

The Western New York Law Center
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ANNUAL REPORT

The Western New York Law Center receives CDBG funding to coordinate a Distressed Property Task Force for the City of Buffalo. The Distressed Properties Task Force is composed of elected officials, and government employees, non-profit agencies, and community members. The group's efforts have the potential to improve the quality of life for all Buffalo residents.

FY 2013

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BUFFALO NEW YORK FORECLOSURE (LIS PENDENS) 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Project Overview & Data Collection Methods

Project Overview:

The Distressed Properties Task Force's mission is to identify, catalog, and explore solutions to decrease the number of vacant properties in strategic neighborhoods. Vacant properties, typically the result of fraudulent flipping, delinquent property taxes, and mortgage defaults, devalue properties and promote crime in otherwise stable neighborhoods. One of the key elements to controlling vacant properties is identifying foreclosures. The Western New York Law Center has perfected a methodology to gather detailed foreclosure data.

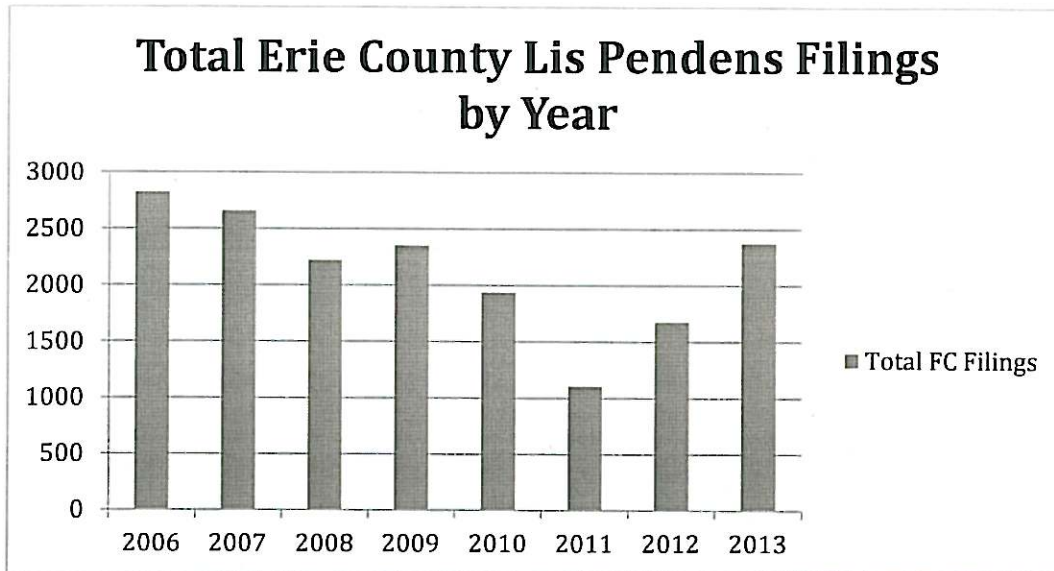
The data collection efforts also include tracking daily property sale transactions and identifying geographic areas targeted by fraudulent "flippers". The bank mortgage and tax foreclosure data collection efforts assist the city to apply for funding to combat the foreclosure crisis and target neighborhood development funding at areas hard hit by vacant properties. Further, the *in rem* property data collection efforts and strategic analysis provide an opportunity to improve the *in rem* auction process.

Foreclosure Filings (Lis Pendens) Data Collection Methods:

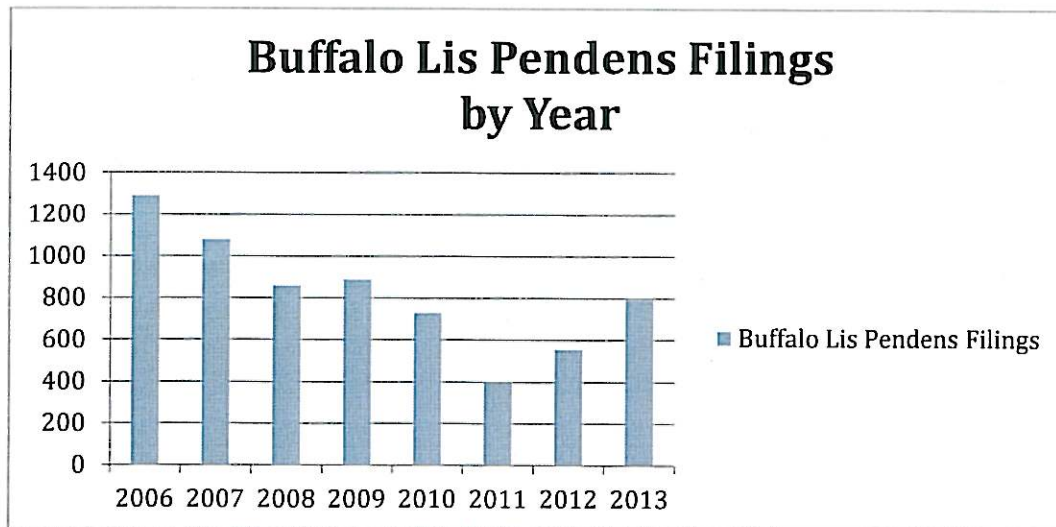
The Western New York Law Center collects information on Foreclosure filings in Erie County by tracking daily each Lis Pendens filed with the county clerk's office. The Lis Pendens, or notice of mortgage default, is the first document filed with the county clerk. Each day, the Lis Pendens information for the previous day is entered into an excel spreadsheet. The information collected from the Lis Pendens includes borrower name, address, index number, SBL, plaintiff, etc. Properties listed as commercial properties in the Lis Pendens are indicated in the spreadsheet and removed. Duplicate filings against the same property are also removed from the total. In removing duplicates and commercial properties, we can ensure that we are looking at the number of residential mortgages with notices of mort filed against them for any given period of time. The Western New York Law Center has collected data on Erie County foreclosures from 2006-present.

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Erie County Foreclosure Filings 2006-2013



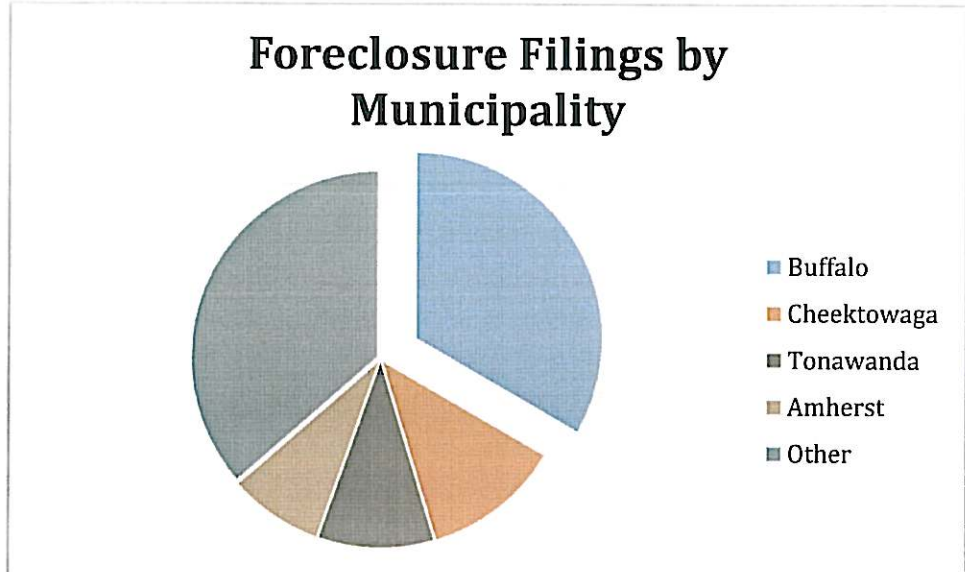
Erie County had a total number of 2380 residential properties with notices filed against them in the year of 2013.



Since 2006, the City of Buffalo has ranged from 45% of the total number of foreclosure filings to 33% more recently.

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Breakdown of Buffalo 2013 Foreclosure Filings

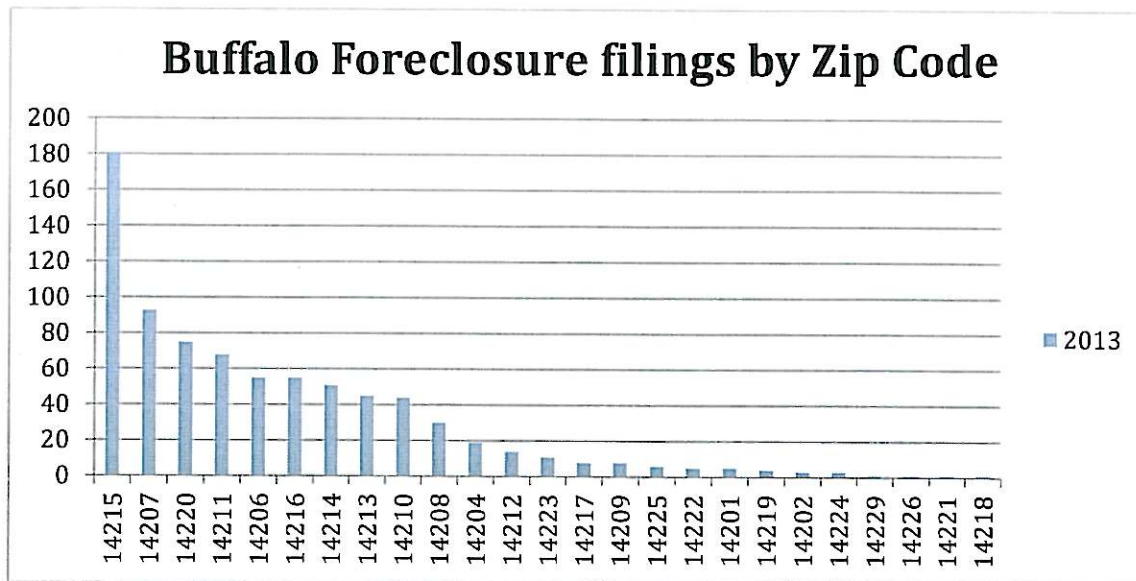


Each year the Law Center has tracked foreclosure filings, the City of Buffalo accounts for the largest percentage of foreclosures in the County. In 2013, the City of Buffalo was 33.3% or 793 of the total filings in Erie County.

There are also high areas of concentrated foreclosure filings in certain zip codes and on streets often have multiple foreclosure filings within a given year. We will go into detail on where these concentrations are within the City of Buffalo on the following page.

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Breakdown of Buffalo 2013 Foreclosure Filings Continued



Concentrated areas of foreclosure filings within the City of Buffalo have remained fairly consistent since 2006. Each year from 2006-2013, 14215 has been the zip code with the highest number of City of Buffalo foreclosure filings. This does not include foreclosure filings that are 14215 but on the Cheektowaga side of the border. The top five zip codes within the City of Buffalo with the highest number of foreclosures filed for each year from 2006 -2013 has started with 14215 and included in varying order 14211, 14207, 14220 and either 14206 or 14214.

The zip codes with the highest foreclosure filings in each of the past 8 years have remained consistent and also represent a wide range of geographic area within the City of Buffalo. North and South Buffalo as well as the East and West side are represented in these high filings areas.

The foreclosure crisis is not over in Buffalo. We need to remain diligent to ensure homeowner's have an opportunity to remain in their homes and when home retention is unattainable, there needs to be process for the property to be properly transferred to another party. Without oversight and intervention, the vacant and abandoned property problem will continue to spread and plague Buffalo.

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