

Picture Source: Cuyahoga County

RESIDENTIAL VACANT LOT ANALYSIS

November 3, 2026

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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OUR VISION

Inspiring all of our communities to thrive

OUR MISSION

To advance Cuyahoga County's social, economic, and environmental health through equitable community planning

CUYAHOGA COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

The Residential Vacant Lot Analysis provides a framework to understand, track, and evaluate vacant lots in Cuyahoga County suburbs for future residential development. It builds on two recent studies: the Single-Family Zoning Analysis and the Cuyahoga County Housing Study.

BACKGROUND

In 2021, the first phase of the Single-Family Zoning Analysis was released. This study identified more than 5,300 infill opportunities and revealed common zoning challenges across first suburb communities, such as mismatches between existing lot dimensions and zoning requirements. These findings led to the development of several tools to help first suburb municipalities address these issues.

In 2025, the Cuyahoga County Housing Study was published. It outlined several key housing challenges facing suburban communities, including limited diverse and affordable housing options, aging housing stock, and low levels of new residential construction.

SCOPE

This study focuses on Cuyahoga County suburbs and examines patterns across east-west and inner-outer ring geographies. It aims to highlight housing-related patterns that may be overlooked by broad generalizations. Figure 1 shows these suburban geographies and the communities within them.

Although vacant lots and residential construction are also critical topics in Cleveland, the City is not included in this analysis. As the largest municipality in the county, Cleveland has distinct housing dynamics and substantial neighborhood-level variation that are beyond the scope of this study.

PROJECT GOALS

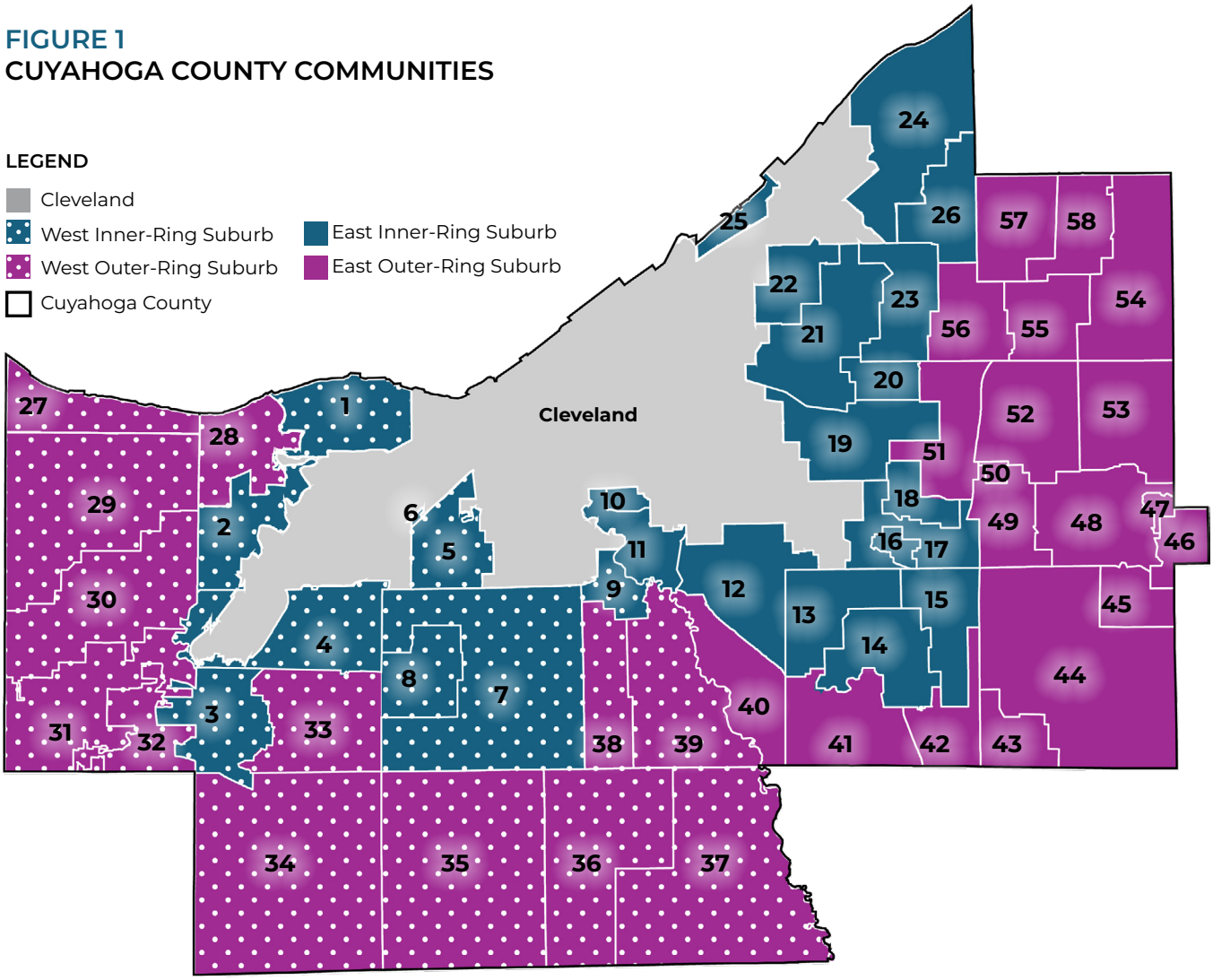
The primary goals for this study include:

1) Understand key housing trends across Cuyahoga County suburbs
2) Track progress on developing infill housing in the First Suburbs
3) Identify, map, and analyze vacant residential land in suburban communities
4) Provide an online tool to help prioritize lots for residential construction

There are two main deliverables: this report and an online mapping tool. The report offers essential context and key findings related to opportunities and challenges to residential development across the county. The online tool centralizes publicly available data to help municipalities, partners, and stakeholders identify, track, and evaluate potential residential lots. It makes vacant lot information more accessible and supports more informed, data-driven discussions about opportunities and challenges.

The online tool is summarized in the last section of this report and can be accessed on the project page at: www.countyplanning.us/RVLA

FIGURE 1
CUYAHOGA COUNTY COMMUNITIES



Inner-Ring Suburbs

West

1) Lakewood*
2) Fairview Park*
3) Berea*
4) Brook Park*
5) Brooklyn*
6) Linndale
7) Parma*
8) Parma Heights*
9) Brooklyn Heights*

East

10) Newburgh Heights**
11) Cuyahoga Heights
12) Garfield Heights*
13) Maple Heights*
14) Bedford*
15) Bedford Heights*
16) North Randall
17) Warrensville Heights*
18) Highland Hills
19) Shaker Heights*
20) University Heights*
21) Cleveland Heights*
22) East Cleveland*
23) South Euclid*
24) Euclid*
25) Bratenahl
26) Richmond Heights

Outer-Ring Suburbs

West

27) Bay Village
28) Rocky River
29) Westlake
30) North Olmsted
31) Olmsted Township
32) Olmsted Falls
33) Middleburg Heights
34) Strongsville
35) North Royalton
36) Broadview Heights
37) Brecksville
38) Seven Hills
39) Independence

East

40) Valley View
41) Walton Hills
42) Oakwood
43) Glenwillow
44) Solon
45) Bentleyville
46) Chagrin Falls
47) Chagrin Falls Township
48) Moreland Hills
49) Orange
50) Woodmere
51) Beachwood
52) Pepper Pike
53) Hunting Valley
54) Gates Mills
55) Mayfield Heights
56) Lyndhurst
57) Highland Heights
58) Mayfield

** Northeast Ohio First Suburbs Consortium member*
***Newburgh Heights became a member after completion of the Single-Family Zoning Analysis*

SECTION 1

HOUSING TRENDS

This section explores seven key topics that shed light on the state of the housing market in Cuyahoga County suburbs, while comparing trends across different areas. While not intended to be comprehensive, this targeted analysis provides a contextual overview that highlights significant changes in the housing market, geographic differences, and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This overview primarily draws on data from 2010 to 2024, a timeframe that captures the historical context of post-Great Recession recovery (2010-2019), the pandemic-driven disruption (2020-2023), and early indications of post-pandemic impact (2024).

The housing market in Cuyahoga County suburbs underwent significant shifts during these time periods. While the effects of the Great Recession lingered for years, by 2019 the market showed slow but steady signs of improvement.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted trends, exposing vulnerabilities and amplifying disparities between inner-ring and outer-ring suburbs. Today, although early indicators suggest some level of stabilization and recovery, housing shortages and price increases remain critical challenges, and the gap between inner- and outer-ring suburbs continues to be pronounced.

SECTION 1 KEY FINDINGS

OVERALL SUBURBAN TRENDS

- **Stabilizing population:** Following years of minimal population growth pre-pandemic, the suburban population declined during COVID-19 and only recently stabilized.
- **Improving housing & occupancy:** Following relative stagnation, the suburbs have seen recent increases in total housing units, occupied units and owner-occupied homes which indicate a growing and strengthening market.
- **Residential sales surged then normalized:** The number of single-family and condominium sales peaked during COVID-19, but fell back quickly as prices rose and housing stock tightened.
- **Rising housing prices:** COVID-19 accelerated median sale price increases for both single-family homes and condominiums, and prices continue to intensify.
- **Declining demolitions:** County Land Bank demolitions—peaking in 2018—dropped sharply to just 21 demolitions in 2024, generally due to improved market conditions, as well as regulatory and policy changes.
- **Low but improving new residential construction:** New residential construction remains under 2007 levels but has rebounded from a 2023 low and is trending upward.

GEOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

- **Growing Outer-ring Suburbs:** Outer-ring suburbs show consistent population growth and stronger overall housing performance, including larger increases in housing stock, higher occupancy rates, and greater homeownership. New construction is heavily concentrated in these communities, with the west outer-ring producing the most new homes and the east outer-ring achieving the highest sales prices.
- **Stabilizing Inner-ring Suburbs:** Inner-ring suburbs are characterized by stagnant population and uneven housing improvements, with east inner-ring communities experiencing the slowest recovery while west inner-ring suburbs have experienced rapid price increases. Although these suburbs have experienced high sales activity, prices remain lower than in the outer-ring. New construction is limited but has recently increased in the east inner-ring. Tax abatements continues to be a common tool to support construction in these older neighborhoods.

POPULATION

As of 2024, an estimated 875,215 people live in Cuyahoga County's 58 suburbs, with 55.9% residing in inner-ring suburbs and 44.1% in outer-ring suburbs. Overall, suburban population remained relatively stagnant between 2010 and 2020, increasing just 1.1% above 2010 levels by 2018. However, numbers declined during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2023) before beginning to stabilize in 2024 slightly below (-0.9%) 2010 levels.

These overall trends mask significant differences by geography. The outer-ring suburbs saw steady population growth, peaking at 3.2% above 2010 levels in 2020, with the east outer-ring suburbs consistently growing the most. The pandemic briefly reduced population numbers before growth resumed, although levels remain below pre-pandemic levels.

In contrast, inner-ring suburbs generally experienced population loss from 2010 to 2020, only surpassing 2010 levels between 2013 and 2016. By 2020, their population was 0.9% below 2010 levels. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this decline, and by 2023, inner-ring suburbs had lost 3% of their 2010 population. In 2024, population numbers remained virtually the same.

FIGURE 2
POPULATION BY SUBURB, 2024

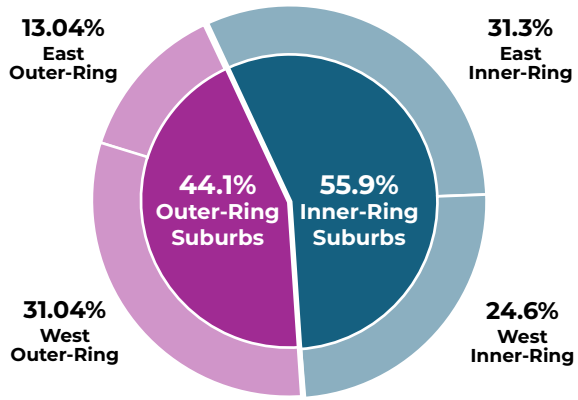
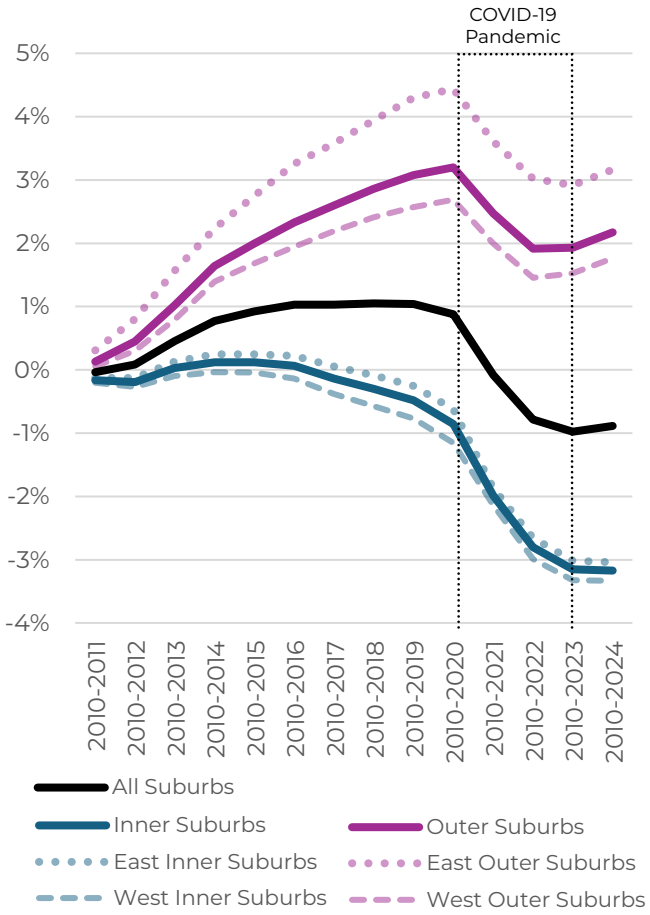


FIGURE 3
CUMULATIVE POPULATION CHANGE, 2010-2024



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Annual Estimates of Resident Population for Minor Civil Divisions, downloaded November 2024 and May 2025

HOUSING

As of 2023, there were 414,971 housing units in the Cuyahoga County suburbs, with 58% in the inner-ring suburbs and 42% in outer-ring suburbs. Cuyahoga County suburbs had a 93% occupancy rate and 67% home-ownership rate.

The decade from 2013 to 2023 can be divided into two distinct periods: relative stagnation from 2013 to 2018, followed by a stronger and improving housing market from 2018 to 2023. During the first period, the number of housing units and occupancy rates changed little, while homeownership declined (-2%). In contrast, from 2018 to 2023, Cuyahoga County suburbs experienced modest growth in housing units (+2%), occupied housing units (+4%), and owner-occupied units (+5%).

Despite overall improvements, growth has been uneven among suburban geographies. Between 2018 and 2023, the outer-ring suburbs saw more growth in housing units (+5% vs. 0%), occupied-housing units (+6% vs. +3%) , and owner-occupied units (+6% vs. +5%). This indicates development continues to push outward.

The east inner-ring suburbs' housing market in particular has lagged behind the other suburban areas. For example, from 2018 to 2023, the east inner-ring suburbs' housing stock contracted (-3%), while other geographies expanded (+3% to +6%). Although the east inner-ring suburbs experienced slight gains in occupied-housing units (+2%) and owner-occupied units (+4%), they still have the lowest occupancy rate (89%) and homeownership rate (56%) among the suburban areas.

	Housing Units			Occupied-Housing Units			Owner-Occupied Units		
Cuyahoga Suburbs	**2023 Total**	**2013-2018 % Change**	**2018-2023 % Change**	**2023 Total (Rate)**	**2013-2018 % Change**	**2018-2023 % Change**	**2023 Total (Rate)**	**2013-2018 % change**	**2018-2023 % Change**
East Inner-Ring	137,029	-1%	-3%	122,242 (89%)	0%	2%	68,007 (56%)	-7%	4%
West Inner-Ring	104,785	-1%	3%	98,853 (94%)	0%	4%	62,986 (63%)	-3%	6%
Inner-Ring Suburbs	**241,814**	**-1%**	**0%**	**221,095 (91%)**	**0%**	**3%**	**130,993 (59%)**	**-5%**	**5%**
East Outer-Ring	51,830	2%	6%	48,768 (94%)	1%	8%	36,104 (74%)	0%	6%
West Outer-Ring	121,327	0%	5%	115,658 (95%)	1%	6%	90,727 (78%)	1%	6%
Outer-Ring Suburbs	**173,157**	**1%**	**5%**	**164,426 (95%)**	**1%**	**6%**	**126,831 (77%)**	**1%**	**6%**
All Suburbs	**414,971**	**0%**	**2%**	**385,521 (93%)**	**0%**	**4%**	**257,824 (67%)**	**-2%**	**5%**

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, 2013, 2018, 2023

NUMBER OF SALES

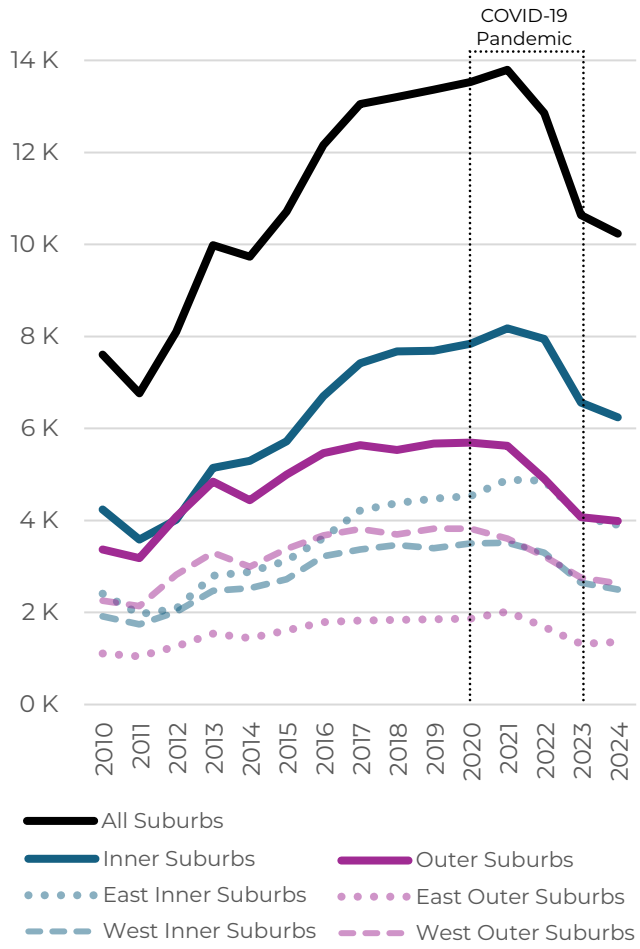
SINGLE-FAMILY SALES

In 2024, 6,244 single-family homes were sold in the Cuyahoga County suburbs, which is an increase of 35% since 2010. This indicates a growing demand for housing and a strengthening housing market.

Home sales have been rising steadily since 2011, with the COVID-19 pandemic pushing activity to an all-time high. This surge can be generally attributed to record-low interest rates, a generally affordable market, and a rise in remote working. Sales peaked in 2021, but then declined sharply as demand outpaced supply due to limited new construction, rising costs and prices, higher interest rates, and increased competition from local and out-of-state buyers. By 2024, sales continued to decrease, but at a slower pace, suggesting some stabilization in the market.

These trends vary by geography. Over the past decade and a half, single-family sales increased significantly more in inner-ring suburbs (+47%) than in outer-ring suburbs (+18%). The east inner-ring suburbs saw the largest increase (+62%) since 2010.

FIGURE 4
TOTAL SINGLE-FAMILY SALES, 2010-2024



Cuyahoga Suburbs	2010	2020	2024	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2024	% Change 2010-2024
East Inner-Ring	2,412	4,532	3,905	88%	-14%	62%
West Inner-Ring	1,916	3,499	2,498	83%	-29%	30%
Inner-Ring Suburbs	**4,240**	**7,842**	**6,244**	**85%**	**-20%**	**47%**
East Outer-Ring	1,112	1,871	1,360	68%	-27%	22%
West Outer-Ring	2,257	3,821	2,631	69%	-31%	17%
Outer-Ring Suburbs	**3,369**	**5,692**	**3,991**	**69%**	**-30%**	**18%**
All Suburbs	**7,609**	**13,534**	**10,235**	**78%**	**-24%**	**35%**

Data Source: Northeast Ohio Metropolitan Data Resource (NEOMDR), downloaded October 2025

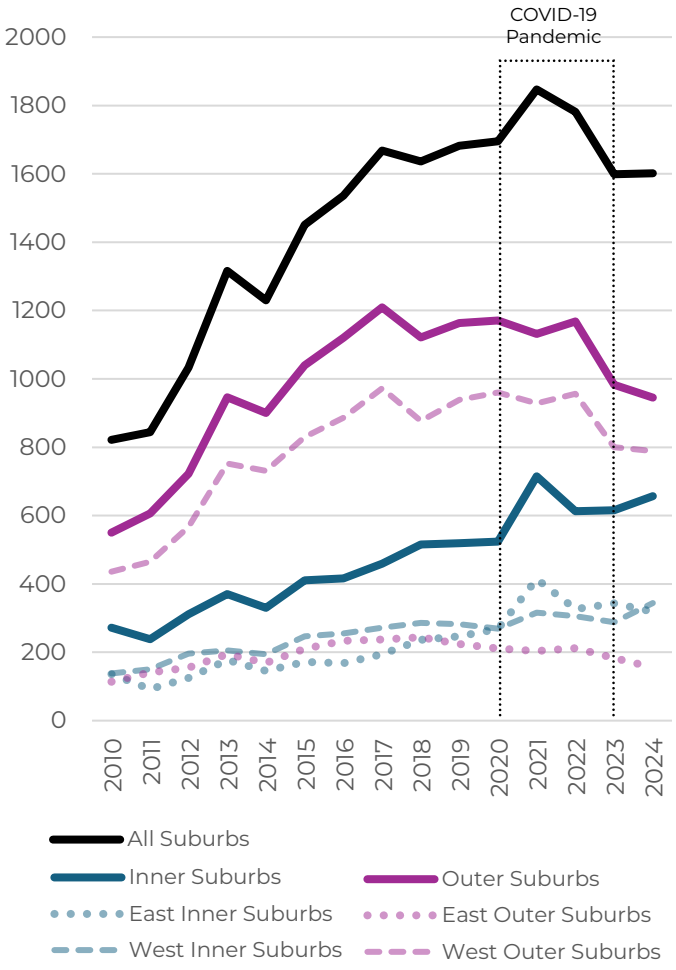
CONDOMINIUM SALES

In 2024, 657 condominiums were sold in the Cuyahoga County suburbs, which is an increase of 95% since 2010. Like single-family home sales, condominium sales in Cuyahoga County suburbs peaked during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, but fell slightly below pre-pandemic levels by 2024.

However, trends differ among the suburban geographies. The west outer-ring suburbs have continuously outpaced all other areas in condominium sales, contributing to higher overall sales in outer-ring suburbs compared to inner-ring suburbs.

The COVID-19 pandemic shifted condominium sale trends between the inner and outer-ring suburbs. From 2010 to 2020, sales grew more in the outer-ring suburbs (+113%) than the inner-ring suburbs (+93%). However, from 2020 to 2024, outer-ring sales declined (-19%) and inner-ring sales increased (+25%).

FIGURE 5
TOTAL CONDOMINIUM SALES, 2010-2024



Cuyahoga Suburbs	2010	2020	2024	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2024	% Change 2010-2024
East Inner-Ring	136	268	319	97%	19%	135%
West Inner-Ring	138	269	344	95%	28%	149%
Inner-Ring Suburbs	**272**	**524**	**657**	**93%**	**25%**	**142%**
East Outer-Ring	114	211	156	85%	-26%	37%
West Outer-Ring	436	960	789	120%	-18%	81%
Outer-Ring Suburbs	**550**	**1, 171**	**945**	**113%**	**-19%**	**72%**
All Suburbs	**822**	**1695**	**1602**	**106%**	**-5%**	**95%**

Data Source: Northeast Ohio Metropolitan Data Resource (NEOMDR), downloaded October 2025

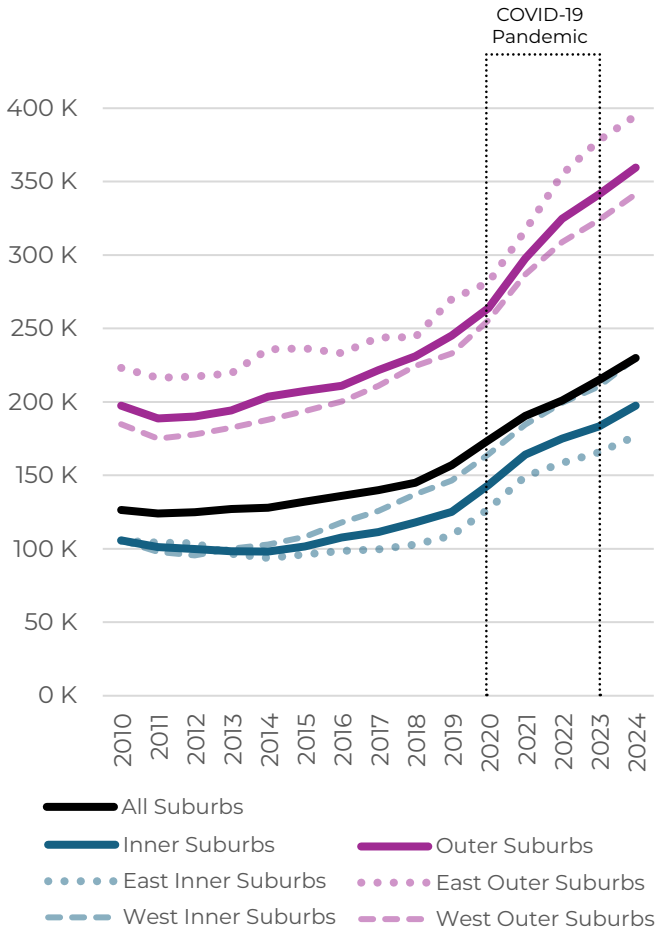
MEDIAN SALE PRICE

SINGLE-FAMILY MEDIAN SALES PRICE

In 2024, the median sales price for a single-family home in the Cuyahoga County suburbs was $230,000, which was an 82% increase from 2010. Prices have risen steadily since 2011, with the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating this trend. Rising sales prices generally indicate stronger housing demand and an improving housing market, particularly in areas that had previously been stagnant. However, with a tightening supply of housing, price increases have intensified over shorter periods, which can create affordability challenges as prices outpace income growth.

The outer-ring suburbs have consistently had higher median sales prices for single-family homes than inner-ring suburbs. In 2024, the median sale price in the outer-ring suburbs was $359,663 compared to $197,514 in the inner-ring suburbs. In terms of relative change since 2010, the west inner-ring suburbs saw the largest increase (+117%), while the east inner-ring suburbs had the smallest (+68%).

FIGURE 6
WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF MEDIAN SALE PRICE OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES, 2010-2024



Cuyahoga Suburbs	2010	2020	2024	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2024	% Change 2010-2024
East Inner-Ring*	$105,531	$127,097	$176,833	20%	39%	68%
West Inner-Ring*	$105,776	$164,418	$229,845	55%	40%	117%
Inner-Ring Suburbs*	**$105,640**	**$143,357**	**$197,514**	**36%**	**38%**	**87%**
East Outer-Ring*	$223,222	$281,249	$394,982	26%	40%	77%
West Outer-Ring*	$184,844	$255,586	$341,406	38%	34%	85%
Outer-Ring Suburbs*	**$197,512**	**$264,021**	**$359,663**	**34%**	**36%**	**82%**
All Suburbs	**$126,500**	**$173,900**	**$230,000**	**37%**	**32%**	**82%**

**The weighted average for each type of suburb corresponds to the average of median sale prices of single-family homes for the associated communities weighted by the number of sales.*

Data Source: Northeast Ohio Metropolitan Data Resource (NEOMDR), downloaded October 2025

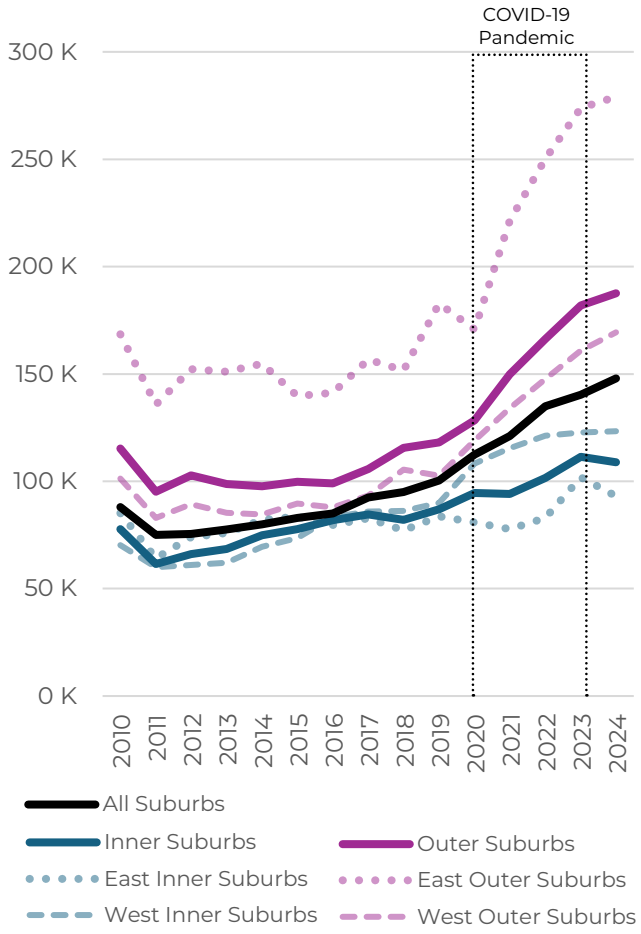
CONDOMINIUM MEDIAN SALES PRICE

In 2024, the median sales price of a condominium in Cuyahoga County suburbs was $147,900, which was an increase of 68% since 2010. Prices have generally increased since 2011 and accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, trends vary by geography. The outer-ring suburbs, particularly the east outer-ring suburbs, have consistently had higher prices for condominiums than inner-ring suburbs. In 2024, the median sale price in the outer-ring suburbs was $187,574 compared to $108,815 in the inner-ring suburbs. The east outer-ring suburbs have had significantly more expensive condominium sales, reaching $279,140 in 2024.

Price growth also shifted after 2020. From 2010 to 2020, the east outer-ring suburbs saw only a 1% increase, but between 2020 and 2024, prices surged by 64%, marking the steepest rise among all suburban geographies.

FIGURE 7
WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF MEDIAN SALE PRICE OF CONDOMINIUMS, 2010-2024



Cuyahoga Suburbs	2010	2020	2024	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2020-2024	% Change 2010-2024
East Inner-Ring*	$85,145	$80,847	$93,092	-5%	15%	9%
West Inner-Ring*	$70,261	$108,234	$123,396	54%	14%	76%
Inner-Ring Suburbs*	**$77,649**	**$94,566**	**$108,815**	**22%**	**15%**	**40%**
East Outer-Ring*	$168,431	$170,678	$279,140	1%	64%	66%
West Outer-Ring*	$101,308	$119,041	$169,470	18%	42%	67%
Outer-Ring Suburbs*	**$115,221**	**$128,345**	**$187,574**	**11%**	**46%**	**63%**
All Suburbs	**$88,000**	**$112,400**	**$147,900**	**28%**	**32%**	**68%**

**The weighted average for each type of suburb corresponds to the average of median sale prices of single-family homes for the associated communities weighted by the number of sales.*

Data Source: Northeast Ohio Metropolitan Data Resource (NEOMDR), downloaded October 2025

PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENTS

A tax abatement is a reduction in taxes on the increased value of a property for a set amount of time. Abatement amounts, timeframes, and applicable properties and locations are determined by communities based on their needs.

Communities typically use tax abatements to incentivize new construction or substantial rehabilitation of properties, such as in distressed areas or areas where additional support is necessary to make an investment feasible. Communities commonly offer property tax abatements through the Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) program.

In 2024, there were an estimated 733 tax-abated properties in 20 Cuyahoga suburbs. Lakewood, Warrensville Heights, and Olmsted Falls were the communities with the highest number of tax-abated properties and the highest total abated value. Shaker Heights had the highest average tax-abated value at $310,791.67.

Nearly 81% of the tax-abated properties in 2024 were located in inner-ring suburbs. This demonstrates the importance of abatements to spur investment where new construction is significantly more limited and where the housing stock is older. In comparison to data gathered in 2020, ten of the inner-ring suburbs increased in the number of abated properties and six decreased.

Abatements on single-family homes constituted the majority of tax-abated properties in 2024. Only 26 were multi-family—including 11 two-family homes, one three-family home, and 13 condominiums.

FIGURE 8

TAX-ABATED PROPERTY TOTALS AND ABATED VALUES BY COMMUNITY, 2024

Cuyahoga Suburbs	Tax-Abated Units	Total Abated Value	Average Abatement Value
Lakewood	151	$20,107,800	$133,164
Warrensville Heights	100	$16,498,100.	$164,981
Olmsted Falls*	96	$18,069,000	$188,219
Cleveland Heights	70	$17,628,000.	$251,829
Fairview Park	69	$17,366,800	$251,693
University Heights	51	$7,581,800	$148,663
Berea	38	$9,077,300.	$238,876
North Olmsted*	25	$4,558,600	$182,344
Euclid	23	$4,674,600.	$203,243
Walton Hills*	20	$3,590,000.	$179,500
Shaker Heights	18	$5,593,700.	$310,761
Brook Park	18	$3,741,100.	$207,839
Parma Heights	13	$2,315,400.	$178,108
Maple Heights	12	$2,012,300.	$167,692
Brooklyn	12	$57,500	$4,792
Bedford	6	$640,900.	$106,817
South Euclid	4	$755,100	$188,775
East Cleveland	3	$354,000.	$118,000
Newburgh* Heights	3	$929,000	$309,667
Strongsville*	1	$86,500	$86,500

** Outer-Ring Suburb*

Data includes single-family homes, two-and three-family homes, and condominiums with tax abatements
Data Source: Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office, downloaded October 2025

COUNTY LAND BANK DEMOLITIONS

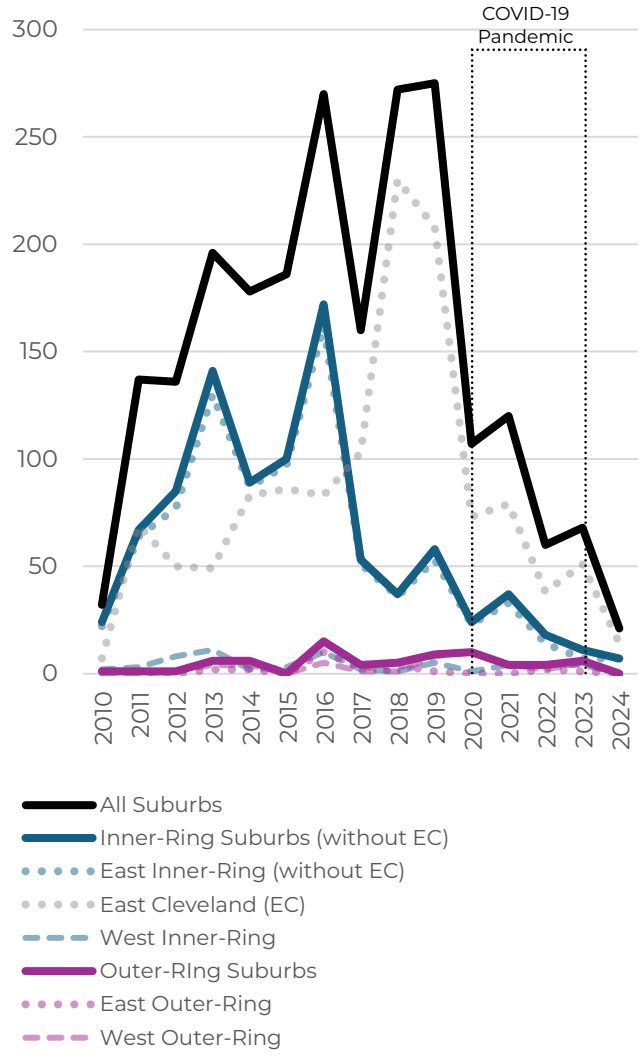
The Great Recession and associated foreclosure crisis left communities with numerous abandoned, blighted properties. Persistent disinvestment left these properties beyond repair, which negatively impacted surrounding neighborhoods. Demolitions were a critical response to remove these structures and stabilize neighborhoods.

The Cuyahoga Land Bank was the main entity undertaking demolitions in the County. The Cuyahoga Land Bank ramped up its demolition program in 2010 with the support of federal funds and later the Cuyahoga Property Demolition Program, starting in 2015. With these funds expiring, the Land Bank had shifted its focus to renovations and more complex demolitions by 2019, and saw the last demolition funded through the county program in 2023.

Most demolitions conducted by the Land Bank took place in the east inner-ring suburbs, especially in East Cleveland, where foreclosures and ongoing disinvestment were most pronounced. Demolitions in the inner-ring suburbs (excluding East Cleveland) peaked in 2016 at 172 demolitions, whereas demolitions in East Cleveland peaked in 2018 with 230. In 2024, the Land Bank completed 21 demolitions—14 in East Cleveland and seven across other east inner ring suburbs.

The reduction in demolitions reflects a strengthening housing market driven by renewed investment in rehabilitation and infill development, while recent regulatory and funding changes also played a role. Still, demolition remains an important tool in target areas where issues persist.

FIGURE 9
CUYAHOGA LAND BANK DEMOLITIONS, 2010-2024



Data Source: Cuyahoga County Land Bank, downloaded November 2025

NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

NEW SINGLE-FAMILY CONSTRUCTION

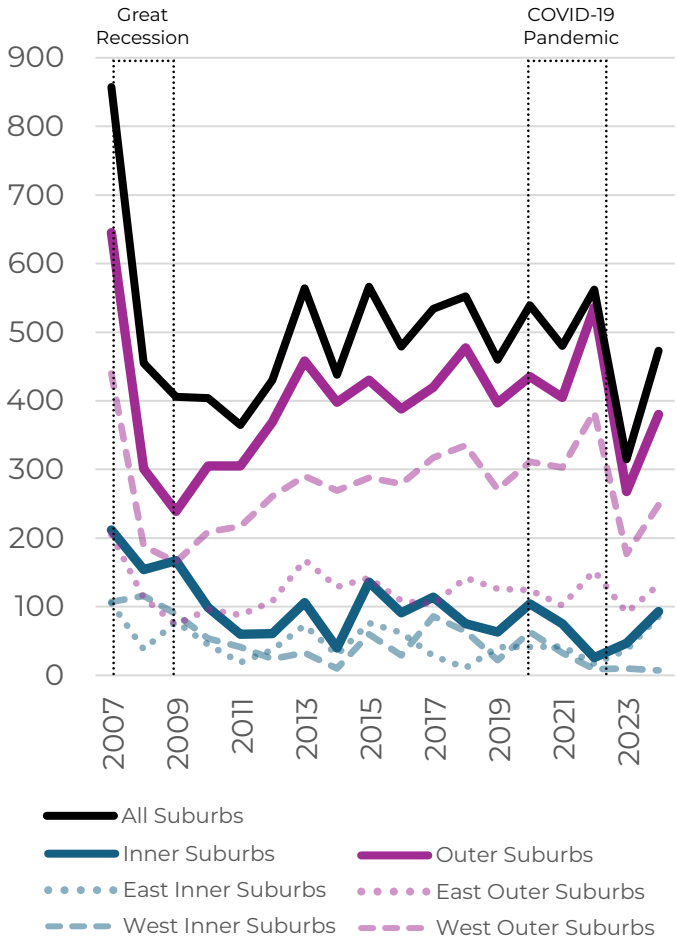
Construction of single-family homes dropped sharply after the Great Recession in 2007, and over a decade and a half later, it has yet to return to pre-recession levels. In 2024, 473 houses were built in Cuyahoga County suburbs—less than 45% of 2007 levels. Construction activity briefly surged in 2022 during the second half of the COVID-19 pandemic, reaching about 560 homes, before falling to a low of 315 in 2023 and then rising again in 2024.

Construction of single-family houses has been significantly uneven. Since 2017, outer-ring suburbs have accounted for 78% of new single-family houses, with a strong concentration in the west. However, even in the outer-ring suburbs, construction remains 41% below 2007 levels.

In addition to only accounting for 22% of new construction, the inner-ring suburbs overall have experienced a steeper decline, falling by 56% since 2007. However, from 2021 to 2024, trends diverged: the east inner-ring suburbs saw a 110% increase, while west inner-ring suburbs declined by 89%. This decline occurred almost entirely in 3 cities: Lakewood, Parma, and Berea.

FIGURE 10

TOTAL NEW SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSES BY YEAR BUILT, 2007-2024



Cuyahoga Suburbs	2007	2020	2024	% Change 2007-2020	% Change 2020-2024	% Change 2007-2024
East Inner-Ring	105	41	86	-61%	110%	-18%
West Inner-Ring	107	63	7	-41%	-89%	-93%
Inner-Ring Suburbs	**212**	**104**	**93**	**-51%**	**-11%**	**-56%**
East Outer-Ring	205	124	132	-40%	6%	-36%
West Outer-Ring	440	311	248	-29%	-20%	-44%
Outer-Ring Suburbs	**645**	**435**	**380**	**-33%**	**-13%**	**-41%**
All Suburbs	**857**	**539**	**473**	**-37%**	**-12%**	**-45%**

Data Source: Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office Year-Built ,Data downloaded December 2025

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SECTION 2

INFILL HOUSING IN THE FIRST SUBURBS

This section serves to track infill development in the First Suburbs, building on the 2021 Single-Family Zoning Analysis. The 2021 study identified zoning barriers and cataloged over 5,000 potential infill lots in the communities of the First Suburbs Consortium. Since then, several communities have amended their zoning codes to reduce regulatory obstacles and facilitate new housing construction on these sites.

The current analysis evaluates progress towards that goal. Using data from the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office, this section reports the number of homes constructed from 2021 to 2024, highlights how many were built on previously identified infill lots, and shows how development activity relates to communities that have enacted zoning changes.

Although complete County data is available only through 2024 for this report, conversations with communities and early indications for 2025 suggest an anticipated increase in construction activity within the First Suburbs.

SECTION 2 KEY FINDINGS

- **New residential construction:** 231 single-and two-family homes were built in communities of the First Suburbs from 2021–2024.
- **Infill lot share of construction:** 46% of new construction occurred on previously inventoried infill lots, reflecting a growing interest in developing housing within existing neighborhoods. Additional development occurred on lots outside the original inventory.
- **Remaining infill potential:** Nearly 90% of the original infill lot inventory remains available for infill housing. Only 2% of lots were developed, indicating significant ongoing opportunity for infill construction.
- **Zoning reform impact:** Over 25,000 parcels would no longer require variances for certain dimensional requirements in order to be built due to zoning changes adopted in South Euclid, Maple Heights, Euclid, Warrensville Heights, and Brooklyn.

INFILL LOT INVENTORY

2021 INFILL INVENTORY

Residential infill development refers to the construction of homes on previously developed lots in existing neighborhoods. Since the First Suburbs are typically built-out communities with few large tracts of vacant land, infill development becomes important to meet housing demand.

As part of the 2021 Single-Family Zoning Analysis, County Planning identified 5,320 potential infill lots in single-family zoning districts within 19 First Suburb communities. These were publicly and privately owned vacant lots with the following criteria:

- Not listed with another parcel
- Not part of an adjacent property (e.g. side yards, back yards, driveways, etc.)
- Could be accessed from the street and not landlocked behind other lots
- On an existing street, not just a platted street
- Surrounded by other developed lots or located in a developed neighborhood
- Had previously been developed and/or was not fully forested
- Comparable to surrounding residential lots in size and/or shape

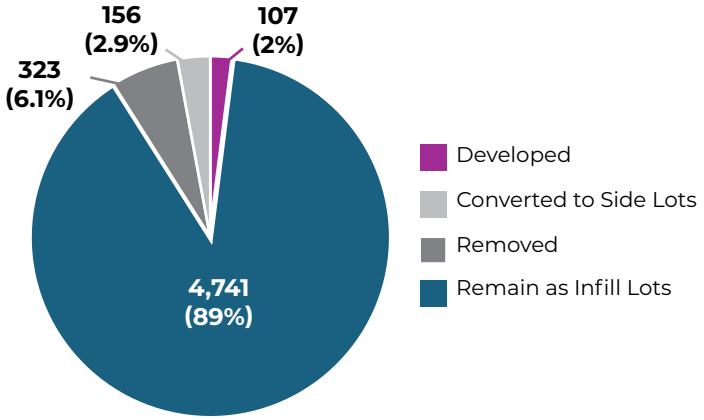
2024 INFILL INVENTORY UPDATE

As part of this 2024 update, the 5,320 lots identified in 2021 were re-evaluated to measure progress and remaining potential for infill housing in the First Suburbs. Despite some development and lot absorption, nearly 90% of the original inventory remains potentially available for infill housing.

From 2021 to 2024, the following changes occurred to the inventoried lots:

- **Developed**: 107 lots (2%) have been built upon with new residential construction.
- **Converted to side lots**: 156 lots (2.9%) have been absorbed by neighboring properties, likely incentivized by County and municipal side lot programs.
- **Removed-does not qualify**: 323 lots (6.1%) were determined, based on updated information, to not meet the previously identified criteria (e.g. being part of adjacent non-vacant property, small size, landlocked, etc.).
- **Remain as infill lots:** 4,741 lots (89%) remain as potential infill sites.

FIGURE 11
2024 INFILL INVENTORY UPDATE



Note: this exercise does not account for new infill lots that have since been created through new demolitions since 2021

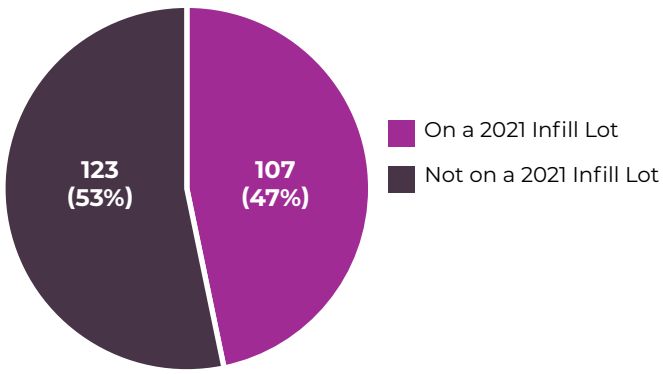
NEW INFILL CONSTRUCTION

SINGLE- AND TWO- FAMILY CONSTRUCTION IN THE FIRST SUBURBS, 2021-2024

In total from 2021 to 2024, First Suburb communities built 231 single- and two-family houses, with 107 (46%) built on lots identified in the 2021 infill lot inventory. This high share of infill development underscores the critical role infill plays in meeting housing needs in the First Suburbs.

The impact is greater than reported because some newly built homes that qualify as infill were not included in the original inventory. For example, the table on page 23 shows that in South Euclid, 29 homes were built on previously identified infill lots and 19 were on other lots. However, all 19 could be considered infill housing—two replaced demolished houses, and the remaining 17 are part of Lowden Place, a redevelopment of the former 6-acre Lowden Elementary School site located within a residential neighborhood.

FIGURE 12
SINGLE- AND TWO- FAMILY CONSTRUCTION IN THE FIRST SUBURBS, 2021-2024



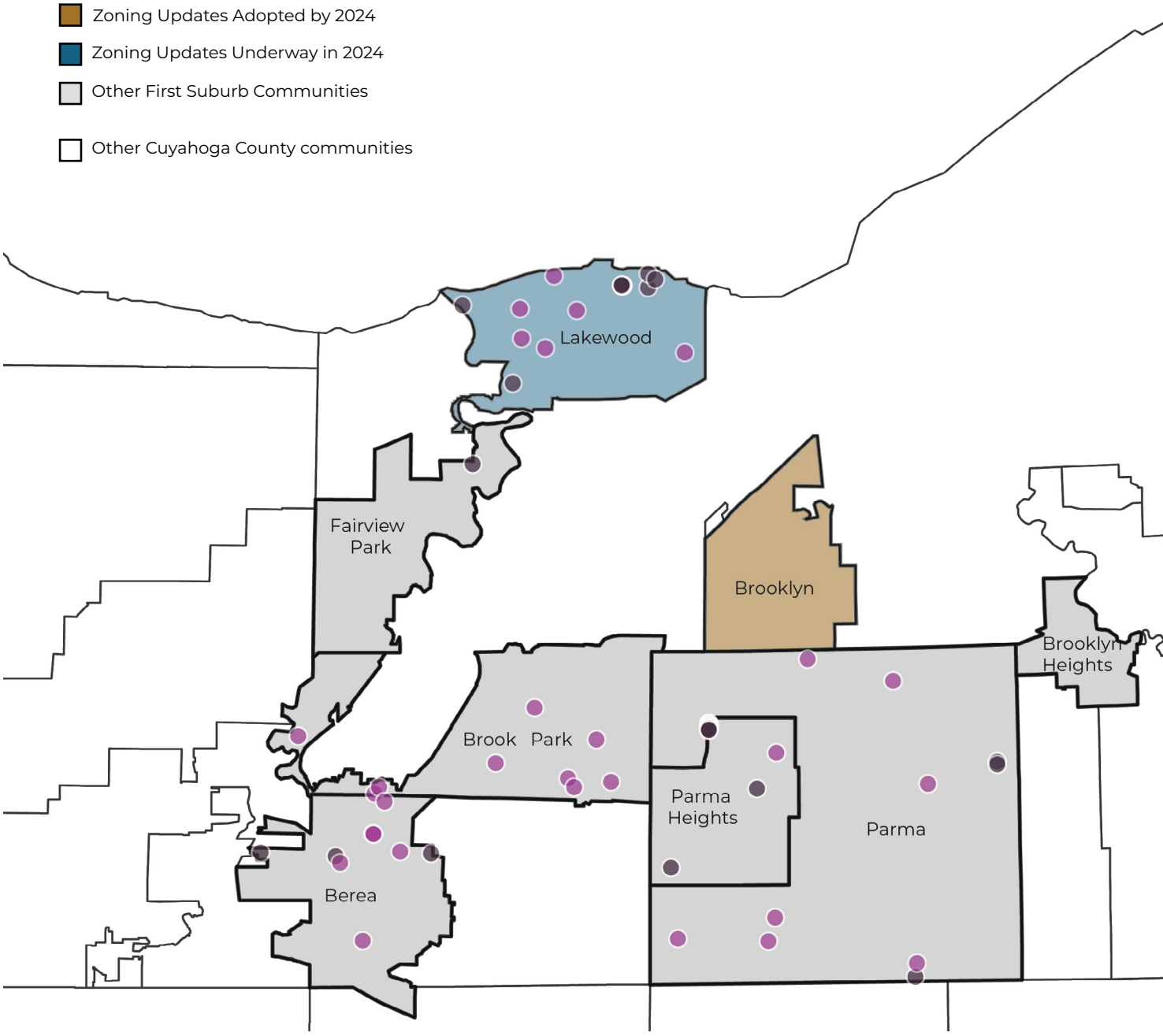
FIRST SUBURBS FACILITATE INFILL

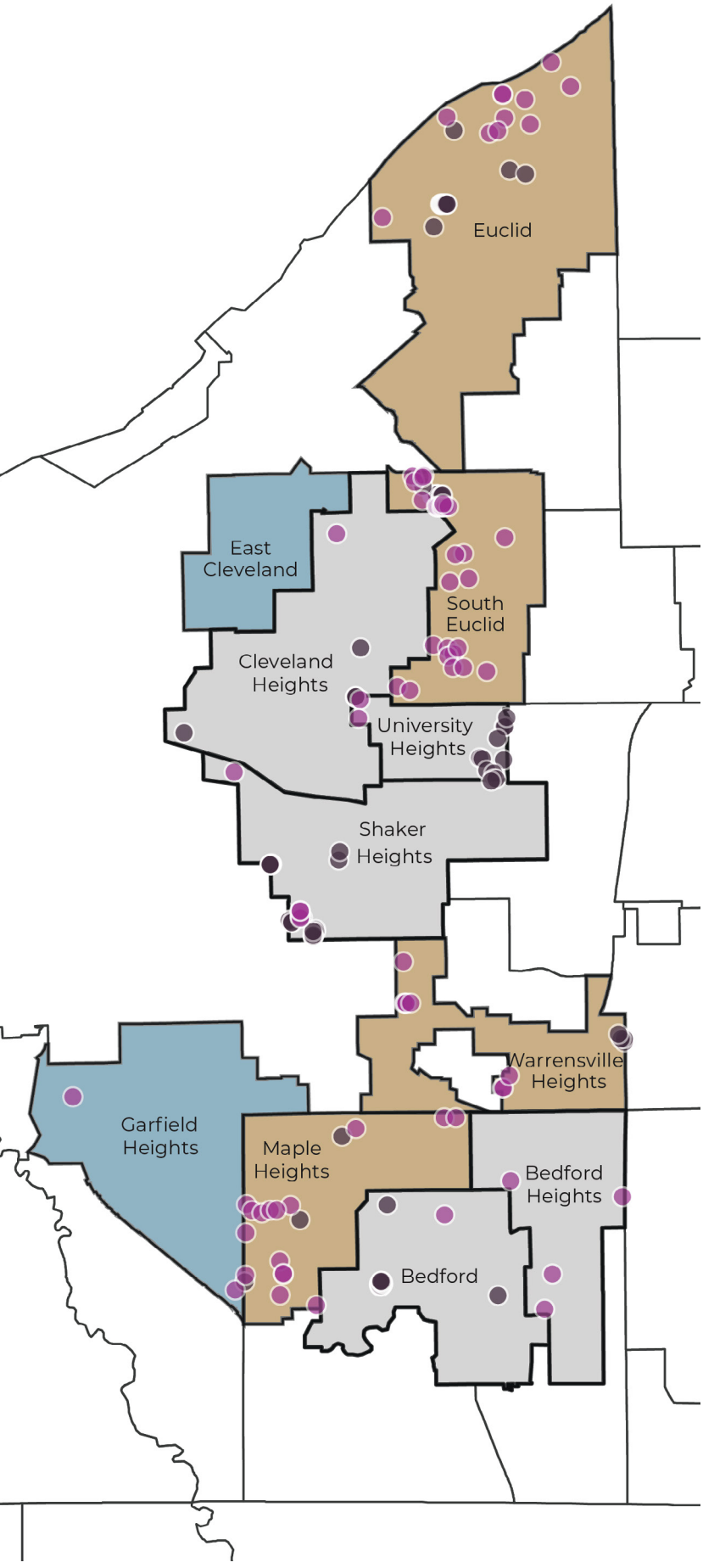
The 2021 Single-Family Zoning Analysis revealed that restrictive zoning in First Suburb communities was limiting infill development. Since then, many communities have updated regulations to remove barriers, make more lots buildable, and provide clearer guidance. Zoning changes in South Euclid, Maple Heights, Warrensville Heights, Euclid, and Brooklyn have made over 25,000 parcels buildable without variances for dimensional requirements like lot size and width. Additional communities, including Garfield Heights, Lakewood, and East Cleveland, have adopted or are pursuing similar changes.

South Euclid stands out as a leader in this effort. Partnering with County Planning, the city created a new overlay zoning district that reduced minimum lot size and lot width requirements—turning previously non-conforming lots into buildable, marketable sites. The city has also actively promoted these infill opportunities. As a result, between 2021 and 2024, South Euclid has achieved the highest number of new homes (48) among first suburbs. The city continues to build momentum, with nearly twice as many homes currently in the pipeline.

These successes reinforce the findings of the 2021 Single-Family Zoning Analysis: addressing restrictive zoning and ensuring active municipal involvement are critical to advancing infill development.

FIGURE 13
SINGLE- & TWO- FAMILY CONSTRUCTION IN THE FIRST SUBURBS, 2021-2024





First Suburb Community	New Construction: On a 2021 Infill lot	New Construction: Not on a 2021 Infill Lot	Total
South Euclid	29	19	48
Euclid	11	15	26
Shaker Heights	6	20	26
Maple Heights	16	3	19
University Heights	2	15	17
Lakewood	6	9	15
Parma Heights	1	14	15
Bedford	0	15	15
Warrensville Heights	8	4	12
Parma	7	3	10
Brook Park	9	0	9
Berea	6	3	9
Bedford Heights	4	0	4
Cleveland Heights	1	2	3
Garfield Heights	2	0	2
Fairview Park	0	1	1
East Cleveland	0	0	0
Brooklyn Heights	0	0	0
Brooklyn	0	0	0
TOTAL	**107**	**123**	**231**

SECTION 3

SUBURBAN VACANT LOT INVENTORY & TOOL

This section describes the core of the project: the Suburban Residential Vacant Lot Inventory and the mapping tool built from it. Like the Single-Family Zoning Analysis, this inventory identifies opportunities for residential construction. However, its scope is broader—capturing both infill and vacant lots potentially suitable for single-family and multi-family development across all suburban communities in Cuyahoga County. The inventory also undergoes an additional level of analysis to assess buildability, incorporating dimensional and environmental constraints. Finally, rather than presenting the inventory as a static map, it serves as the foundation for a dynamic tool that remains current and allows users to explore individual lots and customize analyses.

The previous two sections provided context and demonstrated the need for a residential vacant lot tool. As discussed earlier, housing dynamics—particularly new construction—vary significantly across the county. Engagement with communities in prior projects also revealed substantial differences in capacity among municipalities, underscoring the need for an accessible, user-friendly tool that helps level the playing field, increase transparency, and support more data-driven decision-making.

The Suburban Residential Vacant Lot Tool fulfills this need and is designed to be accessible and useful to a range of stakeholders. Because it relies on publicly accessible datasets that are frequently maintained, the tool can remain relevant and up-to-date over time. It is also intended to supplement and further support conversations between municipalities and stakeholders, helping them better address their vacant land and residential development needs.

SECTION 3 KEY FINDINGS

- **Overall inventory of buildable lots:** Of the 14,925 lots in the initial inventory, 11,258 lots (75.4%) were considered buildable, meaning they fit minimal lot dimensions for a typical single-family home and had enough land free of environmental constraints.

- **Limited city control of buildable lots:** Slightly over a quarter (26.9%) of lots were in city land banks and the majority (71.1%) are privately owned lots.

- **Vacant lots are concentrated geographically:** Buildable lots are concentrated in the east inner-ring suburbs (50.7%) and west outer-sing Suburbs (24.8%).

- **More potential for by-right single-family construction:** With 82.9% of buildable lots located in single-family zoning districts, ensuring zoning regulations are current and reflect community priorities is essential.

INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

INITIAL INVENTORY

The Suburban Residential Vacant Lot Inventory is a compilation of lots that are potentially available for residential development in suburban communities. The inventory includes four types of lots presumed to be vacant: private vacant lots, city land bank lots, lots with recent demolition permits, and County Land Bank available vacant lots.

The majority of the inventory was sourced from the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office, which categorizes lots using land use codes. For this inventory, the following codes were included: private vacant lots (taxable land-use codes 5000 – RES VACANT LAND and 4000 – COMMERCIAL VACANT LAND) and land bank lots (tax-exempt land-use code 6411 – CITY LAND BANK). While these lots may be presumed vacant, they are not necessarily available for development, as individual property owners make those decisions.

Because this data can lag behind real-time conditions by up to two years, additional datasets were incorporated to create a more current inventory. Permit data was received from the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office which compiles it annually from monthly community submissions. Lots with demolition permits were added to the inventory, while lots with building permits were taken out of the inventory.

Lastly, the Cuyahoga Land Bank provided a list of vacant lots available to acquire, which was incorporated into the inventory.

As of July 2026, there were a total of 14,925 lots in the initial inventory.

BUILDABILITY ANALYSIS

To evaluate how many of these lots were buildable, the inventory was filtered using key criteria related to dimensional and environmental constraints.

FIGURE 14
LOTS BY BUILDABILITY

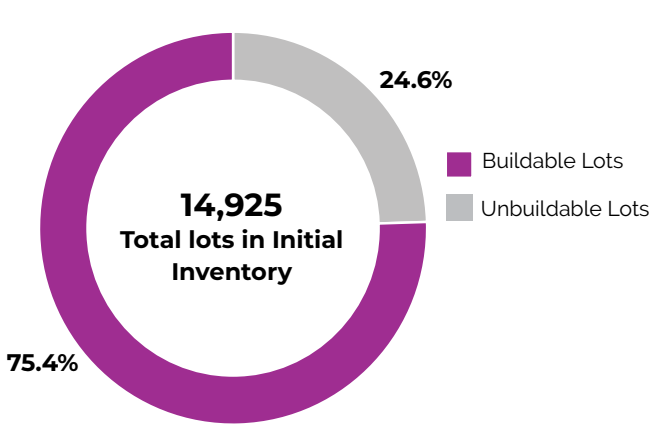
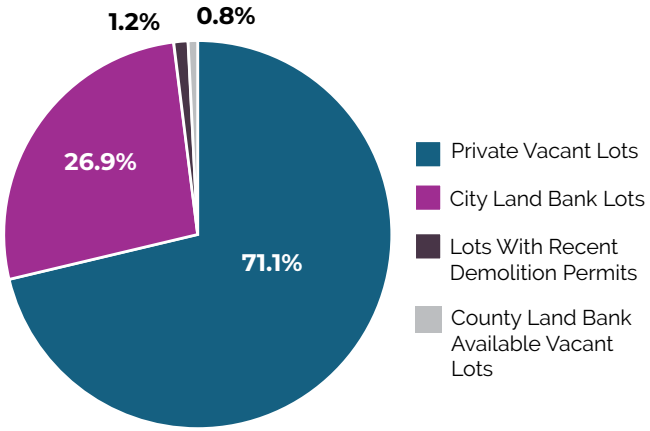


FIGURE 15
BUILDABLE LOTS BY TYPE



A lot was considered buildable if it met the following criteria:

- A minimum lot size of 3,000 square feet and a minimum legal frontage of 30 feet.
- At least 2,000 square feet of land free of environmental constraints.

Environmental constraints included steep slopes, 100-year flood zones, riparian buffers, conservation easements, and solid waste/dump sites.

RESULTS

Of the 14,925 lots in the initial inventory, 11,258 lots (75.4%) met the criteria for buildability. Most buildable lots (71.3%) were privately owned. Municipalities have site control over 26.7% of the buildable lots through their city land banks.

Geographically, over half (60.2%) of buildable lots are located in the east inner-ring suburbs. Although these communities have experienced increased construction activity over the last four years, they still maintain a large inventory of available lots. This indicates that beyond physical constraints, market factors may be limiting the ability of east inner-ring suburbs to bring more of these lots into market.

On the other side of the County, nearly a quarter (24.8%) of buildable lots are in the west outer-ring suburbs, which continue to have the highest levels of new construction. These communities have previously undeveloped land available for development and are able to convert it into new residential construction relatively quickly.

From a zoning perspective, a significant majority (82.9%) of buildable lots fall within single-family zoning districts, indicating that substantially more land is available for by-right single-family infill construction than for multi-family development. Opportunities for multi-family residential construction are comparatively more limited.

FIGURE 16
BUILDABLE LOTS BY SUBURB

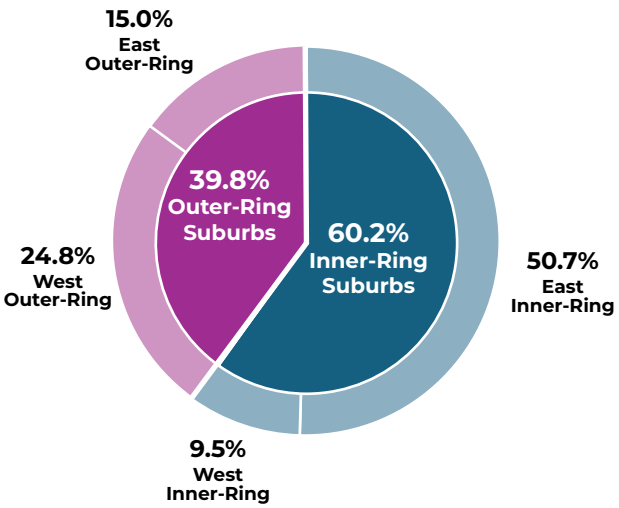
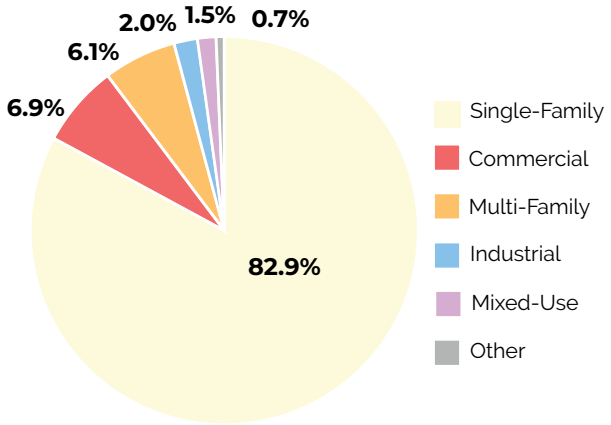


FIGURE 17
BUILDABLE LOTS BY ZONING



MAPPING TOOL

In addition to providing a snapshot of current opportunities for residential construction across suburban communities, the inventory also serves as the foundation for an online mapping tool that helps identify, track, and evaluate potential lots for residential development.

PURPOSE

This tool makes vacant lot data easily accessible and serves as an initial screening resource to quickly evaluate sites, increasing awareness for all users. Its flexible design enables users to tailor it to their specific needs.

For municipalities, it can help:

- Increase transparency and facilitate discussions with various stakeholders
- Identify focus areas for residential development, and support preparations of RFQs or RFPs
- Identify barriers to residential development such as zoning incompatibilities

For development professionals or others involved in vacant lot development, the tool can help:

- Reveal potential sites in communities they may not have previously considered
- Build a more informed starter list of potential sites and supplement due diligence efforts
- Increase efficiency through a more targeted process

CONSIDERATIONS

Several key factors were considered when developing the tool to ensure its effectiveness:

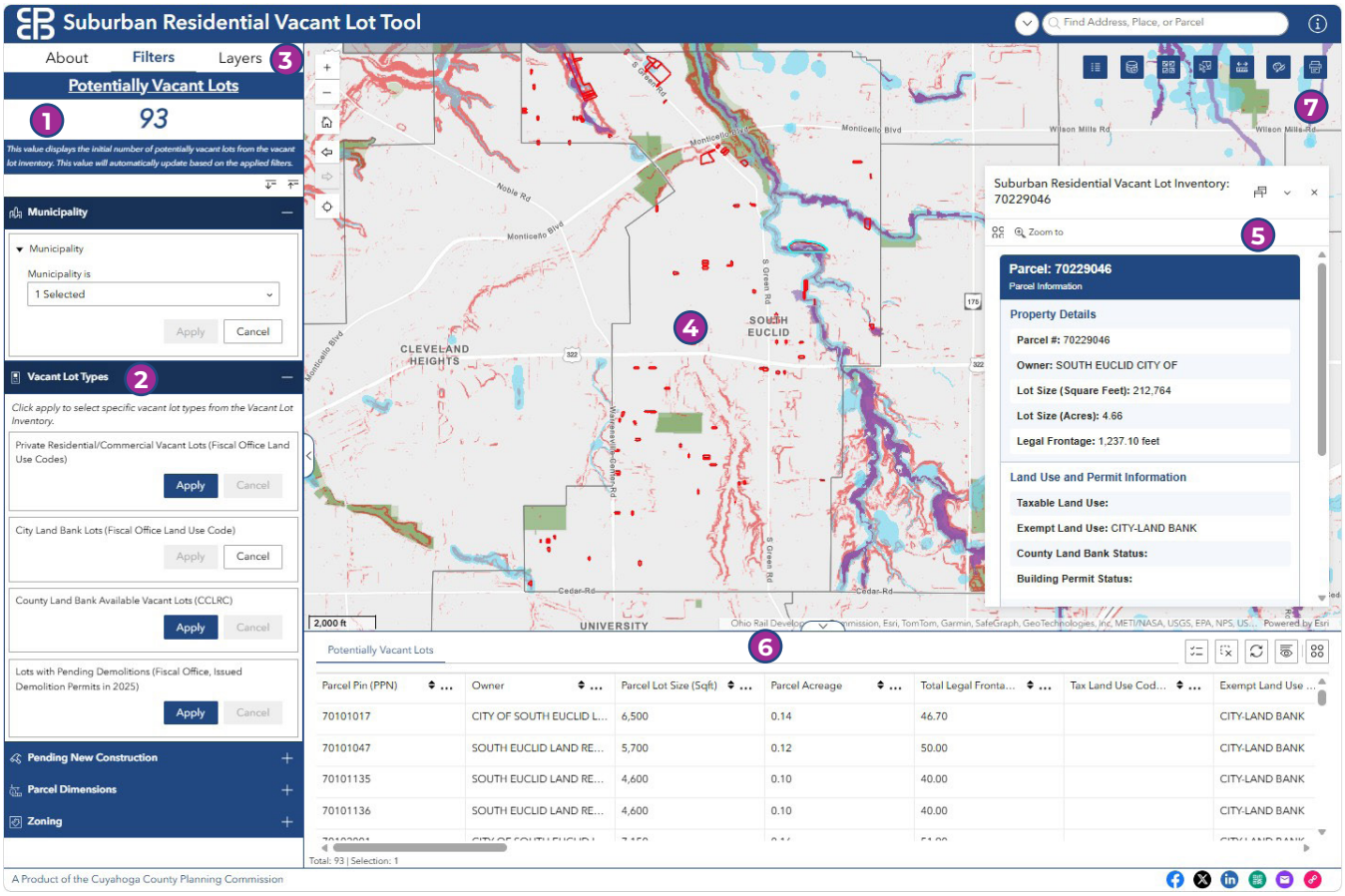
- **Reliable sources:** Uses publicly available datasets that are routinely maintained, ensuring relevance while minimizing long-term upkeep
- **Focused metrics:** Prioritizes the most influential physical metrics affecting a lot's buildability
- **Customizability:** Offers filters and layers that can be adjusted based on each user's goals
- **Intuitive design**: Provides a simple, user-friendly interface appropriate for a wide range of users.

FEATURES

The tool includes five sets of filters that allow users to tailor their analysis. The first three filters narrow the scope by selected municipalities, vacant lot types, and by removing lots with recent building permits. Additional filters allow users to adjust minimum and maximum lot size and lot width thresholds. A final filter enables selection based on generalized zoning categories.

As filters are adjusted, the map, vacant lot counter, and attribute table update to reflect the new selections. Users can also turn environmental layers on or off to identify lots with potential environmental constraints and manually assess their development potential. Figure 19 shows a screenshot of the tool interface and its key features.

FIGURE 18
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL VACANT LOT TOOL FEATURES



1. **Vacant Lot Counter:** Displays the number of potentially vacant lots based on applied filters
2. **Filters:** Narrows list of potential vacant lots by municipality, vacant lot type, recent permits, lot dimensions, and zoning
3. **Layers:** Provides additional map layers to turn on/off that displays environmental features, zoning districts, and other types of relevant lots
4. **Map:** Provides different map views based on applied filters and layers
5. **Pop-Up:** *W*hen a lot is clicked, a summary of lot details is displayed
6. **Table:** Provides a list of filtered lots and their details and allows the ability to export it
7. **Print:** Creates a printable map of the current view based on pre-set layout options

To learn more and access the tool, visit : www.countyplanning.us/RVLA


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