

OH/LEX: ohio land exchange

COLLABORATIVE SITE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

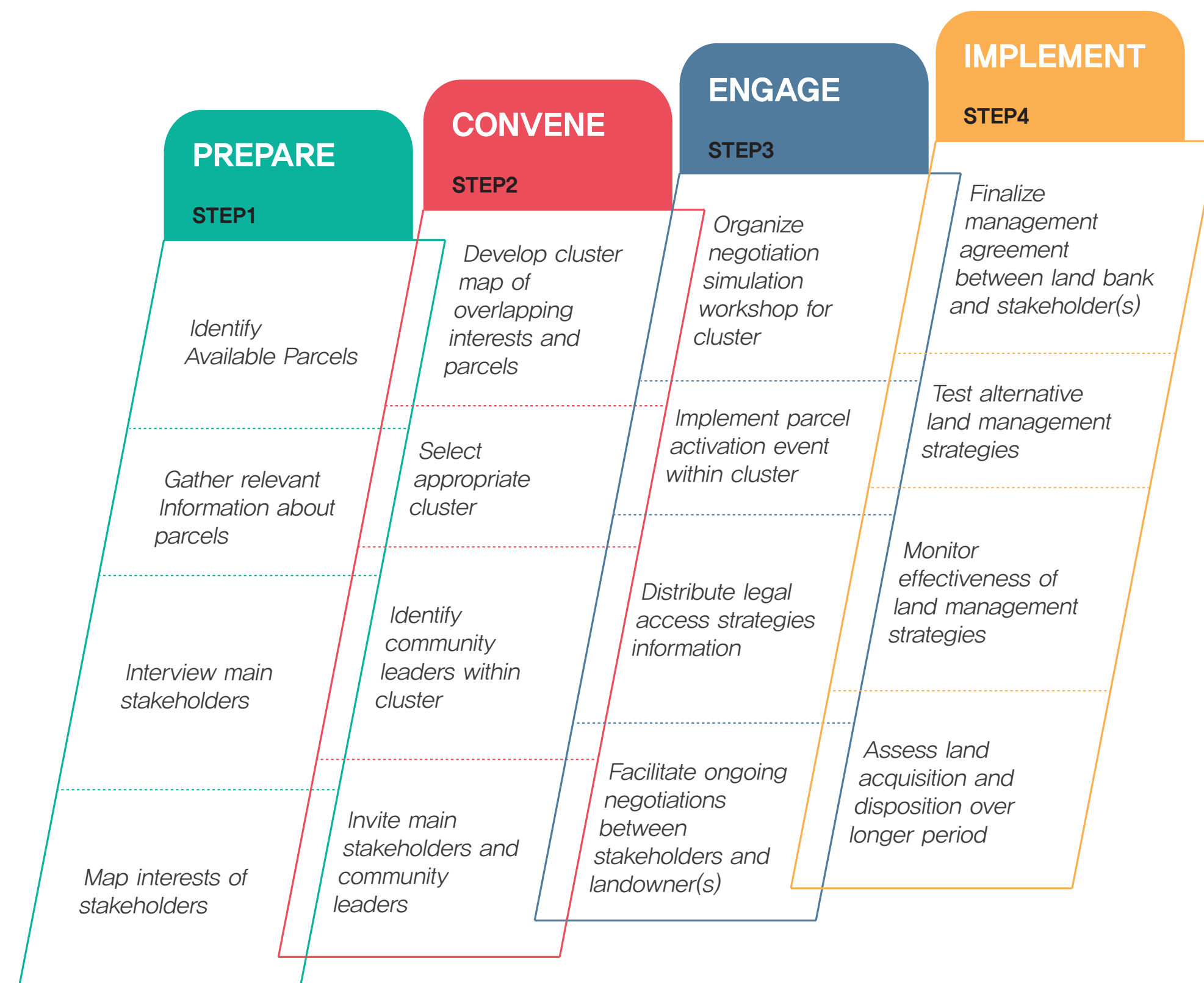
OH/LEX
OHIO LAND EXCHANGE

Shifts focus from single to multi-parcel planning strategies

Highlights the range of options that can be used to secure access or use of vacant parcels

Transforms perceptions of vacancy from persistent problem to urban resource

The Ohio Land Exchange (OH/LEX) is a collaborative process designed to engage a broad range of stakeholders in planning and implementing reuse strategies for vacant and abandoned land.



Currently, many responsible agencies and officials at the local and county levels in Ohio rely on a narrow set of civic engagement practices regarding vacancy and land abandonment. OH/LEX provides a model to gather relevant information on both available land, its current and potential socio-ecological values and potential stakeholder interests. The OH/LEX process then uses that information to facilitate creative interactions between organizations and community groups to produce practical reuse strategies for clusters of vacant parcels.

In Ohio, more than 20 cities with a population over 20,000 have seen significant declines in population, land use and economic activity over the last 30 years, making them "shrinking" or "legacy" cities (Greater Ohio Policy Center, 2016). In 2008, an analysis of 8 cities in Ohio, including Cleveland, Zanesville and Lima, found that there were over 25,000 vacant and abandoned properties in those cities alone, many of which are contaminated (Community Research Partners and ReBuild Ohio, 2008). This same report estimated the direct annual cost of city services related to these properties at \$15 million per year, with a cumulative cost of \$49 million when value decline and resulting foregone tax revenue are included.

In 2010, in response to this formidable fiscal, social and environmental challenge, Ohio's legislature made the formation of county land reutilization corporations (land banks) possible within Ohio's forty-four most populous counties. As of 2016, forty county land banks have formed. Many are still in their infancy. These land banks, as well as any preexisting ones at the city or county level, and the communities they serve, can benefit from the OH/LEX process. There is significant opportunity to positively impact the practices and procedures these novel institutions use to acquire, plan for and dispose of vacant parcels within their jurisdictions in ways that will encourage a broadening of the stakeholders engaged in the process. More collaborative and engaging planning and decision-making procedures have potential to directly influence thousands of parcels throughout Ohio and the people and organizations that live, work and recreate on and around those lots.



lima, ohio: pilot project

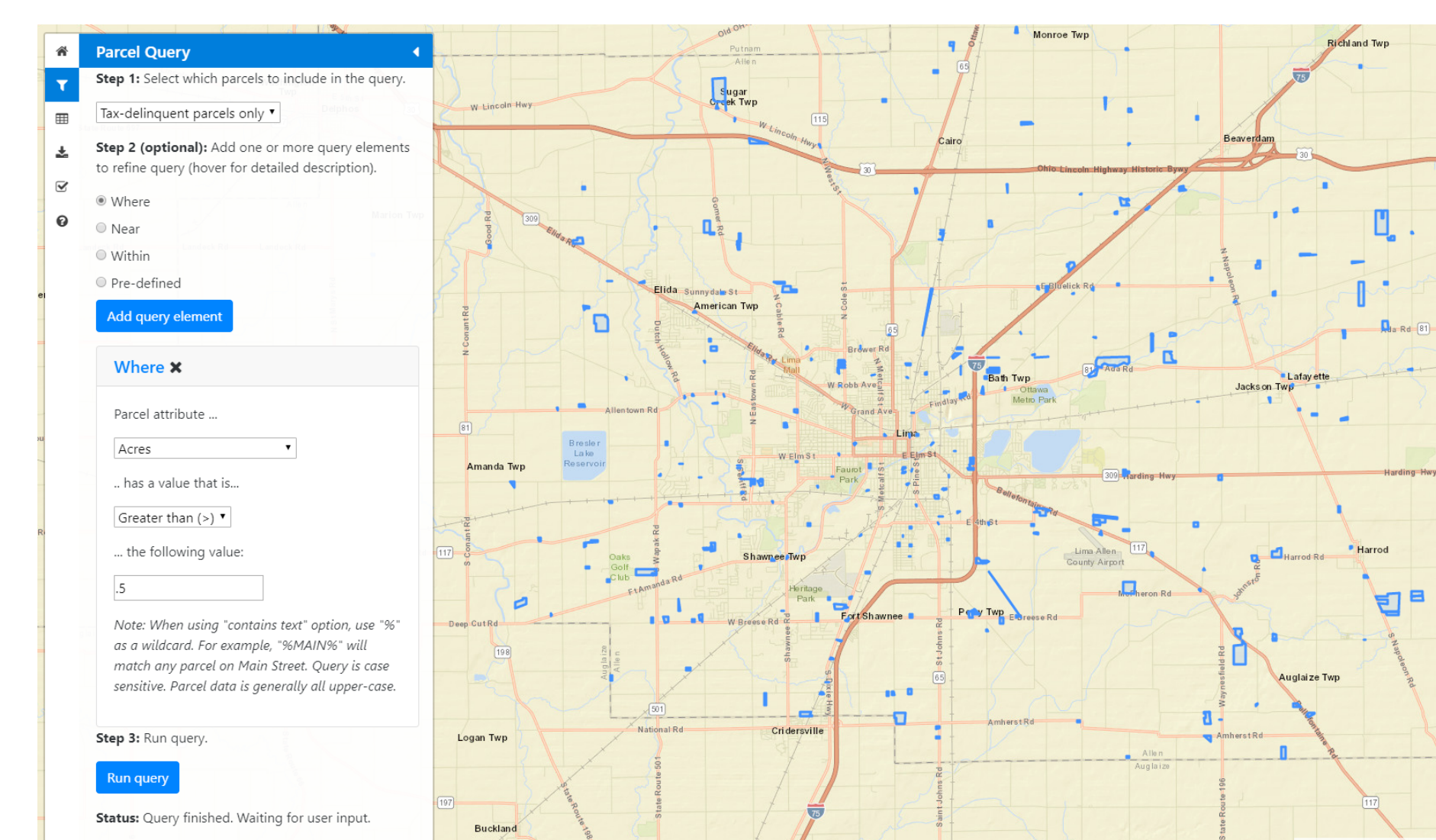
In 2015, faculty in OSU's Knowlton School commenced a partnership with the Mayor and the Department of Community Development in Lima. The goal of this project was to enhance the capacity of the city and its stakeholders to make informed decisions about vacant land reuse, which is why the participation of the mayor and the Department of Community Development were of central importance. In addition, the City of Lima gained access to a range of planning and mapping tools, as well as the modeling work, in its ongoing efforts to manage vacant parcels. Given the presence of the OSU campus in Lima, this project also created an avenue for different parts of the university to work together and be a good neighbor to its host communities. The collaboration, which is ongoing, has become a test-bed for the development of various elements of the OH/LEX process. OSU Lima students have been actively involved in the assessment of vacant and abandoned parcels in Lima, engaging stakeholders through interactive meetings, the construction of temporary structures to visualize the potential of specific revitalization strategies and a range of supportive research and development tasks.



abandoned structure



students mapping tax delinquent parcel



active mapping



stakeholders and students testing negotiation simulation

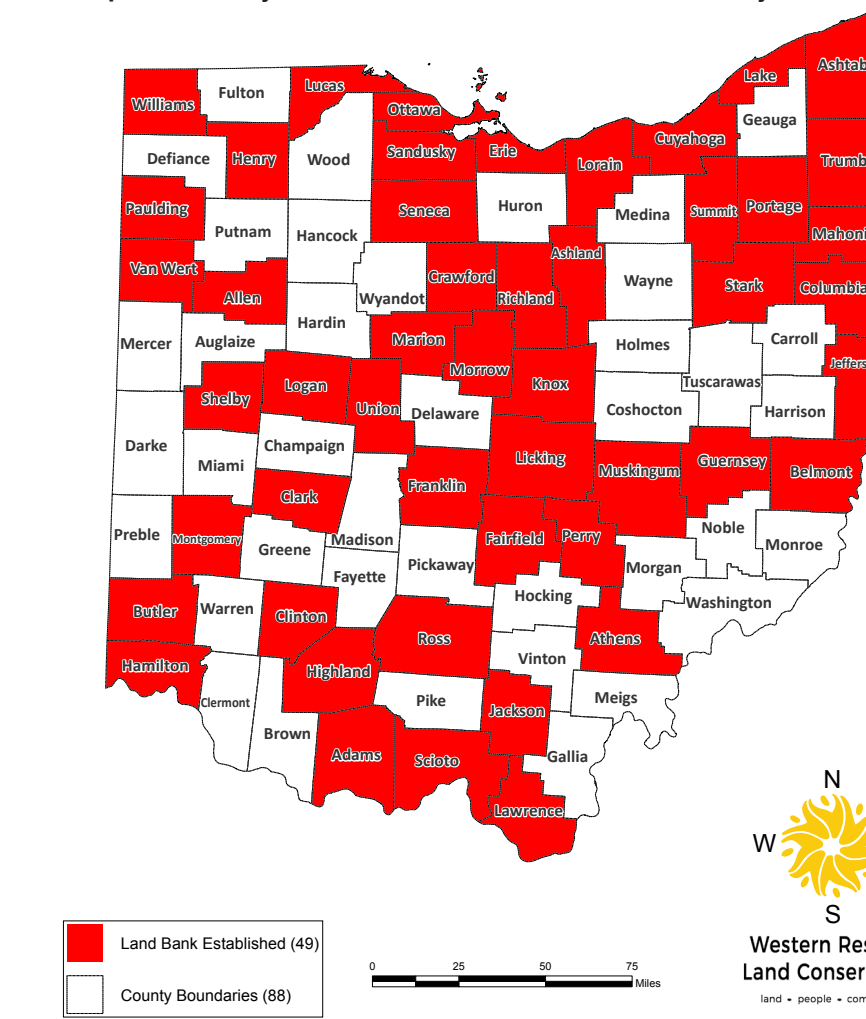
project expansion

The central goal of this proposal is to develop, in collaboration with OSU Extension, the platform for the expansion of the OH/LEX process to counties across Ohio, using the experiences of the project team in Lima, Allen County as the central guiding point. Achieving this goal requires the development of a service-delivery structure that includes:

- 1) a standard collaborative agreement between OSU Extension and a city/county land bank including a cost estimate to participating counties and/communities
- 2) the development and delivery of a training program to transfer the necessary skills to interested Extension staff so they can implement the OH/LEX process
- 3) an online tool to store and make accessible data on vacant lots and potential stakeholders to be used during the OH/LEX process.

Ohio County Land Banks

map created by Western Reserve Land Conservancy



Soil Feasibility Testing

Contamination	Nutrients	Drainage
Compaction	pH	Debris
		Organic Matter
Texture Class	Plant Cover	
Adequate or easily remediated		
Moderately difficult to remediate		
Difficult to remediate		



OSU Extension staff and land bank personnel practicing land use negotiation

Are communities in your county facing persistent population decline?
Is vacancy and abandonment a problem in your area?

Are you interested in bringing together key stakeholders to revitalize land?

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Partners:

Office of Outreach and Engagement
Extension
Knowlton School
Lima Campus
Center for Urban and Regional Analysis

School of Environment and Natural Resources
City of Lima
Allen County
Downing Community Advisors