

BUFFALO ERIE NIAGARA LAND IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT REPORT FY 2016

---

**Mission Statement: the Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation (BENLIC) seeks to confront and alleviate the problems distressed properties cause to communities by supporting municipal and regional revitalization efforts and strategically acquiring, improving, assembling and selling distressed, vacant, abandoned and and/or tax-delinquent properties.**

❖ **Return distressed, vacant, abandoned and/or tax-delinquent property to productive use.**

*The Corporation obtained and holds clear title on all of its property:*

- I. Acquired thirty-seven (37) tax-delinquent and tax-foreclosed properties using the preferred bid power of the Corporation at the County's In Rem auction 163 & Buffalo's In Rem auction 50. Acquisitions include twenty-three (23) single-family residential properties, four (4) two-family, one (1) three-family home residential property, and eight (8) vacant lots.
  - i. The Corporation began rehabilitating all single-family and two-family residential single-family residential acquisitions in 2016 as part of the Corporation's Round Two Community Revitalization Initiative (CRI) grant award from the New York State Office of the Attorney General (OAG). Rehabilitation will continue through the first quarter of 2017 and the properties will be resold to low-moderate income buyers.
  - ii. The Corporation disposed of eleven (11) properties: seven (7) residential structures and four (4) vacant lots. Each disposition enhanced land use planning objectives in the respective municipality in which the parcel resides.
- II. Acquired one (1) vacant and abandoned single family residential structure via REO (Real Estate Owned) bank donation.

- i. The Corporation rehabilitated these properties using a portion of the cash donation received as part of the donating bank's donation agreement and made additional repairs to each property using CRA funding from the Office of the Attorney General.

❖ **Enhance the quality of life within neighborhoods**

- I. Prior to property acquisition in 2016, disposition plans – prepared by the municipality, for every property – were received by the Corporation. The disposition plans reflect the goals of the municipality with respect to the various properties and their neighborhoods. Property was selected for acquisition by the Corporation in part for its effect on the quality of life within neighborhoods upon return to productive use.
- II. The Corporation commenced or continued rehabilitating thirty (30) properties in 2016. These properties are blighting proximate property and neighborhoods at-large. A property's rehabilitation will increase its value and improve neighborhood perception. Many of the Corporation's rehabilitation projects are nestled between or amongst otherwise properly-maintained properties; it is expected that rehabilitating this sort of property will provide the highest positive neighborhood externalities.

❖ ***Actualize, stabilize and grow the value of the real property tax base***

- I. Properties undergoing rehabilitation by the Corporation or otherwise improved will likely see their assessment increase, providing for a growth in the value of the real property tax base.
- II. Disposition guidelines of the Corporation function to responsibly return property to productive use to owners / interests that will improve, maintain, make code-compliant and safe, and keep conveyed property from returning to its formerly distressed, vacant, abandoned and/ or tax-delinquent status.

❖ ***Provide economic growth, encourage economic opportunities***

Education and Outreach is conducted continually throughout Erie County during the course of the year. Each town and village in Erie County received an annual notification of properties "ripe" for

foreclosure which is interpreted as at least three years behind in tax liens. These properties are considered Land Bank candidates. BENLIC conducts training sessions, presentations, and one on one visits to municipal leaders. These sessions are intended to perform participants as to the benefits of Land Bank participation, the economic opportunities the Land Bank offers, and the value of returning vacant, abandoned structures to productive use.

❖ ***Lessen the burden on local government***

- I. The Corporation completely insured and secured its property in its own name.
- II. The remainder of funding from the OAG's CRI program allowed for three (3) demolitions throughout Erie County. The cost of these demolitions amounted to approximately \$51,000. An additional \$82,200 was appropriated for strategic demolitions in the City of Buffalo. All property was reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Board prior to demolition. All property was vacant and abandoned: such property is more probably suspect to criminal activity, therefore its demolition and removal constitutes a reduction in the probability of crime within a neighborhood.

❖ ***Build Organization Capacity***

- I. In an effort to increase effectiveness in diagnosis and rehabilitation of properties, the Corporation hired Corey Baskerville as a part time building inspector. Mr. Baskerville brought extensive construction and trades experience, including work with Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood Housing Services.
- II. Two AmeriCorps members were provided by LISC to assist in operations, community outreach, and various other capacities. The work of these Outreach Planners affords full time staff increased time for identifying acquisition opportunities.