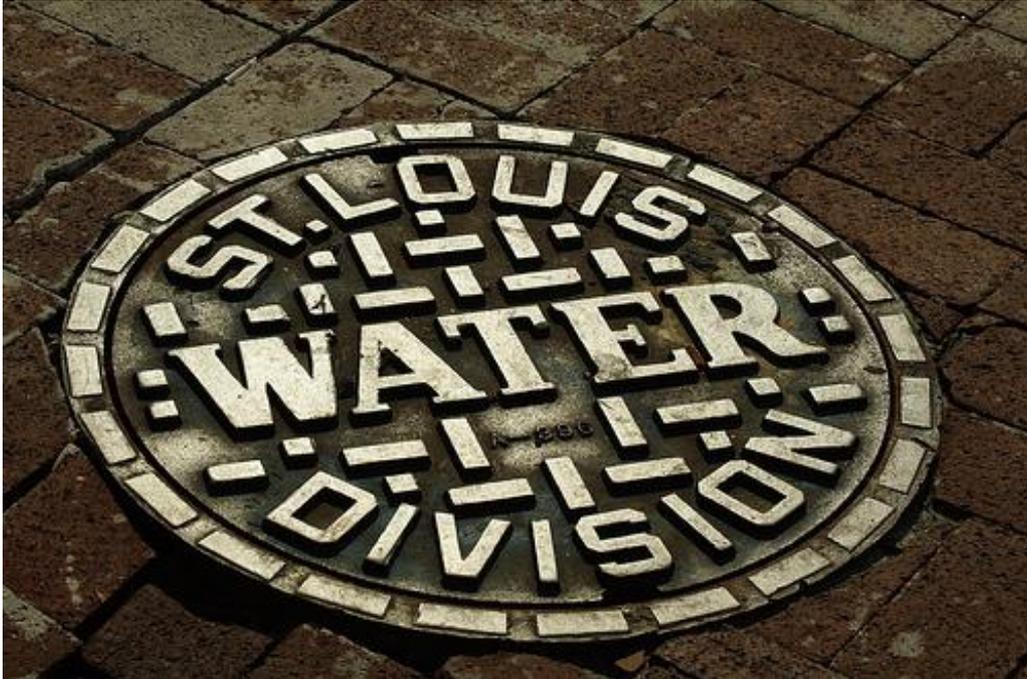




Since 2005, Jackson County Land Trust Has Sold More Than 1,700 Properties

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By: Audrey Spalding

During a hearing of [Senate Bill 795](#), a bill to create a land bank in Kansas City, the sponsor, Missouri Sen. Victor Callahan (D-Dist. 11), told the committee that the Jackson County Land Trust (the entity that currently deals with vacant property in Kansas City) had sold very few properties. Kansas City officials prepared information and distributed it to the committee at the meeting; the information showed that the Land Trust had sold just 97 properties in 2011, 41 properties in 2010, and 31 properties in 2009. These numbers are wrong.

Since 2005, the Land Trust has sold more than 1,700 properties for more than \$1.5 million. Due to a data error, Callahan and other legislators were presented with incorrect information that made the Land Trust appear to have sold very few properties in recent years.

The correct sales data, which the Land Trust itself provided, is listed below. You can also [download a spreadsheet of all addresses sold \(and purchase prices\) here](#) :

2011: 200 properties were sold

2010: 137 properties were sold

2009: 154 properties were sold

2008: 181 properties were sold.

A big part of the narrative that is being used to advocate for the land bank legislation in Jefferson City is that the existing Land Trust is not selling enough property.

The truth is that the Land Trust sales rate in recent years is as good as, if not better than, the sales rate of any land bank I have researched — including the longest-standing land banking experiment in the United States, the 40-year-old Saint Louis land bank.

Indeed, the very land bank that proponents hold up as the gold standard of land banking (the Genesee County Land Bank in Michigan) [continues to amass property](#) . Where, exactly, is the story of success that land bank proponents hope to replicate in Kansas City?

I will admit it: I just do not understand why legislators are in a rush to create a land bank in Kansas City. Why pass legislation that would create an entity similar to what has a [long-term track record of failure in Saint Louis](#) ? Why create a land bank that could incur unlimited debt with the power to say "no" to people who want to buy vacant, city property? And, why cast aside the Land Trust, which cannot discriminate when selling property and has a reasonable sales record?

About the Author



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[2] http://www.senate.mo.gov/12info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=2022610

[3] <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/327095-copy-of-5-years-of-land-trust-properties-8-10-11-2.html>

[4] <http://www.thelandbank.org/downloads/LBANewsletter-Annual-Report-Winter-2012.pdf>

[5] <https://showmeinstitute.org/2012/03/legislators-are-ignoring-40-years-of-failure.html>

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