
State of Land Banking

Results of the 2023 State of Land Banking Survey

Overview

The **State of Land Banking Survey**, first conducted in 2021, represents the only opportunity for the land banking field to tell its story with comprehensive data.

Citing this research:

“2023 State of Land Banking Survey,” Center for Community Progress, October 2023.

www.communityprogress.org/publications/2023-state-of-land-banking”



Survey Methodology

Respondents

- ↑ **48% increase** in respondents from 2021 survey
- **112 land banks started** the survey
- **92 land banks completed** the survey

Data Overview

- 66 total questions in an online survey
- All multiple-choice or checkbox questions required a response
- Open-ended questions did not require a response
- New land banks (est. 2020 or later) were excluded from inventory questions



Survey Respondents

Most Respondents

1. New York
2. Michigan
3. Pennsylvania
4. Georgia

Geographic Footprint

- 64% county
- 24% municipal
- 7% multi-municipal
- 4% regional
- 2% state

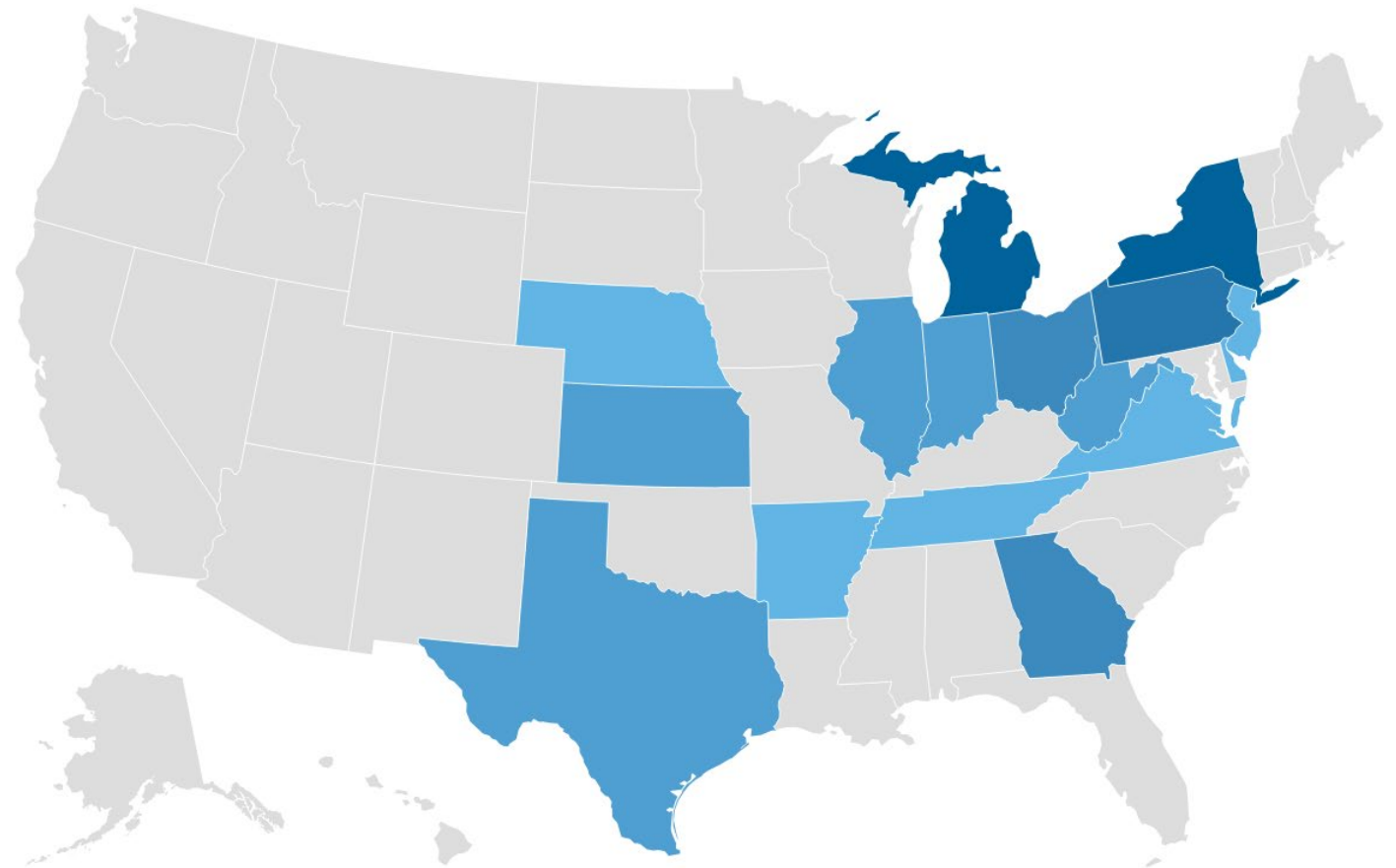
Legal Entity Structure

- 80% public authority
- 8% private nonprofit
- 7% other
- 3% program or division of government
- 2% unsure

State of Land Banking respondents by state

Land banks that completed the 2023 survey

 < 2 2-4 4-10 10-15 ≥ 15



N = 92

Map: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Survey Results



Top Priorities

81% of land banks consider **supporting the creation of affordable housing** a top priority for the next three years.

Top Five Priorities for Land Banks

Respondents selected up to three answers.

| | Priorities | Percent of Total ▼ |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Support the creation of affordable housing | 81% |
| 2 | Address more vacant lots | 50% |
| 3 | Conduct more rehabilitations | 42% |
| 4 | Increase inventory | 40% |
| 5 | Other (conduct demolitions, rehabilitate brownfields, build capacity, etc.) | 40% |

Additional 3 rows not shown.

N = 112

Table: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Top Challenges

65% of land banks consider **funding** to be one of the biggest threats to their land bank's success in the next three years.

Top Five Threats for Land Banks

Open response. The following are top 5 common themes described.

| | Common Threats | Percent of Total ▼ |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Funding (finding consistent funding, increasing funding, diversifying funding, etc.) | 65% |
| 2 | Inventory (lack of available inventory, access to inventory pipelines, cost of inventory, etc.) | 24% |
| 3 | Local-level political leadership, transitions, willpower, legislation, and/or capacity | 16% |
| 4 | Staff capacity | 14% |
| 5 | Cost of building materials, construction costs, and/or contractor availability | 12% |

Additional 2 rows not shown.

N = 99

Table: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

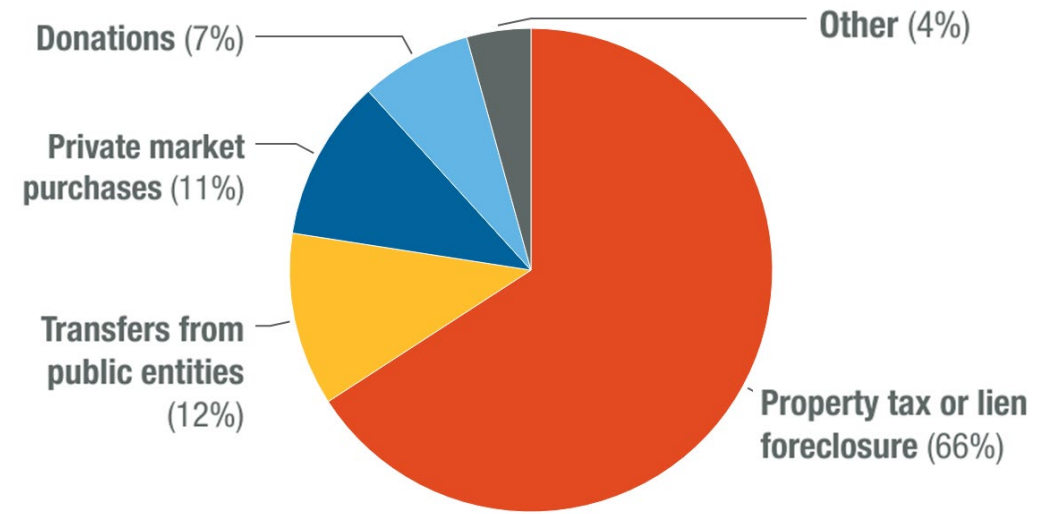


Land Bank Inventory

Since 2021 Survey:

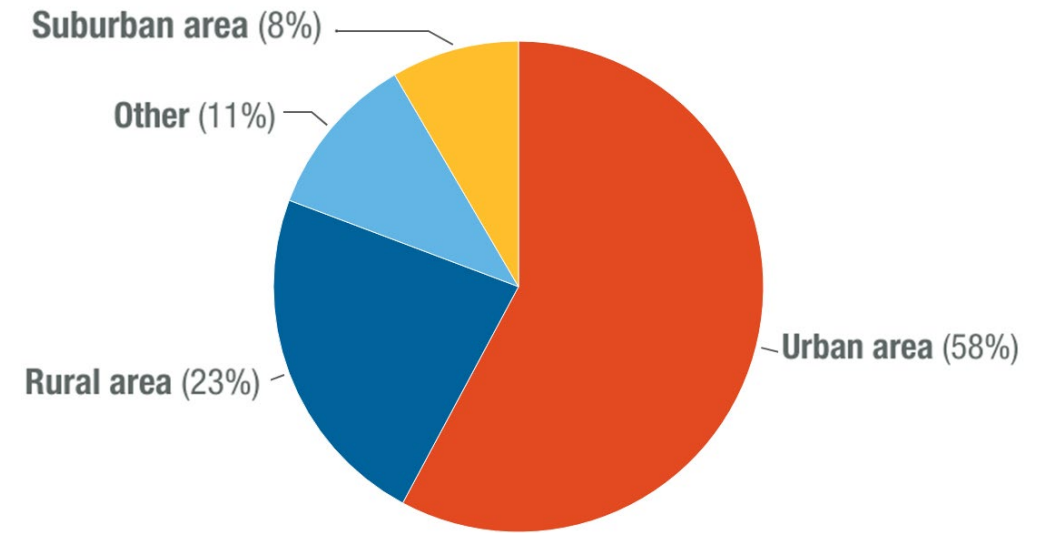
- ↓ **-14% decrease** in inventory from property tax or lien foreclosure
- ↑ **100% increase** in inventory from transfers from public entities
- **No change** in inventory from private market purchases
- ↑ **17% increase** in inventory from donation

Where Land Bank Inventory Comes From



N = 70

Where Land Bank Inventory Is Located



N = 83

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

Land Bank Inventory

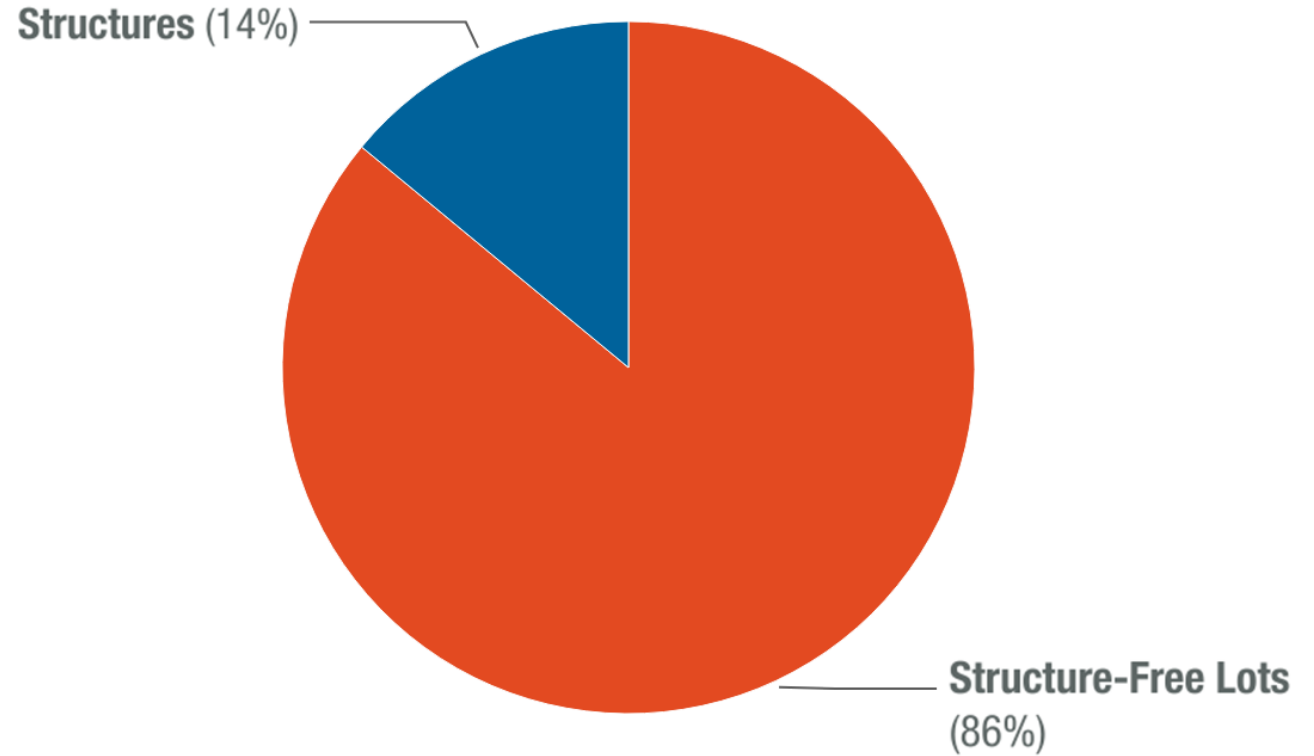
Vacant lots continue to make up the majority of land bank inventory.

Since 2021 Survey:

↓ **30% decrease** in lots with structures

↑ **7.5% increase** in structure-free lots

Structure-Free Lots Comprise a Majority of Land Bank Inventory



N = 77

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Structural Condition

81% of respondents track the condition of properties in their inventory.

76% of land bank inventory with structures is either poor or substandard/hazardous.

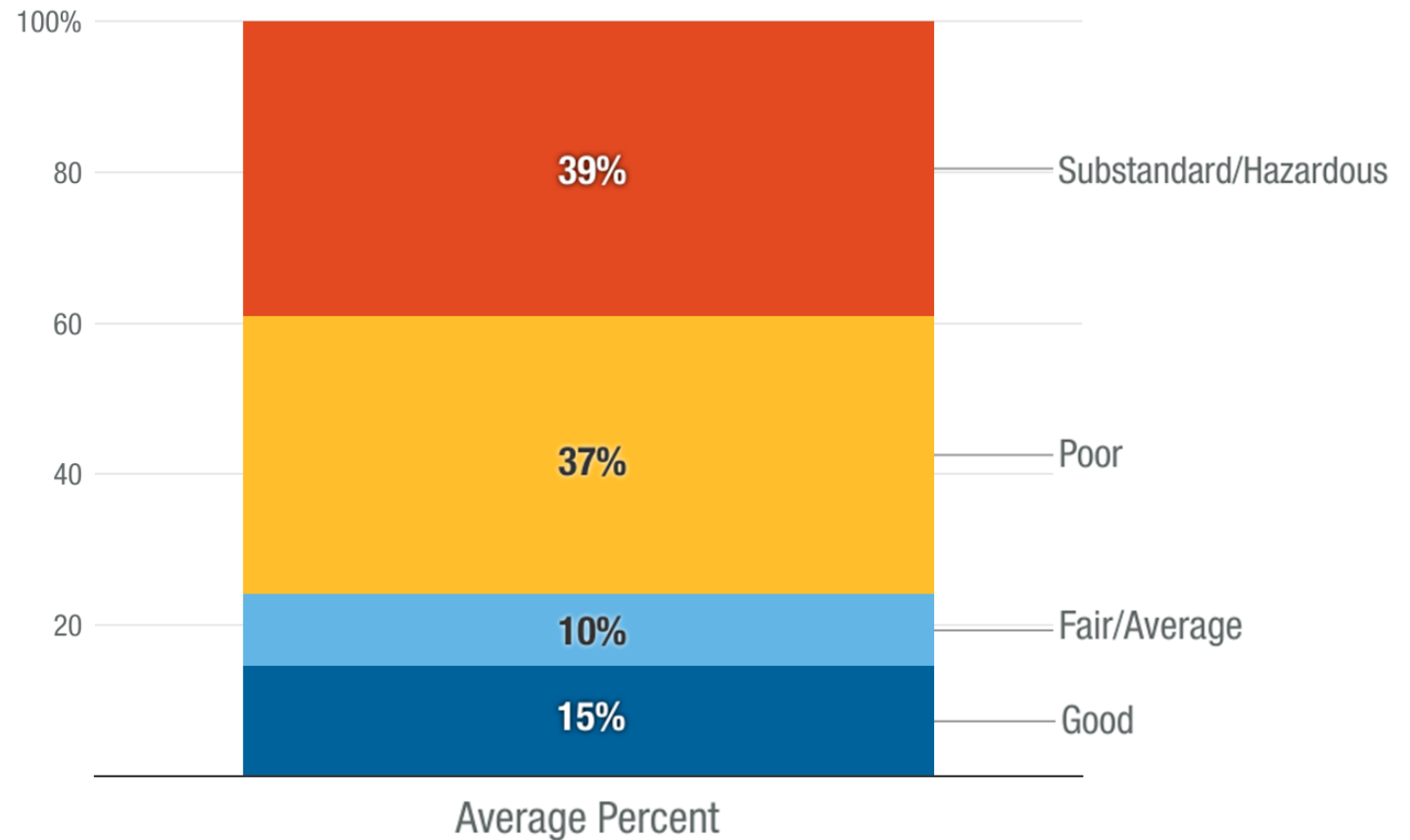
Occupied parcels with structures in inventory?

- Yes (22%)
- No (78%)

Average percent buildable or not buildable lots in inventory

- Buildable (70%)
- Not buildable (30%)

Most Structures in Land Bank Inventory are in Hazardous or Poor Condition



N = 68

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



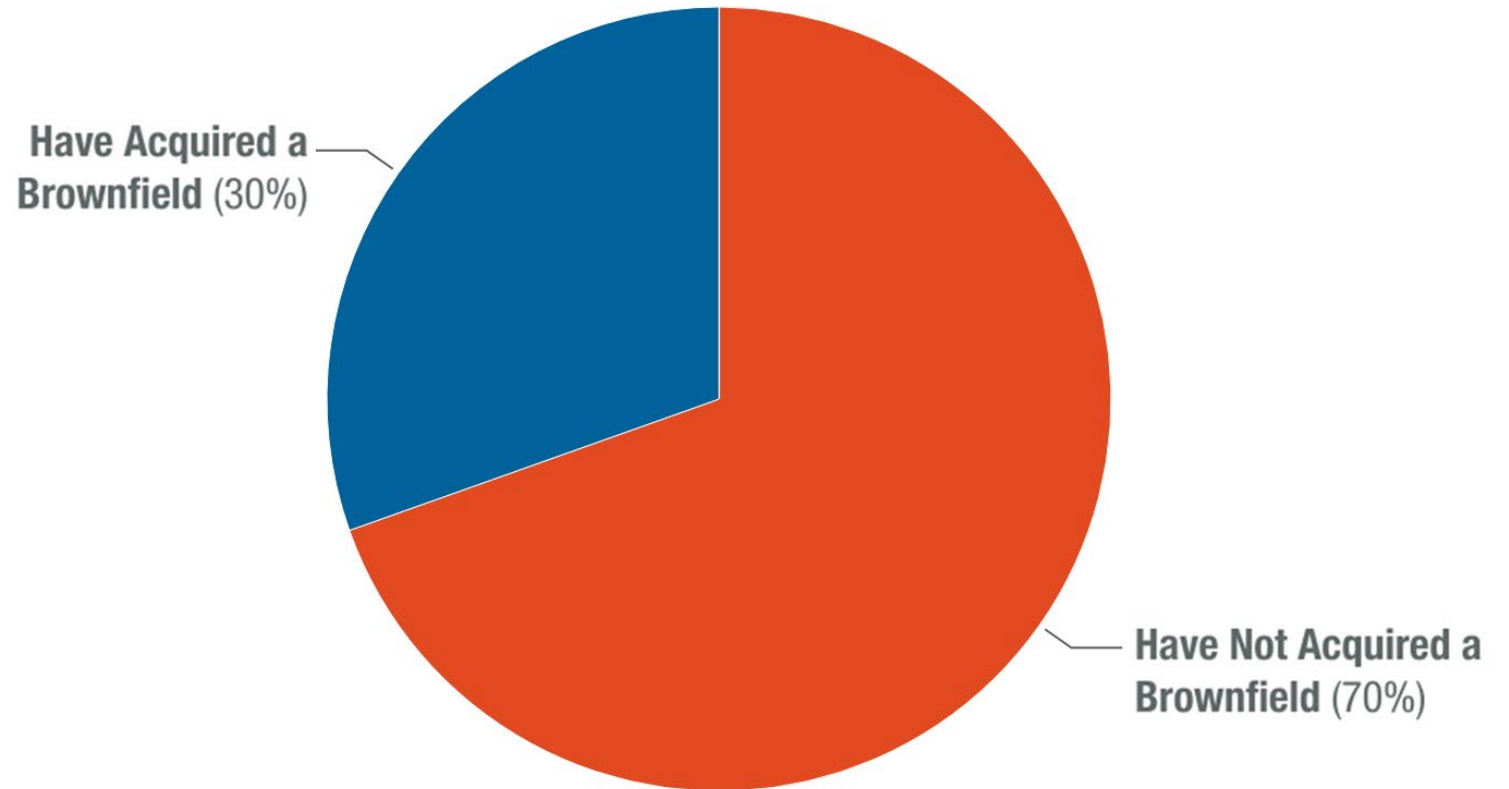
Brownfields

Land banks have unique powers to help communities revitalize brownfields—properties contaminated by hazardous substances that make them difficult and costly to redevelop or reuse.

A third of respondents said they have acquired a brownfield property.

The Center for Community Progress has been awarded [\\$500k by the EPA](#) to advance brownfields remediation through land bank partnerships.

A Third of Land Banks Have Acquired a Brownfield Property



N = 92

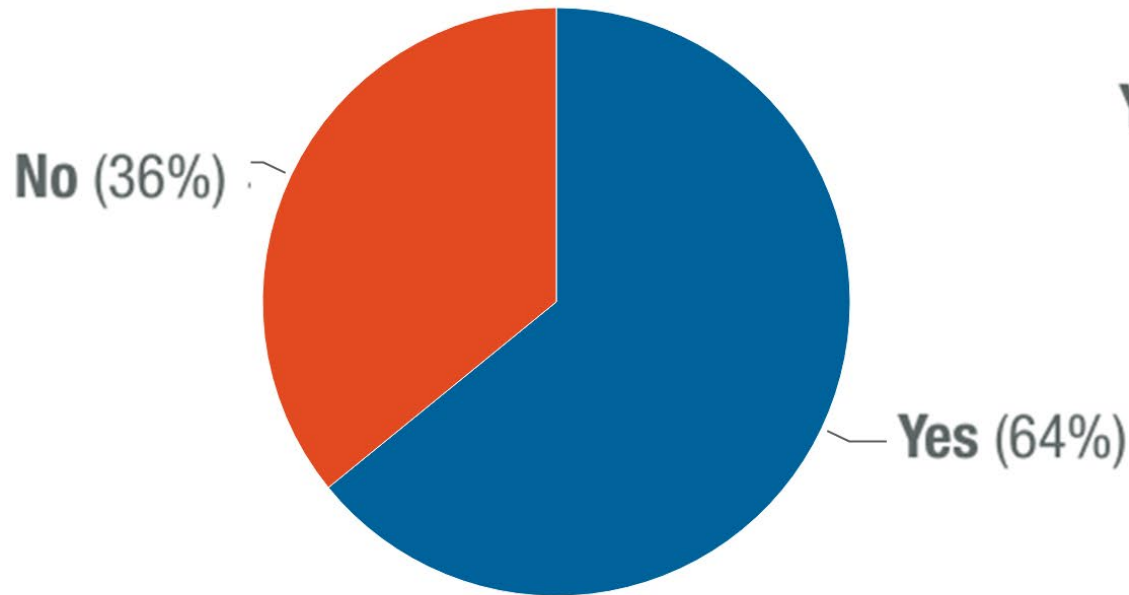
Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

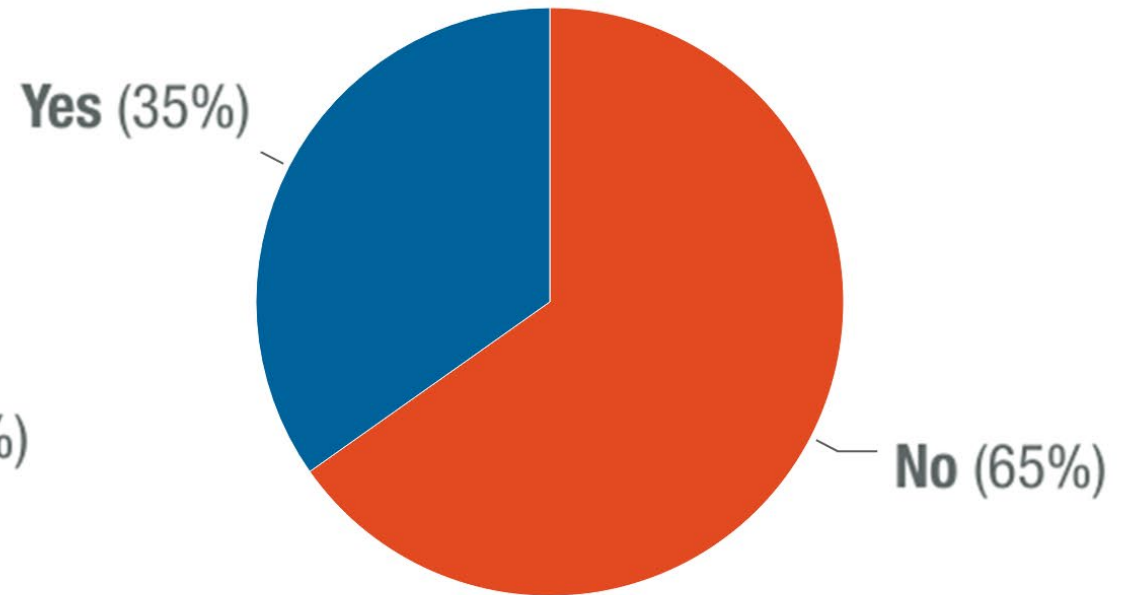


Software and Data

Do you have software to identify current and potential sources of inventory?



Do you have data-sharing agreements with local government partners?



N = 92

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

communityprogress.org



Property Disposition

91% of respondents have a policy governing how they acquire and dispose of properties.

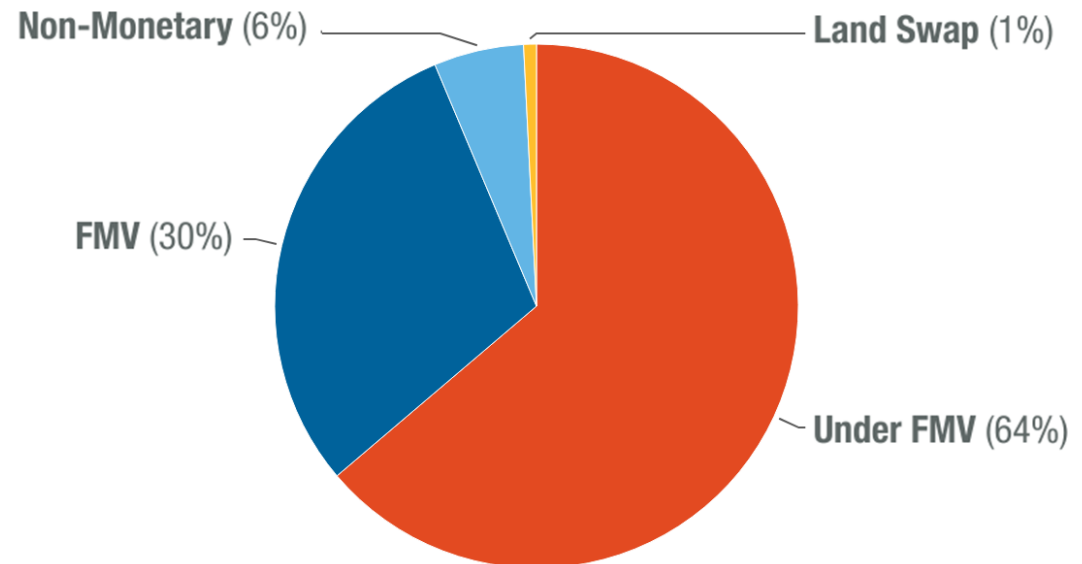
As in the 2021 State of Land Banking Survey, local residents and institutions top the list of recipients of land bank properties.

Residents and Local Institutions Continue to be the Most Common Recipients of Land Bank Properties

Entities ranked below from most frequent to least frequent.

1. Local residents and/or non-incorporated organizations
2. Locally/regionally based nonprofit corporation
3. Locally/regionally based LLC or private entities
4. Government agencies
5. Out-of-state LLC or private entities
6. Out-of-state nonprofit corporation

Most Parcels Are Sold for Less Than Fair Market Value



N = 62

Chart: Center for Community Progress
Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Demographics of Land Bank Property Recipients

Nearly half of land banks reported not collecting any socio-economic information on recipients of land bank properties.

39% of respondents collect information about ownership intent and current residency.

Socio-Economic Information Collected on Land Bank Transferees

No socio-economic information collected

48%

Ownership (e.g., first-time homebuyer, owner-occupant, landlord)

39%

Residency (e.g., resident of the city where they are purchasing property)

39%

Income

33%

Race or ethnicity

18%

Gender

14%

Age

8%

Other

5%

Education level

2%

N = 83

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

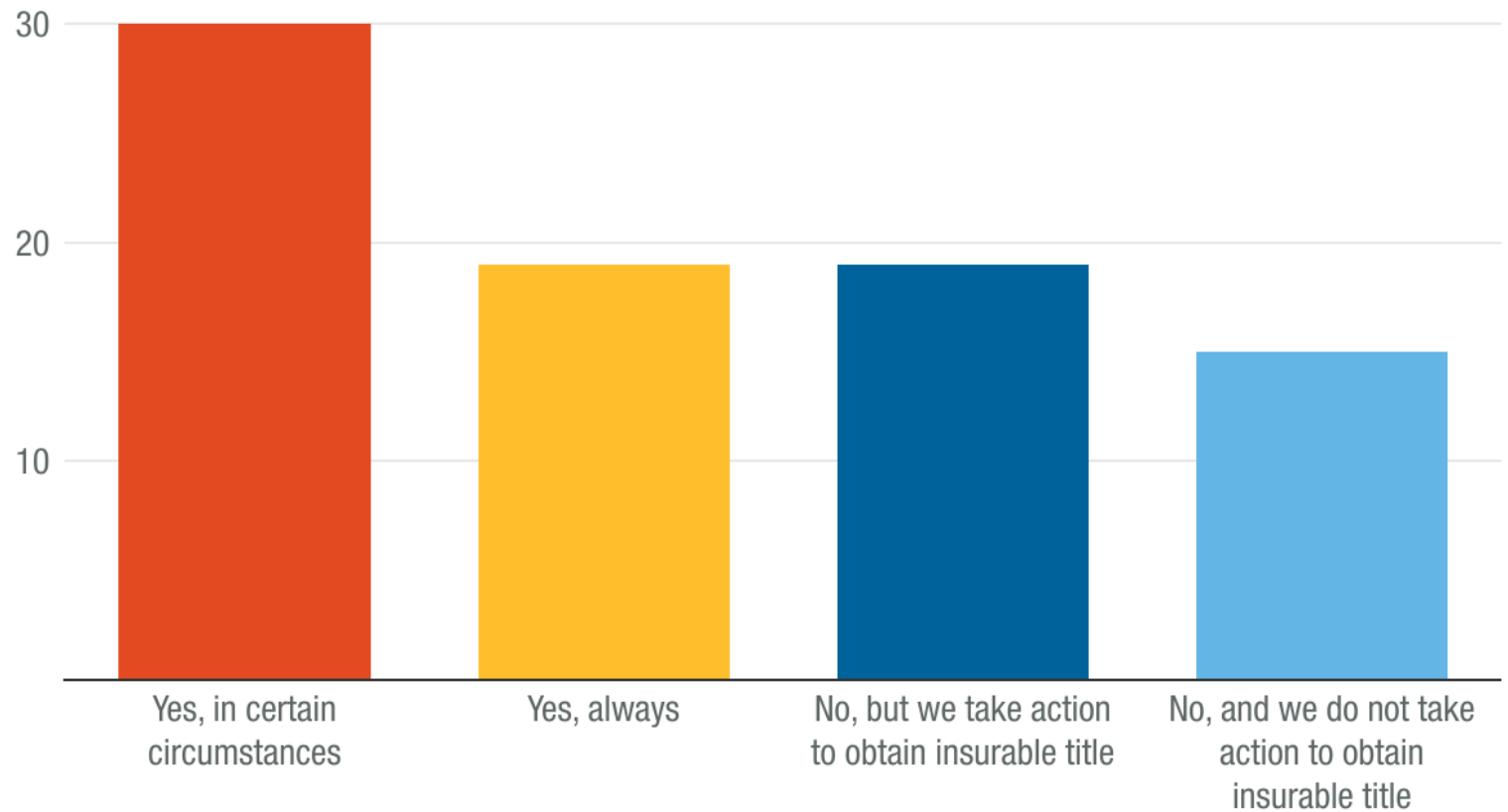


Title Insurance

Over half of respondents reported using private title companies to issue title insurance policies on properties obtained through the tax foreclosure process, at least in certain circumstances.

About a quarter of land banks take action to obtain insurable title if no title company is involved.

Do Private Companies Issue Title Insurance Policies on Properties Obtained Through the Tax Foreclosure Process?



N = 83

Chart: Center for Community Progress

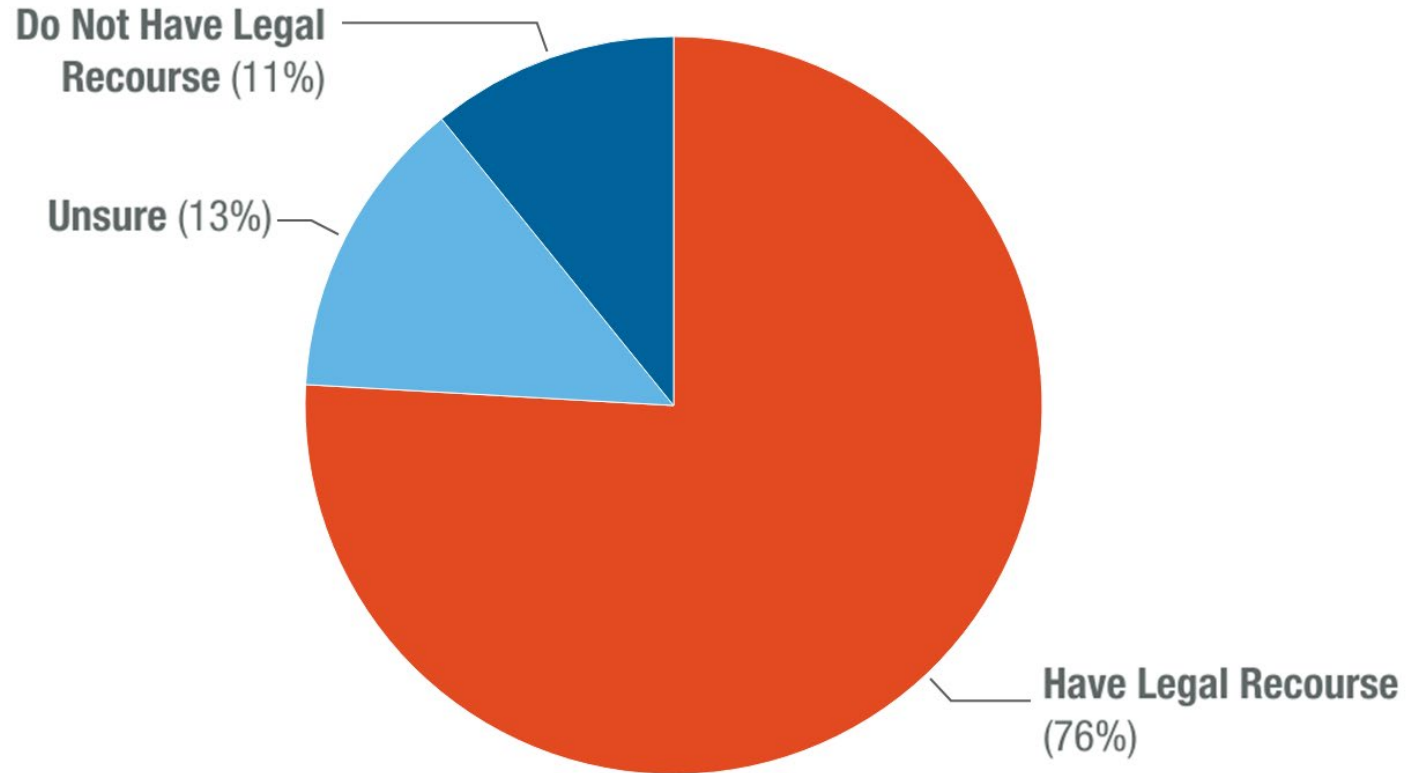
Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Post-Disposition Legal Recourse

Three-quarters of respondents **have legal recourse following disposition** to ensure that transferees are abiding by the terms of the sales agreement.

Most Land Banks Have Legal Recourse to Ensure Transferees Abide by the Terms of the Sales Agreement



N = 83

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Land Bank Activities

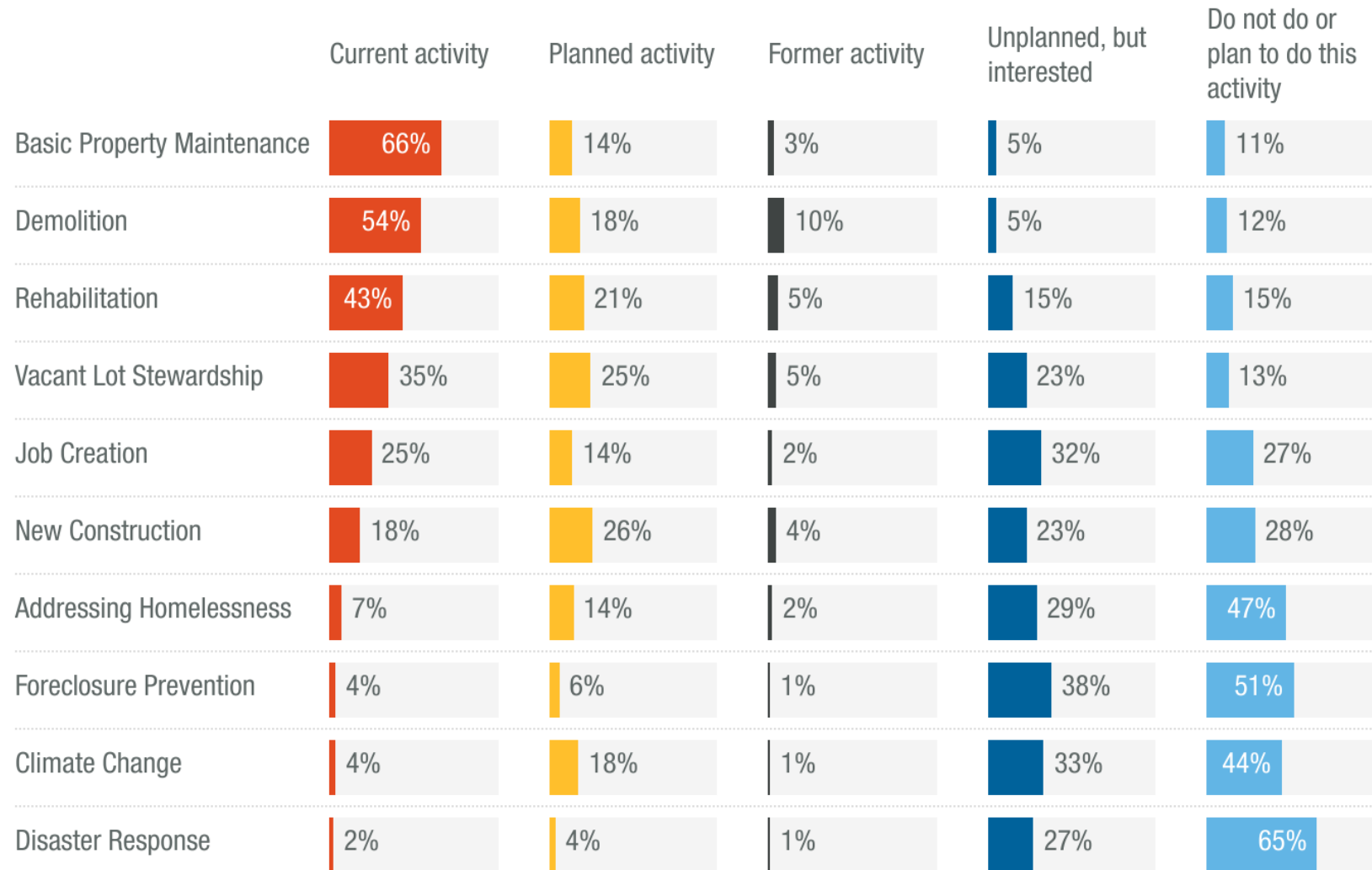
Since 2021 Survey

Top three activities in 2021:

1. Basic Property Maintenance
2. Vacant Land Stewardship
3. Demolition

Which of the following activities has your land bank engaged in?

Over half of respondents are currently engaged in basic property maintenance and demolition.



N = 92

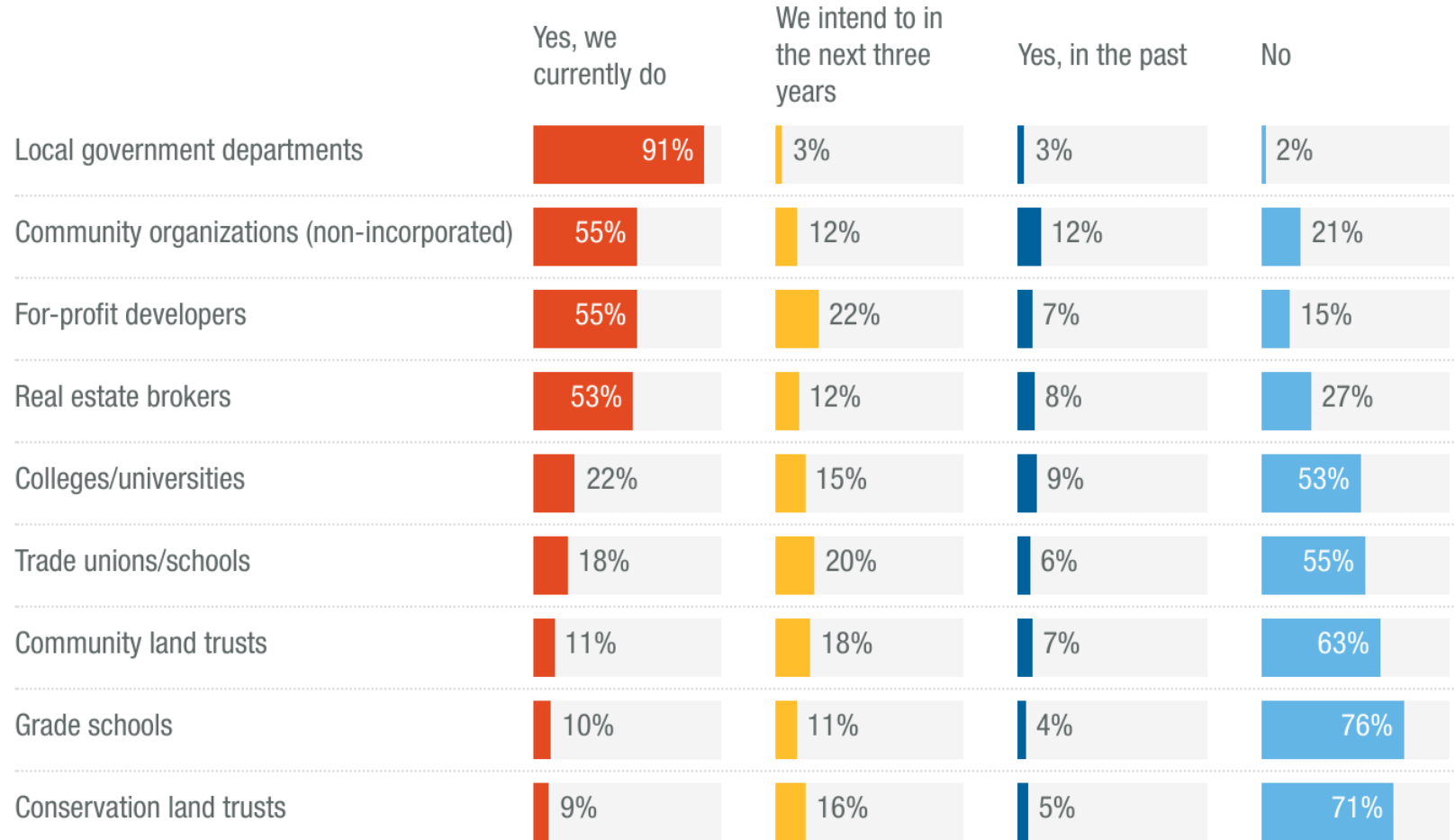
Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

Land Bank Partnerships

Which entities does your land bank partner with?

Local government departments are the most common partner for land banks.



N = 92

Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

Federal Funding

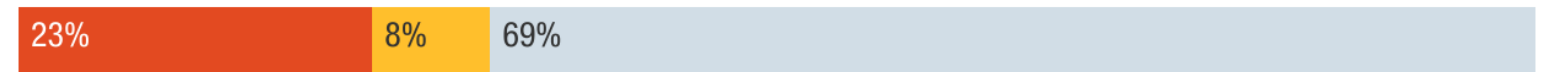
47% of respondents were directly funded by or involved in American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (ARPA SLFRF) projects

Top ARPA SLFRF Projects for Land Banks

47% of respondents were directly funded by or involved in ARPA SLFRF projects.

Directly Funded Involved Not Involved

Demolition



Structure Repair



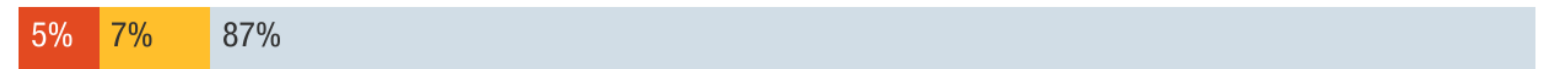
Structure Construction



Structure Maintenance



Vacant Lot Maintenance



Vacant Land Greening/Reuse



N = 95

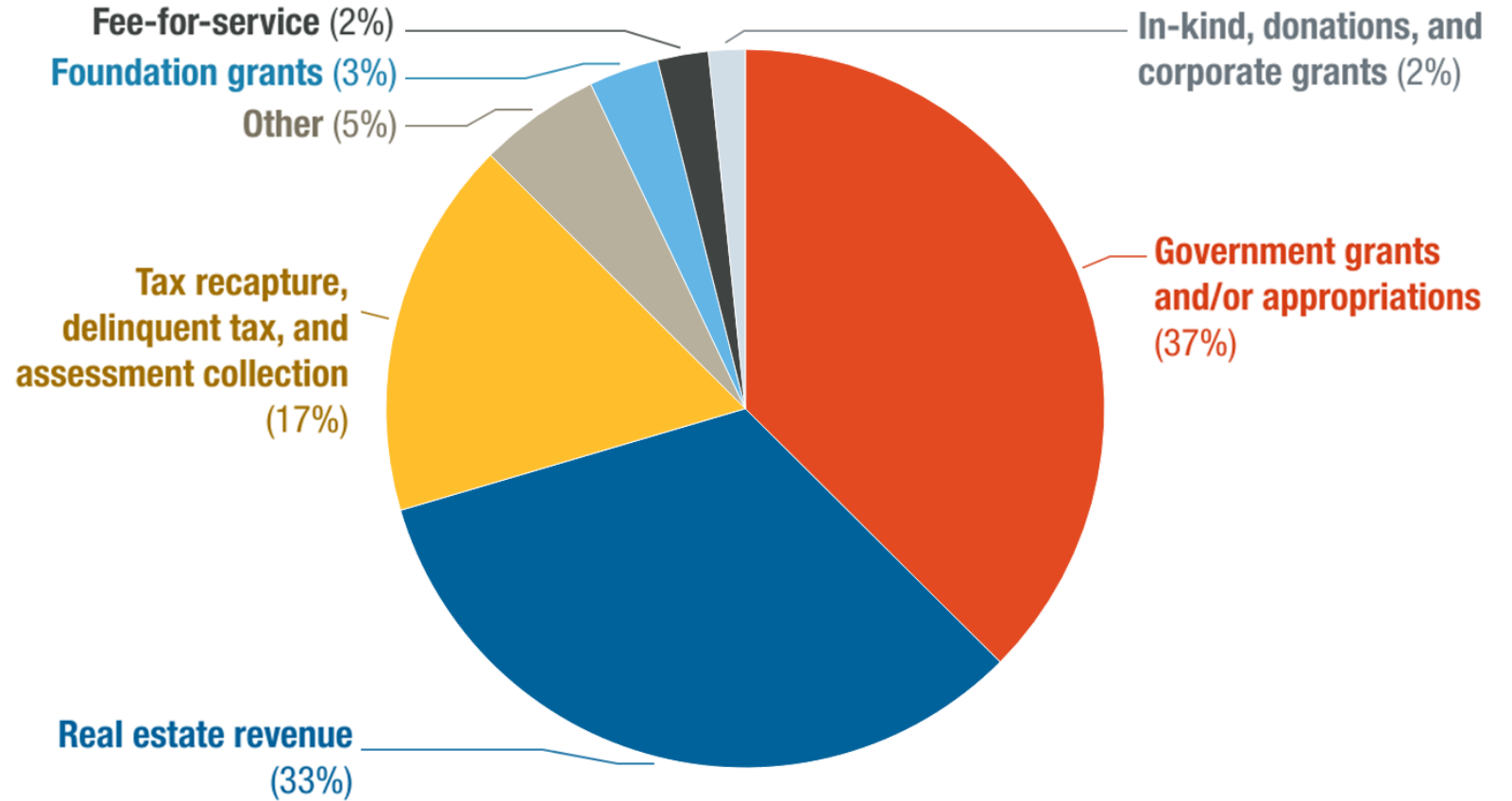
Chart: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress

Funding

Government grants and/or appropriations, real estate revenue, and recurring local funding (tax recapture, delinquent tax, and assessment collection) are the top funding sources for respondents.

Where Land Banks Get Their Funding



N = 87

Chart: Center for Community Progress • Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Funding

Current Funding Adequacy and Future Expectations

- Does current revenue adequately cover basic operations?
 - **Yes** (63%)
 - **No** (37%)
- Funding from local governmental partners expected to...
 - **Remain the same** (48%)
 - **Increase** (32%)
 - **Decrease** (13%)
 - **N/A** (8%)



Staff and Leadership

Land bank staff and leadership sizes vary significantly based on inventory and community needs.

Median number of full-time, part-time, and volunteer employees is **one**.

Median number of board members is **seven**.

Median Numbers of Land Bank Staff, Volunteers, and Leadership

| Staff Type | Median |
|---------------------|--------|
| Full-time employees | 1 |
| Part-time employees | 1 |
| Seasonal | 0 |
| Volunteer | 1 |
| Other | 0 |
| Board members | 7 |

N = 92

Table: Center for Community Progress

Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



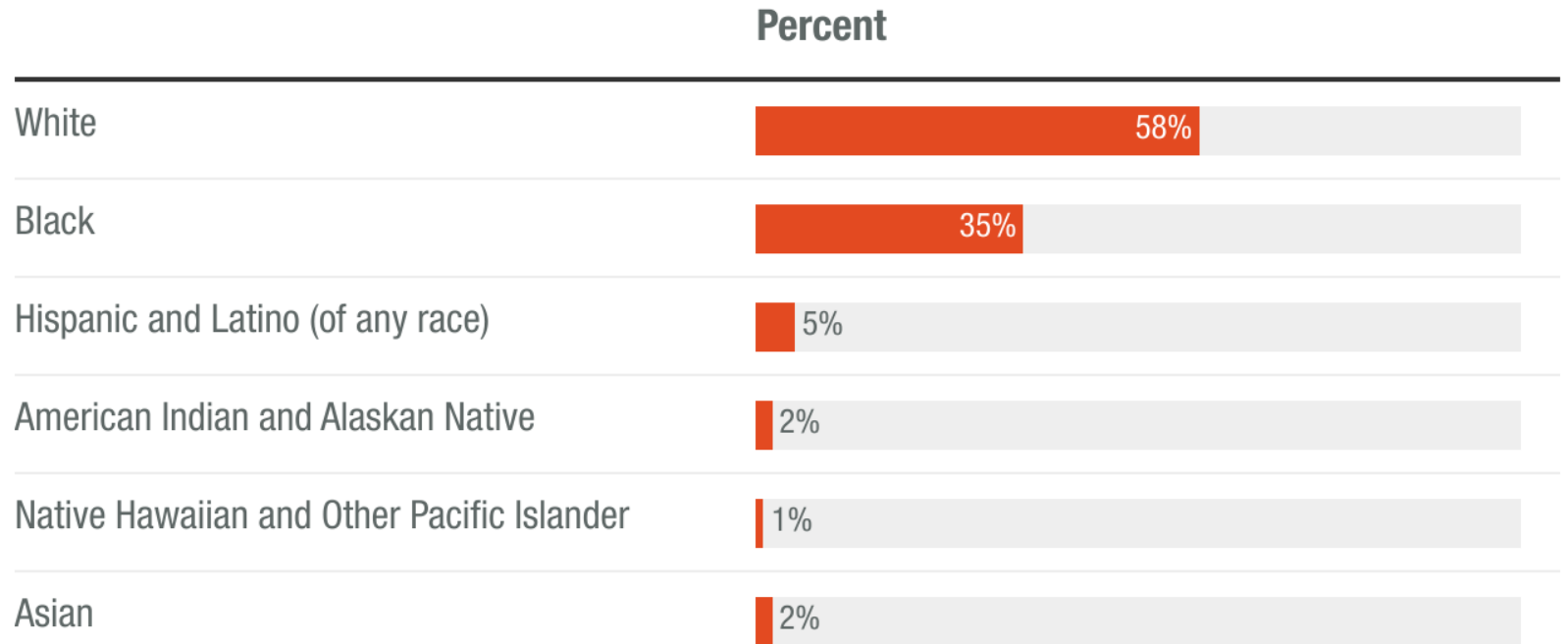
Staff and Leadership

58% of all respondents' staff are **white** and **35%** are **Black or African American**

Racial and ethnic composition of the staff and/or board reflect community served?

- 2023
 - **Yes** (66%)
 - No (34%)
- 2021
 - **Yes** (67%)
 - No (33%)

Racial and Ethnic Demographics of Full-Time, Part-Time, and Seasonal Land Bank Staff



N = 58

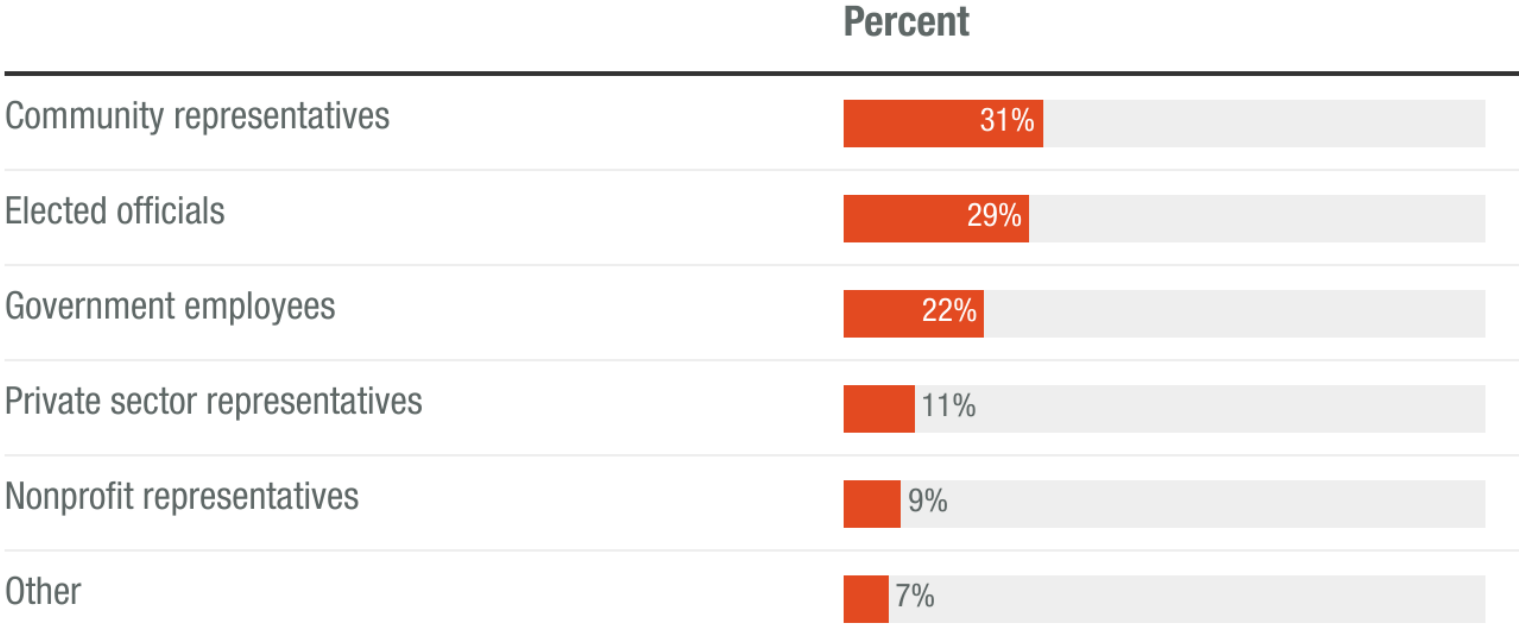
Table: Center for Community Progress
Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Staff and Leadership

31% of all land bank board members are **community representatives**.

Which stakeholders are represented on land bank boards?



N = 80

Table: Center for Community Progress
Source: 2023 State of Land Banking Survey, Center for Community Progress



Key Takeaways

- **Affordable housing** emerging as a top priority
- **Declining inventory** emerging as a top challenge, which will likely continue given hot housing markets
- Many more land banks are **facilitating rehabs** as one of their top activities
- Land banks need support with continued advocacy and education to political leaders for **more funding support**
- Land bank staff and boards need to continue **working towards racial equity and providing leadership opportunities** to people who look like the communities they represent represent their community





Flint (Headquarters)

111 E. Court St
Suite 2C-1
Flint, MI 48502

Washington, DC

1101 14th St NW
Suite 510
Washington, DC 20005

Atlanta

299 Joseph E. Lowery Blvd NW
Suite 203
Atlanta, GA 30314

Chicago

100 S. State St
Suite 405
Chicago, IL 60603

communityprogress.org