



Property inventory will benefit Cuyahoga County: editorial

Published: Tuesday, August 09, 2011, 8:09 PM



By **The Plain Dealer Editorial Board**

Over the course of many decades, as its scope and the ambitions of its many independent officeholders grew, Cuyahoga County acquired more property than an aggressive Monopoly player. According to the **transition work group** that examined the issue, the county -- on the eve of its change to charter government at the start of this year -- owned roughly 40 pieces of property and held leases on more than 20 others.

That is why the transition group and virtually every candidate for county executive last fall agreed on one thing: The new government needed to take a full inventory of everything it owned or leased, review the terms of every real estate agreement and determine how each property would fit the realistic needs of a streamlined government.

County Executive Ed FitzGerald has now moved to make good on that pledge, **retaining** Allegro Realty Advisors of Cleveland to conduct that analysis. FitzGerald, who has been **trimming the county work force** since he took office in January, wants the consultants to examine not only the space needs of county operations, but also which sites would work best for citizens in need of county services. That means looking at convenience factors, including the availability of parking and proximity to public transportation.

Allegro is to recommend what to do with some of the larger "items" in the county's property inventory: its 56-year-old administration building, the Ameritrust complex that the former county government acquired and the soon-to-be-vacated Juvenile Court building on East 22nd Street.

The transition group suggested that the county could save money by adopting a coherent strategy and unloading unneeded properties. Now it's up to Allegro and the new government to turn that idea into a workable plan.

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Chuck Crow, The Plain Dealer

Among the buildings whose future Cuyahoga County must consider is the Ameritrust Complex, at East Ninth Street and Euclid Avenue.