

ULI 2025 HINES

STUDENT URBAN DESIGN COMPETITION



Briefing Materials
Cleveland, Ohio
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About the Sponsors



Urban Land Institute is a nonprofit with a mission: *Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide*. ULI's mission priorities are 1) Decarbonizing the real estate sector and accelerating progress to net zero; 2) Increasing housing attainability in communities around the world; and 3) Educating the next generation of diverse real estate leaders. These priorities are underpinned by a commitment and focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). [Learn more about ULI](#). Follow ULI on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

Hines

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Students and graduates, consider becoming [a member of ULI!](#) ULI members have access to the following:

- [ULI Member Directory](#)
- [ULI Navigator](#)
- [ULI Knowledge Finder](#)
- [ULI Case Studies](#)
- [ULI Bookstore](#) discounts, including on textbooks

The following [Associate Membership](#) discounts are available:

- Under 35 or Government, Nonprofit, and Academia 50 percent discount off the regular rate
- Students 75 percent discount off the regular rate

About the Competition

The ULI Hines Student Competition, now in its 23rd year, is one of the core education initiatives of the Urban Land Institute. The competition offers eligible students the opportunity to form multidisciplinary teams and engage in a challenging exercise in responsible land use. It is part of ULI's ongoing effort to raise interest among young people in creating better communities, improving development patterns, and increasing awareness of the need for multidisciplinary solutions to development and design challenges.

The late Gerald D. Hines, founder and chairman of the Hines real estate company, was the 2002 recipient of the \$100,000 [ULI Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development](#). A firm believer in the power of people and fostering transformative values, Hines declined the prize money and endowed the competition with an additional \$3 million, ensuring its longevity and legacy for future generations of practitioners. "The purpose of the competition is to raise awareness, particularly among the next generation, of the important role that high-quality urban design plays in creating not just beautiful buildings, but living environments," Hines said.

The competition encourages cooperation and teamwork among future real estate developers and investors and the many allied professions, such as architecture, landscape architecture, planning, finance, historic preservation, law, and public policy, among others. Since the competition began in 2003, more than 11,371 students on over 2,286 teams have participated, including 88 teams (440 students) who have made it to the finalist round. More than 1,000 real estate and design professionals have served as advisers to these teams.

Please refer to the competition website, uli.org/hines for more background and updates.

Notice to Competitors

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU COMMUNICATE REGARDING THE COMPETITION WITH HINES; THE CITY OF CLEVELAND OR OTHER REGIONAL MUNICIPALITIES; CUYOGHA COUNTY; THE STATE OF OHIO; THE NONPROFIT AND PUBLIC AGENCIES INVOLVED; THE PROPERTY OWNERS OR EMPLOYEES OF THE PROPERTY OWNERS; CONSULTANTS WHO ARE WORKING OR WHO HAVE WORKED ON THE PROJECT; THE COMPETITION JURY; AREA RESIDENTS; OR OTHER ASSOCIATED ENTITIES UNLESS THEY ALREADY ARE AMONG YOUR PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS. DO NOT CALL ULI'S HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, D.C., ULI CLEVELAND, OR OTHER ULI DISTRICT COUNCILS UNLESS THOSE DISTRICT COUNCILS ALREADY HAVE OFFERED TO BE A RESOURCE TO YOUR TEAM. IF ULI LEARNS THAT YOU HAVE TRIED TO COMMUNICATE IN THE MANNER DESCRIBED HERE, ULI MAY DISCARD YOUR SUBMISSION AND THE JURY WILL NOT REVIEW IT.

Citing Sources

You are allowed to use artificial intelligence (AI) if you properly cite your uses of it, including any prompts that you may use. You may use AI tools for tasks such as idea generation and data processing without citation. If you use AI tools to generate imagery, please use citations in the same way that you would for a human designer or photographer. In general, please ensure that if a juror wanted to learn more about your process that they would be able to track your sources easily through your citations. If you are unsure about how to cite something, include a note in your text that describes how you used a certain tool.

Here are examples of [how to cite an AI-generated image](#) (Chicago and APA format) according to Harvard University. To cite AI-generated images in APA style, Harvard recommends you include the figure number above the image (Figure #), include a title above the image in *italics*, and include a caption as such, "Note. Image generated using Adobe Firefly from the prompt artist designing a landscape."

Figure 1

An AI-Generated Image of Landscape Design



Note. Image generated using Adobe Firefly from the prompt artist designing a landscape.

Figure 1: Example of captioning an AI-generated image | Source: [Harvard University](#)

The Competition Host City: Cleveland, Ohio

This year's competition is focused on a site in Cleveland, Ohio. Cleveland, situated on the southern shore of Lake Erie, is a vibrant city known for its rich history, cultural diversity, and [economic transformation](#). Founded in 1796, Cleveland emerged as a key industrial hub in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, driven by its strategic location for shipping and transportation. As of 2024, Cleveland has an estimated population of approximately 372,000 residents. The city has a continuing trend of gradual population decline since its peak in the 1950s. According to recent data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the demographic composition is around 46 percent African American, 35 percent white, 12 percent Hispanic, and 3 percent Asian, reflecting the city's rich cultural tapestry. Cleveland is the largest city in Cuyahoga County, located in northeastern Ohio along the southern shore of Lake Erie. The county has a population of [over 1.25 million residents](#) composed of 57 percent white, 29 percent African American, 7 percent Hispanic, and 3 percent Asian residents. The 2020 Census reported the Cleveland-Elyria Metropolitan Area as having a population of 2,088,251.

The city's proximity to Lake Erie defines its geography, providing waterfront access and recreational opportunities. The city has made substantial strides in recent years in urban revitalization and community engagement.

Cleveland covers an area of about 82.47 square miles, of which 77.73 square miles are land, and 4.75 square miles are water. In terms of land use, Cleveland mixes urban and green spaces, with a combination of residential, commercial, and industrial areas alongside parks including [Cleveland Metroparks](#). The city's revitalization efforts have focused on attracting new businesses and residents, particularly in the downtown area. Cleveland has also been working to enhance public transportation and connectivity, with the [Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority](#) offering a network of buses and rail services to facilitate movement within the city and to surrounding areas.

Overall, Cleveland is a dynamic city in transition, combining its industrial roots with modern urban development, diverse neighborhoods, a commitment to sustainability, community engagement, and economic development.



Figure 2: Greater Cleveland Partnership – Cleveland Development Model | Source: [ArcGIS](#)

Land Acknowledgement

"We recognize that the land within Cuyahoga County, Ohio, where the Cuyahoga Indigenous Tribal Council operates, rests on the traditional territories of the Mississauga, Kaskaskia, and Erie peoples, along with their Indigenous relatives and ancestors. We acknowledge the devastating impacts of colonial warfare and cultural erasure that forcibly displaced these nations and severed countless Indigenous communities across North America from their ancestral lands. Despite these profound injustices, Indigenous nations continue to thrive, preserving identities, cultures, and legacies with strength and resilience. We are deeply grateful to those who generously share their knowledge and goodwill, allowing us to come together in a spirit of collaboration as we work toward the restoration and honoring of these lands."

Sources: [Cuyahoga Indigenous Tribal Council](#)

To learn which Native peoples called your lands home, visit <https://native-land.ca/>.

Moment of Reflection

History

General Moses Cleaveland, a surveyor for the Connecticut Land Company, founded Cleveland in 1796. The city's strategic location by the inlet of the Cuyahoga River facilitated shipping and trade, contributing to its early growth. By the mid-19th century, Cleveland was known as a major industrial hub, bolstered by the arrival of the [Ohio and Erie Canal in 1832](#), which connected the Great Lakes to the Ohio River, promoting commerce and immigration.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked Cleveland's golden age, as the city became a center for manufacturing, particularly in steel, automotive, and machinery industries. This industrial boom attracted a diverse population, including waves of immigrants from Europe, which significantly shaped the city's cultural landscape. However, the latter half of the 20th century saw Cleveland facing economic challenges due to deindustrialization, leading to job losses and population decline. The city's economy transitioned from manufacturing to a focus on health care, education, and technology in the 21st century.

Competition Site History

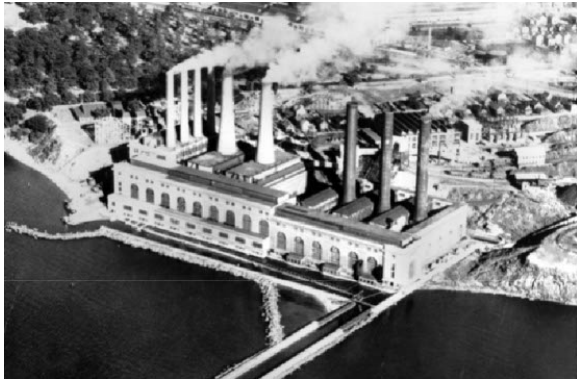


Figure 3: 1924 photo of the Lake Shore Power Plant
| Source: [Cleveland.com](#)



Figure 4: 1950s aerial photo of the Lake Shore Power Plant
| Source: [Cleveland.com](#)

The site was the location of the [Lake Shore Power Plant](#) (also known as the [Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company Power Plant](#)), built in 1911. As energy demands evolved and regulations tightened, particularly regarding air quality standards, the plant faced significant challenges. In 2015, the current owner, Energy Harbor, opted to close the facility rather than invest in costly upgrades necessary to meet new federal air quality regulations. This decision was emblematic of the broader decline in coal-based [energy production](#) across the United States, driven by environmental concerns and a shift toward cleaner energy sources. In 2017, Energy Harbor dismantled the plant, marking the end of an era for the site. The site's closure reflects not only the [changing energy landscape](#) in Cleveland but also the city's broader [industrial decline](#) and subsequent transition toward other economic development.



Figure 5: Gordon Park circa 1909 | Source: [Cleveland Public Library](#)

The power plant and additional infrastructure changes [separated Cleveland neighborhoods](#) from easy access to the [lakefront](#). Before the construction of [Interstate 90 \(I-90\)](#) cut off its direct access, Gordon Park was connected to the lake as pictured in Figure 5. Running east–west across the northern tier of Ohio, construction on I-90 began in the 1930s. This local section of I-90 is a part of the [Cleveland Memorial Shoreway](#), running from East 9th Street to East 55th Street. The Shoreway extends west over the Cuyahoga River and ends at Edgewater Park on the near west side of the city at Lake Avenue. In 1938, there was an eastward expansion to the Illuminating Company plant, which was close to Gordon Park.

The Competition Site

A private company in Cleveland has identified a former industrial site—located east of Downtown Cleveland in the St. Clair Superior neighborhood—as a development opportunity. In addition, two adjacent parcels owned by the City of Cleveland are part of this development opportunity. Together, these three parcels comprise the **Site** which will be the focus of this competition. The Site sits between I-90, to its north, and industrial rail, operated by CSX, to its south. East 55th Street is west of the site and East 72nd Street is east of the site. Both streets host on- and off-ramps to I-90. Currently, the area is stagnant former industrial land and lacks access to the waterfront to its north and the rest of the St. Clair Superior neighborhood to its south. The site was a brownfield that has since been remediated. It is not possible to develop all the land on the Site; more details about the specific challenge will be available on January 6, including the detailed assignment and set of assumptions. Parcel data is available at [Cuyahoga County Parcel Viewer](#) GIS.

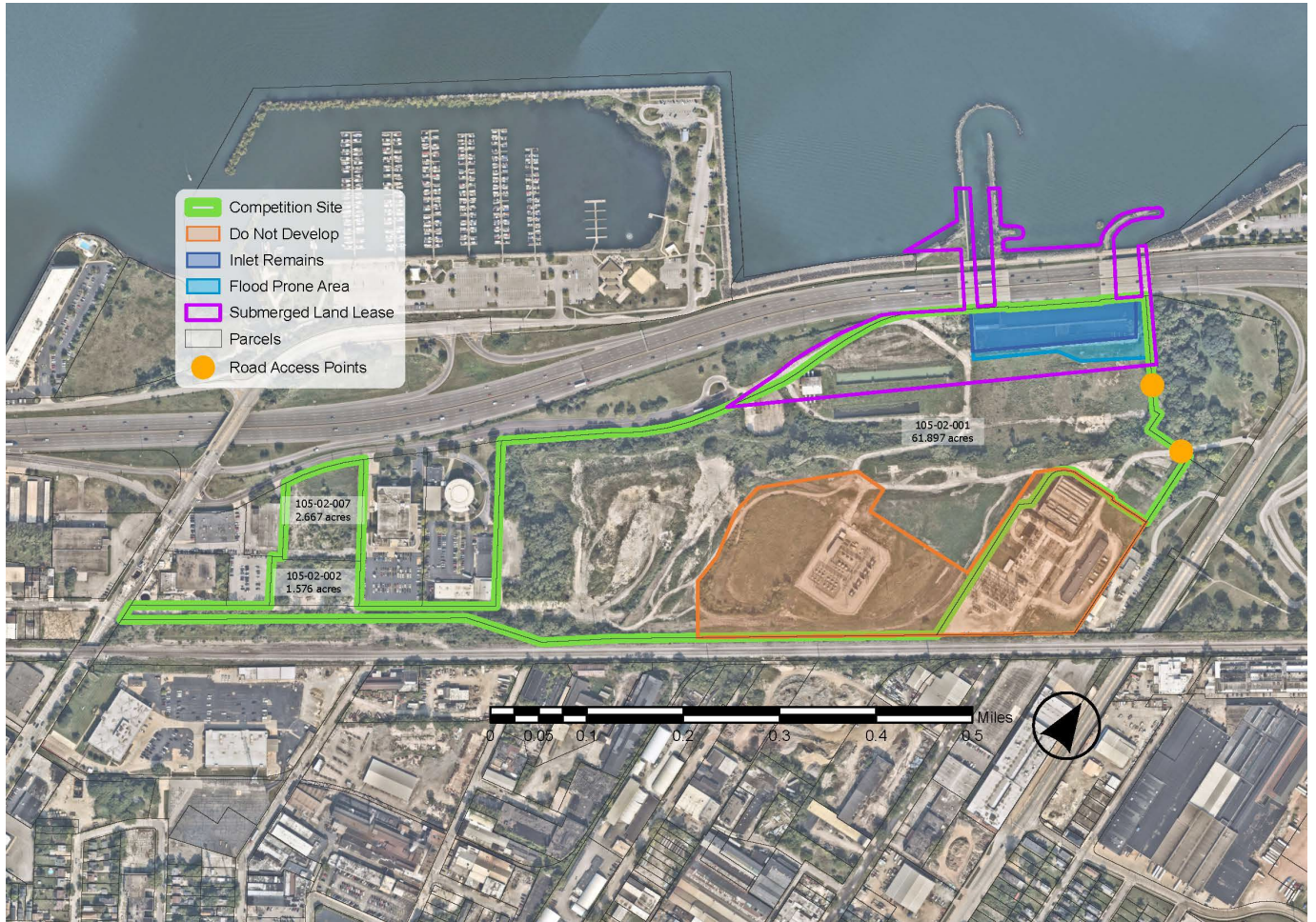


Figure 6: Competition Site | Source: Brooks Patrick

Reading Resources

The links below provide access to resources about Cleveland. Some of these resources will be available in the [Google Drive folder](#), entitled **2025 ULI Hines Student Resources**. You do not need to review every resource listed here in detail, and you should conduct additional research to learn about the region, city, and Site, and follow additional links provided in the brief.

Public Resources

[Downtown Cleveland Developments to Watch](#)

[Cleveland Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Cleveland Market Reports](#)

[Downtown and Waterfront Developments – Greater Cleveland Partnership](#)

[Other Resources](#)

ULI Reading



The following resources are available to students for the competition. Some resources are available only to [ULI members](#). You can find these resources in the [Linked Documents in the Competition Brief](#) sub folder of [Google Drive](#).

- [Emerging Trends in Real Estate® United States and Canada 2025](#) [October 2024], PwC and Urban Land Institute.
- [ULI 2024 Terwilliger Center Home Attainability Index](#) [February 2024], Urban Land Institute.
- [10 Principles for Embedding Racial Equity in Real Estate Development](#) [2022] Urban Land Institute.
- [ULI Cleveland technical assistance panel Improving the Cuyahoga River Infrastructure](#) [November 2021], Urban Land Institute.

ULI Technical Assistance Panels and Award Winners

Technical assistance panels: [Art in Place - Hough Neighborhood](#), April 2024; [National City Brownfields Assessment](#), November 2023; and [ULI Cleveland Improving the Cuyahoga River Infrastructure](#), November 3–4, 2021. These reports are available in the [Linked Documents in the Competition Brief](#) sub folder ([Technical Assistance Panel](#) sub folder).

Award winners: The following are developments relevant to this year's Site that have won the [ULI Americas Awards for Excellence](#):

- 2024, [Cleveland Foundation Headquarters](#), Cleveland, Ohio, United States
- 2023, [Ironworks](#), Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- 2022, [St. Pete Pier](#), St. Petersburg, Florida, United States

Local and Regional Data

Cleveland, Ohio, boasts a wealth of local and regional data from various sources, providing insights into demographics, economic trends, public health, and more. The [U.S. Census Bureau](#), including [Quick Facts](#), provides important demographic data, including population statistics, income levels, and housing information. Additionally, the [City of Cleveland](#) provides access to city-specific reports and data sets, including crime statistics, housing data, and neighborhood profiles. The [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) provides context and background information about employment and the labor market. The [Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency \(NOACA\)](#) offers valuable information on transportation, environmental planning, and economic development in the Greater Cleveland area. Their data includes traffic patterns, air quality assessments, and regional economic analyses.

Some key economic development agencies that provide data and resources for understanding Cleveland's economic landscape include [Cleveland Economic Development Department](#), [Greater Cleveland Partnership](#), and [Cuyahoga County Economic Development](#).

Information on Cleveland destinations is available from the [Cleveland Visitors Center](#). Explore parks, playgrounds, programs, and green spaces through [Cleveland Metroparks](#) and [Cleveland Parks & Recreation](#). Cleveland offers a vibrant array of attractions, arts, and cultural institutions, including the [Rock and Roll Hall of Fame](#), [Cleveland Botanical Garden](#), [Playhouse Square](#), [Cleveland Orchestra](#), [Cleveland Museum of Art](#), and [Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland](#). [Huntington Bank Field](#) is home of the National Football League's [Cleveland Browns](#), while the National Basketball Association's Cleveland Cavaliers play at [Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse](#), and the [Cleveland Guardians](#) of Major League Baseball play at [Progressive Field](#).

Development Context

Urban Planning

The city's latest urban planning initiatives aim to enhance public spaces, improve transportation networks, and promote green infrastructure. Key projects include the ongoing development of the [Cleveland Opportunity Corridor](#), which seeks to connect neighborhoods and improve access to jobs and services. The city also is emphasizing the need for affordable housing and has launched initiatives to preserve existing units while encouraging new developments that meet community needs, implemented through housing policies of the [Cleveland City Planning Commission](#) and the [City of Cleveland Department of Community Development](#).

[The City of Cleveland's Land Reutilization \(Land Bank\) Program](#) is designed to acquire vacant land and market it to individuals, developers, and nonprofit organizations for redevelopment. This program has not been active lately. Additionally, the [Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation](#), known as the Cuyahoga Land Bank, plays a crucial role in addressing vacant properties and promoting redevelopment in Cleveland.

Tour the [Cuyahoga County Planning Commission website](#) for planning reports, maps, and updates on ongoing projects that shape both countywide and city-specific initiatives around effective land use. The [2023 City of Cleveland Property Inventory](#) and story map provide helpful data about the status of 163,000 parcels.

The city is partnering with organizations such as the [Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative](#) to promote innovative design practices and community involvement in the planning process. [Cleveland Development Advisors](#) shares resources for neighborhood development. [Downtown Cleveland Alliance](#) shares insights on districts and [Reimagining Downtown Cleveland](#).

Reconnecting Cleveland to its lake and river waterfronts is a priority that entities in the region share. [Planned developments](#) aim to transform Cleveland's waterfront into a vibrant, mixed-use destination that integrates parks, trails, public spaces, and residential and commercial properties. The 20-year-old [Cleveland Waterfront](#)

[District Plan](#) was commissioned by the city and local organizations to guide the development of Edgewater, Gordon, and Voinovich parks along Lake Erie, intertwining the waterfront and harborfront with surrounding neighborhoods. In 2024, the city released design plans for [key features of this lakefront vision](#), including enhanced connectivity between downtown Cleveland and the lakefront, greening of the waterfront, and restoring lakefront access. These features are included in the Fall 2023 [North Coast Master Plan](#) and will be accessible by the [North Coast Connector](#) pedestrian land bridge, located southeast of the current Cleveland Browns stadium and west of East 9th Street. The U.S. Department of Transportation [recently awarded](#) the [Infrastructure for Rebuilding America \(INFRA\) Grant](#) to the city for the North Coast Connector project, underscoring the connection between downtown and the lakefront.

Just north of the Competition Site is the future location of a \$300-million project called the [CHEERS project](#), short for the Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Strategy. It envisions using dredged sediment from the bottom of the lakefront's harbor and the Cuyahoga River to create an island in Lake Erie, just offshore. Read more on this in [Cleveland Magazine](#). [Cleveland Metroparks](#) held a community open house to update residents, community members, and stakeholders on the [CHEERS](#) project's aim for a more natural, accessible, and attractive lakefront. Gordon Park, south of Interstate 90, was added to Cleveland Metroparks in 2023. Improvements to the park will occur prior to implementation of CHEERS. Read more on Metroparks' vision as told by [The Land](#) and other related studies [here](#). Initial phases include Gordon Park's \$8M [concept plan](#), set to be completed by 2027. The [Mandel Community Trail](#), stretching from E 55 to E9, is a \$12 M project with 2026 completion, and the [Patrick S. Parker Community Sailing Center](#) is a \$15 M project which is also targeted for 2026 completion.



Figure 7: Cleveland Metroparks' vision of east side lakefront | Source: [The Land](#)

Historic Resources

Cleveland's historic landmarks and districts highlight its [unique heritage](#). One of the most notable adjacent to the project Site is the [Cleveland Cultural Gardens](#), which features beautifully landscaped gardens representing various ethnic communities that have shaped the city's identity. This collection celebrates Cleveland's multicultural history and is in [Cleveland's Rockefeller Park](#).

Another key historic area is the [Warehouse District](#), characterized by its 19th-century architecture and vibrant nightlife. The district has experienced a revitalization, now serving as a hub for restaurants, bars, and residential spaces, while preserving its architectural history.

The [Tremont West Development Corporation](#) maintains Tremont, known for its stunning Victorian homes and thriving arts scene, steeped in Eastern European heritage. The area is home to the famous Tremont Arts and Cultural Festival, which celebrates local artists and the community's vibrant culture. Additionally, [Slavic Village](#) retains its historic charm, rooted in a strong manufacturing background and a tight-knit community.

The [Hough](#) neighborhood played a pivotal role in the civil rights movement. The neighborhood continues to be a focal point for legacy, culture, and community development.

More historical archives can be found through the [Cleveland Memory Project](#) and [Cleveland Historical](#).

Housing and the Unhoused

The Department of Community Development offers resources in support of Affordable and Market Rate Housing Development through its [Housing Development Office](#). This department provides information and reports on housing policies, programs, and statistics related to housing supply and affordability. The [Cuyahoga County Office of Homeless Services](#) offers data on homelessness in the county and services including prevention, shelter services, and permanent supportive housing. [Cleveland Neighborhood Progress](#) focuses on community development and provides insights into housing market trends, vacancies, and affordability challenges in Cleveland.

The [Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research](#) conducts research and advocacy related to housing issues, including affordability and discrimination, and offers a variety of reports. [Cleveland State University's Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs](#) publishes studies and reports on housing and urban development issues in Cleveland, including the annual *State of Housing* report. The [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) produces and compiles research on Ohio's housing landscape. These resources will provide comprehensive data and insights into Cleveland's housed and unhoused populations.

In 2024, two new initiatives emerged from the City of Cleveland. "[A Home for Every Neighbor](#)" expedites housing for unsheltered residents. In partnership with KeyBank, [the Local Initiative Support Corporation](#) is investing \$100 million to enhance the development of mixed-income rental housing and homeownership opportunities.

Transportation

Cleveland's transportation infrastructure and planning efforts focus on improving mobility, enhancing sustainability, and adapting to modern needs. [Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority \(RTA\)](#) is the primary provider of public transportation services in Cleveland. RTA operates the extensive [bus service](#) throughout Cleveland and surrounding suburbs. The [rail service](#) includes the [Red Line](#), connecting downtown Cleveland to the airport and neighborhoods along the way. Additionally, the [Blue](#) and [Green](#) Lines serve other neighborhoods east of downtown, while the [Waterfront](#) line serves downtown to the south harbor. [This interactive map](#) shows the areas serviced by each route. RTA also operates a [trolley service](#) with electric-powered trolleybuses in parts of the city. RTA has future plans for improving [bus rapid transit](#) lines and expanding rail and bus service options. The [Opportunity Corridor](#) project is part of these efforts, which aims to connect neighborhoods to downtown and the interstate from East 55th Street at Interstate 490 to East 105th Street in University Circle.

Cleveland's street network interconnects with a variety of expressways and major roads that support both local and regional traffic. Key highways include [Interstate 90 \(I-90\)](#), a major east-west highway that connects Cleveland to Chicago and the broader Great Lakes region; [Interstate 71 \(I-71\)](#), a north-south route connecting Cleveland to Columbus and further south; and [Interstate 77 \(I-77\)](#), which runs from Cleveland southward, passing through the city and connecting to other regional corridors. Cleveland is known for its [series of bridges](#) that span the Cuyahoga River, with ongoing efforts that are focused on rehabilitating [Cleveland's historic bridges](#) to ensure safety and functionality.

For biking and walking infrastructure, Cleveland has implemented [several bike lanes](#) and [bikeshare programs](#), helping promote sustainable transportation in the city. Cleveland's [Lakefront Bikeway](#) spans the entire length

of Cleveland's 17-mile Lake Erie shoreline from the city's eastern border with Euclid to its western border with Lakewood. The [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#) and the [Towpath Trail](#) are popular pathways for cyclists and pedestrians.



Figure 8: The Emerald Necklace | Source: [Biking in Cleveland Guide](#)

[Cleveland Hopkins International Airport \(CLE\)](#) is the city's primary airport serving as a hub for both domestic and international flights. [Burke Lakefront Airport](#) is a smaller, general-aviation airport primarily serving private planes and small aircraft. The river is vital for local shipping and freight. [Port of Cleveland](#) facilitates trade via Lake Erie, and [Cuyahoga River Shipping](#) traverses the curvy channel. There are [ongoing efforts](#) to clean and maintain the river environment for both industrial and recreational use.

[VNEO 2024](#) is a regional vision and action plan for strengthening communities of Northeast Ohio. The [Cuyahoga County Comprehensive Plan](#) integrates connectivity and [Cuyahoga County's Complete Streets](#) initiative aims to improve safety for all users of transportation infrastructure through designs that accommodate a range of mobility options, particularly in urban core areas. The [City of Cleveland's Complete & Green Streets](#) program emphasizes and encourages multimodal transportation design and is planning for improved mobility and medians with [Superior Midway](#) from Public Square to [East 55th Street](#).

[Cleveland City Planning Commission](#) plays a significant role in shaping Cleveland's long-term transportation planning. The city's [Vision Zero Cleveland](#) initiative, which aims to reduce traffic fatalities, also guides infrastructure and safety improvements. Regarding regional transportation planning, Cleveland is part of the broader [NOACA](#), integrating transportation planning with land-use and development initiatives, including sustainability goals with [AIM Forward 2040](#) serving as the long-term transportation planning document.

Adjacent Neighborhoods/Places

[Cleveland neighborhoods](#) are diverse, [each](#) contributing to the city's unique character. In central Cleveland are [Downtown](#), known for its skyline and business district, and [Tremont](#), historic and artistic.

To the east and rich in heritage and culture are [Hough](#), [St. Clair Superior](#), [Glenville](#), and [University Circle](#), home to several cultural institutions and universities. To the west of the Site and west of downtown, [Edgewater Park](#) is a lakefront beach town.

To the south of the Site are [St. Clair Superior](#) and the [Hough](#) neighborhoods, both sharing a geographic closeness that influences their development and community dynamics. [St. Clair Superior](#) is home to Cleveland's Asia Town, showcasing a tapestry of Asian cultures through restaurants, markets, and cultural events. [St. Clair Superior Development Corporation](#) is the current community development corporation (CDC). Hough is known for its local arts initiatives, which aim to empower residents through creative expression. The ULI Cleveland

district council produced [Art in Place](#), a strategy for connecting art and real estate in the Hough neighborhood after hosting a technical assistance panel with residents.

The [Cleveland Neighborhood Progress](#) highlights challenges faced by St. Clair Superior, Glenville, and Hough including high vacancy rates, limited access to resources, and the negative perceptions that can accompany urban decline, impacting the ability to attract new residents and businesses. St. Clair Superior and Hough are working toward revitalization, but they approach it differently. St. Clair Superior benefits from its cultural attractions, drawing visitors who contribute to the local economy, while Hough focuses on grassroots initiatives aimed at enhancing community pride and involvement.

Home of Rockefeller Park and Gordon Park, [Glenville](#) is a historic neighborhood to the east and southeast of the Site, conveniently located close to Lake Erie, east of Downtown, and north of University Circle. Economic decline and closure of the [Glenville Community Development Corporation](#) signal disinvestment, leaving vacant lots and abandoned buildings in need of revitalization. [Famicos Foundation](#) is the current CDC for most of the Glenville neighborhood.

Despite their challenges, the strategic location of these neighborhoods near University Circle, celebrated as the [best arts district](#) in 2021, provides a significant opportunity for growth. Glenville has been a focal point for [urban renewal efforts](#) in recent years, including the Opportunity Corridor project connecting Glenville to the downtown area and the airport. These efforts reflect a broader trend of urban renewal that seeks to balance modernization with the preservation of the neighborhood’s unique historical and cultural identity. St. Clair Superior, Hough, and Glenville could benefit from renewed investment and community collaboration, paving the way for a more vibrant and interconnected future.

Area Developments

Cleveland Magazine provides an overview of [new developments](#) in the city. Particularly notable is the [Flats East Bank](#), which has undergone a major transformation over the past decade, being downtown along the Cuyahoga riverbank near the Port of Cleveland. [The Flats entertainment district](#), historically home to Cleveland’s industrial waterfront, has become a desirable area with a mix of residential, retail, dining, and entertainment spaces.

The \$100 million [Battery Park](#) urban redevelopment project in Cleveland’s [Detroit Shoreway](#) neighborhood, in the West Side of Cleveland, is a local case study for lakefront redevelopment. This project turned a brownfield site into a mixed-use multiphase development that overlooks Edgewater Park and connects to the Gordon Square Arts District. Edgewater Park has been a key element in the lakefront’s redevelopment and accessibility, including [connector tunnels](#) from Gordon Square that enable [pedestrian access](#) to the park. Walking paths, green spaces, and beaches on the shores of Lake Erie were pivotal to the development of Battery Park, as well as [The Edison at Gordon Square](#). Cleveland’s inequities and “east side” versus “west side” divide are evident in Cleveland’s predominantly white west side receiving amenities—including Edgewater Park and Beach—and investment in various nearby neighborhoods over the past 20 years, while St. Clair Superior and Hough—in Cleveland’s mostly Black east side—have not received similar investments. This Competition Site provides opportunities to help provide both economic investment and a “place” for east side neighborhood residents to connect to the lake.

The Competition Challenge

The competition challenge reflects much of the actual conditions at the location; however, ULI has changed certain details in this brief for the purposes of the competition. The competition is an educational exercise; ULI does not anticipate that anyone will build what participating teams propose for the Site.

The Competition Site and Study Area

A private company in Cleveland has identified a former industrial site—located east of Downtown Cleveland in the St. Clair Superior neighborhood—as a development opportunity. In addition, two adjacent parcels owned by the City of Cleveland are part of this opportunity. Not all land on parcel 10502001 is fit for development, as detailed in figure 9 below. Together, these three parcels comprise the Site, which will be the focus of this competition.

The Site sits between I-90, to its north, and industrial rail, operated by CSX, to its south. East 55th Street is west of the Site and East 72nd Street is east of the Site. Both streets host on- and off-ramps to I-90. Currently, the area is stagnant former industrial land and lacks access to the waterfront to its north and the rest of the St. Clair Superior neighborhood to its south. The Site was a brownfield that has since been remediated.

Parcel data is available at [Cuyahoga County Parcel Viewer](#) GIS.

Your team has been selected by Lake Shore Acquisition Company as master developer for the Site. As master developer, you have entered into an agreement with the landowners to provide a proposal to **transform the Site into a thriving, mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood**. The proposal will **evaluate the benefits and financial possibilities of redeveloping the Site (three parcels) within a 10-year period**. The owner is seeking a **vision** for the area that will **increase connectivity and mobility around the Site**, address issues of **equity and housing affordability**, create a **positive economic impact**, include light industrial and maker spaces, and increase the **sustainability and resilience** of the immediate area. As the master developer, you can propose to acquire the parcels from the City of Cleveland, lease land from the state (for the section of the parcel that is a submerged land lease), establish a public/private partnership, and/or determine other mechanisms by which to redevelop.

Parcels of the Competition Site: Your proposal must address all parcels listed here.

Parcel_ID	PROPERTY NAME	PRESENT USE	DEEDED ACREAGE
105-02-001	Lake Shore Acquisition company	None	61.897 acres
105-02-007	City of Cleveland Land Reutilization Program*	None (acquisition needed)	2.667 acres
105-02-002	City of Cleveland Land Reutilization Program*	None (acquisition needed)	1.576 acres

Optional: Area beyond the Site – This competition does not ask you to develop anything beyond the Site. Do not propose to acquire or redevelop parcels beyond the Site. You have the option to propose **high-level, conceptual designs** for the next 20 years for parcels up to 1.25 miles (6,600 feet) beyond the site boundaries in any direction if doing so enables you to demonstrate how critical connections to and from your proposal for the Site will develop over time. For any area beyond the Site that you propose designs, you must use the “Conceptual Area” slides (see the “Presentation Requirements” section in this document). Do not include these conceptual designs in your pro forma or financial figures. If you opt to include conceptual designs beyond the Site, your proposal must maintain Gordon Park as a park indefinitely, for recreational use only. Please also note that clearance beneath I-90 bridges is minimal and prevents access from Lake Erie. The clearance from the lake to the pond on site is approximately 5 feet from the average lake surface levels.

* The “Urban Planning” section of this document covers the Land Reutilization (Land Bank) program. You may consider the program’s options, but you are not required to follow the specific program guidelines.



Figure 9: Competition Site | Source: Brooks Patrick

Assumptions

Please observe the following guidelines as you prepare your proposal.

Site Assumptions

City-owned parcels: Parcel numbers 105-02-007 and 105-02-002, owned by the City of Cleveland, must be acquired or leased and accounted for in your pro forma.

Entry points, rights-of-way and circulation patterns: All parcels are accessible to the north and west at East 55th Street and South Marginal Road. You may show up to two access points to the east at the two points shown. You may change street and circulation patterns within the Site. You may choose to close or create public streets within your development blocks.

Railway line to the south of the Site: Assume the industrial rail line operated by CSX will remain indefinitely. Given this obstruction, consider pedestrian and bike access between the Site and the rest of the St. Clair Superior neighborhood to the south.

Remediation: Assume the site has been remediated with funds for brownfields and is ready for redevelopment. Ohio Development Services Agency offers [brownfield remediation](#) and cleanup grants to

enable redevelopment of brownfield sites, and the [Cleveland Industrial Retention Initiative](#) links Cleveland manufacturing companies to valuable community resources.

Topography: Assume all the pads are flat. Your design should respond to the existing elevation and features of the topography, or your pro forma should account for the costs and sources of funding needed to alter the topography.

Substations (see “Do Not Develop” in map legend of figure 9): Assume these will remain in place indefinitely and cannot move within the site. If you undertake conceptual designs for areas outside the Site boundary, do not propose conceptual designs for the substation outside of the Site.

Flood zone: Note the flood prone area as indicated in Figure 9.

Inlet and ponds: You may assume the open water (“Inlet Remains” in map legend of figure 9) and the two rectangular ponds west of the open water (labeled Ash Pond and Oily Pond in figure 10) are filled. Alternatively, you may keep the open water to bring water uses into the site.

Submerged land lease: The submerged land lease area (see figure 10) covers land both inside and outside the Site. Assume there are not restricted uses of buildings or uses in this area. You can lease the portion of this area within the Site from the State of Ohio at 2 cents per square foot per year without escalation. The total area of the submerged land lease area is approximately 14.37 acres, with approx. 10.8 acres laying within the site parcel.

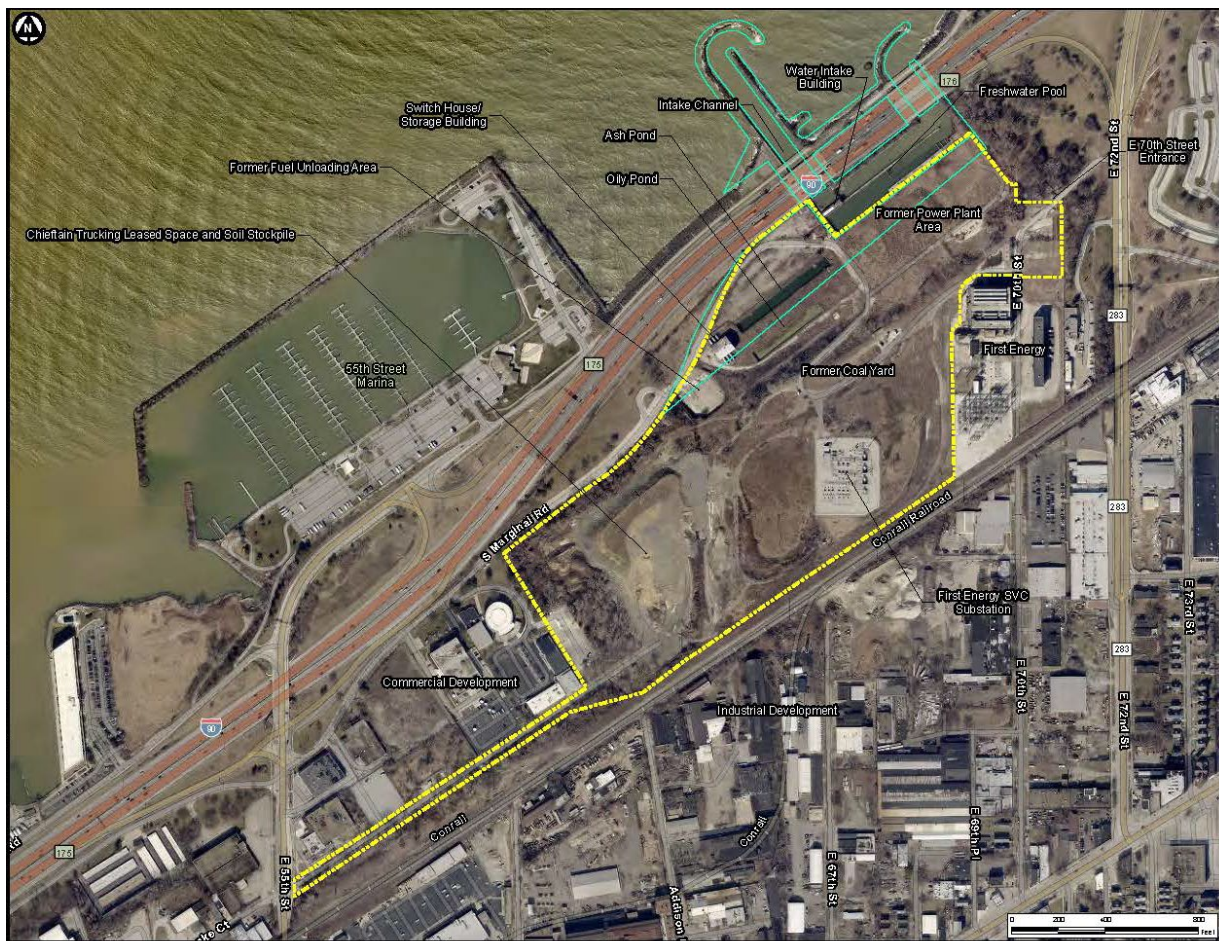


Figure 10: Submerged land lease in teal, Parcel 105-020001 in yellow | Source: [Verdantas](#)

Height restrictions (FAA): Take note of federal height restriction requirements due to Burke Lakefront Airport. Assume airport restrictions apply to development of the parcel even though the City of Cleveland is considering closing the airport in the next 30 years. Parcels 105-002-007 and 105-02-002 have a height restriction of 140 feet. Assume parcel 105-02-001 has a height restriction of 160 feet above ground level across the Site.

Waterfront activation: While you consider the CHEERS Master Plan and the new island it proposes, you are invited to propose temporary plans inside the Site that would yield more active engagement with the waterfront before the island is available. Note that the height of the bridges is an average of five feet above the average surface level of the lake.

I-90: Do not propose a cap or lid over this highway. Do take into consideration that buildings or uses adjacent to I-90 will experience significant auto noise. You may propose pedestrian pathways and land bridges above the highway and tunnels below the highway; however, consider and address flood risks for any tunnels you propose.

Existing buildings: Assume all buildings within the developable areas have already been demolished, and that there are no current tenants on the required Site parcels.

Context Assumptions

For the competition, your team should consider the following guidance.

Start of development/predevelopment: Land acquisition, planning, entitlements, stakeholder engagement, etc. can begin as early as **January 1, 2026**, for any component. The start year—the first year you may begin **construction** on any phase—is **2027**. **Close-out** for all phases must finish by the end of **2036**. You may address entitlement issues for components upfront or sequentially, adjacent to the construction period for each component. In real life, predevelopment can take three to four years or more, but it is possible to complete it in less time, depending on the size and scope of the project. You may propose shortened predevelopment periods for the components of your development for the purposes of this competition.

Complete neighborhoods: Proposals should give priority to mixed-use, mixed-income development and neighborhood vitality.

Market-feasible costs and pricing: Although the competition uses a fictional scenario, your team should aim to create a financially feasible plan for the site. Produce market-appropriate amounts that you can justify in your pro forma (e.g., current sales price for land in the area, market rents for various uses, project costs, etc.). If your program requires a subsidy or grant, the subsidy amount should be realistic and from viable sources.

Inflation: You do not need to apply inflation as a factor and can use untrended data.

Planning and zoning code: You may use the current zoning requirements or propose new zoning. The jury will not be checking your proposal against the existing zoning ordinance; however, the existing zones outlined in the land use code can provide you with examples of compatible uses, design preferences, setbacks, parking, lighting, and other approaches that align with the city's urban design, planning, and land use goals.

- You can view the zoning map and overlay districts using the city's [interactive online resources](#).
- The Cleveland City Planning Commission provides the public with an interactive GIS web app for viewing the official zoning district maps, overlays, landmarks, and other planning-related information in the City of Cleveland.
- More information on Cleveland's zoning and land use can be found on the [Cleveland City Planning Commission](#) site, under [Zoning > The Code](#).
- The [Municode Library](#) hosts the full [Code of Ordinances for the State of Ohio](#).

- County zoning information is available on the [Cuyahoga County Planning Commission website](#). [Cuyahoga County's interactive mapping](#) can provide detailed reports for data and mapping.
- Legacy documents from the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission and the Regional Planning Commission are available through the [Cleveland Public Library Digital Gallery](#).

Redevelopment tools and incentive programs: The City of City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and State of Ohio have many incentive programs available for redevelopment of sites. The following key programs may be applicable to your project:

- The Ohio Housing Finance Agency has a 4 percent [LIHTC program](#).
- Cleveland has several [Opportunity Zones](#) that continue to attract investment. The State of Ohio has an [Opportunity Zone Tax Credit](#) program. If you propose using this tax credit for your project, you must use the per investor/project cap identified in the program guidelines.
- The City of Cleveland has a [CRA residential tax abatement program](#) and sometimes provides 30-year non-school tax increment financing (TIF) to projects. A non-school TIF is a TIF district that redirects non-school incremental taxes (payments in lieu of taxes, or PILOTS) to the project to finance debt service. Assume 60 percent of non-abated taxes go to Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the remainder could finance TIF bonds or TIF-backed debt.
- Assume the [Ohio Transformational Mixed-Use Development Tax Credit](#) (TMUD) is available for one-time use. If a phase of your project qualifies, assume you can be competitive for no more than one \$20-million tax credit within your development plan. Show how you would monetize it appropriately in your pro forma with a bridge loan. Maximum pricing should be \$0.90/credit. Note that phases of more than 50 percent residential and parking use in Cleveland are not competitive in the TMUD scoring methodology due to the CRA residential tax abatement limiting tax impacts of projects.
- The [JobsOhio OSIP Program](#) is sometimes used for speculative industrial and manufacturing buildings in Ohio.
- [The Cleveland Development Model](#) is an interactive district development tool developed by [Greater Cleveland Partnership](#). [Cleveland Citywide Development Corporation](#) is the city's economic development agency sharing [regional partners](#) that enhance this mission, including the [City of Cleveland Department of Community Development](#) and [Cuyahoga County Economic Development Commission](#).
- Cuyahoga County has small-size loan subordinate loan programs of up to \$2 million for mixed-use projects housed in its [Department of Development](#).
- Ohio has an economic development tool called [new community authority](#), which Cleveland is considering for the first time for another lakefront location. This tool can be used to set additional charges on property taxes, sales, etc., in the district, to be bonded to finance revenues. Note that if this tool is implemented, charges are typically in cent increments per dollar spent and they are politically tricky.
- The [Port of Cleveland-Cuyahoga County](#) as an economic development agency frequently enters into capital leases and ground leases with projects to exempt them from construction materials sales taxes. If you use this tool, note that Cuyahoga County's sales tax rate is 8 percent; you must estimate the percentage of your hard costs that are material expenses, and due to the port's fee structure, you must estimate only 70 percent net benefit after fees.

Taxes: [Ohio state law states](#) that all property must be assessed at 35 percent of its appraised (fair market) value. One hundred effective mills of property tax levies equal approximately a 3.5 percent effective property tax rate. There are about [80 levy rates](#) (a levy is a cap on the amount of property tax dollars) in Cuyahoga

County based on different overlapping taxing jurisdictions. The city website provides an overview of corporate income tax, sales and use tax, and property taxes. The [Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office](#) and the [Cuyahoga County Department of Real Estate and Appraisal](#) provide tax rates for real and personal property.

- **Real property tax:** You can find real property tax on the [Cuyahoga County Department of Assessments webpage](#).
- **Cleveland's effective commercial tax rate** was 3.5 percent when the County appraised property value in 2023. Assume this tax rate and that newly constructed buildings carry an appraised tax value of 80 percent the market value (excluding tax abatements). Apply the 3.5 percent to this value for purposes of estimated taxes.

Stormwater utility fee: The [Department of Public Utilities](#) provides sewer maintenance and stormwater management for the city of Cleveland through the [Cleveland Stormwater Program](#) of the [Division of Water Pollution Control](#). [Cleveland Water Department](#) provides the water quality report, and the [regional stormwater management program](#) offers resources on credits and fees. Use the [stormwater fee finder](#) to locate a fee summary for any address.

Construction and infrastructure costs: You must include costs for infrastructure on private parcels in your financing proposal. In addition, you must include costs for public infrastructure in your financing proposal if you use that infrastructure to achieve a building premium. That means if you propose public infrastructure that clearly goes above and beyond what the municipality typically provides in the area, then you should include it in your budget and identify sources of funds to cover the cost of that infrastructure. For example, if the county does not typically pay for rain gardens for stormwater management in the area and you are proposing rain gardens, then you should include the cost of rain gardens in your budget and identify a source of funds for them. If you propose infrastructure that is normal practice for the area (e.g., something like paving a public road), you do not need to include the cost of the infrastructure in your budget.

- [RSMeans data from Gordian](#) will be available to two members of each team for the duration of the competition. You can use tables from RSMeans or a resource of equivalent quality as a guideline to estimate your construction costs.
- *The following two data sets are estimates provided by local firms that you may use or adjust at your discretion. The main goal of these data sets is to provide realistic numbers for your pro forma. Sales tax is included in these figures.*

Local Data Set 1: Operating Supplies and Equipment (OS&E), Design, Contingency, Permitting, and Utility Availability/Tap are not included here. The City of Cleveland Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) includes around 6 percent applied to hard costs.

1. 2- to 5-story wood frame residential/mixed-use: \$200–\$275/gross square foot (GSF)
2. 5+-story residential/mixed-use: \$240–\$305/GSF
3. 1- to 2-story retail buildings: \$341–\$417/GSF – includes fitout
4. Hotel (midscale): \$185–\$270/GSF – excludes OS&E; see [2024 Hotel Cost Estimating Guide](#) for upgrades and OS&E
5. 2- to 5-story office buildings: \$240–\$290/GSF – excludes tenant improvement (TI)
 - 2- to 5-story lab/medical office buildings – depending on the use, this can vary broadly. Depending on the use, an office building can often be upgraded for lighter medical uses. Each use turns out to be very specific depending on the medical gases used, shielding, and other requirements. Clean room construction can add hundreds to thousands per square foot depending on the use.

6. 5+-story office buildings: \$260–\$300/GSF – excludes TI
7. Industrial/Distribution Center structures of 32-foot clear ceilings: \$61–\$82/GSF – excludes TI
8. Public park/plaza cost per acre – This could vary widely depending on the intent. The simplest options are usually \$50,000 or \$100,000 per acre (a stone-clad park would be millions per acre).

Local Data Set 2:

1. Site development (1.676 acres)
 - a. \$1,000,000 earthwork and utilities (\$596,659/acre)
 - b. \$500,000 ground-level landscaping, streetscapes, hardscapes (\$298,329/acre)
 - c. \$400,000 ground improvement (\$238,663/acre)
2. Parking garage/retail (cold gray box)/podium
 - a. \$90/square foot or \$27,202/space
3. Liner units (4-story as depicted/single-loaded corridor)
 - a. Type 5A wood: \$205/square foot
4. Apartments 5-story on podium
 - a. Type 3A wood: \$203/square foot
 - b. Cold-formed metal stud: \$212/square foot
 - c. Post-tension concrete: \$230/square foot
5. Apartments 4-story on podium
 - a. Type 5 wood: \$195/square foot
6. Apartments 6-story above garage (not high-rise)
 - a. Post-tension concrete: \$227/square foot
7. Apartments 10-story on podium
 - a. Cold-formed metal stud: \$238/square foot
8. Apartments 22-story above garage (250-foot max height with mat foundation)
 - a. Additional mass excavation: \$800,000
 - b. Shoring (if needed): \$1,000,000
 - c. Post-tension concrete: \$258/square foot
 - d. Girder slab (hollow-core plank): \$263/square foot
 - e. Diversakore (hollow-core plank): \$272/square foot
9. Hoisting (with operators) – 10-story and 22-story options
 - a. Tower crane: \$1,500,000 (16 months)
 - b. Dual-car buck hoist: \$800,000 (20 months)
10. General conditions, fee, general requirements
 - a. 10 to 12 percent of cost of work

Detailed Assignment

As master developer, you must do the following:

1. Analyze regional forces—social, historical, demographic, political, and economic, among others—and the Competition Site in relation to its surroundings and **describe or visualize key aspects of your regional analysis.**
2. **Determine the type of redevelopment** the market would support and **describe or visualize key aspects of your market analysis.**
3. **Establish a strong vision for the future of the Site based on these analyses.** Communicate or visualize the decision-making process that led to your unique vision and informs the program and plans you will propose.

4. **Propose a market-feasible development program and financial pro forma** for the Competition Site. This program should identify all phasing within the 10-year period.
5. **Ascertain the development value of the total redeveloped Site** within the 10-year period. **State the offering price to acquire** the city parcels (105-02-007 and 105-02-002) or the amount you will lease them for. You are not required to use a specific development tool.
6. **Determine and state the subsidies and/or grants** (if any) that would make redevelopment feasible and the **sources** of those subsidies and/or grants.
7. **Establish and state a fair rate of return to the owner** that compensates for the value-added activity and/or establish and state the concessions you recommend.
8. **Propose and visualize a site plan** for the Competition Site. Be explicit about what the owner is getting out of the plan.
9. **Describe or visualize key urban design elements, including specific connections or integrations** between your development components.
10. *Optional: **Provide conceptual designs/plans for the future of the area around the Site up to 1.25 miles beyond the Site boundaries (vision up to 20 years).** The purpose of undertaking this optional exercise is to encourage thoughtfulness about how your plan will enhance connections to surrounding areas in the future, giving a way to communicate these connections to the jury. Your focus should be on the connections, not coming up with new ideas for development surrounding the Site. These plans will be high level; therefore, descriptions and illustrations of these plans do not need to be as detailed as those for the Site. In your visuals, clearly delineate any conceptual plans from those that are part of the Site within the 10-year period.*
11. **Provide site-specific illustrations** of key development components you propose within the 10-year hold including planning context and analysis
12. **Offer minimum levels of affordable/workforce housing. In your proposal, a minimum of 20 percent of new residential product**, both for sale and rental, must be units affordable for low- to moderate-income households. Avoid concentrating these units in a single building, if possible.

Presentation Requirements

ULI developed the presentation requirements for the benefit of both competitors and the jury. These requirements ensure that the jury will have enough information to evaluate and compare proposals. Please follow the naming conventions in the submission form as you upload files.

****Please simplify and clarify your visuals in a way that the jury can digest the information quickly. Entries should aim to represent big ideas with graphics rather than with a lot of text. Make sure there is just enough text so that the jurors understand what they are seeing. Labeling is important. Please label significant buildings, streets, landmarks, charts, or graphs. You might also use text to provide succinct descriptions where needed.****

Required Submission Materials (1–5 See “Submission Process” in the next section).

1. **One pro forma in Excel** based on the ULI pro forma template. ULI has provided a pro forma template in the [Google Drive folder](#). In this template, worksheets link to one another, and the cells contain formulas to aid you in scoping the financial viability of each development component. You may modify the template and apply different assumptions (e.g., cap rate, rental rates, project costs by line

item, etc.) as you deem necessary. You can add new building types. You do not need to add information about a product type if that type is not part of your development program.

2. A set of one to four PDFs (11" × 17") of the Assumptions and Development Program summary tabs from the ULI pro forma template. You can orient these in landscape or portrait format; the template is in landscape format. You should eliminate unnecessary tabs and use or add tabs only for the development components that are part of your design.

3. One 11" × 17" PDF digital slide show in horizontal landscape format. Digital slides may not be animated. Do not include video. Each team is limited to **25 slides** that must follow this outline and should have a **minimum of 20 slides**. The digital slide show must follow these rules in the following order:

- **(1 slide) Title slide. Include the proposal title and application code.** Do not include information that would identify any team member, school, or adviser. You may include an image or not.
- **(1 slide) One narrative summary, no more than 750 words, which describes your design and development plan.** Use this summary to indicate what you are proposing to build (your development program) and to highlight *how* your proposal increases connectivity and mobility, addresses issues of equity and housing affordability, has a positive economic impact, and increases sustainability and resilience.
- **(1 slide) One table ([see link to template](#)), which describes your financing plan.** Please follow the template (you may add columns for phases and alter colors and fonts).
- **(4 slides) Analysis, vision, and decision-making process.** Address your parti and what makes your vision for the site unique. Include concept diagrams that illuminate patterns and concepts for local and regional issues the team considers relevant. This section could include early sketches and bullet points. Please avoid narrative explanations over 50 words per slide.
- **(6 slides) Plan, urban design, and development context.**
 - **Your whole site plan—without conceptual plans for outside the Site—should be on one slide.**
 - *If you provided optional, high-level, conceptual plans for outside the Site, you must include another slide that shows the Site plan plus the conceptual plans.*
 - **The Site plan elements might include the following:**
 - a. A legend or key and/or text and labels to orient the viewer
 - b. Blocks and streets, labeled with street names wherever possible
 - c. Land uses and building uses
 - For all uses, text and labels should clearly delineate between amounts included in the Site and amounts in conceptual plans outside the Site.
 - d. Landscape, open space, waterways and other natural systems
 - e. Circulation (pedestrian, vehicular, transit, bicycle, parking, etc.)
 - f. Location of transit lines and stops or terminals
 - g. Public and private infrastructure, including stormwater and landscape
 - h. Public realm enhancements
 - **Provide additional illustrations** that zoom in on the Site and illuminate the urban design elements. These illustrations might be plans, diagrams, elevations, sections, or three-dimensional views (perspective/axonometric). These illustrations might highlight the elements above as well as the following:
 - a. Private-sector development concepts
 - b. Connections to neighboring blocks

- c. Environmental, sustainability, and resilience considerations
 - d. Image and character of the area
 - e. Overall design characteristics and aesthetic values
 - f. Social and economic concerns
 - g. Community planning and infrastructure concepts
 - **(4 slides) Phasing.**
 - These slides should illustrate massing and scale for the public and private realms, including how they will be programmed and used.
 - For each phase, include text, labels, or graphs that indicate the total size of each use, the number of units (where relevant), and the percentage of each use as a portion of all uses for that phase.
 - Indicate how much affordable housing is complete in each phase. Include an indicator of affordability [such as area median income (AMI)], size, and number of units.
 - Debt and equity by phase including loan-to-value (LTV) and loan-to-cost (LTC).
 - One of these slides should show the program when complete, at the end of the development period, with labels that indicate total size and number of units for each use. These slides should not include any elements outside the Site.
 - **(3 slides) Three to five renderings or graphic vignettes of elements of your development.**
 - **Optional (5 slides) Other slides:** Use the remaining slides to communicate images and information to tell the story of your development.
4. Upload the same three renderings/graphic vignettes from your **plan, urban design, and development context** slides as jpeg or png files (340-pixel × 340-pixel). ULI may use these on the ULI website or social media if your project is recognized by the jury. Please do not include team codes on these images.
 5. Site plan from your slideshow as a jpeg or png file (340-pixel × 340-pixel).

Notes on Graphics

- Competitors have discretion to select which graphic techniques they use.
- Maps, plans, and illustrations may be at any scale.
 - Sections should include a graphic scale.
 - Maps and plans should include a graphic scale and an arrow indicating north.

Submission Process

Deadline

ULI must receive all digital submissions by 11:59 p.m. PST on Monday, January 20, 2025 (which is 2:59 a.m. EST on Tuesday, January 21, 2025). We suggest you review and understand the online form **and** plan to complete it well ahead of this deadline. **ULI staff will not be available** to answer questions or assist you after 2:00 p.m. PST/5:00 p.m. EST on January 20.

Rules for Submission

- **You will submit only digital files**, as outlined below. Please do not mail anything to ULI.

- Submit all files via the 2025 ULI Hines Student Competition portal at uli.org/hines2025 using the form titled “Submission Materials.” This form will be accessible by January 8, 2025, two days after the competition commences.
- The person who submitted the team application should also be the one to log in, upload documents, and submit your team’s final proposal. If other team members need to upload documents, the person who submitted the application will need to log in and add team members using the Manage Collaborators function.
- **One corner of every document except the vignettes MUST display your team’s nine-digit code**, which takes the form “2025-#####.”
 - Your code was automatically generated when you registered to participate at the submission portal at uli.org/hines/2025. Whoever registered the team should log in to the portal, click on My Applications, and select Complete. Your code can be found code under “Application #.”
- **DO NOT include any marks**—other than your nine-digit code—**that identify your team or universities** on any of the sheets you submit, either in digital or in hard copy. There should be no mascots, no university buildings, and no references an alum would recognize, etc. **If you include identifying marks on any sheets, ULI will discard your submission, and the jury will not review it.**
- ULI will not accept—and the jury will not review—any supplemental diagrams or information that you do not present within “Required Presentation Materials.”

Notification of Receipt

You will receive an automatic email and system notification once you hit Submit, confirming that we have received your submission. About five days after the submission period ends, ULI will send a message to your team to let you know if your submission is complete and eligible for jury review.

Competition Resources

The following list includes all the items available for download from the [Google Drive folder](#) or elsewhere and serves as a checklist for you to ensure that you receive all the resources:

- The **challenge brief** (this document) is available as a PDF.
- The **pro forma template** is available as an Excel file.
- The **Question & Answer (Q&A) document** is available as a Google Doc. During the competition period, ULI will post responses to team inquiries on this document in the [Google Drive folder](#). **Please plan to check the Q&A document daily.**
- **Geographic information system (GIS) files** of the site and its surroundings are also provided in the GIS folder. The City of Cleveland partners with Esri/ArcGIS to provide GIS information in addition to what is being made available to you through your Esri login for the competition specifically.
 - During the competition, participants have free access to [ArcGIS Online](#), [ArcGIS Urban](#), and [ArcGIS Business Analyst](#) tools via [Esri](#), as well as to high-resolution 3-D models and aerial imagery of the site via [Nearmap](#). By January 2, registered participants will receive instructions on how to log into ArcGIS and access these tools. If you have not received these instructions, email HinesCompetition@uli.org. Participants are not required to use these tools and do not need to use them to be successful in this competition.
- **Photos and videos** of the site and context, including [ground-level imagery](#) available through our [ULI Awards account](#) on flickr.com, and [aerial video](#) is available on Google Drive. There is a document in the Google Drive folder with details on how to access geolocation data for these photos.
- Various **reports** will be available in the Google Drive folder. You are not required to review these documents, and you should plan to do additional research to inform your proposal.

Downloading Competition Resources

- You may download competition resources for distribution only among your team members, faculty advisers, and professional advisers.
- You may share resources and collaborate across teams, but team members should not directly contribute content to another team's proposal (so that ULI and the jury do not have to worry about someone asking for credit for part of another team's proposal).
- You may use competition resources only for this competition. **You may not use, copy, or distribute these resources for any other purpose without written permission from ULI.**

Criteria for Judging

The jury will select **four finalist teams** that it deems to have best satisfied the goals and deliverables of the challenge and criteria described here. The jury, at its discretion, will award an unspecified number of **honorable mentions** for outstanding submissions in one or more of these criteria. Specifically, proposals should strive to meet the following criteria:

- **Integrate planning and design decisions with economic feasibility, including market-level returns on investment** for private investors and lenders. For instance,
 - Public investments in infrastructure and public facilities should have clear value for the owner.
 - The development proposal and planning and design concepts should support and reinforce both public planning goals and financial returns for the owners.
- **Demonstrate awareness of design issues** contributing to a development that supports the vision specified in this brief.
- **Demonstrate attention to factors affecting the risks and feasibility of the project**, including:
 - Development and construction costs;
 - Future expenses and revenues from operations and land sales; and
 - Effects of project phasing on risks and feasibility.
- **Work together as a team.** A primary goal of this competition is to provide a means and demonstration of integrating real estate with allied disciplines. The jury will consider how successfully your team worked together, as evidenced by the consistency and coherence of your proposal. For example, the financial proposal should accurately reflect the designs and vice versa. You may have an excellent pro forma, but if your vision is weak and your site plan is confusing, your proposal will not advance to the finals. Likewise, you may have an excellent vision and stunning graphics, but if your pro forma is very weak with no obvious room for simple corrections and improvements, your proposal will not advance.

The jury may, if it wishes, use additional criteria in making its final decisions.

Jury Evaluation Process

ULI strives to conduct a thorough, fair, and rigorous jury evaluation process, yet teams need to consider the realistic constraints on and limitations of the jury. ULI receives many submissions (70 to 100 on average), and jurors have very limited time to review each one. Jurors will not have extensive time to delve into every detail of every proposal, nor will they have the capacity to provide lengthy, detailed feedback. Teams should make their presentations as clear and easy to understand as possible.

The jurors ULI selects are leaders in their fields and generously donate their time to the competition. Just as in the real world, in which developers and designers have a finite window to present their proposals, your team should strive to make a meaningful first impression by packaging your solution in a compelling and succinct fashion that invites additional analysis of the proposal. The following is a typical process; however, it might not be the exact process the 2025 jury uses.

- The jury meets several times in February to review all submissions and again in April for the final presentations.
- About one week before the jury meets in February, all jurors receive all digital files from each complete submission. ULI will indicate to all jurors which subset of submissions they should review before they reconvene as a full jury.
- During the February meetings, the jury has about 15 hours over three working days to review all the submissions, select the four finalists and any honorable mentions, and consider whether and how each submission meets the criteria.
- All jurors cast votes for the four submissions they think should be finalists. The submissions with the most votes become the finalists.
- The jury discusses the feedback they want ULI staff to provide to each finalist team.
- The jury selects honorable mentions and discusses why they merit this honor.
- Only after selection of the finalists and honorable mentions does ULI staff reveal to the jury which schools submitted each proposal.

Tools (Not Required)

ArcGIS

Esri has prepared an Urban Model of the 2025 ULI Hines competition Site in ArcGIS Online to facilitate use of ArcGIS tools and Nearmap 3-D mesh for the competition. This model supports early-stage analysis and site design. ULI does not require that you use the ArcGIS or Nearmap tools to participate in the competition.

Note: The space use type parameters related to cost, value, tax rate, and other important assumptions in the Urban Model in ArcGIS Urban are simply for illustrative purposes and are not accurate for the selected city and Site. Those who use ArcGIS Urban will need to update the underlying metrics that Esri added to the model. Identifying the right metrics is part of the research you will need to do to be successful in the competition.

Esri will hold several workshops that will be recorded and available on the [About the 2025 Competition](#) page. Please register for the workshops ahead of time. Teams have received registration links by email and you can register through the [About the 2025 Competition](#) page.

RSMeans Data

Registered teams had the option to request this access for two team members from ULI by December 13. This is an online database tool that consists of relevant local construction cost information. If you have questions about using the software, please see the training videos offered on [the RSMeans website](#).

Pro Forma Training and Q&A Sessions

ULI offers recorded trainings on how to use the pro forma template and a Q&A session will be held on Friday, January 10. The recordings for these sessions are available on the [About the 2025 Competition](#) page.

Questions

Please make sure you are monitoring your email during the competition period because we may send email updates, new resources, or corrections.

ULI will periodically post questions and answers to the [Q&A document](#) in the [Google Drive folder](#). ULI reserves the right to edit submitted questions before posting them. ULI also reserves the right to not answer every question it receives and to not post redundant questions or remarks it deems inappropriate or irrelevant.

Please plan to check this document daily as we do not have the staff resources to send out an email every time that we update the document.

During the 15-day competition, teams may send questions in writing via email to hinescompetition@uli.org.

Once ULI announces the four finalist teams, it will share finalist stage guidance with those teams.

You will have a chance to provide feedback on the competition in February after the general competition is complete and again in May after the finals have concluded.

Thank you for joining us in this year's competition!

Best of luck,

ULI Hines Student Competition