Summit County Land Bank completes $7.4 million demolition program

The Summit County Land Bank has announced the completion of a $7.4 million demolition program, removing 963 vacant and abandoned properties throughout Summit County. The effort encourages long-term community development and contributes to the revitalization of devastated neighborhoods.

Formed in 2012, the Summit County Land Bank is a nonprofit community improvement corporation. It was established in collaboration with Summit County Fiscal Officer Kristen M. Scalise, CPA, CFE, Summit County Council and Summit County Executive Russ Pry.

“Establishing the Land Bank demonstrates my commitment to helping our communities recover from the recent foreclosure crisis,” said County Executive Russ Pry. “Through the removal of blighted and dilapidated structures, we can improve the safety of our neighborhoods and spur economic growth in Summit County.”

In 2012 the Summit County Land Bank received $3.78 million in grant funds through Moving Ohio Forward, a program sponsored by the Ohio Attorney General.
This funding required a dollar-for-dollar match for demolition costs, which was met by the Summit County Land Bank and participating cities, villages and townships. “Our communities really stepped up by contributing $1.8 million to the demolition costs. We couldn’t be more proud of the result,” said Patrick Bravo, executive director of the Summit County Land Bank, which also contributed $1.8 million to match the state funds.

All 31 municipalities in Summit County were invited to take part in the demolition program. Twenty-two communities participated by having properties razed.

“The Land Bank has a direct impact on the value of our homes and businesses. When introducing the program, it was my priority to give each community the opportunity to benefit from the grant funds,” said Summit County Fiscal Officer Kristen M. Scalise, CPA, CFE, who serves as Chair of the Summit County Land Bank.

The recent program resulted in more than $7.4 million being spent to demolish houses in Summit County. The structures demolished were vacant and blighted residential properties, some of which were previously used to manufacture methamphetamine. The removal of these structures will allow communities to begin new development and for property values to stabilize.

“The Land Bank has certainly made a difference for our communities,” said Ilene Shapiro, president of Summit County Council and vice chair of the Summit County Land Bank. “Vacant, blighted properties are a drain on community resources and create an opportunity for dangerous activity. I am very proud of our efforts.”

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