

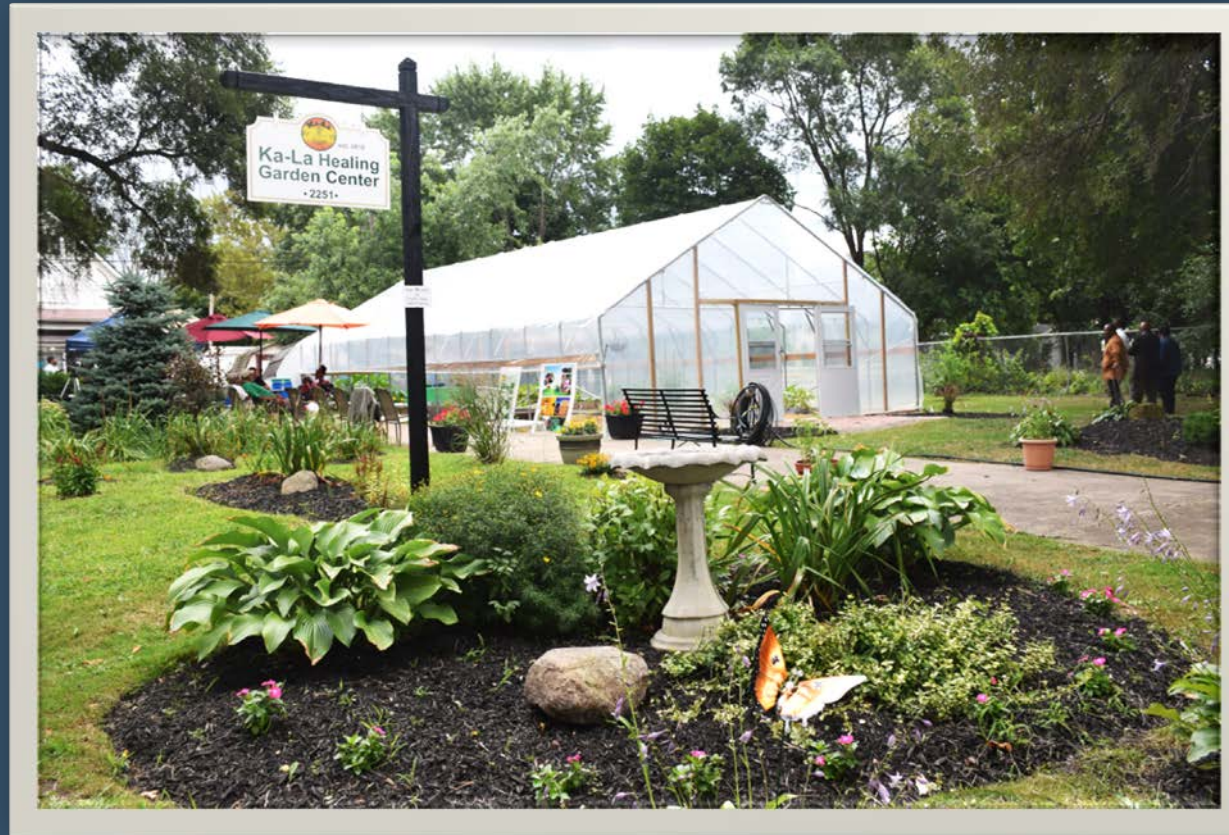
A Blueprint for Urban Agriculture



“Leading Conservation in the Urban Environment”

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District Administrator
Cuyahoga SWCD

Cleveland Urban Agriculture & Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative



Cleveland History

- By 1920, due in large part to the city's economic prosperity, Cleveland became the nation's fifth largest city - Population 796,841
- By 1950, Cleveland's population peaked at 914,808, but was now the 7th largest city
- By 1970 Cleveland was #10 at 750,903 and less dense than in 1920
- By 1990, Cuyahoga is the most urbanized county in Ohio
- Cleveland's Population in 2013- 390,113



Why Agriculture Now?

- Dairy Industry, butter in 1830's; orchard fruits (cherries & peaches); grapes and market gardens-vegetables, strawberries, small fruits
- Post civil war-Market gardening expands and growing “under glass” starts concentrated on the south west side of Cleveland.
- Mid-1920's Cuyahoga County had 160 acres under glass, more than any other American county. In 1959-236 acres were farmed under glass; by 1982 only 122.5 acres under glass.
- By 1949 little farming was done.
- Market milk production sharply declined after WWII; by 1964 the milk industry was gone

Cleveland: Ground Zero

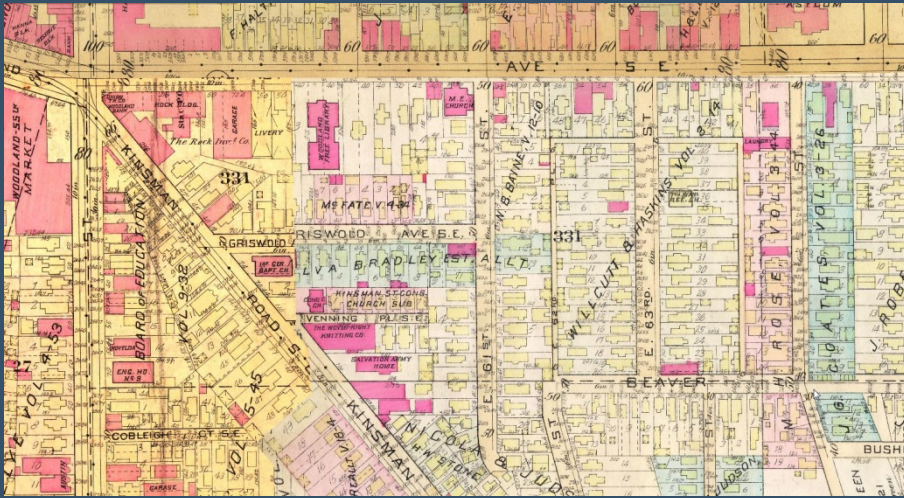


In 2006, one Cleveland neighborhood 31% of its homes were foreclosed.

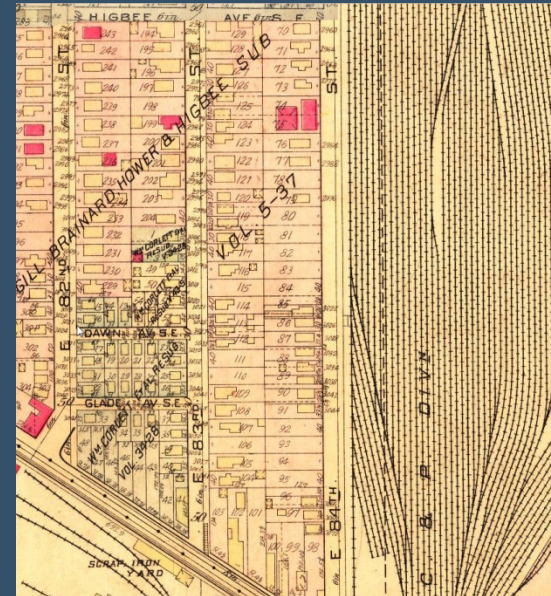
The city has razed 8,365 condemned structures since January 2006, which does not include demolitions by the County Landbank or private demolitions.

Today there are 12,179 vacant structures and 27,774 vacant lots.

Changing Neighborhoods



"Forgotten Triangle" - 1946 & 2014



"Kinsman Farm" - 1946 & 2014



Community Gardens

- 250 community gardens in Cuyahoga County
 - 5,000 residents are dedicated to their care
 - Growing healthy produce
 - Providing social networks
- OSU Extension provides workshops
- City of Cleveland funds the Summer Sprout Program
- Suburban Community Garden Programs



Cleveland Urban Agriculture – A Timeline

2007

Urban Ag and
Green Space
Zoning
Ordinance

- Allows Farming Through Zoning
- Ability to reserve land for gardens use
- Permits urban gardens
- Permits market gardens

2009

Allows Chickens,
Ducks, Rabbits
and Beehives

- Allows chickens, ducks, rabbits and 2 beehives (1 per 800 sq. ft.)
- Allows set backs for pigs, goats, sheep
- Allows coops and cages
- Applies citywide

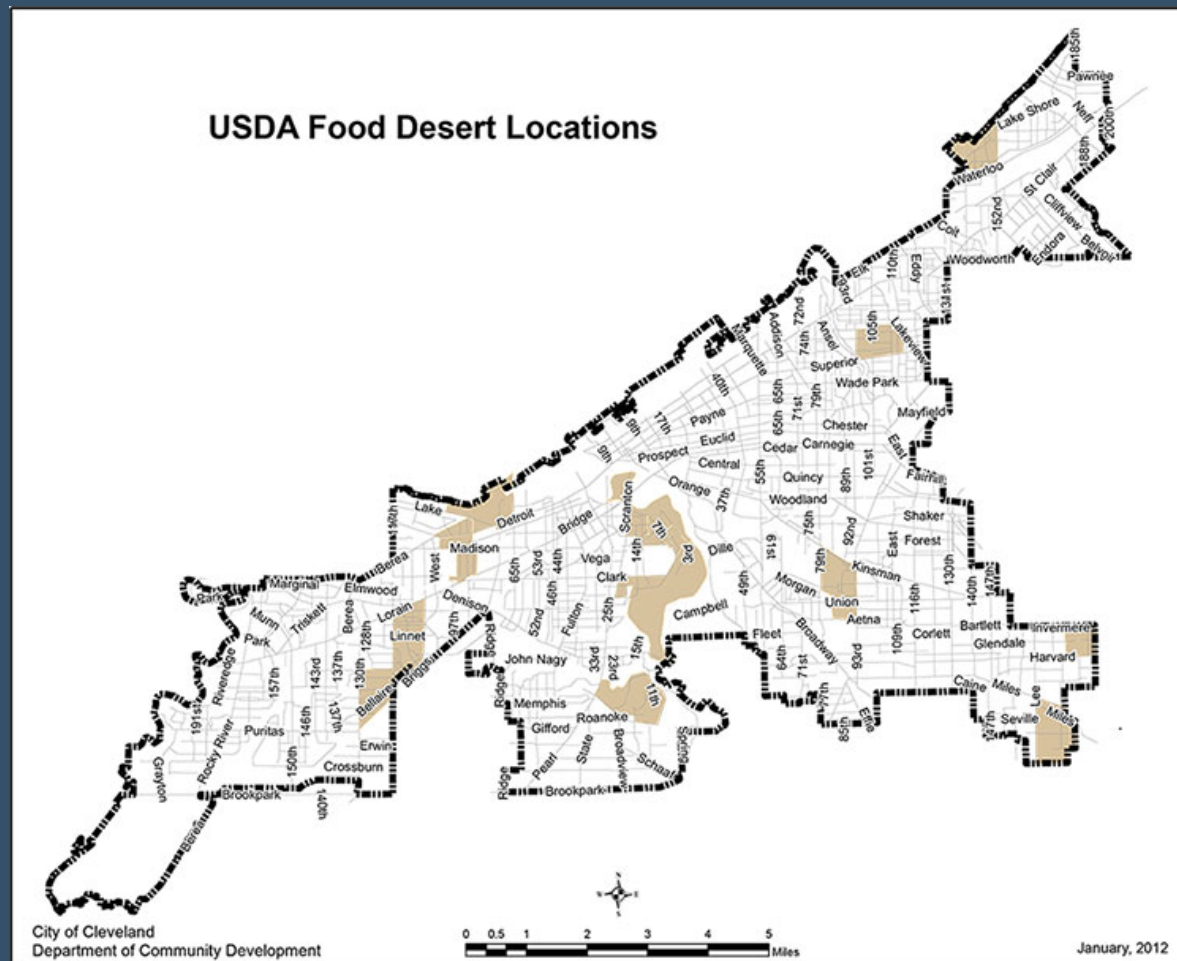
2010

Permits Ag as a
Principal Use on
Vacant City Lots

- Permits agriculture as principal use on all vacant residential lots
- Permits sale of produce from farm stands
- Creates designated areas for animal raising

Food Deserts - A Life or Death Matter

- Cleveland poverty rate is 34.7%; 50% youth live in poverty
- Life expectancy in Cleveland*
 - Low income area = 64 yrs.
 - Affluent suburb = 88.5 yrs.
- 25% of Cleveland residents live in “food deserts”
- low-income neighborhoods far away (a mile or more) from grocery stores
- Access to safe, healthy food matters!



Urban Agriculture

- Congresswoman Marcia Fudge (Know your Farmer, Know your food)
- Community Greenhouse Partners
- Standard Farm
- Green City Growers
- Cleveland Crops (launched by the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities)
- Ohio City Fresh Food Collaborative-The Ohio City Farm is nearly 6 acres of cultivated land, 1 mile from downtown Cleveland, started in 2010
- Urban Agriculture Innovation Zone-Kinsman Farm, 2010, 20 acres aimed being an incubator for a few years as a way to provide entrepreneurs access to land for food production and minimize infrastructure costs like water access, fencing, and soil remediation
- Rid-All Green Partnership
- Cleveland Botanical Garden
- **Cleveland was recently ranked the second best city in the United States for local food thanks to our farmers markets, community gardens, and local food-loving restaurants and diners**



Cleveland High Tunnel Initiative

- Grew from discussions between NRCS and community leaders.
- In 2012, Ohio allocated EQIP funds to pilot the CHT (photo of 2012 pilot ceremony)
- Hired a full-time urban conservationist
- Amended an agreement with the Federation of Southern Cooperatives to assist with outreach



Issues to Consider



- Partnership Support/Involvement
- Close Cooperation w/Participants
- Municipal Support – Zoning, Permits
- Ownership of the land
- Neighborhood Support/Involvement
- Marketing – Allowed on site?
- Continuous Communication
- Access to Water – On site, Trucked?
- Environmental justice –
 - Soil contamination (lead, arsenic)
 - Debris - Removal
 - Abandoned Buildings – Demolish?

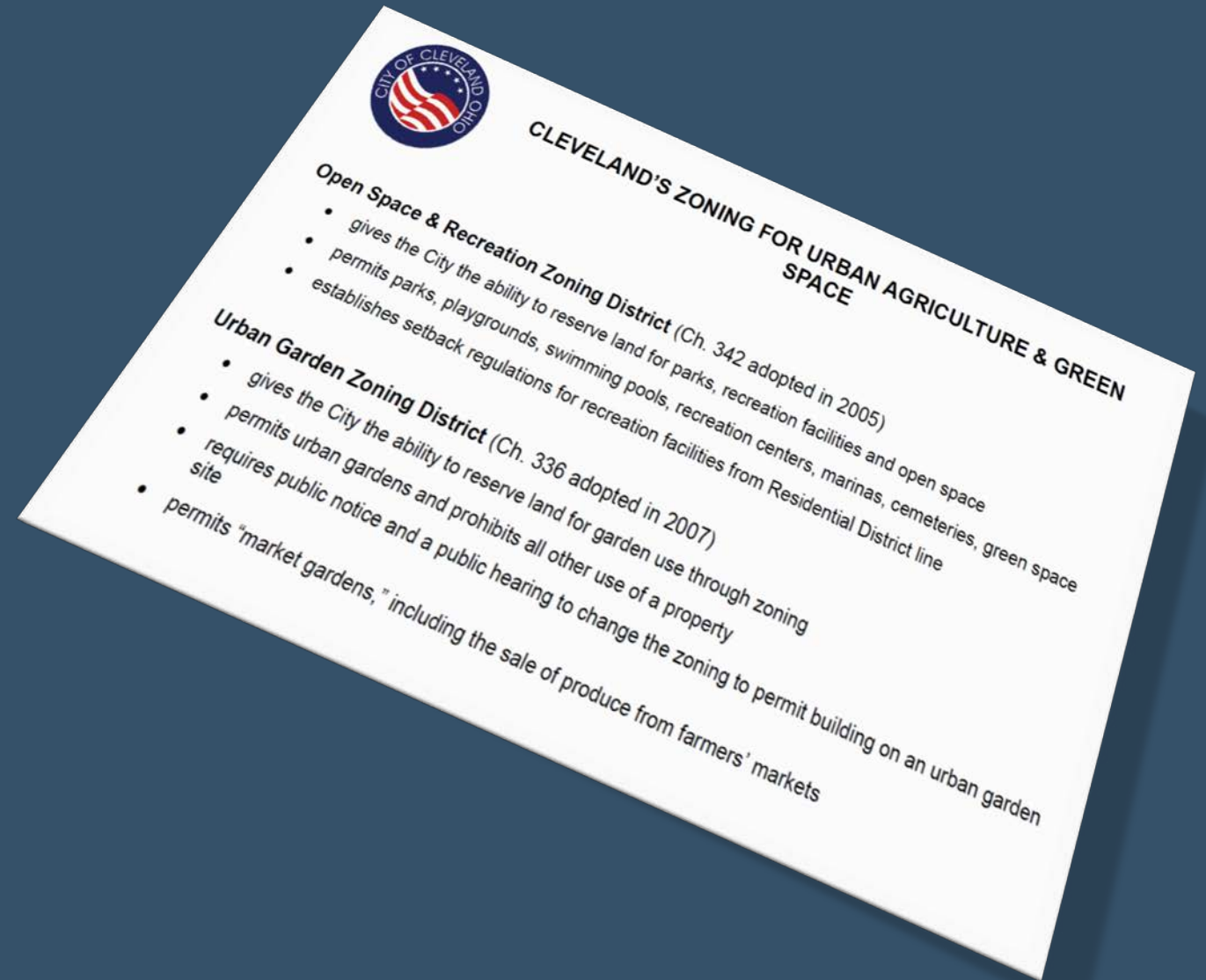
Project Components



- Eligibility determination
- Planning/Contracting (soil testing recommended)
- Permitting
- High Tunnel installation
- Education & Training
 1. NRCS programs
 2. Hoop House construction and maintenance
 3. Food production, food preservation, and marketing (optional)

CLE Zoning

- Open Space & Recreation Zoning (2006) Ch. 342
- Urban Garden Zoning District (2007) Ch. 330
- Land leases



CHT Accomplishments (2012-2016)



High Tunnel Build Training – NRCS Staff,
Partners, and CHT Participants

- Since 2012, 95 seasonal high tunnels have been constructed or are scheduled for installation.
 - 85 installed
 - 10 scheduled for installation
 - 10 application pending
- Total obligation = \$700,000

Expansion – NACD Urban Ag Grant



- Cuyahoga SWCD awarded a grant
- Justin Husher was hired
- The SWCD pledged to support the position for two years
- Justin is in the field

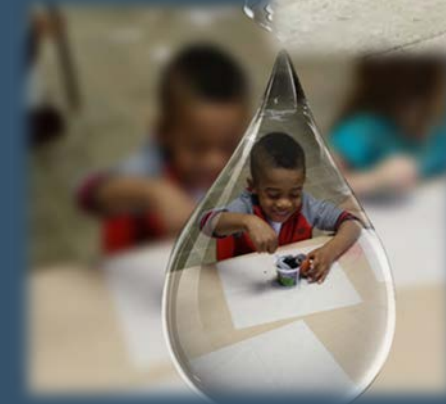
Urban Ag Realities



- Resource concerns
- Trust factor
- Farming know-how
- Abandoned hoop houses and community gardens
- Need to revitalize early efforts
- Equipment sharing
- Cropping strategy
- Selling produce

Early Accomplishments

- Building Awareness of the SWCD
- Developing Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts
- Training Opportunities
- Working with Non-Traditional Customers
 - New and Beginning Farmers
 - Socially Disadvantage Farmers
 - Organic Farmers
 - Veteran Farmers
- Building Trust and Effective Outreach
 - Social Media
 - Community Meetings
 - Workshops
- Determining Needs for Successful Programs
- Working with Youth-Schools & Americorps
- Mini Grant, Soil Health



Questions?



Chief Weller and Terry Cosby talking with Ohio's first high tunnel contract holder, Avon Standard (r) and fellow gardeners at his Cleveland garden – July, 2015