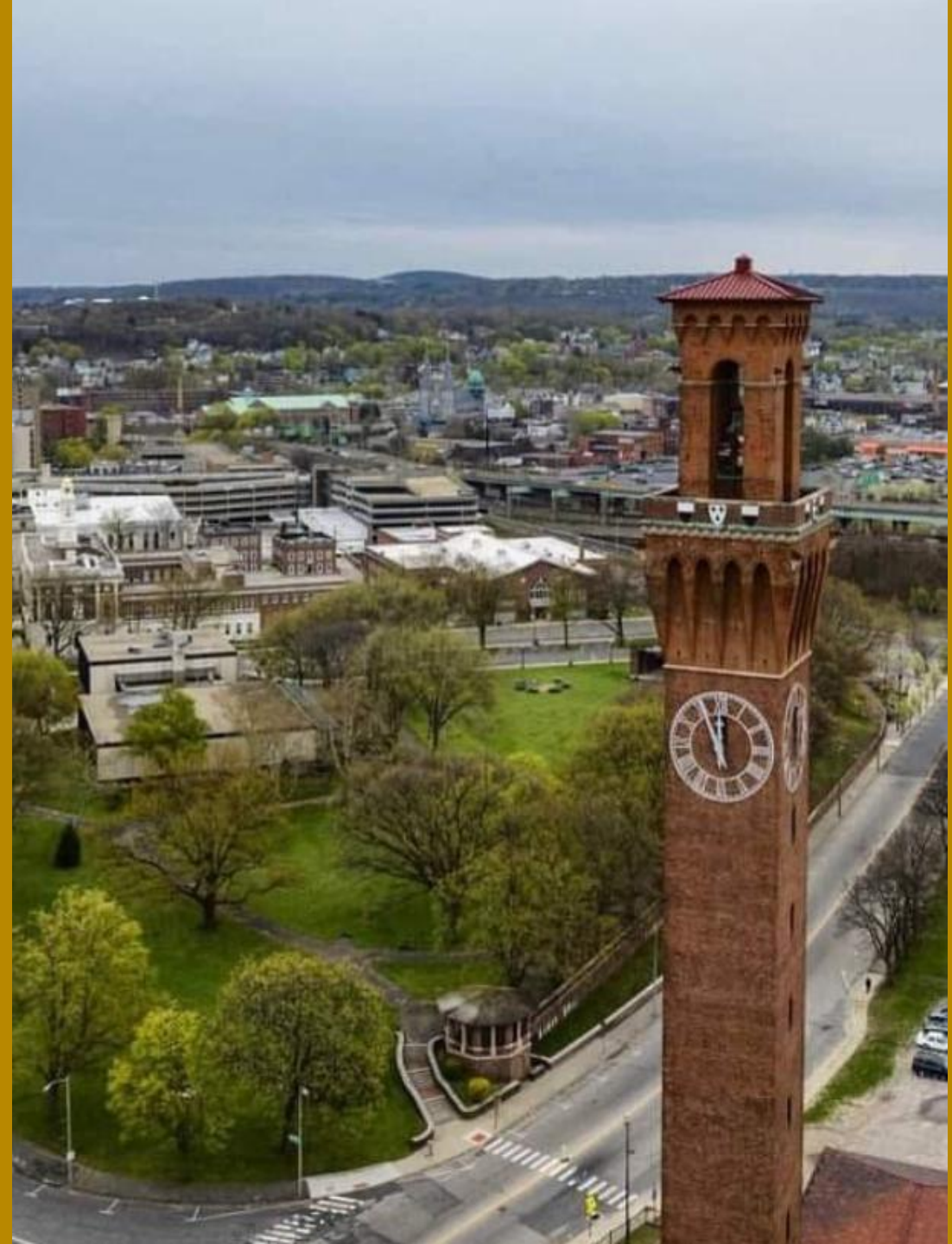


# The Waterbury Land Bank Authority



Commerce Committee  
February 24, 2026





## **Waterbury Land Bank Authority (“WLB”) Mission:**

“To strengthen neighborhoods by returning distressed property to productive use, promoting economic development, increasing real property values, and improving the quality of life for Waterbury residents.”

# What is The Waterbury Land Bank Authority?



- The Waterbury Land Bank Authority (“WLB”) is an independent tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization (Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.)
- WLB is governed by seven (7) volunteer Board of Directors, and led by a full-time Executive Director.
- WLB has sole discretion and legal right to acquire/accept and dispose of real property, working in close collaboration w/ the city and aligning with the city’s land use regulations/codes. WLB takes responsibility for accepting/disposing of property and may reclaim a parcel if a project or intended use is not completed within given timeframe, or it is not compliant.
- WLB generates revenues through sales proceeds and shares in real estate tax revenues (50%) generated for each parcel for 5 yrs.

# WLB Board of Directors Officers:



Fred Luedke, Chair

Former President of  
NEOPERL Inc.



Robert Polito, Treasurer

Former Webster Bank Senior VP  
Director of Gov't Guaranteed  
Lending.



Dr. James Gatling, Vice-Chair

Former CEO  
New Opportunities  
of Waterbury Inc.



Gaudys Grullon, Secretary

Director of Research, Development  
and Planning at New Opportunities,  
Inc.



# WLB Board of Directors & Executive Director:



Dan Lauer

Former Waterbury Deputy Chief of Police; currently officer with the Middlebury Police Dept.



Lana Ogrodnik

Licensed real estate broker, First-time home buyer instructor.



Joel Becker

Torrco CEO and Chairman.

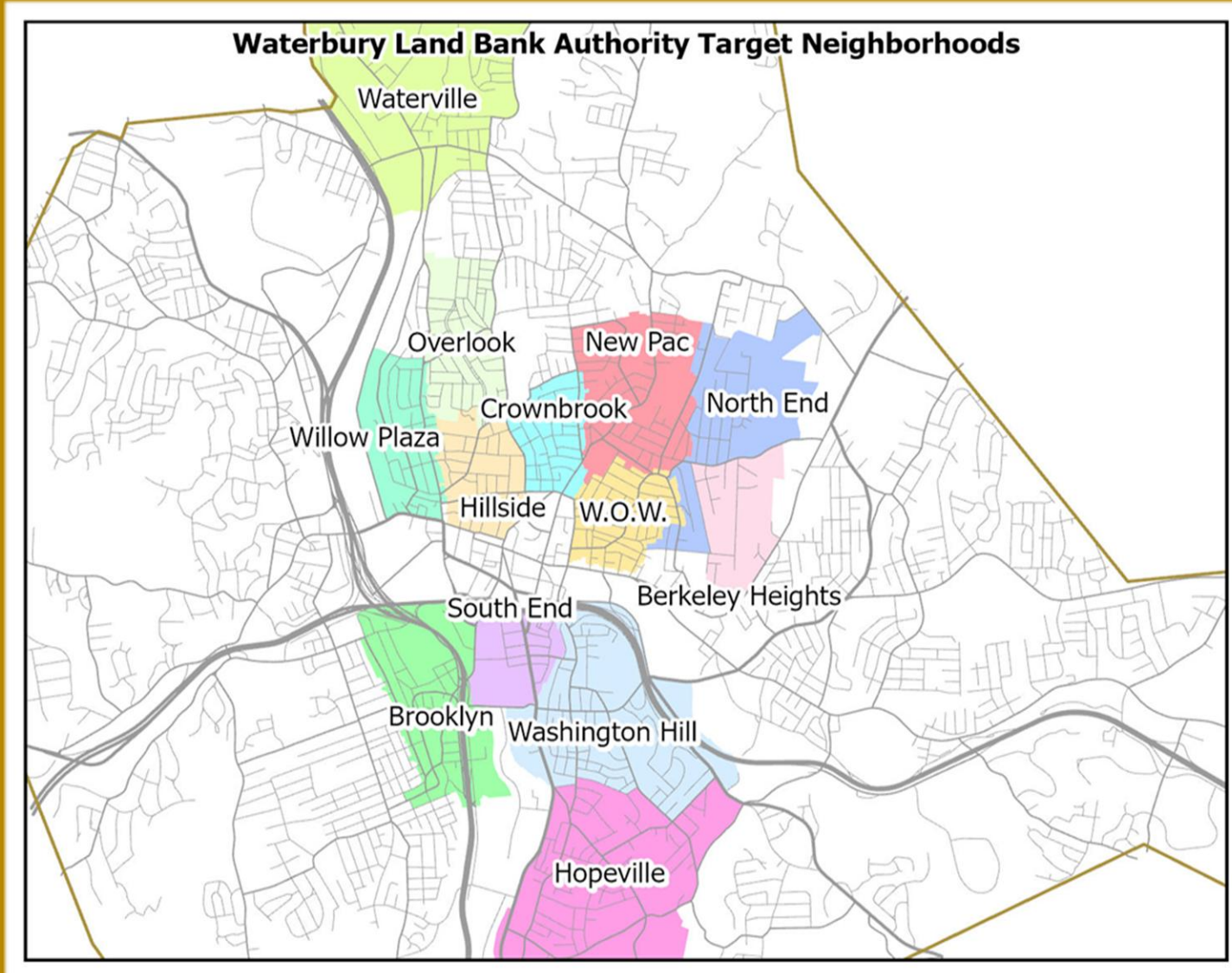


Nancy MacMillan  
WLB Executive Director

Former affordable housing & community development director, gov't planner, and real estate appraiser.

# What area does WLB serve?

## Targeted Neighborhoods and Strategic Planning



Identified 13 inner-core neighborhoods (within 16 qualified census tracts\*) closest to downtown, where incidence of blight/vacant properties is high.

*\* “areas where either 50% or more of the households have an income less than 60% of the AMI or have a poverty rate of at least 20 percent.”*

# Creation of the WLB:



- 2017:** Harold Webster Smith Foundation commissioned the Center for Community Progress to research strategies for addressing blight in Waterbury, and recommended the creation of the Land Bank.
- 2019:** CT Vibrant Communities Coalition encouraged adoption of House Bill 7277, An Act Concerning the Creation of Land Bank Authorities; signed into law by Gov Lamont. A Land Bank Advisory Committee was formed by the City of Waterbury.
- 2020:** HWSF provides funding to support Land Bank consulting services.
- 2021:** Waterbury announces a Land Bank Ordinance and the creation of the WLB.
- 2022:** WLB Board performs a regional search and selects Nancy MacMillan as Executive Director.



## Progress of WLB:

**2022:** WLB Offices established at 207 Bank St in Waterbury.  
Strategic planning begins.

**2023:** Refinement of EpropertyPlus software; Implementation of ArcGIS.

**2023:** Condition Assessment Program; Sidewalk inspection of 289 parcels.

**2025:** Acquisitions/Dispositions Process accelerates. Side Lot Program begins.

**2026:** WLB reaches 32 acquired parcels. Collaborations strengthened.  
Number of planned acquisitions identified and exceeds previous year.  
Number of housing units proposed increases.

# Acquisitions & Dispositions to date:



Total Acquisitions (to date): 32

Dispositions: 12

Pending Sales: 5

Parcels to be developed by WLB: 2

Parcels being held (future use/development): 6

Parcels under evaluation: 7

Number of housing units to be produced to date: 12 new construction  
1 single family rehab  
1 multi-family rehab

Number of community gardens in production: 2

Number of acquisitions planned for **2026**: 33



# Sources & Uses of Capital Funds:

- \$5M request from the State of CT, similar to funding granted to Hartford and New Haven land banks, to support the City of Waterbury's efforts to overcome the “net new blighted property” curve.
- Secured over \$1M in capital funds from HUD via the CT Congressionally Directed Spending Initiative.
- Secured \$300,000 from the City of Waterbury toward the WOW Neighborhood Revitalization Project. Additional capital support expected from the City (in addition to \$1M plus in operating funds provided to date by the City under the WLB MOU.)
- Capital will be used to accelerate blight remediation through the acquisition, maintenance, remediation, development, and disposition of over 100 additional parcels, as described in the Appendix.

# Overall Benefit:



- Granting capital to WLB will help the City of Waterbury bend the “net new blighted property” curve by effectively recycling vacant, abandoned and dilapidated properties into single and multi-family homes owned by community residents or rented from vetted, responsible landlords.
- \$5M in State grant capital, buttressed by other identifiable capital sources, is crucially important to the ability of WLB and the City of Waterbury to achieve their shared vision:

Thriving neighborhoods where every property contributes to community well-being, economic opportunity, and neighborhood stability.



**Thank you for this opportunity to present our organization.**

**WLB**

**207 Bank Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor**

**P.O. Box 825**

**Waterbury, CT 06702**

**(203) 721-6958**

**[www.waterburylandbank.org](http://www.waterburylandbank.org)**



# APPENDIX



## Other WLB Collaborations & Financial Support:

The City of Waterbury & the Harold Webster Smith Foundation are primary financial supporters.

Other supporters include:

- Liberty Bank Foundation
- CT Community Foundation
- Local Initiatives Social Connection (“LISC”)
- Webster Bank Foundation
- The CT Project
- HUD (capital support) via the CT Congressionally Directed Spending Initiative FY24

# Considerations during Acquisition, Holding/ Maintenance, and Disposition:



## Acquisitions:

- WLB at its discretion, acquires property, usually at no cost, via the city disposition or foreclosure process and also through engagement with residents and neighborhood associations.
- WLB can accept property from private donations, and through its own due diligence to find/acquire property.
- WLB assists the city in identifying and remediating blight.

## Holding/Maintenance:

- Physically maintains each parcel in accordance with city Blight Ordinance.
- Carries proper insurance for parcels.
- Markets parcels for sale via WLB website; Side Lot Program; Developers.
- Meetings with buyers and their attorneys held to discuss policies.

# Considerations during Acquisition, Holding/ Maintenance, and Disposition (continued):



## Dispositions:

- WLB analyzes each property for its Highest & Best Use.
- Follow WLB Policies & Procedures; includes Rating & Ranking system for applications.
- Review each applicant's intended use along with their experience (if developing parcel), financing plan, along with community needs.
- Priority is given to owner/occupants/homeownership.
- Attorney due diligence; Purchase and Sale Agreements; Deeds with restrictive covenants (retain right to take back property if there's non-compliance.)
- WLB Board Discussion & Approval of property being disposed.
- Compliance benchmarks on timing, completion, certificate of occupancy.



## Strategic Priorities:

- Priority 1: Acquire, Rehabilitate, Sell blighted properties
- Priority 2: Expand Housing Development Focus
- Priority 3: Accelerate Side Lot Program Growth
- Priority 4: Strengthen Community Engagement/Partnerships
- Priority 5: Build Sustainable Operating & Capital Funding
- Priority 6: Enhance Data Collection/Tracking and Impact Measurement

## Benefits and Outcomes:

- Strengthening neighborhoods, increasing property values.
- Increasing home ownership opportunities; adding housing units.
- Increasing tax revenues for the city. Adding tax revenues to the WLB.
- Alleviating vehicle congestion, and promoting safety.
- Improving conditions i.e. health, crime reduction, decrease food scarcity.
- Enhancing economic development for the city.

# Sample Disposition Process:



## Parcel w/ dwelling Acquired by WLB

WLB rehabs dwelling & sells to owner occupant.  
5 yr. occupancy req.

OR

WLB rehabs MF dwelling & sells to reputable buyer.

OR

WLB sells to reputable buyer who rehabs dwelling and resides (SF) for 5 yrs., or rents (MF).

## Vacant Land Acquired by WLB

### Sell Parcel:

\*Sell parcel to buyer who will build and reside in dwelling; min of 5 yrs.

OR

\*WLB builds dwelling and sells to buyer who will reside in dwelling; min. of 5 yrs.

OR

\*Sell parcel to reputable developer/landlord who builds dwelling and sells to homebuyer/occupant or rents housing units w/ accessory on-site parking

### Sell parcel via Side Lot Program:

\*WLB contacts abutting property owners for interest in buying parcel.

\*Buyer merges parcel with abutting property with a structure.

\*Yard area increased.

\*On-site parking can be created.

\*Opportunity to increase dwelling size or number of housing units.

\*Value of property overall increases. Intended use must adhere to zoning.

**Owner occupancy mandatory for SF dwelling, and is preference / priority for MF dwelling.**

# Sample of properties



**Side Lot Program**



**Community Gardens**



**Housing  
Rehabilitation**



**Infill Housing  
Development**



# What Support does WLB receive from the City?

- Memorandum of Understanding / Financial Assistance Agreement
- Highly Collaborative Relationship with City Departments:
  - Finance
  - Tax Collector and Assessor's Office
  - Corporation Counsel
  - Information Technology
  - Purchasing
  - Planning and Zoning
  - Nuisance Enforcement Team

## Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

- In 2022, the City of Waterbury, and the WLB entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for furthering the mutual goals of the City and the WLB, establishing policies and procedures that allow the City and the WLB to undertake their respective business (collaboratively and concurrently.)
- To achieve these mutual goals, a Financial Assistance Agreement is part of the MOU.



## Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) continued:

- Within the MOU, the Land Bank's purpose is to:
  1. Develop programs and prioritize sales that increase and preserve home ownership.
  2. Identify and cause the removal of blighting influences, such as abandoned cars, trash, debris, condemned and burned houses and promote enforcement of Property maintenance standards.
  3. Work w neighborhood groups, city agencies, private developers to develop and implement community-centered strategies that achieve the strategic goals.
  4. Create residential, commercial & mixed-use sites that attract development and investment.

