement projects and pursue innovative strategies for development.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

LEADERSHIP

Our unique, statutorily derived powers place us at the forefront of neighborhood revitalization. This responsibility demands meaningful engagement, thoughtful planning, and strategic deployment of resources to catalyze positive, inclusive development.

INTEGRITY

We endeavor to make organizational processes and decisions as transparent and accessible as possible and to deliver measurable improvements in line with stated objectives—to say what we mean, and do what we say.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Close monitoring of project outcomes and continuous solicitation of feedback helps ensure our impact is consistent with our mission and responds and adapts to the goals of the community.

VISION STATEMENT

We create positive opportunities for community and economic development that:

- Improve the quality, availability and affordability of housing options for a diverse community;
- Strengthen the vibrancy of neighborhoods;
- Build strong partnerships; and
- Attract new investment.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

From the strategic planning process, NCLB identified four goals and fourteen inter-connected strategies to guide its work over the next three years. These goals and strategies complement and expand upon existing programs and activities.



1 PROPERTY USE AND DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

NCLB will continue to be responsive to the evolving needs of the community while developing a sustainable business model.

BACKGROUND

NCLB has helped the City of Newburgh increase the efficiency and effectiveness of returning properties to the tax rolls. NCLB will continue to explore new models and opportunities to further its mission. NCLB will engineer new strategies to enhance its impact, draw investment, and relieve the City of tax and administrative burdens.

STRATEGIES

1. Reaffirm and strengthen the relationship between NCLB and the City of Newburgh government.
2. Continue to act as a conduit and subsidy source for owner-occupant purchasers and non-profit developers.
3. Explore new opportunities to partner with private property owners and developers for strategic land-banking activities.
4. Incentivize a mix of development to achieve community development goals that benefit all neighborhood residents.
5. Selectively undertake full renovation of properties to further support neighborhood growth, including first-time home ownership and possible rent-to-own opportunities

2 ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL

NCLB will develop the revenue, infrastructure, and policies needed to sustain a growing organization.

BACKGROUND

Prudent management has ensured that NCLB has reserve funds to carry the organization through 2019. While opportunities for governmental and foundation funding may continue, NCLB should hone programs that provide earned income for the organization. As a young and growing organization in a changing community, NCLB must continually evolve to deliver the best, most transparent, and most responsive policies and programs that support its mission and values.

STRATEGIES

6. Diversify revenue opportunities through pursuit of fee-based income for planning, consulting and other services.
7. As market improves, increase cost recapture through higher price sales.
8. Balance acquisitions between high and low value properties.
9. Continue to develop and revise organizational policies and procedures to reflect updated regulations and industry standards.



3 HUMAN RESOURCES

GOAL

NCLB will ensure that it has the leadership and expertise it needs to steward and sustain the organization.

BACKGROUND

As NCLB's operations have grown to accommodate larger and more innovative projects, staff have been added to help manage greater administrative complexity. For example, the creation of an Administrative Manager position has helped free programmatic and management time to concentrate on organizational and program planning and development. Additionally, securing training in new operation areas for existing staff can ensure that NCLB remains dynamic in a changing development environment in Newburgh.

As a community-driven organization, NCLB needs to have a diverse Board of Directors reflective of the community it serves. Recruitment, orientation, and ongoing training processes for Board Members should drive the organization toward ever improving service to Newburgh based upon national best practices.

STRATEGIES

10. Align staffing capacity with evolving organizational needs, functions, and priorities through key hiring and training.
11. Formalize recruitment, orientation and training procedures to support a Board of Directors with the knowledge, skills, composition, and structure to provide pro-active leadership and effective oversight.

4 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT

GOAL

NCLB will pursue effective and strategic partnerships with organizations and residents to advance its mission.

BACKGROUND

Building strong and resilient neighborhoods requires active participation from the community. NCLB must continue building trust through meaningful engagement and responsive projects that provide opportunities to a broad cross section of Newburghers. Iterative dialogue with local stakeholders as well as ongoing communication with elected representatives will ensure that projects reflect community aspirations and that tangible governmental support will follow.

STRATEGIES

12. Continue to strengthen working and productive partnerships with diverse segments of the community.
13. Develop strategic communication schedules for regular reporting to broad stakeholder base and local, state and national representatives.
14. Strengthen the advisory role of residents in project planning.

NOTES:

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NEWBURGH COMMUNITY LAND BANK
15 CHAMBERS STREET, NEWBURGH NY 12550
WWW.NEWBURGHCOMMUNITYLANDBANK.ORG
T 845 565 5360