



2025 IMPACT REPORT

Celebrating **15 Years** of Transforming Vacant Spaces into Vibrant Places





LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear friends and partners,

In 2025, Community Progress marked an important milestone: 15 years of working across the country to transform vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties into assets for neighbors and neighborhoods.

When Dan Kildee and Frank S. Alexander launched this organization in 2010, vacancy challenges looked very different. Back then, cities were grappling with a flood of foreclosed homes underwater in value. Today, cities struggle to produce enough housing as home prices climb out of reach for the average American. Back then, cities had no choice but to demolish many properties too badly deteriorated to be saved. Today, they must decide what to do with all that vacant land where structures once stood.

Over the last 15 years, this work has grown into a national movement with increasing strength, sophistication, and impact. Throughout that evolution, Community Progress remained dedicated to our core values and driven by our belief that every person wants to live in a place where they feel safe, connected, and have opportunities to thrive.

In 2025, sticking to that belief required resilience. Federal funding remains uncertain, and the investments that support neighborhood stability still fall far short of what communities need. Even so, our team and partners stayed the course. Together, we advanced strategies for home repair, affordability, and supported the public servants dedicated to improving property conditions in their neighborhoods.

Our progress is possible through strong partnerships. We proudly work with coalitions, local governments, resident leaders, and national organizations who share our goals of closing racial wealth divides and expanding access to safe, affordable homes. Together, we're shaping national conversations on community and economic development.



As we look ahead—guided by our new, five-year strategic plan—we remain focused on building the policies, tools, and resources needed to transform properties into community assets. If the past 15 years have demonstrated anything, it is that the momentum is real. I am inspired each day by the determination I see in our partners—and in you. And I am proud of the ways our team shows up with integrity, curiosity, and care.

Thank you for being a part of this work. Together, we are building the conditions for resilience for decades to come.

Warmly,

Kathleen J. Guillaume-Delemer, President & CEO



LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Dear friends,

As Board Chair, I have the privilege of seeing Community Progress' work from a unique vantage point—close enough to see the daily dedication of our team, yet far enough to appreciate the cumulative impact of 15 years of committed work. This milestone year reminds us that transformational work requires patience and partnership. Issues like entrenched property vacancy, deterioration, and disinvestment don't have quick fixes. They demand sustained, relationship-based approaches, which is exactly what defines Community Progress.

Our strategic plan charts an ambitious course for the next five years, grounded in lessons learned and responsive to challenges ahead. It reflects our organization's maturity and the evolution of the field. What began as crisis response to foreclosures has become a sophisticated movement that recognizes addressing vacancy builds equitable communities.

I'm particularly encouraged by our deepening investments in the South, where vacancy intersects with persistent poverty and racial inequity. The work in Jackson, Arkansas,

and Atlanta demonstrates our commitment to supporting local leaders who know their neighborhoods best.

Importantly, none of this would be possible without our partners and supporters who share our long-term vision, the 130 land banks in our network who do this difficult work every day, resident leaders and local officials who are our partners in change, and Kat and her team who demonstrate excellence, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to our mission. The path ahead demands resilience. But as I look at what we've accomplished together, I am confident Community Progress is exactly where it needs to be to drive lasting change.

With gratitude,

Donald Phoenix, Chair of the Board of Directors



OUR 15TH YEAR, BY THE NUMBERS



125

communities benefited from
Community Progress' work



5,066

people joined Community Progress
events, webinars, and roundtables



375

attendees at the
National Land
Bank Network
Summit

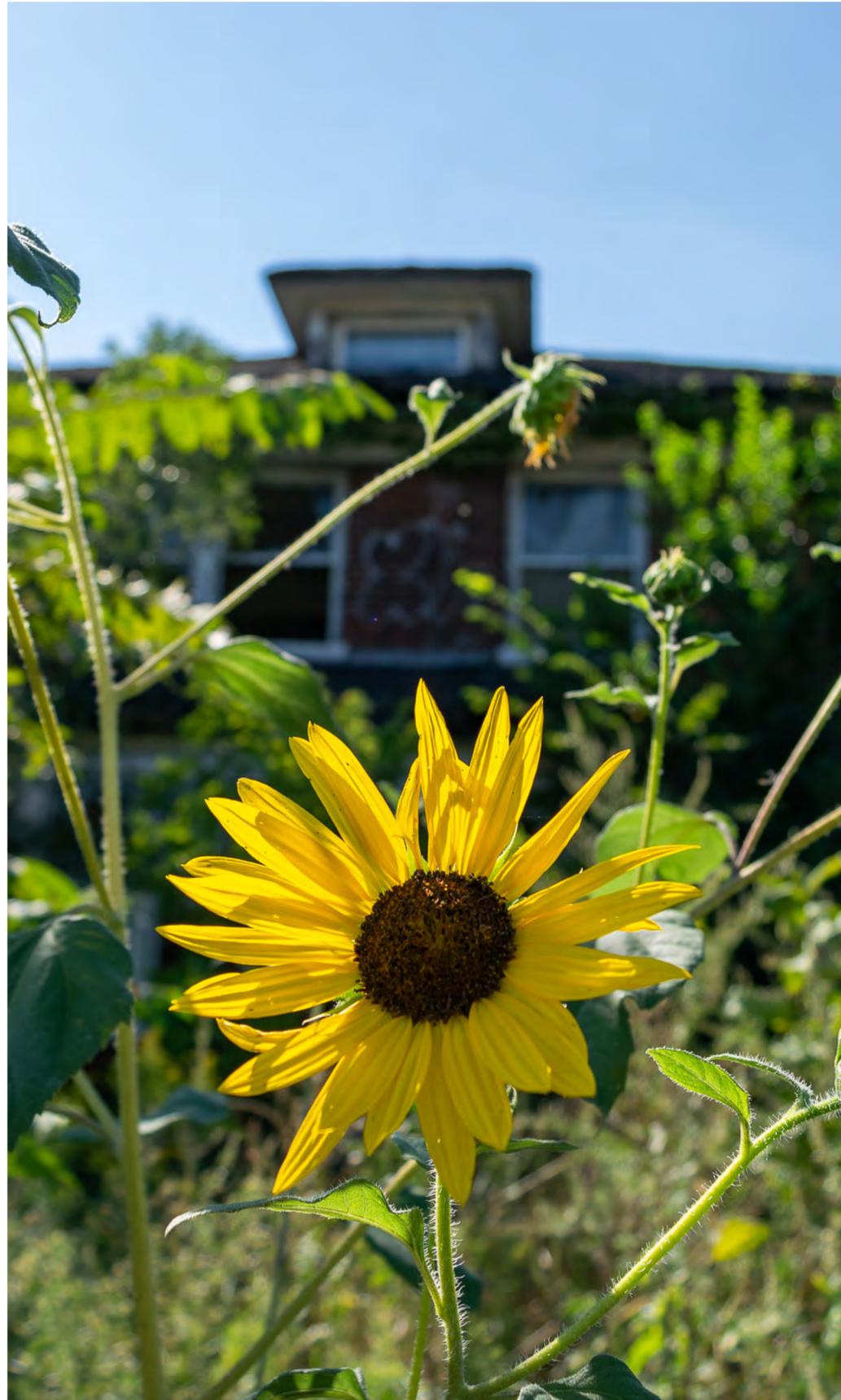
10

communities
advanced or
adopted policies as
a result of our work

6,697

hours of technical
assistance delivered to
communities





CHARTING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Our 2025-29 Strategic Plan

In 2025, Community Progress adopted a new five-year strategic plan to guide our work, setting a clear vision for how we approach transforming problem properties into community assets. As the only nonprofit dedicated solely to this work, we drive change by uncovering and disrupting the unjust systems that perpetuate entrenched vacancy and deterioration. Our work is guided by four core values:



We are motivated by **boundless curiosity**, always looking to learn and improve.



We **center people**, nurturing collaborative relationships and joyful experiences.



We are **dependable, a trusted resource** that does what we say we will, with excellence, and holds ourselves accountable.



We are driven by our **pursuit of justice**, seeking to name and remove barriers to community revitalization.

Over the next five years, we will focus on three key areas: **Increasing economic mobility, improving environmental resilience and community health, and serving deeply disinvested places in pursuit of justice.** Our five strategies to do this are:

1 Reducing VAD residential houses

2 Improving occupied but deteriorated residential houses

3 Reusing VAD commercial properties for community needs

4 Converting VAD properties to quality, affordable housing

5 Improving community resilience through VAD property reuse

The plan positions Community Progress to have a measurable, lasting impact on neighborhoods and the people who call them home.



OUR WORK IN 2025

Highlights from a Milestone Year



2024–25 Community Revitalization Fellows Lead Change Through Creative Placemaking

In 2024–25, Community Progress supported a group of resident leaders through the [Community Revitalization Fellowship \(CRF\)](#), strengthening their ability to advocate for vacant property solutions. Fellows from Lafayette, Louisiana; Memphis, Tennessee; and Rochester, New York participated in a series of hands-on learning exchanges, visiting each other's communities to see local revitalization strategies in action. These exchanges created space for peer learning, shared problem-solving, and stronger connections between communities facing similar challenges. Each community cohort also received a \$10,000 award to implement a creative placemaking project tailored to local needs. Through CRF, these resident leaders gained new skills to lead local efforts to activate shared spaces and create change in their communities.

Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference Returns to Pittsburgh

The [Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference \(RVP\)](#)—the nation's leading event on strategies to address vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties—will return to Pittsburgh in 2026. First launched in 2007, RVP has grown into an essential convening for local leaders, practitioners, and advocates working to strengthen neighborhoods and expand revitalization opportunities. As RVP comes back to where it began, attendees will explore local models for reactivating vacant spaces, connect with their peers, and share effective policies and practices. Pittsburgh offers inspiration and practical lessons for communities across the country. The 2026 conference will build on RVP's legacy while looking ahead to the future of the field, helping communities bring home strategies that support stronger, more just neighborhoods.



Elevating Federal Policy Solutions for Neighborhood Revitalization

In 2025, Community Progress deepened our role as a national policy leader by advancing several federal proposals focused on repairing homes, strengthening neighborhood markets, and ensuring communities have the tools to address vacant and deteriorated properties. With major new funding increases unlikely in the current political climate, we focused on shaping a policy landscape that keeps problem properties, home repair, and land banks core to federal housing conversations.

A key priority this year has been building support for home repair. Working toward a shared [national agenda to advance home repair](#), we convened partners across multiple sectors to explore a unified strategy that recognizes home repair, which consistently resonates across party lines. Home repair is essential for stabilizing neighborhoods, preventing properties from becoming so deteriorated they must be demolished.

We also strengthened the federal policy framework for land banks. For the first time, three separate congressional proposals adopted our formal definition of a land bank. This is an important step to ensure existing land banks are recognized and eligible for future resources. We continue advising congressional offices on bills that touch vacant and deteriorated properties, including the Revitalize Our Neighborhoods Act, the Neighborhood Revitalization Act, the Neighborhood Revitalization and Land Banks Act, the HOME Reform Act, the Strengthening Housing Supply Act, and the Whole Homes Repair Act.

Across this work, Community Progress serves as a trusted policy partner—providing guidance to national coalitions, advising lawmakers, and ensuring communities with the greatest need are not left behind. Our [federal policy tracker](#), launched this year, gives stakeholders a way to follow these efforts and see how policy solutions are taking shape.



Strengthening Local Code Enforcement

Last year we helped cities use code enforcement as a strategic tool to support [home repair](#) and stabilize neighborhoods. At the beginning of 2025, we launched our second round of [code enforcement scholarships](#) and received a record number of applicants from communities seeking support.

We selected three cities—Savannah, Georgia; Jackson, Mississippi; and Providence, Rhode Island—for customized, no-cost technical assistance. Their needs ranged from improving data systems and strengthening interdepartmental coordination to tackling code enforcement on vacant properties and supporting tenants in deteriorating housing.

Additionally, we partnered with the City of Cleveland to develop a [comprehensive training curriculum](#) for the Code Enforcement Division. Building on Cleveland’s national reputation for innovation, the curriculum outlines the core competencies inspectors need to secure compliance, support home repairs, and reduce unintended harm.

Community Progress adapted the curriculum into a [national resource](#) available to any code enforcement team looking to embed best practices that connect code enforcement with broader home repair and neighborhood stabilization efforts.

Leading Strategic Planning for Land Banks

Community Progress continues to be the nation’s leading partner for land banks. Over the past two years, we have provided technical assistance to over 20 land banks across the country to help them address unique challenges, strengthen operations, and respond to changing community needs and market conditions. This work reflects our unique position in the field: No other organization advises as many land banks nationwide.

Strategic planning is an essential part of how we support land banks that are ready to develop a comprehensive plan for their future. In 2025, we supported strategic planning for four land banks across the country:



In **Rochester, New York**, we helped the **Rochester Land Bank Corporation** navigate major legal and market shifts, including how they adapted following the Supreme Court’s *Tyler v. Hennepin County* decision, where Community Progress played a leading role in shaping the field’s understanding of the case’s implications.



In **Detroit, Michigan** we guided the **Detroit Land Bank Authority**—the largest land bank in the nation by size and inventory—through a year-long process to develop *Next Five*, a roadmap for its next chapter of growth and impact.



In **Omaha, Nebraska** we supported the Omaha Municipal Land Bank with a strategic framework as they celebrate their 10th anniversary and consider what comes next amid evolving inventory and community priorities.



And in **Chesapeake, Virginia**, we developed a strategic plan for the **Chesapeake Land Bank Authority** to help build on its strong foundation to better serve community residents affected by vacancy and abandonment.



MORE LOCAL IMPACT



South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority (Illinois)

We helped the land bank hone its **strategic development priorities**, leading to a focus on increasing the supply of quality affordable housing.

Finger Lakes Regional Land Bank (New York)

Following our analysis of how land banks can help address **homelessness in rural Upstate New York**, we worked with the Fingers Lake Regional Land Bank to pilot a partnership with a local homeless services provider. This opened up new funding streams to convert multiple vacant properties into permanent supportive housing.

Salem, New Jersey

We **advised local leaders** on creating a new land bank in 2025, helped attract philanthropic seed funding, and continue to provide implementation support

South Bend, Indiana

After our **strategic guidance**, City, County, and regional partners secured a multi-million dollar state grant to implement a regional land bank and expand neighborhood stabilization programs.





SUPPORTING SOUTHERN COMMUNITIES

Community Progress is deepening our work in southern states, where vacancy, disinvestment, and poverty remain high but receive far less national attention than similar challenges in older industrial cities of the North.

While parts of the South are experiencing unprecedented growth, much of the region—including most of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, the historic Black Belt, and cities like Jackson and Birmingham—is losing population and economic activity. VAD properties are increasingly concentrated in small towns and rural areas where vacancy is closely tied to persistent poverty and racial inequity. These conditions are urgent, highlighting need and opportunity, and we are committed to creating practical solutions tailored to the unique challenges of southern and rural communities. Community Progress is investing in people, partnerships, and strategies to ensure communities in the South can thrive.

Expanding Support for Heirs' Property

Community Progress received a generous award in 2025 from the Wells Fargo Foundation to launch the Clearing Title, Catalyzing Neighborhoods initiative to address the complex challenges of [heirs' property](#)—a pernicious problem in Southern communities. When a



property owner dies without a will, multiple family members or “heirs” often inherit the land, [creating tangled title](#). This makes the property difficult to maintain, transfer, or redevelop. Over time, unresolved heirs’ properties can fall into disrepair and contribute to neighborhood instability.

Through this initiative, Community Progress awarded funding to 16 nonprofit organizations and higher education institutions working to address heirs’ property challenges. The awarded organizations will focus on educating policymakers about the impact of heirs’ property, as well as directly support families experiencing heirs’ property issues.

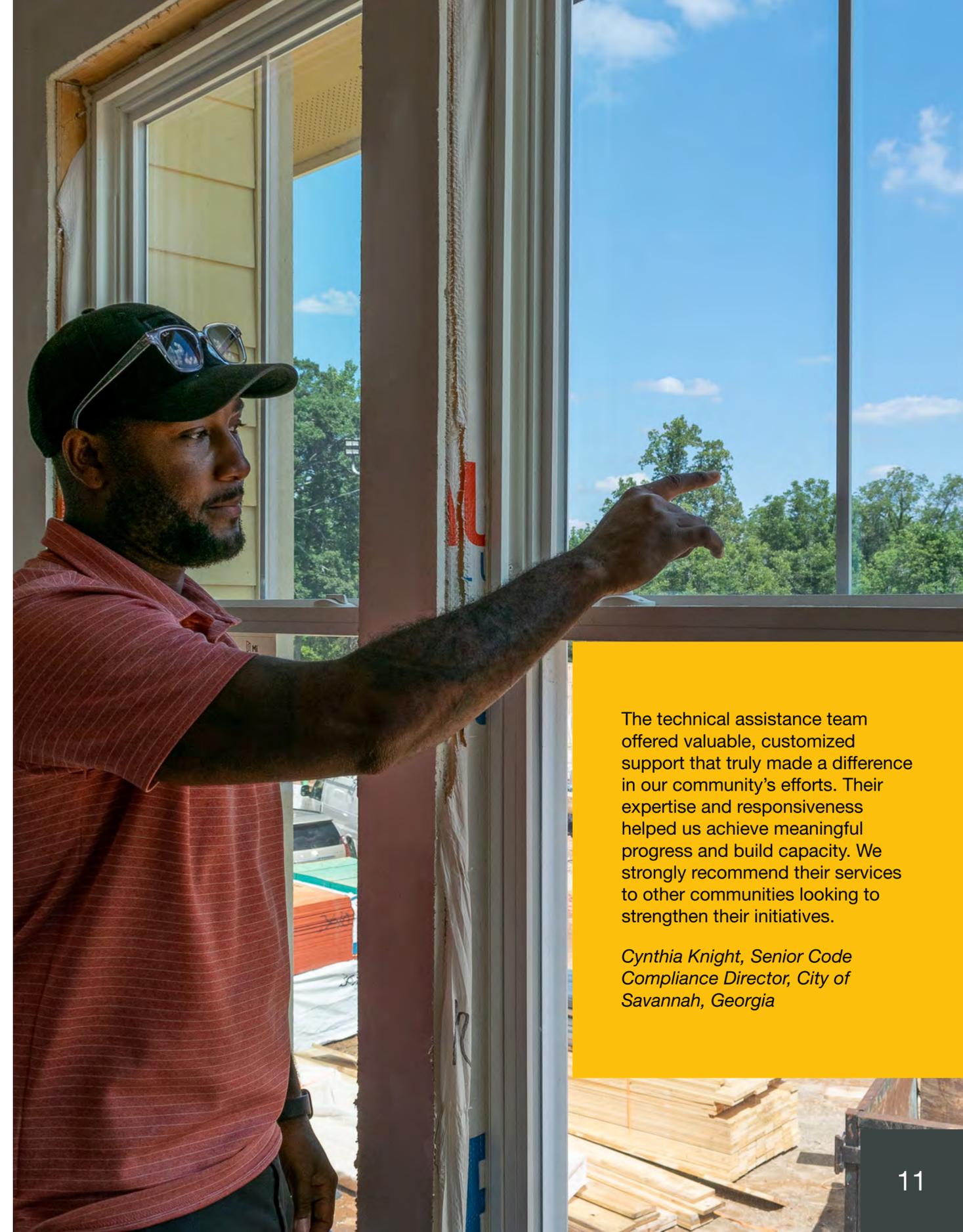
By pursuing efforts to strengthen relationships between heirs’-focused nonprofits and local government, this initiative will create a stronger pipeline of resources and support for VAD properties impacted by tangled title challenges.

Raising the Roof Cohort Bolsters Underserved Developers and Neighborhoods

With support from the JPMorganChase Foundation, Community Progress completed the Raising the Roof initiative to help mission-driven developers in the Atlanta region. This initiative supported the revitalization of metro Atlanta neighborhoods by helping Atlanta-based developers better understand how to access land and financing to produce more green, affordable infill housing in communities impacted by vacancy and disinvestment. The initiative focused on the needs of developers who serve historically underinvested communities, taking into consideration the unique challenges faced by low-income communities and communities of color, and built a cohort who could leverage their partnerships to advance their shared mission.

The initiative brought together developers for formal convenings, optional site tours, meetings with local land banks, and informal peer gatherings. Participants learned about land bank portfolios, neighborhood revitalization strategies, and equitable development practices while building a network of peers and allies to collaborate with long term. Partner institutions—including the Atlanta Neighborhood Development Initiative, Historic District Development Corporation, The Guild, and SK Collaborative—provided training and mentorship.

Community Progress captured the cohort’s findings and lessons learned in a final report, providing a roadmap for future developers and communities seeking equitable, green neighborhood revitalization.



The technical assistance team offered valuable, customized support that truly made a difference in our community’s efforts. Their expertise and responsiveness helped us achieve meaningful progress and build capacity. We strongly recommend their services to other communities looking to strengthen their initiatives.

Cynthia Knight, Senior Code Compliance Director, City of Savannah, Georgia



Setting the Stage for Systems-Change in Jackson through Patience, Partnerships, and Purpose

You cannot address vacant properties without knowing where they're located, who owns them, and what condition they're in. Addressing these [data gaps](#) helps communities prioritize properties for revitalization and target resources where they're needed most. When the City of Jackson, Mississippi received a Community Progress code enforcement scholarship, their data gap was the most pressing challenge. Recognizing this foundational need, Community Progress partnered with the City and a local community development corporation (CDC) in West Jackson—founded and run by two former Community Revitalization Fellows—to pursue a competitive grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Urban Institute. We are now supporting the CDC and volunteers to complete a parcel conditions survey of all the properties in West Jackson, one of the City's most disinvested neighborhoods. This groundwork is essential: without reliable data, Jackson cannot effectively prioritize interventions or allocate its limited resources where they're needed most. In 2026, Community Progress plans to expand the survey to South Jackson and use the findings to help the City develop targeted strategies that can ultimately drive the systemic reforms necessary for long-term neighborhood stabilization.

Highlights from Arkansas

Building on 18 months of work through the Delta Rising Program, Community Progress continues to deepen engagement across Arkansas with support from the Walton Family Foundation. We are connecting a statewide network of local leaders in community revitalization while also working more intensively with Pine Bluff leaders to assess the efficacy of code enforcement legal tools to unlock vacant lots for quality, affordable homeownership opportunities. Through this combination of deep, local engagement and statewide network-building efforts, we aim to identify potential state policy reforms that could be championed in the coming years to help Pine Bluff and all other Arkansas communities more effectively tackle vacant properties, address local housing needs, and strengthen neighborhoods.



The Center for Community Progress provided invaluable technical assistance that helped Jackson strengthen its approach to revitalization and code enforcement. Their expertise and collaborative guidance gave us practical tools to address long-standing challenges, while building capacity across departments. Other communities would greatly benefit from this support, as it empowers local leaders to make sustainable, community-driven progress.

*Von Anderson, Interim Director
Planning and Development, City of
Jackson, Mississippi*



Reviving Historic Black Commercial Corridors

Many commercial corridors named for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., especially in the South, were once vibrant centers of Black entrepreneurship. Today, many of them are overwhelmed with vacant storefronts and deteriorating buildings, the result of decades of disinvestment and a lack of new businesses moving in. In contrast, downtowns have benefited from focused national efforts to drive economic resurgence. While historically segregated Southern cities saw these districts flourish as hubs of white commerce, Black businesses were largely confined to their own neighborhoods. Today, the racial composition of these historic corridors may have shifted, but the investment disparity remains.

To better understand how to transform these corridors into thriving economic and community assets, Community Progress worked with local leaders and organizations through the [Sparkling Commercial Corridors Initiative](#). With support from the Truist Charitable Fund, we convened stakeholders from multiple communities online and at a learning exchange in Montgomery, Alabama to share strategies focused on equitable development, creative placemaking, and commercial property reuse.

If given the opportunity and tools for revitalize, these historic corridors hold economic potential comparable to downtowns.



INSPIRING LAND BANK LEADERS

In September 2025, nearly 400 land bank leaders gathered in Detroit for the [National Land Bank Network \(NLBN\) Summit](#). Through mobile tours and expert-led sessions, the summit highlighted the important role land banks play in returning vacant properties to productive use, doing the best they can to serve their communities with limited resources.

We also celebrated emerging leaders and announced the biennial [NLBN awards recipients](#), honoring innovation and leadership in the field. These awards symbolize both the legacy of land banking and the future of the movement, offering a source of inspiration for the next generation of professionals.

Through NLBN, Community Progress helps land bank leaders build lasting relationships with one another. To date, 130 land banks are part of our network.



Photos (clockwise from top left):

Brian Larkin delivers opening remarks.

Cook County Land Bank Authority (Illinois) accepts the first-ever 2025 Land Bank Project of the Year award for Home Sweet Homan.

Christina Kelly, Director of Community Impact for the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (Michigan), accepts the 2025 Dan Kildee Legacy Award—presented by Dan Kildee himself—for her two decades of contributions to the field.

Antonio Adan, Executive Director of the Marquette County Land Bank Authority (Michigan), accepts the 2025 Emerging Leader Award.



Tracking Land Bank Needs and Impact

Land banks evolve constantly to meet community needs. Capturing the state of the field is crucial to understanding the diverse roles, needs, and positive impact of these organizations. In 2025, Community Progress conducted the biennial [State of Land Banking Survey](#) and published the findings on our new interactive dashboard. The survey highlights how land banks—flexible, locally adaptable entities—act as catalysts for revitalization in a time when more communities are turning to land banks for solutions. Community Progress will continue tracking these trends to showcase how land banks transform neighborhoods and strengthen communities across the country.





THANK YOU

The Center for Community Progress relies on the generous support of a diverse revenue base. The following list reflects all funding received and total active agreements between January 1 and December 31, 2025. We are especially thankful for our long-term partnerships with visionary individuals, organizations, and institutions whose gifts span multiple years. Community Progress is grateful for your continued support of our mission to foster strong, equitable communities and end systemic vacancy and abandonment.

\$1,000,000+

- JPMorgan Chase Atlanta*
- Freedom Together Foundation*
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*
- Wells Fargo Housing Foundation*

\$500,000-999,999

- JPMorgan Chase*
- Melville Charitable Trust*
- The Kresge Foundation*
- Prudential Foundation*

\$100,000-499,999

- Chicago Community Trust*
- Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta*
- General Motors
- Missouri Foundation for Health*
- Truist Charitable Fund
- US Environmental Protection Agency*
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation*
- Walton Family Foundation*

\$25,000-99,999

- LISC Atlanta
- Rocket Community Fund

GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Chesapeake Land Bank Authority
- City of Hopkinsville, Kentucky
- City of San Antonio, Texas
- Community Development Advocates of Detroit
- Illinois Housing Development Authority
- Incremental Development Alliance
- Kalamazoo County Land Bank Authority
- Louisville-Jefferson County, Kentucky
- Neighborhood Partnership Housing Services, Inc.
- New York Land Bank Association
- Omaha Municipal Land Bank
- Oregon Metro Regional Government
- Results4America
- Rochester Land Bank Corporation
- Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania
- SmithGroup
- South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority
- University of Michigan, School of Public Health
- Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority and Land Bank

NLBN SUMMIT PARTNERS

Neighborhood Champion

- DAWGS Vacant Property Security
- Tolemi

Grassroots Partner

- AKT Peerless Environmental Services
- Bricker Graydon LLP
- C&S Companies
- Capital Access, Inc.
- Champion Homes
- Enterprise
- Erie Environmental
- Genesee County Land Bank Authority
- GTJ Field Services
- KSU Technical Assistance to Brownfields
- ThirdSpace Action Lab
- Title Check LLC
- University of Michigan, School of Public Health

Friends & Exhibitors

- Bowers CPAs and Advisors
- Detroit Future City
- Michigan Land Bank Association
- The Neighborhood Foundation
- Onity
- University of Michigan, Taubman College

* Asterisks indicate multi-year gifts

