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**COOK COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY ANNOUNCES MICHAEL DAVIDSON AND  
JENNIFER PARKS TO JOIN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**CHICAGO** — The Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA) today announced the appointment of Michael Davidson and Jennifer Parks to its Board of Directors. As leaders in Chicago’s nonprofit and civic sectors, Davidson and Parks will play a key role in strengthening the Land Bank’s mission to equip local developers, community groups, small business owners, municipalities and potential homeowners with the tools to transform vacant and neglected properties and revitalize neighborhoods across Cook County.

“Michael and Jennifer bring decades of leadership and on-the-ground expertise that will help us accelerate the Land Bank’s work, strengthening neighborhoods and expanding opportunity across Cook County,” **said Bridget Gainer, Chairwoman of the Cook County Land Bank Authority Board of Directors and Cook County Board Commissioner for the 10th District.**

Michael Davidson, the President and CEO of Openlands, brings over 25 years of experience in community wealth-building and environmental stewardship.

“Restoring vacant properties means rebuilding opportunity and wealth in disinvested neighborhoods,” **said Michael Davidson, President & CEO of [Openlands](#) and new CCLBA Board Member.** “It also strengthens the region as a whole. When we reinvest in existing communities through thoughtful infill development, we reduce pressure to develop farmland and natural areas at the metropolitan edge. I look forward to advancing strategies that connect capital to local leadership and support community investment across Cook County.”

Jennifer Parks has more than 25 years of experience with Habitat for Humanity and has led Habitat for Humanity Chicago since 2011. As the Executive Director, she has transformed the organization into one focused on community and neighborhood needs.

“When residents are empowered to lead, communities grow stronger from within,” **said Jennifer Parks, Executive Director of [Habitat for Humanity Chicago](#) and new CCLBA Board Member.** “I am excited to support the Land Bank’s work to revitalize neighborhoods and expand pathways to homeownership.”

Davidson and Parks joined the board on October 23, 2025, succeeding Michelle Carr and Diane Limas, respectively. Each begins a three-year term.

“The Land Bank’s impact depends on strong partners who understand both the challenges and potential within our neighborhoods,” **said Jessica Caffrey, Executive Director of the Cook County Land Bank Authority.** “Michael and Jennifer have spent their careers expanding access to housing and economic mobility, and we’re thrilled to welcome them to the Board.”

During Davidson’s 12 years at The Chicago Community Trust, he led a \$100 million strategy to strengthen Chicago’s built and natural environments in partnership with historically disinvested Black and Latinx neighborhoods. Davidson played a key role in shaping the Trust’s focus on community-led progress, launching initiatives such as Elevated Chicago and the Pre-Development Fund, and expanding access to capital for developers. His proven commitment to inclusive growth and sustainable neighborhood revitalization reflects the Land Bank’s mission to transform vacant properties across Cook County into community assets.

Parks’ leadership is defined by a strengthening of local housing markets, an expansion of homeownership opportunities, and the launch and growth of programs that empower residents to lead change from within their communities. Her expertise in local capacity-building and resident-driven development will advance the Land Bank’s efforts toward equitable neighborhood renewal.

Davidson and Parks join the following existing CCLBA Board of Directors:

- **Chairwoman Bridget Gainer**, Cook County Board Commissioner (10th District)
- **Joy Aruguete**, Chief Executive Officer, Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation
- **Ciere Boatright**, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago
- **Kelly Burke**, Mayor, Village of Evergreen Park, Illinois
- **Sheila Chalmers-Currin**, Village President, Village of Matteson, Illinois
- **Danita Childers**, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Cook County
- **Xochitl Flores**, Bureau Chief of Economic Development for Cook County
- **Peter M. Friedman**, Partner, Elrod Friedman LLP
- **Michael Kaplan**, Vice President, Related Midwest
- **O. Victoria Lakes-Battle**, Executive Director, IFF Chicago Region
- **Dr. William S. McClinton**, Ed.D. MBA, South Suburban Representative.
- **Tracey B. Royal**, Chicago Association of Realtors
- **Tony Smith**, Senior Vice President, PNC Bank
- **Cheryl Thomas**, President and CEO, Ardmore Associates LLC
- **Katrina Thompson**, Mayor, Village of Broadview, Illinois

### **About the Cook County Land Bank Authority**

The Cook County Land Bank Authority, an independent agency of Cook County, was founded by the Cook County Board of Commissioners in 2013 to address residents and communities hit hard by the mortgage crisis. CCLBA gives local developers, community groups and potential homeowners the tools to transform their own communities from within. The Land Bank acquires

properties that have sat tax-delinquent, abandoned and vacant for years and sells them at below-market rates to qualified community-based developers, who then rehab the properties. This approach not only keeps revenue and jobs in the community, but it also helps local developers grow their businesses. Learn more about the Cook County Land Bank Authority at <http://www.cookcountylandbank.org> or email [info@cookcountylandbank.org](mailto:info@cookcountylandbank.org).

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