

Super:

A
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THOMAS MULREADY

Cool Cleveland.com

When they get off a plane somewhere and somebody says, “Where are you from?” they are not going to say, “Hudson, or Bay Village, or Cleveland Heights.” They are going to say, “Cleveland.”

NARRATOR

For centuries, cities have been at the heart of the human experience.

DARIN KING

Cleveland resident

The heartbeat of any state in our union, and I dare say anywhere in the world, are its cities.

NARRATOR

They have been an integral part of our cultural DNA and have served as the driving force behind American commerce.

KYLE EARLEY

Cleveland resident

Cleveland is the center and I've been raised here, I was born here, and the city has done so much for me.

NARRATOR

Great cities have shaped our identity and defined commercial life for entire geographic regions.

VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland.

KATHERINE LARAWAY

Cleveland suburb resident

I mean, I absolutely love Cleveland. I couldn't imagine living anywhere else or raising our family anywhere else.

NARRATOR

Yet, for decades now, we have been leaving our cities for the suburbs — often for the same reason that we came in the first place — to pursue a better life.

VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

For the people of Northeast Ohio, the future holds 100,000 new homes.

MARGARET KUSHNER

My mother thought if we could move from the Tremont area that she would be able to find a two-family house. It was like moving to a wealthy suburb. It was beautiful, it was big. I felt that I had finally found my home.

NARRATOR

Industry too has been leaving the city as it adapted to the realities of a changing economy.

This great migration outward of people and business has had unintended consequences.

Many of our cities are in decline.

And, Cleveland, once an economic powerhouse, is now one of the nation's poorest cities.

JUNIOR JAY

Cleveland property owner

These buildings were built in the early 1930's. They were occupied by professional people: lawyers, doctors. That has since changed. It's now pretty desolate down here. What you are looking at is the end results of people moving from the inner city to the suburbs.

NARRATOR

So, while many people still identify with the culture and entertainment that downtown offers, they now do so from a distance.

MICHAEL LARAWAY

Cleveland suburb resident

I identify myself with Cleveland. But I also know that where I am right now, it's the suburbs, and that's where I want to be.

NARRATOR

**This is a story about one city at risk,
Cleveland.**

**It raises questions that can be asked of
many urban areas throughout America.**

How did our cities come to be this way?

**What are the consequences of leaving
them?**

**And what can be done to reverse their
decline?**

Super Title:

***Making Sense of Place
Cleveland: Confronting Decline
in an American City***

WILLIAM HACHTEL

Brick collector

Every brick has a story in it. There's a story
about where the bricks came from, who
made it, when they made it. It's like one of
those crime series, like in New York City.

WILLIAM HACHTEL

Brick collector

(amidst bricks) Sometimes they have
imprints on them.

WILLIAM HACHTEL

Brick collector

Well the building boom was fantastic. Cleveland was basically covered in bricks in the 1800's. There was a great need for bricks. Nobody could supply them fast enough, so they bought from six sources to get enough bricks.

WILLIAM HACHTEL

Brick collector

(amidst bricks) Well, quite a few of them over there.

WILLIAM HACHTEL

Brick collector

When you discover a brick, or really something you haven't seen or known something about, that's exciting. It's not as exciting as sex, but it's good. Ha! Ha!

There's been a decided decline in Cleveland of industry.

I've grown up with all these industries and it's a sad day to see them all gone.

To me, it's a personal satisfaction: collecting it, doing the research, and learning a little bit more every week.

So people say: you should collect history, so you don't make the same mistake twice.

NARRATOR

**During the first half of the 20th century,
Cleveland's possibilities appeared
limitless.**

VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

Cleveland, Ohio in 1938 sees showman
Billy Lowe stage America's first water
ballet.

2ND VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

Today's Cleveland typifies America at its
best.

NARRATOR

**This was the 5th largest city in the nation,
the destination for thousands of
immigrants from all over the world.**

NORMAN KRUMHOLZ

Cleveland Planning Director, 1969-1979
The city's population was doubling or
tripling every decade.

VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

Cleveland: biggest port on Erie's south
shore. Leader in steel making, machinery,
aircraft parts....

NARRATOR

**Situated where the Cuyahoga River meets
Lake Erie, Cleveland was a thriving
industrial mecca.**

HOWARD KATZ

Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office

A hundred years ago, this is where the center of industrial activity was. This is where Rockefeller was.

VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

King of oilmen is John Davison Rockefeller, Sr.

HOWARD KATZ

Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office

Euclid Avenue was one of the great streets in the world. It was end-to-end millionaires' row.

NARRATOR

These millionaires funded the construction of Cleveland's great cultural institutions.

At one time, the city generated more patents per person than any other place in the nation.

HOWARD KATZ

Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office

This was the Silicon Valley of the United States.

NORMAN KRUMHOLZ

Cleveland Planning Director, 1969-1979

Its factories and mills were putting out durable goods that were being bought by everybody in the world.

NARRATOR

With easy access to raw materials and transportation, Cleveland called itself “the best location in the nation.”

But behind this great boom, something else was going on, starting in the 1920’s.

People were leaving.

Families were growing tired of crowded city life.

As soon as they entered the middle class, many abandoned Cleveland for homes in the suburbs.

NORMAN KRUMHOLTZ

Cleveland Planning Director, 1969-1979

The very success of the city forced land prices up and provided the impetus for owners of properties to think about other locations.

NARRATOR

In the decades following World War II, the exodus from Cleveland accelerated — and hasn’t stopped.

THOMAS CARNEY

Carney-McNicholas moving company

In between 1960 and 2000, the population of the City of Cleveland, you know, almost fell in half.

We're fortunate to still have some work, but oftentimes we think we have moved everybody out of Cleveland already.

NARRATOR

In the 1930's the vast majority of residents lived within Cleveland.

Today, the vast majority lives in the suburbs outside Cleveland — spread across the region of northeast Ohio.

At first, people moved to the inner suburbs just outside the city. But as the migration intensified, they moved farther and farther away into the outer suburbs.

THOMAS CARNEY

Carney-McNicholas moving company

The typical house that we are moving people into now has a three-car garage. You know, they are thirty miles away from the center of the city.

NARRATOR

People weren't the only ones leaving.

JACK PATTON

Retired LTV Steel employee

The steel industry was really the backbone of the country and it was really the fuel to drive the Cleveland economy.

Super:

**195 acres of industrial land:
now unused or vacant**

JACK PATTON

Retired LTV Steel employee

In this valley, that we call the Flats of Cleveland, there were close to 18,000 employees. Today there's about 1,800.

We went from being on Easy Street with a number of major steel companies to where it was dwindling down to but one facility.

NARRATOR

As steel mills closed down or moved to cheaper labor markets, commercial businesses also left. Like many other older American cities, Cleveland was losing thousands of jobs.

THOMAS CARNEY

Carney-McNicholas moving company

A lot of our work has been the decommissioning of multi-office enterprises that are closing their Cleveland offices, and even those are moving out to the suburbs, or just closing and not having a representation in Cleveland.

SECURITY GUARD

(within building) Perimeter check. Floor 26
is clear...floor 12 is clear...floor 13 is
clear...

Super:

**Former American headquarters of BP
Corporation: now vacant**

**Over 3 million square feet of downtown
office space: empty**

**40% of Cleveland's jobs
between 1960-2000: eliminated**

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

Cleveland was a centerpiece of Fortune 500
companies. One day they're here; the next
day they're gone. I think we have less than a
handful that remain. How do you make that
adjustment?

NARRATOR

**Americans had fundamentally changed
where we worked and lived.**

**We no longer seemed to need a center to
hold the region — and our lives —
together.**

NARRATOR

During Cleveland's heyday, most residents lived and worked in an area under 80 square miles. Today, homes and businesses are spread across an area over 600 square miles.

Meanwhile, the overall population has barely increased since 1960.

This is sprawl without growth.

It is happening to many older cities across America.

This shift to the suburbs has left in its wake a city landscape that has been dramatically altered.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

These parking lots are a reminder to many of us of what we've lost, of what isn't there anymore: wonderful blocks of buildings, and housing, and jobs, and hunks of city that are forever gone.

CHRIS RONAYNE

Cleveland Planning Director, 2002 – 2005

1920s Cleveland, at the height of the building boom of the commercial downtown, there were very few surface lots, if any. And over the next eight decades, that whole phenomenon changed.

NARRATOR

Stores and businesses moved out of the city into suburban shopping malls and offices with plenty of free convenient parking.

In the 1960's and 70's, city officials, concerned about this flight, responded.

In an effort to hold onto the remaining businesses, the city allowed the wholesale demolition of vacant buildings to create parking lots.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

It actually became more economically viable to tear tremendous buildings down, historic landmarks down, and park cars.

NARRATOR

But it didn't work.

The department stores failed and businesses continued to flee, leaving the heart of the city scarred with asphalt.

Super:

There are 120 acres of parking lots downtown.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

Parking lots are ugly and they create enormous gaps in the urban fabric. And they don't belong in that quantity in cities.

NARRATOR

Cleveland's neighborhoods experienced similar problems.

NORMAN KRUMHOLTZ

Cleveland Planning Director, 1969-1979

Property was being abandoned, housing was being abandoned, the price of land was declining - as population fell sharply during this period of time.

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

Each property for the city is kind of a death by a thousand cuts, wiping out value, taking economic strength away from the city, decimating it really.

NARRATOR

In addition to being eyesores, the abandoned land no longer generated taxes for the city.

So Cleveland found itself with less revenue to spend on public services at a time when poverty was rising.

NORMAN KRUMHOLTZ

Cleveland Planning Director, 1969-1979

People who were left in the cities needed more and had less.

NARRATOR

Wholesale changes of neighborhoods occurred, as many white residents moved out.

OTIS JONES

East Cleveland resident

When I moved in, it was 75, maybe 100 percent all white. People just seemed to want to move because I move in.

NARRATOR

Conditions worsened, tensions rose, until in July, 1966, they exploded.

VOICE FROM ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

Race riots broke out this summer. In Cleveland, firemen were driven off and rioters manned the hoses.

NARRATOR

Cleveland seemed to reach its nadir when the heavily polluted Cuyahoga River caught fire.

HILARY TAYLOR

Cleveland resident

Anyone that had options headed for the borders. I mean, "Last one out, turn out the lights."

NARRATOR

Cleveland was nicknamed “the mistake on the lake.” In 1978, it became the first city since the Great Depression to default on its loans.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

I remember turning to my left as the clock overhead almost was striking 12. Everybody was aware of the fact that a major U.S. city was about to go bankrupt.

NARRATOR

With their backs to the wall, citizens and business leaders joined with elected officials to try to revive Cleveland.

Over the next two decades, several billion dollars were spent to make downtown a popular destination once again.

A basketball arena was built, as was a baseball stadium, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, along with office buildings and shopping centers.

In many respects, the investment succeeded. Suburban families once again began visiting downtown.

Cleveland even mounted a public relations campaign, calling itself “the comeback city.”

NARRATOR

But all of this failed to solve the core problems.

HOWARD KATZ

Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office

That downtown turnaround didn't change the underlying facts in the city: poverty, decline of manufacturing base, and therefore disappearance of jobs. Those sorts of things didn't change.

NARRATOR

Recently, Cleveland faced another fiscal nightmare.

NEWSCASTER

This is Channel 3 News.

JANE CAMPBELL

Cleveland Mayor, 2001-2005

Today we face a crisis of heartbreaking proportions.

2ND NEWSCASTER

A dark day at city hall and for all of Cleveland...

3RD NEWSCASTER

Seven hundred jobs are gone....

4TH NEWSCASTER

Live at city hall for the latest on....

5TH NEWSCASTER

With Cleveland facing a projected deficit perhaps facing \$60 million....

JANE CAMPBELL

Cleveland Mayor, 2001-2005

We are now struggling with the toughest economic times.

NARRATOR

With tax revenues falling once again, the mayor was forced to make deep cuts in basic city services.

CLEVELAND FIREFIGHTER

This city is in the process of laying off 150 firemen, 263 cops. Really, I mean, it's going to hurt the city.

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, there was one city service that had been struggling for a long time.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

What you had was an exodus out of the public school system.

NARRATOR

In the 1970's, during the upheaval of desegregation, many of Cleveland's residents abandoned the school system.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

Everybody who was middle class and could get out at that time, because of the uproar and the turmoil, began to either move out of the city, or put their kids into private schools.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

You had a system that became racially segregated with a disenfranchised group at the center. We had a system where teaching and learning were not the primary goal. I believe it became more warehousing children: "Let's just keep everybody inside and quiet."

NARRATOR

In 1997, the schools were placed under emergency mayoral control.

Three years later, disaster struck.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

And I remember getting a telephone call and somebody said, "Oh, my gosh! The ceiling has fallen at East High." I thought, you know, "Just get the tile, put it up." And they said, "No, no, no. You don't understand. The roof has collapsed at East High." And I arrived there, and school was in session, and stood in the building and looked up and there was the sky.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

It is a miracle that no one was seriously injured or hurt. The buildings just had not been maintained.

BRENDOLYN BRISTER

Martin Luther King School

(in school) Ok, for lunch you are talking about?

NARRATOR

As with most American public schools, a large portion of the revenue for Cleveland's system comes from property taxes.

And as residents abandon the city, tax receipts fall.

Today, the school district is facing a multi-million dollar deficit.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

So, what do you get? A decreased revenue in order to buy textbooks, to invest in technology and computers, to provide teacher salaries. As you begin to reduce the number of teachers that you are able to hire, then the class sizes increase. Can you imagine 30, 35, 40 children in a classroom that was built for 20 to 22?

NARRATOR

Another shockwave hit the city's schools when downtown commercial property values fell to a new low.

Super:

Galleria shopping mall – downtown

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

I'd say the first two, three years, I remember the retailers were meeting their numbers. But then the suburbs started to build a number of these suburban malls.

GARY PAULENSKE

Cuyahoga County Treasure's Office

So as a result of that, there wasn't enough income generated out of these spaces. And the retail suffered and, ultimately, a lot of these stores went dark.

NARRATOR

When the Galleria shopping mall in downtown Cleveland was sold, it had lost over two-thirds of its value.

This single loss cost the school system \$1.8 million in funding.

It also triggered a domino effect, as other downtown property owners demanded tax reductions for their own buildings.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

Before this reappraisal process is over, there is going to be a minimum of 500 million dollars in value wiped off the books. It will mean millions of dollars lost for an already struggling public school system.

NARRATOR

Desperate to reduce their deficit, the schools sponsored a drive to impose a multi-million dollar property tax levy.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

We must make certain that our community understands that the lifeblood of its children, and the lifeblood of our city, depends upon how supportive our community will be of this levy.

Super:

**Voters defeated the school levy on
November 2, 2004.**

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

(at meeting) Given this issue has failed and the operational levy has not been supported by our community, the four categories are the following areas: academic programs, cuts to safety and security, additional staff layoffs, and potential school closings.

MAN AT PODIUM

(at meeting) These are our children. If we cannot stand for them, we are truly the poorest community in the nation.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

(at meeting) We're at the bone.

2ND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

(at meeting) We have to make up for a \$25 million deficit.

3RD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

(at meeting) I look to the business community when they can't employ people in this region because of skill deficits, or can't find qualifications, and they move from Northeast Ohio. That is a problem. That's a problem that is affecting everyone.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

And so the property devaluation, and businesses leaving our city, has detrimental, detrimental outcomes for children and the school system.

NARRATOR

The consequences of this downward spiral don't end at the schoolhouse door.

Without adequate schools, Cleveland will have trouble competing in the global economy. And middle class families will continue to flee to the suburbs.

NARRATOR

Then there are the more immediate problems.

On one street stands a memorial to the over 1000 children and young adults who have died from violence in Greater Cleveland since 1990.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

There's such a close link between land value and humanity, human happiness, the spirit of human beings, the work, the collective work people do.

And so as we move away from the city, as we escape, quite frankly, from the city, we leave a hole. And sometimes it gets filled with that which is not healthy. And that which is not healthy spreads.

Super:

Cleveland fights back one lot at a time

EDWIN MALONE

Fairfax resident, Cleveland

There was houses out all along here. And apartment buildings, churches, gasoline stations, laundromat. Along here was mostly businesses.

NARRATOR

Once a thriving neighborhood within the city — Fairfax had fallen to decades of neglect.

Recently, however, things have taken a turn for the better.

DENISE VANLEER

Fairfax Renaissance Development Corp.

The first goal was to reweave the fabric of the neighborhood, to fill in the gaps in the neighborhood and the streets. So you really do, you know, reweave it and make it whole again.

NARRATOR

Frustrated with the decay of their communities, residents joined with city planners and officials to revive neighborhoods like Fairfax.

First, they had to find a way to take control of the land.

JOE SIDOTI

Cleveland Neighborhood Development

There was a summit where the public officials and the private sector and the non-profits and the banks got together, and came up with a plan that would allow us to begin reclaiming these properties.

NARRATOR

But turning Fairfax around wasn't going to be easy. Here, like elsewhere in Cleveland, the scars of abandonment ran deep.

EDWIN MALONE

Fairfax resident, Cleveland

This house didn't get torn down by itself, you know. It was torn down by neglect.

NARRATOR

Since the 1950's, 80% of Fairfax's residents moved away, leaving hundreds of empty lots.

EDWIN MALONE

Fairfax resident, Cleveland

You never know what's happening on a vacant lot when you're walking down the street. You're leery because the vacant lot is a place where, nowadays, drug hangouts, or anything can happen on a vacant lot.

JOE SIDOTI

Cleveland Neighborhood Development

And these parcels were not generating any revenues at all. The city was dying.

NARRATOR

Legislation was passed that allowed the city to acquire tax-delinquent properties and place them in what is known as a land bank.

From there, the lots were offered to non-profit, community organizations for a nominal fee.

They teamed up with developers to build homes on the land and sell them at affordable prices.

DENISE VANLEER

Fairfax Renaissance Development Corp.

Everybody said, well, you know, we have to build new houses, so people will come back to the neighborhood.

We've developed over two hundred and fifty new units of housing on vacant land. The majority of that housing came from the city of Cleveland's land bank.

JOE SIDOTI

Cleveland Neighborhood Development

The land bank program is unique. Our policy is: if you want to build a new home within the city of Cleveland, as an economic incentive, we'll sell you the land for one hundred dollars.

DENISE VANLEER

Fairfax Renaissance Development Corp.

And so the landbank made it possible for us to attract back people that may have lived here and left. And now, you know, they're returning.

EDWIN MALONE

Fairfax resident, Cleveland

The land bank has provided the land and we started building on it, so we have built up Fairfax. And so if you got the land, you can do anything.

NARRATOR

So far, over 1,200 empty lots have been turned into homes across Cleveland.

DENISE VANLEER

Fairfax Renaissance Development Corp.

The landbank has made it possible for this organization to offer - to the people that chose to remain in the neighborhood - hope. It really has.

EDWIN MALONE

Fairfax resident, Cleveland

It's beautiful to me because of the fact that the vacant lots are disappearing. And it's making it vibrant. Just when you driving through now, you can see a future instead of seeing decay.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

For every home we build in the city, ten more homes are built in the suburbs. We will never win from a standpoint of quantity. We just can't do it. But we've got something they don't have: we've got a city. We've got a civic, cultural infrastructure that doesn't exist in those outward places. And we're building a residential environment that you can't build there.

NARRATOR

Here, as in other American cities, Cleveland has several demographic trends in its favor. One is a growing number of empty-nesters moving to the city after their children leave home.

JOYCE LAORDEN

Tremont resident, Cleveland

Last January my husband said, "Look what I have seen in the newspaper, they are building in Tremont."

JUAN LAORDEN

Tremont resident, Cleveland

I think it has beautiful surroundings near downtown, I think it's great.

NARRATOR

Juan and Joyce LaOrdan were attracted to the benefits of city living.

So when their children finished school, they left the suburbs for Cleveland's Tremont neighborhood.

In the 1970's, this area was plagued by arson and neglect.

As new businesses and residents slowly returned, Tremont was transformed into a community known for its restaurants and art galleries.

JOYCE LAORDEN

Tremont resident, Cleveland

We really like the city life. We have the culture and the diversity, a city we can walk in, cafes we can go to. If we don't have anything to cook tonight, there are many restaurants in my neighborhood. My roots are here in Cleveland, especially in the Tremont area. My grandparents lived in this area. And so, when Juan said, "We are going to Tremont," and I said, "My people fled from Tremont. What are we doing going back?" And Juan said --

JUAN LAORDEN

Tremont resident, Cleveland

Back to the roots.

JOYCE LAORDEN

Tremont resident, Cleveland

“Back to the roots,” he said. Why not? This is going to be the good thing.

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

This is a region of a million households. We can expect that 2 percent of that million will want to live downtown. We know that. We have done surveys. 20,000 households - that would transform the city! There would be more restaurants, there would be more entertainment, there would be more shopping - all of that.

NARRATOR

Downtown living appeals to another important demographic: young people.

YOUNG WOMAN

(in street) I think we need a whole bunch of people.

2nd YOUNG WOMAN

(in street) What if we go back to the bride?

THOMAS MULREADY

Cool Cleveland.com

When kids grow up, the first thing they want to do is leave the damn suburb and go to a city that's exciting where things are happening.

BRIDGET MANKE

Director of (i)Cleveland, 2000-2006

Young people want to be where there is activity, there's buzz. And if they don't feel they're going to get that here, they're less likely to stay.

TIM MUELLER

Cleveland Chief Development Officer, 2002 – 2004

We've got to appeal to this next generation who are demanding it. Or, they have their options. And that involves a suitcase.

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

It's the younger people who are really creating these cities now. They have figured out that urban life matters to our society. It matters greatly.

NARRATOR

Cleveland is responding to the growing interest in city-living by investing in its downtown.

TIM MUELLER

Cleveland Chief Development Officer, 2002 – 2004

There are oftentimes a series of smaller bets, and then you have some larger bets that we believe that are catalytic in nature. This project that we're doing in Cleveland's Lower Euclid Area is one of those big bet catalytic projects.

NARRATOR

Cleveland is joining forces with a private sector partner to bring new housing, retail, and entertainment venues to East 4th Street in downtown.

The city plans to anchor its investment with a popular hot-spot for young and old alike: the House of Blues.

ARI MARON

MRN Ltd.

We're looking at, this area right here, is the stage. Beneath that is the dance floor.

House of Blues is an anchor tenant and it's the type of tenant that brings people from outside the region to the region.

BRIDGET MANKE

Director of (i)Cleveland, 2000-2006

I think it's a real big step. There's not a House of Blues in every city. So this is a big deal for us.

NARRATOR

Despite its budget deficits, Cleveland is anteing up nine million dollars of financial assistance for this project.

DEBRA JANIK

Cleveland Mayor's Chief of Staff, 2003 – 2004

They needed the government's assistance and our role was to come in find a solution, deliver on it and make sure that development happened.

NARRATOR

The city is betting that new business here will generate enough new tax revenue so it will recoup its investment.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

We need mechanisms that enable us to make it economically compelling to invest in the inner city.

DEBRA JANIK

Cleveland Mayor's Chief of Staff, 2003 – 2004

And what comes out of it? New retail commercial and economic opportunities. Hundreds of jobs. People going back to work, paying their taxes, using their disposable income, generating wealth.

JOE SIDOTI

Cleveland Neighborhood Development

This is one way that you could restore the health of the city is by bringing the vibrancy back, and trying to bring the people back.

NARRATOR

The city hopes that enough people and businesses will move downtown that they, in turn, will attract others to follow.

HOWARD KATZ

Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office

You have to realize you've got to do something. And the only time anything happens is if you take a chance.

NARRATOR

Cleveland's downtown investment seems to make good economic sense, considering the growing interest in urban living.

But the city isn't the only place paying attention to this trend.

Super:

not simply a shopping mall

NARRATOR

This is Crocker Park — the latest innovation in suburban living, as imagined by developers.

CHRISTOPHER NOBLE

Stark Enterprises

Crocker Park is not simply a shopping mall. It's not simply an office development, nor is it a housing development. It has all of those elements and it thoroughly mixes them together.

NARRATOR

Crocker Park is located far from downtown Cleveland in the outer suburb of Westlake.

The development brings together a mix of stores and offices, along with apartments and single-family homes — all in a dense downtown-like setting.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

Based on what I heard, the demand for this housing, before it's even available, has been incredible. I think that speaks to the fact that there are a lot of people out there that would like to be in a setting that gives them a feel of an urban village.

CHRISTOPHER NOBLE

Stark Enterprises

Downtown amenities is exactly what we are doing. All within a very comfortable walk for any pedestrian.

NARRATOR

At first, many Westlake residents balked at the idea of urban density in their backyard.

CHRISTOPHER NOBLE

Stark Enterprises

Density to the folks who live in Westlake is akin to that which they left the urban center from to move out to Westlake. They didn't want those things which are associated with urban density. All the negatives: crime, poverty.

NARRATOR

But in time, people warmed to the idea.

MICHAEL LARAWAY
Cleveland suburb resident

Five years ago, ten years ago, this was just a cornfield here. And now you come here, and it's a city within a city. You have the condos up above, you have all the shopping, and then you have the nightlife. And it's all right here.

JIM ROKAKIS
Cuyahoga County Treasurer

They'd like to feel that they're part of a community, and just enjoy the ambiance of being in an urban center where people are coming and going in a safe setting – where they would feel secure.

CHRISTOPHER CHAN
Cleveland resident

There's a certain comfort level you have here. People are out and about. It feels like the old days, when people used to walk around on the streets in a downtown environment.

NARRATOR
It is perhaps ironic that downtowns are being built in the suburbs for people that once fled the city.

THOMAS BIER
Cleveland State University

The developer has recognized there is a shifting occurring even in suburban mentality. And, so, there we are, with a new type urbanism in a brand new suburb.

NARRATOR

Urban villages like Crocker Park are springing up in suburbia across America.

On one hand, this is good news for America's cities. It confirms that we really do have a need for our communities to have a center, a core, a place where we can work, shop, and live near one another.

On the other hand, it means we may no longer have to move to the city to enjoy urban living.

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

That's going to be competition. That's just competition for the neighborhood style of life that a city of Cleveland offers.

CHRISTOPHER NOBLE

Stark Enterprises

Are we happy to be in competition with folks in other locations in Cleveland?
Absolutely. Look, we are capitalists. We believe that, if you build a better mousetrap, it is going to catch more mice.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

When fully developed, Crocker Park will be on our books for about half a billion dollars. It mirrors almost exactly what's going to be coming off the books in Cleveland this year when the reappraisals are through for loss of value in downtown property.

What you're seeing here is an increase in one community and it appears to be at the expense or loss of another. In this case, downtown Cleveland.

NARRATOR

This begs the question: can planned urban villages, built over a few years, replace downtowns that have evolved over generations?

Crocker Park with its thousands of square feet of tax generating retail space is a highly coveted prize for the outer suburb of Westlake. But it's not alone.

In the outer suburbs, 6 new shopping malls have been built in the last decade. Today, there are more than 10,000 stores out here. Together, they contain over 50 million square feet of retail space, with 5 million more proposed, or being built.

These stores employ more than 60,000 workers and generate 11 billion dollars in sales each year.

NARRATOR

But as the outer suburbs prosper, it is no longer only the city that suffers.

Here, in the inner suburb of Euclid, one older mall is in trouble.

MAN IN MALL

They had a restaurant here. They had a Radio Shack that was down here. Anything you wanted — you know, till midnight, they're used to people coming — walking in here, which one is now just empty space.

2ND MAN IN MALL

There was a coffee shop. Over there was travel agency. There was jewelry, too on this corner. It was very nice. A lot of good stores.

Super:

of 100 stores... 99 have closed

WOMAN IN MALL

This mall is empty because there are several malls that was renovated and built about three miles from here, and so you know, everyone always go for something new. And so business just went down, and everybody just moved out.

Super:

**value in 1998: \$16.7 million
value in 2004: \$3.2 million**

NARRATOR

**Like Crocker Park, Euclid Square Mall
once opened with great enthusiasm.**

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

(in mall) I remember the people of Euclid were so excited that Euclid Mall was going to have Higbees and Mays, which made us better than the Richmond Mall, because the Richmond Mall only had J.C. Penney and Sears. And we had the Higbees and Mays for 20 years.

ROSEMARY LUKSIC

Euclid Square Mall

(in mall) This was Santa's area.

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

(in mall) Santa used to come here, my mother volunteered with the seniors against crime...

ROSEMARY LUKSIC

Euclid Square Mall

(in mall) That's right.

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

When they lost the anchor store to another mall about five miles to the east, it became an avalanche in terms of one tenant leaving, and another tenant leaving.

And now we have several hundred thousand square feet of retail space, and there used to be lots of part-time jobs here. And there's just too many malls on the east side of Cleveland.

CHRIS RONAYNE

Cleveland Planning Director, 2002 – 2005

Everybody seems to want retail. It has killed the downtown. It has killed the first ring suburban shopping malls. If you duplicate and duplicate, and duplicate, where does it end?

Super:

decline spreads to the suburbs

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

The way my mother puts it is, she hates to see the For Sale signs. I grew up in an older suburb. I saw first hand how the neighborhoods have changed.

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

The store you used to go to, it isn't there anymore, and the place where my dad used to work, it's an abandoned, ramshackle building now.

Places where I used to play pick up baseball and places where I used to deliver the newspapers. The jobs, the stores, the people, the fun, the activities, it's gone.

You have got memories of when things used to be thriving, and what you remember was solid and beautiful, and productive, and busy, and now it is a shell of a building, well, what does that say to you? I mean, it hits you in your gut.

When a property like this becomes vacant, it translates into tremendous loss. The people that used to work here had money that they spent over at that grocery store. They rented those apartments. They bought homes up on top of that hill. So there is a spin-off effect, and it is not a positive spin-off effect.

There's lots of factories, new factories, modern factories, hi-tech factories. Are they being built to replace the ones in Euclid and Cleveland? No. They are being built out forty-five miles from the center of town.

NARRATOR

Once people came to Euclid to escape the problems of Cleveland. Now they're moving to the outer suburbs to escape the problems of Euclid.

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

Conventional wisdom is to run away from the problems of the big city. You could afford to be oblivious to what was happening in Cleveland.

Well, now it's showing up in the older suburbs, just outside the Cleveland border: disinvestment, aging housing, abandoned housing. You can't afford not to understand that you have a shared interest with the core community, that what happens in Cleveland is directly relevant, totally material to what is happening in the older suburbs.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

You can live in a suburb, and say Cleveland's problems aren't yours, but the fact of the matter is, they will become your problems because the continued decline of the city will impact the region. It will impact you in your suburb. If you live right next to Cleveland, your suburb is next, and if you live one suburb out, your kids will have to deal with that decline.

NARRATOR

Other inner suburbs are suffering similar fates — Parma, Garfield Heights, and here in East Cleveland.

OTIS JONES

East Cleveland resident

Oh, this street was beautiful. Every apartment on it was occupied. I lived here 14 years. Now I moved here, and this was all beautiful. Go up and down these streets and look at the abandoned houses. A lot of people out here on welfare. A lot of people on Social Security. Some people not paying their taxes. You can't operate without tax. You got to have revenues coming in. But then again you stop and say, "Why do this have to be like this?"

NARRATOR

This is a fundamental question about the spread of decline. Once Cleveland was the focal point for growth in the region. Then it was in inner suburbs like Euclid and East Cleveland.

Now it's 30 miles away, in outer suburban towns such as Avon — where sprawl reaches Ohio's cornfields.

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

(in car) Last right is 33491...33361...

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

We're mapping the world, in a nutshell,
street by street, city by city, county by
county, state by state.

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

(in car) 33070 on the right.

NARRATOR

**As suburbs like Avon spring up, people
who map the new streets and homes can
barely keep up.**

BRIAN NASH

Navteq

Trying to keep up with the development
going on, gives you a good feeling like "I
helped that person get from some place to
another."

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

(in car) Turning on Burgundy Circle...

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

In a sense, we are explorers. We are out
there to find where everybody wants to end
up, all of the people that want their dream,
and we try to get there first.

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

(in car) 33328...

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

Lorraine County is growing, as urban sprawl does.

BRIAN NASH

Navteq

We'll find several more roads added onto the back of a subdivision, and a number of other houses already built - just in a six-month span.

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

(in car) Last right is 33491... Napa Boulevard up to Vineyard Park.

STEPHANIE BAUMGARTNER

Navteq

I think the biggest reward for this job is the scenery: the panoramic view through windows that are 360 degrees around your car.

I think that the growth of the subdivisions and the neighborhoods is a good thing. It's good for every individual with what they ultimately want.

Where these new subdivisions are going, are where there used to be the fields of dreams, the corn the wheat. You know, the farmers' land. Now it's becoming every individual's dream land.

NARRATOR

**Why is it that we must fulfill our dreams
in the converted cornfields of places like
Avon?**

**Why do our communities keep sprawling
farther and farther outward?**

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

It's very easy to envision, you know, a 100-acre farm turned into 100 homes, compared with what you have to go through in a central city to recycle maybe five acres? Or even one acre. Urban redevelopment is tough.

NARRATOR

**To build in Cleveland, developers must
first demolish old buildings, then clean up
land contaminated from Cleveland's
manufacturing legacy.**

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

It takes about \$200,000 to get an acre of the city of Cleveland ready for redevelopment. You can go out 20 miles and buy an acre for \$30,000.

NARRATOR

**It's just cheaper, faster, and more
predictable to build in cornfields.**

**And once housing is built, other
development follows.**

CHRISTOPHER NOBLE

Stark Enterprises

We get asked oftentimes, “Why couldn’t you have built this in Cleveland?”, and the reality of the matter is commercial development follows people to where they live. Wal-Mart doesn’t spring up in a cornfield one day.

There are houses that are built in a cornfield one day and one day later, Wal-Mart springs up in the cornfield across the street.

NARRATOR

Before any development can begin, infrastructure such as roads, utilities and bridges must be built.

This is happening in Avon today.

PAUL OYASKI

Euclid Mayor, 1996-2003

This site here is under serious consideration for yet another new interchange off of Interstate 90. This is thirty or forty miles from downtown Cleveland.

But if the taxpayers build the freeway access, instead of this cornfield, you will have a fast food restaurant, next to a gas station, next to three different motels, next to an office plaza.

DAVID BEACH

EcoCity Cleveland

One of the major reasons why real estate gets developed out at the edges of the metropolitan area is because the land is made accessible by new highways.

NARRATOR

Highways not only make sprawl possible, they cost millions of dollars to build.

But it's not just suburbs like Avon that are paying for them.

Taxpayers from across the state will have to foot the bill — and then keep on paying for their maintenance.

DAVID BEACH

EcoCity Cleveland

What are the costs that we might be imposing on future generations of taxpayers to pay for all that stuff we are scattering out over the land: water systems, roads, highways, schools.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

It continues to put the fiscal health of the region at risk, this cost of infrastructure maintenance.

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, back in Cleveland, millions of dollars of existing infrastructure sit underutilized.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

I think we would like to think in America that we can continue to grow outward, to sprawl as they say, and all will be fine. To me, it is an illusion. It is a tremendous drain on our economy.

THOMAS BIER

Cleveland State University

Not only do we wipe out the city, we are now wiping out suburbs. This phenomenon does not stop at the city line. In fifty years, we will have brought down another twenty suburbs in this county. And ultimately that, of course, pulls down the whole region. It's pulling it down now.

NARRATOR

Decline is spreading outward across many of America's metropolitan regions.

The question is: where will it end?

Is it only a matter of time — perhaps a generation or two — before outer suburbs like Avon will also be pulled down?

Or can the spread of decline be stopped?

Many believe that slowing the effects of sprawl begins in the region's center.

NATE COFFMAN

Cleveland Home Builders Association

You have to have a vibrant, healthy city of Cleveland, a core city, if you're going to have a strong region.

NARRATOR

If Cleveland is to become vibrant again, it must do more than bring back young people and empty-nesters.

It must convince middle-class families to put down roots in its neighborhoods.

BARBARA BYRD-BENNETT

Cleveland School District CEO, 1998 - 2006

There can't be just a community of very poor people, because it doesn't work. So we've got to figure out how we attract middle class, how do we attract more social and economically mobile families back.

NARRATOR

Cleveland is attempting to attract middle-class families with a venture called Citirama. Officials chose Hough as a test neighborhood.

HILARY TAYLOR

Hough resident, Cleveland

I've contemplated all my work life driving past, "What are we going to do? What in the world are we ever going to do? We can't just let it stay like it is."

HILARY TAYLOR

Hough resident, Cleveland

And I said to my wife, “Come over and look at these houses. Because, you know, all of a sudden I think I see something that’s making a lot of sense to me.” She came over and she fell in love with this house right here.

MATTHEW FROST

Hough resident, Cleveland

The first one we actually went into was this one. And she just, you know --

SHELLEY FROST

Hough resident, Cleveland

I loved the house.

AIMEE MORRIS

Hough resident, Cleveland

This house is my husband’s and my first house. We both grew up in the area and had considered moving out. And I kind of talked him out of it. I saw the neighborhood coming back and I had to convince him that it would be a good idea.

SHELLEY FROST

Hough resident, Cleveland

One of the African American colleagues I have, mentioned to me, “Do you know where you’re moving to? You’re going to be the only white people on the street — are you crazy?”

AIMEE MORRIS

Hough resident, Cleveland

My husband and I have a close friend who's a realtor and he said to us, "I can't believe you're going to buy a home down there."

NARRATOR

With Citirama, Cleveland is competing head on with the suburbs by giving developers city land on which to build custom, suburban-style homes.

MATTHEW FROST

Hough resident, Cleveland

You know, you put this house in a different area, a suburb, it would be twice the amount at least. And on top of it, we were doing something very good for the city. We were putting money back in the city. And at the same time, they were giving us something as well.

NARRATOR

The city is giving these new residents a fifteen year tax abatement on their homes.

NATE COFFMAN

Cleveland Home Builders Association

More wealth is needed in the city, more market rate to luxury housing. That is what is scarce in the City of Cleveland.

And Citirama offers an incredible incentive for someone to make the decision to live in the city.

JOE SIDOTI

Cleveland Neighborhood Development

In order to attract people back, you have to give them a reason for wanting to come back.

SHELLEY FROST

Hough resident, Cleveland

I would say the top three reasons that we decided to purchase a home on this street is the commute was ten minutes versus an hour and a half one way; the home was absolutely beautiful; and we loved becoming part of Cleveland, making it less segregated and becoming a part of the neighborhood.

AIMEE MORRIS

Hough resident, Cleveland

For the past 20 or 25 years this area has been known as “the ghetto.” And now, we're making a change. We're making the effort to bring the area back, to get rid of the stereotype. We don't want to be any longer separated.

KELYNN BREWER

Hough resident, Cleveland

It's like sometimes you just can't run from everything. You've got to make it work.

NARRATOR

These homeowners have chosen to make a stand in Cleveland.

For them, identifying with the city from a safe distance in the suburbs was not enough.

AIMEE MORRIS

Hough resident, Cleveland

It is a risk, but if you don't get enough people to want to take that risk, we can never make those land values go back up to the way they were, or where they should be.

NATE COFFMAN

Cleveland Home Builders Association

You can take a blighted street, a neighborhood that may be suffering from decades of neglect, and turn it into a neighborhood again.

HILARY TAYLOR

Hough resident, Cleveland

We put our families here, our most sacred part of our lives here. Perhaps, you're making a statement. Not only to our friends in the suburbs. You're making a statement to the city, is that we read you and we're with you.

AIMEE MORRIS

Hough resident, Cleveland

(in street) We could just find a group of people for these last few houses. We could bring them all in and just right....

NARRATOR

If Cleveland is to make a comeback, it must do more than bring people back.

It must also replace its lost industrial base with new businesses geared for the global economy.

THOMAS MULREADY

Cool Cleveland.com

We are under this unfortunate luxury of still thinking that we are a steel-making town. Really we're not. We never will be again. And we've got to get that out of our minds. We've got to move on to the 21st century.

NARRATOR

Right next door to Hough, in University Circle, one company is focused on the future.

Nottingham-Spirk, a successful innovator of new product design, was growing rapidly and needed more space.

The owners had to decide whether to stay in the city — or leave it.

JOHN SPIRK

Nottingham-Spirk Design

We looked at warehouses, and school buildings, and all kinds of — but they all had issues. So, we looked outside of the city limits.

JOHN NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham-Spik Design

We started thinking, boy, moving out,
leveling a piece of ground, and putting up a
glass box. And we were kind of saddened by
that.

NARRATOR

**Most companies needing more space head
to the suburbs. Nottingham-Spik found
its new home in the city.**

JOHN NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham-Spik Design

This Christian Science Church, it was
designed by the same people that designed
Severance Hall where the Cleveland
Orchestra plays.

JOHN SPIRK

Nottingham-Spik Design

If I'm not mistaken, we were the only
interested party for the building that didn't
want to tear it down.

The state, the county, the city, all were very
supportive because of the fact that they
recognized this building was a very
significant building.

NARRATOR

**As it did for the Citirama homeowners,
Cleveland chose to help with some tax
incentives.**

JOHN NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham-Spirk Design

The financial incentives made it a lot easier for us to really make the decision to stay here. And in turn, I think we're going to give back more than they gave us.

This building was a church that was there for 70 years that didn't pay any taxes at all. Now, all of a sudden, we buy it. We're paying taxes on that amount. But, more importantly, we're creating economic activity because we build things here. We invent, design, and create new products and new businesses; and we have about 400 patents.

NARRATOR

Nottingham-Spirk chose to settle here for another reason.

JOHN NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham-Spirk Design

University Circle is where the action is in the Cleveland area. Not only with the university, but with the university hospital and the Cleveland Clinic. That's going to just spawn all kinds of economic activity.

NARRATOR

The University Circle neighborhood is home to many of Ohio's leading research centers, with Case Western Reserve University, and several of the nation's leading hospitals, all within a few blocks of one another.

NARRATOR

Cleveland's cultural life also intersects in this area with museums and the world-renowned Cleveland Orchestra.

THOMAS MULREADY

Cool Cleveland.com

What a city provides is a critical mass. It provides a place where a lot of things are layered, one on top of each other. And it's the intermixing of those layers that creates a rich culture. That's the only place you can find this, is in the critical mass of the city.

NARRATOR

In many respects, University Circle is reminiscent of Cleveland's heyday.

Here, a unique confluence of business, culture, and innovative thinking is coming together, just as it did several generations ago.

If this continues, University Circle could serve as an economic growth engine for Cleveland.

Super:

**anticipated new construction
in University Circle:
\$1 billion**

JOHN SPIRK

Nottingham-Spirk Design

It is, and will be over the next five to ten years, one of the most dynamic and exciting parts of northeast Ohio, maybe the entire state of Ohio.

NARRATOR

In many Cleveland neighborhoods, efforts to revive the city and replace its lost economy seem to be working.

The flight to the suburbs has been slowed.

And some communities are on the rebound.

But, despite decades of hard work and many city initiatives, Cleveland has yet to stem its general decline.

The poor remain stuck in ghettos.

And the school system continues to struggle, threatening the future of the city's next generation.

Cleveland is not alone.

Many American cities are confronting these same challenges - and their consequences.

KATHERINE LARAWAY

Cleveland suburb resident

When the downtown is undesirable, then I think ultimately that's going to spread to the suburbs. You still want to make sure that, you know, the city does whatever they can to maintain... something.

JIM ROKAKIS

Cuyahoga County Treasurer

You can't allow the core to continue to rot and not expect that that won't affect inner-ring suburbs. You can't expect that it will not impact the region's reputation.

NARRATOR

We must understand what contributes to the decline of our cities.

Only then can we begin to pursue solutions — however big or small — that will help revitalize them.

MYRA WALLACE

Cleveland resident

It is absolutely crucial in my opinion, that the city stands, and that it prospers.

NARRATOR

To give up on cities like Cleveland is to abandon our shared past, and our common hope for the future.

PAUL VOLPE

City Architecture Inc.

You build some housing here and you redo a street there. All of these things, we're talking about, are making a new Cleveland. Because people start saying "I'd like to live here, I'd like to bring my business here." That's what every city should be doing like Cleveland.

CHRIS RONAYNE

Cleveland Planning Director, 2002 – 2005

And what we're saying is, for all its scars and warts, the center city is the heart of activity. It's the soul of the region, and it is a place with history.

THOMAS MULREADY

Cool Cleveland.com

The great cities are still the places that people want to be, where good things happen, where civilization reaches its highest potential.

And that's not going to go away.

KYLE EARLEY

Cleveland resident

Cleveland has given us a sense of history. It's given us a foundation, and so why see it go to waste?

MAKING SENSE OF PLACE
CLEVELAND: CONFRONTING DECLINE IN AN AMERICAN CITY
NARRATION AND SEQUENCE SCRIPT

KYLE EARLEY

Cleveland resident

If you were raised in a family, would you let go of your family? If you were nurtured by that family, you built your character, values, moral system with that family -- why would you throw it away?

Credits.