REGIONAL LAND BANKING STUDY UPDATE

Date: July 9, 2026
Department: Planning, Development & Research
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Length: 45 min.

ISSUE STATEMENT

Land banking is the practice of purchasing property—often vacant, underused or otherwise difficult to develop sites— for future sale or development. It is an important tool to help reduce barriers to building affordable housing and developing a more livable, walkable and equitable region. Metro Council directed staff to study options for a regional land banking program through the Regional Housing Coordination Strategy. This regional land banking study is being funded in part through the Housing Production Accelerator Fund created by Council.

This work session will update Council on the key issues a new regional land banking program must address, summarize the feedback staff have heard from housing partners and jurisdictions across the region, and seek Council guidance on the key criteria to be considered in drafting a future recommendation.

ACTION REQUESTED

Staff requests Council's feedback on the draft evaluation criteria and the themes emerging from partner engagement conducted to date.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

- Developing a framework for a regional land bank, including governance, legal authorities, operational roles and partnership structures.
- Defining policy priorities, including considerations related to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, market conditions and funding opportunities.
- Identifying legislative changes to Oregon's current land banking statute that would support long-term land banking program's success.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

As the team engages with partners across the region several policy questions have emerged, highlights include:

- ***Governance***: How would a regionally coordinated land banking program address roles for partner jurisdictions, balancing a desire for local control and nimbleness?
- ***Financing***: How would a land bank's structure create a range of revenue options for operations and program activities and attract diverse funding partners? Should

legislative changes be pursued to enable new revenue sources available in other states, such as property tax recapture?

- ***Inventory management***: How would the land bank's policies anticipate its role in holding land, as well as the need to conduct due diligence and mitigate liability?
- ***Acquisition***: Which powers to acquire property, such as a mechanism for direct government transfers, public lien enforcement and short-term holding programs, should be included? Would state legislative changes be required?
- ***Disposition***: What policies should guide the transfer of land to development partners, including affordability requirements, community benefits, and long-term stewardship objectives?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

The team is in the process of developing options for Council consideration, however in this phase of the study the following approaches are the bookends of discussion and analysis:

- A Metro-led regionally coordinated land banking program, operated as an extension of current programs that acquire land for housing; or
- An independent regional land banking entity governed by a board of directors and operating separately from Metro.
- A permutation of the above approaches that has independence from Metro with support from Metro staff.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Land banking was one of 16 strategies identified by partners and included in the Regional Housing Coordination Strategy adopted by Council in December 2025. The RHCS is required by the State and is intended to accelerate and advance the production of housing. This land banking study is being funded in part through the Housing Production Accelerator Fund and is coordinated with work underway in the Housing Department to address the siting of affordable housing in areas that provide a high level of opportunity for residents.

A new regional land banking program would build upon Metro's existing work through both the Transit Oriented Development Program and the Site Acquisition Program that was funded by the 2018 regional affordable housing bond. So far, the team has heard general support for a regional land banking program, especially from affordable housing developers and smaller jurisdictions that struggle to manage complex real estate projects with existing staff. Partners have raised questions regarding governance, potential impacts of land banking on property tax revenues, and sustainable funding for the program's operations. However, there is broad recognition that the region could benefit from a coordinated program that can identify investment priorities, streamline decision making across jurisdictions to act quickly when opportunities arise, and hold and prepare land until funding is available.

BACKGROUND
Council approved the project work plan in February. Since then, the team has brought national land banking experts on board, convened two large Working Group meetings, and met individually with several interested jurisdictions and other potential partners. The project's Working Group will meet three more times to provide feedback. Staff will use Council feedback and Working Group input to develop and evaluate program models, with a recommendation for Council consideration this fall.

ATTACHMENTS
Attached are meeting summaries from the first two Regional Land Banking Working Group meetings, as well as a list of participating organizations.

- Is legislation required for Council action? ¨ Yes x No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? ¨ Yes x No
- What other materials are you presenting today? N/A