



Annual Report On Operations and Accomplishments January to December 2024

Introduction

The Franklin County Land Bank (FCLB) Board of Directors respectfully submits this report on Operations and Accomplishments for FY 2024. This has been a pivotal year for the Land Bank, marked by establishing standard operating procedures and systems, beginning a search for an Executive Director, securing critical grant funding, and acquiring our first two properties in January 2024.

Administrative Activity

Over the past year, Land Bank operations have been primarily managed by the all-volunteer board in the absence of full-time staff. The FCLB Board of Directors holds its meetings virtually via Zoom on the first Thursday of each month at 4:00 PM.

As a newly established organization in its startup phase, the board has undertaken several key tasks to position itself for effective land banking. These efforts have included:

- Engaging professional service firms for essential services, such as accounting, auditing (as required by the Authorities Budget Office), website development, and legal support.
- Conducting strategic planning sessions to define the Land Bank's mission and goals.
- Establishing necessary insurance policies.
- Adopting key organizational policies.
- Developing a job description and initiating the search for an Executive Director (who began in February 2025).

Board of Director and Staff

The FCLB Board is comprised of 11 members who are appointed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation. Over the last year, the board has experienced some changes in membership.

- Board Member Chris LaBarge resigned. His replacement has not been appointed

The current officers, directors, and committees are as follows:

Executive Committee	Chair - Harry Gordon Vice Chair – Madelyn Fleury Treasurer – Sherry Boyea Secretary – <i>vacant</i> + Governance, Finance, and Property Management Committee chairs
Audit and Finance Committee	Chair – Sherry Boyea Janelle Lavigne Madelyn Fleury
Governance Committee	Chair – Kip Cassavaw Fran Perry
Property Management Committee	Chair – John Gillis Janelle Lavigne Harry Gordon Scott Cook Eric Ashlaw

Executive Director – Shiela Conners (began in February 2025)

Summary of Financial Activity

The FCLB secured funding from Franklin County and a NYS Land Bank Initiative Phase I grant for operations (SHARS 20230363), which was extended for year 2. FCLB prepared a grant application for the open round of Phase II funds for capital activities (submitted in January 2025).

In FY 2024, FCLB did not have LBI grant funding for capital activities. The Phase I grant funding was used for technical assistance, property maintenance, and pre-development activities including appraisals, property surveys, debris removal, legal services, and professional engineering services.

Acquisitions

The FCLB acquired two properties through Franklin County via tax foreclosure:

1. 13 Williamson Street in Malone, NY, a single-family residence that is uninhabitable and will require major rehabilitation of all building systems
2. 92 Wawbeek Avenue in Tupper Lake, NY, a single-family residence that has been determined to be too deteriorated for rehabilitation. This building will be demolished and replaced with a single-family residence.

Both properties will be developed as affordable workforce housing, contributing to the community's housing needs.

Conclusion

The Franklin County Land Bank was established as the 27th land bank in NY, building on the significant accomplishments of the prior land banks. We acknowledge the forward-looking vision of the Franklin County Government in establishing and supporting the FCLB. Our non-capital organizational and pre-development activities in FY 2024 have positioned the FCLB for significant progress in subsequent years. FCLB is well-positioned to address the challenge of blighted and abandoned properties in our community. We are committed to building stronger communities by increasing affordable workforce housing, strengthening neighborhoods, and returning properties to the tax rolls.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Directors, Franklin County Land Bank