

## SHAKER HEIGHTS

# Department of Economic Development

## SUMMARY OF PRIORITIES AND GOALS

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NEIGHBORHOOD AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

JANUARY 14, 2026

# Economic Development Priorities

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- Business Growth and Support
  - Attraction, Retention, Expansion
  - Business support services
- Long-Term Commercial District Planning & Redevelopment
  - Partnership with Shaker Heights Development Corp (SHDC)
- Community Development
  - Home Repair Grant Programs
  - Community Network Building in Moreland; Neighborhood Engagement

# Approach is Grounded in Long-Term Planning

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## Strategic Investment Plan (2000)

- Identified commercial areas as problem areas lacking character and quality seen in neighborhoods
- Recommended offering vibrant mix of quality commercial businesses to serve all economic groups and creating a wide range of well-maintained housing accessible to a variety of household types

## Economic Development Plan (2010)

- Update to Strategic Investment Plan; restated commitment to commercial development
- Key Findings: diversify the City's tax base; establish business-proactive policies; develop quality office space; provide incentives to improve commercial property and attract targeted businesses; generate density required to support amenities (restaurants and retail)

## Lee Road Action Plan (2023)

- Recommends investments and development on Lee Road south of Van Aken Blvd. into Cleveland
- Community-driven vision to comprehensively transform the area into a thriving commercial district that is attractive, walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly

# How Economic Development Meets City Goals

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- **Superior Response & Service Delivery:** “Deliver outstanding services including... commercial development...”
- **Financial Health & Sustainability:** Includes goal to “increase the tax base by maintaining and increasing high quality housing and commercial development.”
- **Quality Housing:** “Invest in both new and existing housing to ensure that a diversity of high-quality and well-maintained housing types are available to residents. Encourage both reinvestment in older housing and the growth of additional attractive housing types to meet the needs and desires of current and future residents across a wide spectrum.”
- **Economic Development:** “Develop and maintain vibrant commercial districts through public/private partnerships and other innovative approaches.”
- We prioritize **Greenspaces & Public Spaces** in commercial district development, and we promote **Environmental Sustainability** with the business community and in development.

# Business Growth and Support

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- Attract new businesses to the City of Shaker Heights
- Retain existing businesses and encourage business expansions
- Provide targeted business and development incentives
- Engage and establish positive working relationships with local businesses
  - Serve as City liaison to businesses; help businesses navigate City processes
  - Connect Shaker businesses to available regional support and resources
  - Respond to inquiries from current and prospective business
  - Engage Shaker businesses in events and initiatives to promote business vitality in the City
- Storytelling and marketing
  - Shop Shaker – “buy local” campaign
  - Monthly Business News to all Shaker businesses
  - Quarterly Community Economic Development Update e-newsletter to the community

# Retention, Expansion & Attraction Tools

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- Vision Fund – Forgivable Loan Program
- Shaker Partnership Program (for tenant improvements)
- Storefront Renovation Program
- Development Incentives:
  - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
  - Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) - Tax Abatement
  - Urban Renewal District (725)

# Economic Development By the Numbers

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315

businesses operate  
in Shaker Heights

17      \$4.1M  
loans      invested

Shaker Partnership  
Program

24      \$466K  
projects      invested

Storefront Renovation

18      \$1.9M  
projects      loaned

Vision Loans

# Vision Fund – Forgivable Loan Program

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- Forgivable loan program targeted to established, growing businesses and high tech earlier stage businesses that are ready to move into office space in Shaker Heights
- Targeted to industries identified in Economic Development Plan – Healthcare, IT, Professional Services, Engineering and Design
- Funds can be use for tenant improvements and equipment purchases
- Amount of loan and portion forgiven is based on income/payroll taxes collected over the term
- Businesses commit to keep their operations in the City of Shaker Heights for at least double the amount of time it takes to pay back the loan via income tax receipts

**18**

**Total Vision Loans**

**\$1.9M**

**Loaned**

**\$1.7M**

**Repaid**

**2**

**Active Loans**

# Shaker Partnership Program

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- Funded by Cuyahoga County and City's Economic Development & Housing Fund
- City and County jointly contribute equity toward a commercial buildout to enable a business to open or expand
- Typical Structure:
  - Business contributes a minimum 10% equity toward a private loan
  - City and County contribute up to 15% as equity (no repayment if income tax targets met)
  - A private loan encompasses 75% of the total project
  - Business enters into agreement with the City; length of agreement aligns with lease term; claw back language requires repayment if business closes before end of term
- Business is required to work with a Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

# Shaker Partnership Program Funding Summary

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County Round	Year Started	Amount Committed	Notes
Round 1	2014	City and Cuyahoga County each committed \$250,000	Pilot program in Cleveland and Shaker Heights only
Round 2	2017	No new funds	City assisted with best practices in expansion to Cleveland Heights, Maple Heights, Fairview Park and Lakewood
Round 3	2019	County contributed \$150,000 and City contributed \$50,000	In Round 3, the County provided additional funding for Shaker Heights, Lakewood and Cleveland Heights

A total of \$200,654 currently remains available to award.

# Shaker Partnership Program 10-year Loan Summary; 2015-2025

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**17**

Total Shaker  
Partnership Loans

**12**

Loans to MBE/FBE  
owned businesses

**\$499,346**

Invested by  
City and County

**\$4.1M**

Estimated total  
project investment

**4**

Active, open Shaker  
Partnership Loans

**109**

Estimated full time  
jobs created

**\$448K**

Average annual  
payroll

# Storefront Renovation Program

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- Purpose/Goals:
  - Improve the appearance of commercial districts
  - Support property and business owner efforts to improve building exteriors
  - Encourage improved design and better quality signage in commercial districts
  - Attract, retain and support locally-owned businesses
- Signage Only: rebate up to 50% of project cost, not to exceed \$3,000
- Full Façade: rebate up to 50% of total project cost, not to exceed \$15,000

**24**

**Total completed storefronts**

**\$130K**

**City investment in storefront rebates**

**\$466K**

**Total exterior investments**

**5**

**Projects active or in the pipeline**

BEFORE



3700 Lee Road

AFTER



Before



After



3620 Lee Road

Before



As Designed



After



Scorpacciata Pasta Co.  
13051 Larchmere Blvd.

# Commercial District Redevelopment

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## Commercial Districts:

1. Chagrin-Lee (Shaker Towne Center, Lee Road, Chagrin Blvd.)
2. Greater Van Aken District (including District South and Bloc at Almar)
3. Larchmere (shared with Cleveland)
4. Fairmount Circle (shared with University Heights)

## Focus:

- Comprehensive revitalization, grounded in long-term planning
- Placemaking and Vibrancy
- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
- Available Properties – for lease or sale

# Lee Road Action Plan

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Complete Streets Public Infrastructure Improvements: \$30M

Generating Excitement: Annual Chagrin-Lee Fest; Murals; Storefront Reno

Business Retention, Expansion & Attraction

Development Opportunities; Partnership with SHDC

- Neighborhood Center (bus depot relocation)
- Southern Gateway (at Scottsdale)

# Van Aken District Phased Development



## Phase 1 Mixed-Use

100,000 SF retail; 60,000 SF office; 103 apartment units

Opened in 2019

RAYE: 227 units; opened end of 2024

Arcadia: 141 units; 2nd floor office; ground floor retail; under construction

RTA Improvements

Future Phase: NW corner of Chagrin and Warrensville

# Home Repair Grants & Assistance

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- Grant Programs

Exterior Maintenance Grant	up to \$3,500 to correct cited violations
Senior Emergency Safety Grant	up to \$700 for emergency repairs and/or accessibility improvements for homeowners age 62+
Paint Program	free paint to correct exterior painting violations
Moreland Model Block (MMB)	up to \$3,500 for improvements visible from the street; Moreland residents only

- To be eligible, homeowners must be:
  - Owner-occupants
  - Current on property taxes or on approved payment plan
  - Earn less than or equal to 100% Area Median Income (not required for MMB)
  - Contribute at least a 10% match

Before



After



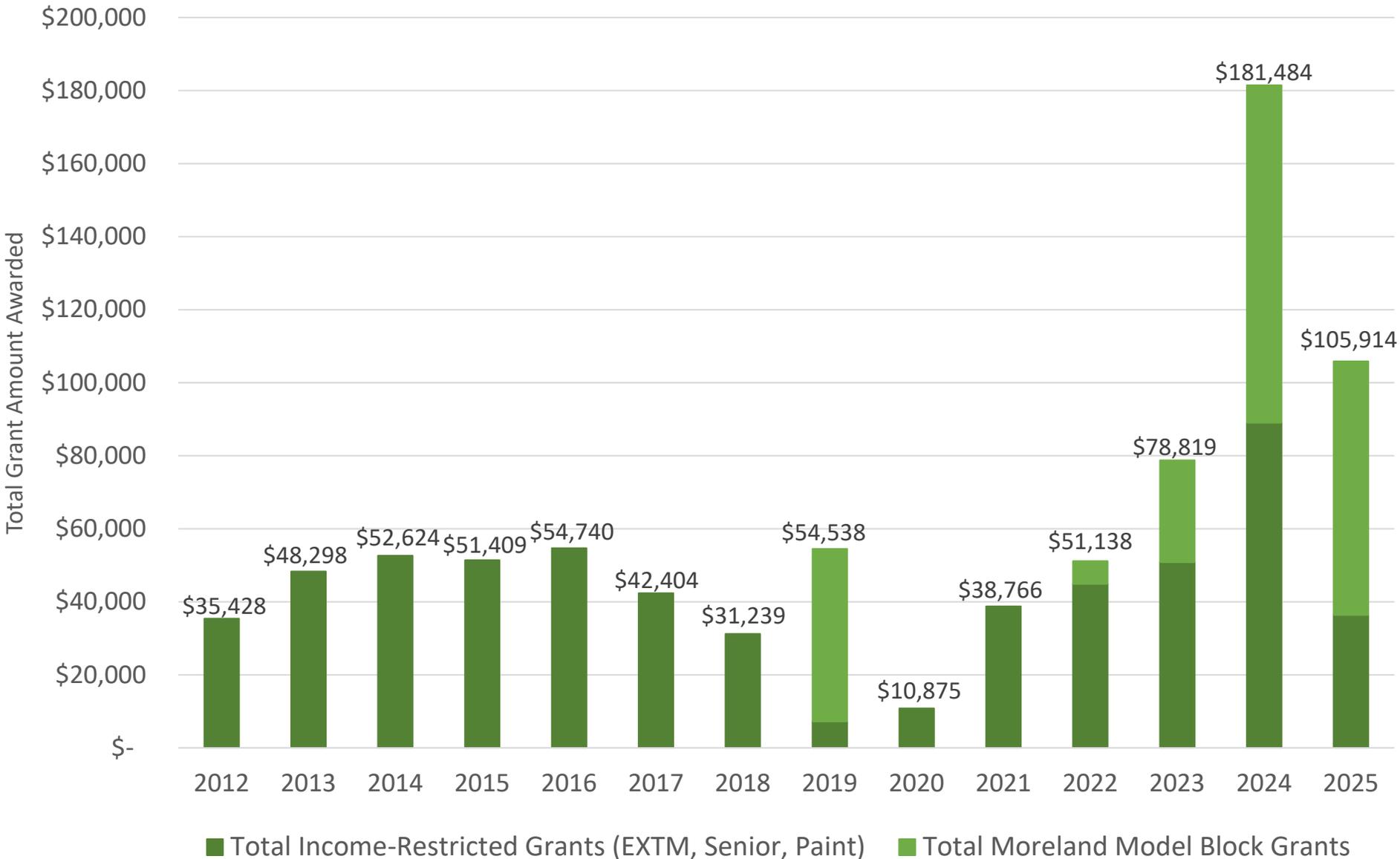
# Before/During



# After



# Home Repair Grant Awards (2012-2025)



*Neighborhoods inspected:*

- 2012 Fernway; Onaway
- 2013 None
- 2014 Moreland; Boulevard
- 2015 Lomond; Sussex
- 2016 Malvern; Ludlow
- 2017 Mercer
- 2018 None
- 2019 Fernway; Onaway
- 2020 None
- 2021 Moreland; Boulevard
- 2022 Lomond; Sussex
- 2023 Malvern; Ludlow
- 2024 Mercer
- 2025 Mercer continued

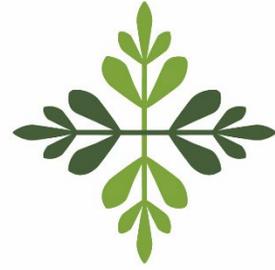
*Notes:*

- Historically, \$50,000 available annually for home repair grants. Increased to \$100,000 in 2019. Increased to \$150,000 in 2024.
- Moreland Model Block piloted in 2019; paused 2020-2021
- All grants paused in 2020 due to pandemic
- 2025 data is through Nov. 2025

# Moreland Neighbor Network Support

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- Community Network Building
- Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)
- Began as part of comprehensive approach to reinvesting in Moreland after the foreclosure crisis
  - In 2025, we celebrated 10 years of network building in Moreland.
  - Welcoming and belonging. Pride in Neighborhood and Place.
- 2026 priorities: Launch Moreland Mini-Grant Pilot; continue Leadership Development; ongoing networking building & coaching



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Questions?

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