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HLB Fund Receives $75,000 Grant to Prepare Vacant Lots for Affordable, Storm-Resilient Homes in Greater Houston

Through a grant from the CenterPoint Energy Foundation, working families earning 51 to 120 percent of Area Median Income will have more opportunities to own quality, energy-efficient homes through the Finding Home Initiative

HOUSTON (November 17, 2026): HLB Fund, the nonprofit philanthropic and programmatic arm of Houston Land Bank (HLB), announced that it has been awarded a $75,000 grant from the CenterPoint Energy Foundation to prepare high-need vacant lots for new affordable homes. The grant supports Year Two of the Finding Home Initiative and addresses the remaining barrier between those lots and construction: site readiness.

“At Houston Land Bank, our focus is on returning vacant land to productive use so Houston families can own homes that last,” said Christa D. Stoneham, Chief Executive Officer and President of Houston Land Bank. “Our plans are ready and our builders are ready. Site preparation is what moves the land. The CenterPoint Energy Foundation’s third investment in Finding Home helps carry our remaining high-need lots to construction, so more working families can own quality, energy-efficient homes built to stand up to Houston’s storms.”

HLB launched Finding Home in 2024 to turn vacant, underused, and environmentally challenged lots into quality, energy-efficient homes for working families across Greater Houston, with a goal of 100 homes. Residents shaped the initiative from the start through design charrettes, workshops, and HLB’s resident-led Neighborhood Advisory Committee. Its catalog of at least seven pre-permitted home designs, developed with Auburn University Rural Studio and Collaborative Designworks to meet FORTIFIED home standards, is complete, and the first homes are in development. FORTIFIED homes are designed to stand up to severe weather and lower long-term utility and insurance costs for the families who own them.

Most lots in the Finding Home pipeline are ready for construction. The remaining high-need lots sit in floodplains, carry environmental concerns, or need major clearing and drainage improvements. CenterPoint Energy Foundation funds will cover tree removal, site clearing and debris removal, preliminary grading, and environmental assessment and testing on these lots in underserved neighborhoods within CenterPoint Energy’s Greater Houston service territory. Local small builders, including minority-owned and women-owned firms, will build the homes, and homebuyers will receive education on energy efficiency and home maintenance through HUD-approved counseling partners.

The grant is the Foundation's third investment in Finding Home. The CenterPoint Energy Foundation awarded $30,000 in 2023 for the initiative's community engagement phase and $50,000 in 2025 to begin site preparation on the highest-need lots.

As the only public land bank in Texas, HLB acquires hard-to-develop land, clears the legal and physical barriers that hold it back, and moves it to builders and partners who create affordable homes and lasting community assets. HLB expanded its service area into unincorporated Harris County in 2025 and has facilitated more than 385 affordable homes since 2018. In 2026, HLB broke ground on the first FORTIFIED Gold home in Texas.

The CenterPoint Energy Foundation strives to be a catalyst in the communities it serves by leveraging everyday opportunities and resources to improve stakeholders' lives today and build a strong foundation for tomorrow. Grants are awarded to eligible nonprofit organizations with programs that support community vitality and education in CenterPoint Energy's footprint.

Finding Home is also supported by Fannie Mae, Auburn University Rural Studio, and the Houston Community Land Trust. HLB has invested more than $1.2 million of its own funds in lot maintenance and site preparation over the last three fiscal years.

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About Houston Land Bank and HLB Fund

Houston Land Bank (HLB) is a local government corporation created by the City of Houston and operating under Chapter 379H of the Texas Local Government Code. HLB strategically acquires, disposes, and stewards vacant, abandoned, and damaged properties, returning them to productive use and catalyzing community and economic development for Houston. HLB Fund is the 501(c)(3) philanthropic and programmatic arm of Houston Land Bank, and more information is available at houstonlandbank.org.