A Tale of Two Recoveries

How Deutsche Bank, Ocwen Financial, and Altisource Failed to Maintain Its Bank-Owned Homes in African American neighborhoods in metropolitan Toledo, Ohio
Overview: Maintenance Investigation of Bank-Owned Homes

- This Power Point reflects the investigation by The Fair Housing Center from 2012-2017. These investigations are part of a larger, nationwide investigation involving the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) and 19 fair housing center partners.

- Banks claim to preserve and maintain their foreclosures to the same standard of maintenance in the neighborhood. NFHA and partners took photos of the bank-owned homes and neighboring homes to put into context how Deutsche Bank, Ocwen, and Altisource failed to maintain these bank-owned homes in African American and Latino neighborhoods across the country.

- These investigations are about routine maintenance on the outside of the bank-owned homes. Banks are paid to mow lawns, remove trash/debris, and secure doors and windows to thwart vandalism and squatters.

- Boarded doors and windows, overgrown grass, invasive plants, and trash and debris on the property detract from the home’s curb appeal to owner-occupant buyers.
Methodology for Investigation

- For every bank-owned home, there were 39 maintenance or marketing factors evaluated on a checklist.

- The investigator simply marked “yes” or “no” as to whether the deficiency was present on the home.
  - For example, 1 broken window would count as 1 deficiency; likewise, 3 broken windows would count as 1 deficiency.

- Photos were taken of the bank-owned home and neighbors on both sides and across the street.
Methodology for Investigation

Curb Appeal
- Trash, Leaves, Overgrown Grass, Overgrown Shrubs, Invasive Plants, Dead Grass

Structure
- Broken Windows, Broken Doors, Damaged Fences, Damaged Roof, Holes, Wood Rot

Signage
- Trespassing/warning signs, “Bank owned”, “Auction”, or “Foreclosure” signs, “For Sale” signs missing or broken/discarded
Methodology for Investigation

Paint/Siding
- Graffiti, excessive peeling/chipped paint, damaged siding

Gutters
- Missing, out of place, broken, hanging, obstructed

Water Damage
- Mold, discoloration, excessive rust, erosion

Utilities
- Tampered with or exposed
Racial Disparities

- The Fair Housing Center investigated 27 homes owned by the Deutsche Bank Respondents.
  - 9 were located in predominantly African-American neighborhoods
  - 2 were located in a predominantly non-White neighborhoods
  - 16 were located in predominantly White neighborhoods

- 45.5% of the Deutsche Bank homes in African American neighborhoods had unsecured or broken doors, while only 18.8% in predominantly White neighborhoods had the same problem.

- 45.5% of the Deutsche Bank homes in African American neighborhoods had damaged steps or handrails, while none of the Deutsche properties in White neighborhoods had the same problem.

- 72.7% of the Deutsche homes in African American neighborhoods had broken or boarded windows, while only 31.3% of the Deutsche properties in White neighborhoods had the same problem.

- 63.6% of the Deutsche Bank homes in African American neighborhoods had overgrown or dead shrubbery, while only 31.3% of Deutsche properties in predominantly White neighborhoods had the same problem.
Deutsche Bank’s Failed Routine Maintenance in African American Neighborhoods in Metro Toledo

From 2012 through 2017, The Fair Housing Center investigated Deutsche Bank owned homes and found failed maintenance in African American neighborhoods.
This Deutsche Bank home in a majority non-white neighborhood has no professional “for sale” sign marketing it for sale.
The front yard has dead leaves that need to be removed.
Deutsche Bank has failed to secure this home – the back sliding door is open and unsecured. This is a safety hazard for the entire neighborhood.
Deutsche Bank is letting invasive plants grow unchecked in the backyard.
This Deutsche Bank home in a middle class African American neighborhood has leaves left in the yard which kill grass.
Deutsche Bank left a gutter hanging on a wire, trash, and overgrown shrubs around its home.
Another eyesore at this Deutsche Bank home.
You can see that Deutsche Bank fails to rake leaves, but the neighbors next door and across the street take good care of their homes in this African American neighborhood.
The neighbor across the street has a manicured lawn.
This is another Deutsche Bank home just a couple blocks from the previous home. The first investigation was in 2013 and this investigation is in 2015. You can see Deutsche Bank still fails to take care of its homes in the middle class African American neighborhood. The home lacks curb appeal because a pile of leaves sits at the curb, the garage door is ajar, and shrubs are overgrown.
Deutsche Bank left the front door unlocked and the back door as well.
Deutsche Bank not only left the front door unlocked but this back door is also unlocked.

Being this irresponsible puts the asset at risk of vandalism and fire and puts the neighbors, especially children, in harms way.
Deutsche Bank failed to clear the leaves and clean the back yard step area or reattach the downspout to move water away from the foundation.
These are the next door neighbors’ homes being put at risk because Deutsche fails to secure its home in this African American neighborhood.
Deutsche Bank boards almost every window at its home in this African American neighborhood. There is little natural light available to view the inside of the home.
Deutsche Bank boards even more windows.
Another boarded window keeping light out of the home and detracting from showing the property to buyers.
Deutsche Bank failed to mow the grass in the back yard at its home in an African American neighborhood.
Why does Deutsche Bank board every window? This is a stable African American neighborhood.
Deutsche Bank
Maintenance in White Neighborhoods
Deutsche Bank cleaned the leaves from the yard and mowed the grass before fall set in at its home in this white neighborhood.
Deutsche Bank cleaned the front and back yards of its home in this white neighborhood.
Deutsche Bank cleaned the back yard here.