



**MEDIA RELEASE – October 4, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HOUSTON LAND BANK AND COMMUNITY LAND TRUST PARTNERSHIP CITED
AS NATIONAL EXAMPLE FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES IN PARTNERING
TO TURN VACANT, ABANDONED AND DAMAGED PROPERTIES
INTO AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR HOUSTONIANS**

A successful and still-developing partnership between the [Houston Land Bank](#) (HLB) and [Houston Community Land Trust](#) (HCLT) was highlighted as a national model in Atlanta in early October. HLB Vice President Sam Dike and HCLT Executive Director Ashley Allen joined representatives from Atlanta’s land bank and community land trust on a panel discussing how the two types of organizations can work together to foster stronger neighborhoods and communities.

The panel, called “Land Bank-CLT Partnerships: Creating a Pipeline of Properties for Affordable Housing,” was presented as part of the [Center for Community Progress’ 2019 “Reclaiming Vacant Properties” conference](#), held October 2-4 in Atlanta. It was highlighted as an opportunity to learn how land banks and related systems in Houston and Atlanta have successfully unlocked properties that are trapped in decline and coordinated with local community land trusts on reuse strategies that support lasting affordable housing, disaster resiliency and other community needs.

Also at the conference, Houston was announced as one of three cities – along with Atlanta and Portland, Oregon – selected to receive technical assistance and support for strategic planning and community engagement as part of a [new “National Catalytic Land Initiative for Lasting Affordability.”](#) The three-year project, rolled out by the Center for Community Progress and housing advocacy group [Grounded Solutions Network](#), is to focus on benefitting populations of color at significant risk of involuntary displacement by defining a real estate pipeline for equitable development.

The presentation made by Dike and Allen outlined the ways in which HLB, HCLT and the City of Houston are aligning efforts and resources to create new affordable homes for Houstonians. In Houston, HLB supports the City’s efforts through development and sale of affordable new homes to qualified buyers, and HCLT can hold the underlying property to reduce ongoing property tax burdens that could threaten long-term ownership. In the last six months, HLB and HCLT have collaborated to help five Houston families buy their own homes, and as many as five more are expected by year’s end. Both organizations work closely with the City’s New Home Development Program to provide incentives and assistance to qualifying homebuyers.

“We’re very proud of the relationship that’s developing between HLB and HCLT,” Dike said. “Even more, we’re proud of how that relationship is transforming not just properties, but lives and neighborhoods. It’s great to have the opportunity to share our experience with



other communities from around the country, and draw lessons from their work, too, and we're excited about the potential to increase our effectiveness with the assistance we're to receive from Grounded Solutions and the CCP."

"Our board and staff have worked incredibly hard over the past year to make the Houston Land Bank an essential partner, along with the Houston Community Land Trust, for the City's efforts to create more affordable homes and reduce the amount of vacant, abandoned or damaged properties in Houston neighborhoods," HLB Board Chair Nick Hall added. "It's exciting to see our work recognized on a national stage, and we appreciate the opportunity to showcase our progress while learning from others around the country about their challenges and successes."

About the Houston Land Bank

Houston Land Bank strategically acquires and returns vacant, abandoned and damaged properties to productive uses across Houston, with an emphasis on Complete Communities identified by the City of Houston. HLB is, a local government corporation created by the City to promote redevelopment of vacant, damaged, and/or tax-delinquent residential real estate in targeted Houston neighborhoods. In the past year, HLB has realigned its strategic activities to better serve neighborhood revitalization activity in Houston and changed its name to reflect its core function. The Board of Directors continues to include representatives from the City, Harris County, and the Houston Independent School District. For more information, visit www.houstonlandbank.org.

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