



CITY OF DETROIT

MARY WATERS

COUNCIL MEMBER AT-LARGE

MEMORANDUM

To: David Whitaker, Legislative Policy Division

Through: James Tate, City Council President

From: Council Member At-Large Mary Waters submitting memorandum relative to

Date: 3/16/2026

RE: Request for Information on Relationship Between Detroit Land Bank Authority and the Wayne County Treasurer's Office

SUMMARY:

Please provide our office with answers to the following questions regarding the Detroit Land Bank Authority:

What contractual or formal agreement exists between the Detroit Land Bank Authority and the Wayne County Treasurer's Office regarding properties that do not sell at the Wayne County tax foreclosure auction?

1) How many properties or homes are set aside or transferred to the Detroit Land Bank Authority each year from unsold county tax auction properties?

2) Is the Wayne County Treasurer legally required under the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Act to transfer certain tax-foreclosed properties to a land bank authority? If so, what specific sections of the law govern this process?

3) How many properties are transferred to the Wayne County Land Bank Authority compared with those transferred to the Detroit Land Bank Authority?

4) What is the typical condition of the properties transferred to the Detroit Land Bank Authority?

5) Are they primarily demolition candidates?

6) Are any structurally salvageable or suitable for rehabilitation?

7) Is the City of Detroit required to take ownership of these properties once they are transferred to the Detroit Land Bank Authority, or could they remain under the Wayne County Land Bank Authority? If not, what legal or administrative reason prevents that?

Property Use and Proceeds

- How does the Detroit Land Bank Authority use the proceeds from property sales?
- What percentage of revenue is allocated to demolition, rehabilitation, administrative costs, or community programs?
- How many properties acquired through the tax foreclosure process have been used in the Detroit Land Bank NAP Program?
- The properties sold through the NAP program, how many were purchased by: Detroit residents, Real estate investors or companies, Nonprofit community development corporations (CDCs)
- How many NAP properties were ultimately rehabilitated and occupied by homeowners?
- What safeguards are in place to ensure that NAP properties are not simply transferred to speculative investors?

Ownership and Heir Properties

- Of the tax-foreclosed properties transferred to the Detroit Land Bank Authority, how many were previously heirs' properties or involved in probate disputes?
- How does the land bank handle properties that are later discovered to have unresolved probate or heirship claims?
- Are heirs or family members given an opportunity to reclaim the property before it is sold by the land bank?
- What policies exist to prevent the loss of generational homes due to tax foreclosure and probate complications?

Transparency and Accountability

- Does the Detroit Land Bank Authority publish annual reports detailing: the number of properties acquired the number sold demolition totals rehabilitation outcomes?
- How many properties transferred from the Wayne County Treasurer remain vacant or unsold after five years?
- What criteria determine whether a property is demolished versus rehabilitated?
- How does the Detroit Land Bank Authority coordinate with neighborhood residents or community groups before deciding the fate of properties?

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT:

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