



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

PUBLIC HEALTH

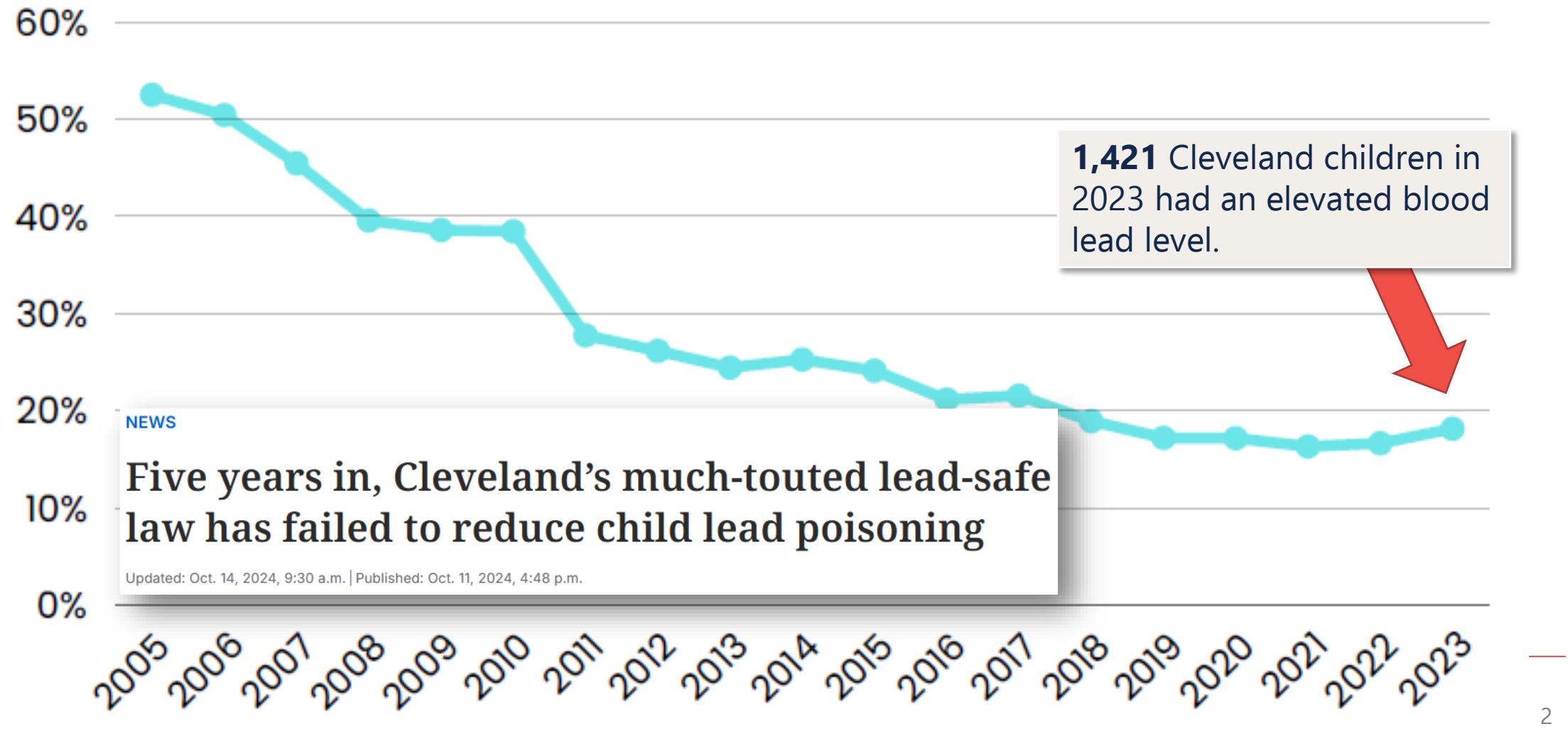
Accelerating Progress Toward Fewer Lead Poisonings

David Margolius, MD

February 9, 2026



In 2024, we noted: of children in Cleveland <6 yrs old who tested at least once each year, the percentage of tests with results $\geq 3.5 \mu\text{g/dL}$ **had not declined since 2019.**

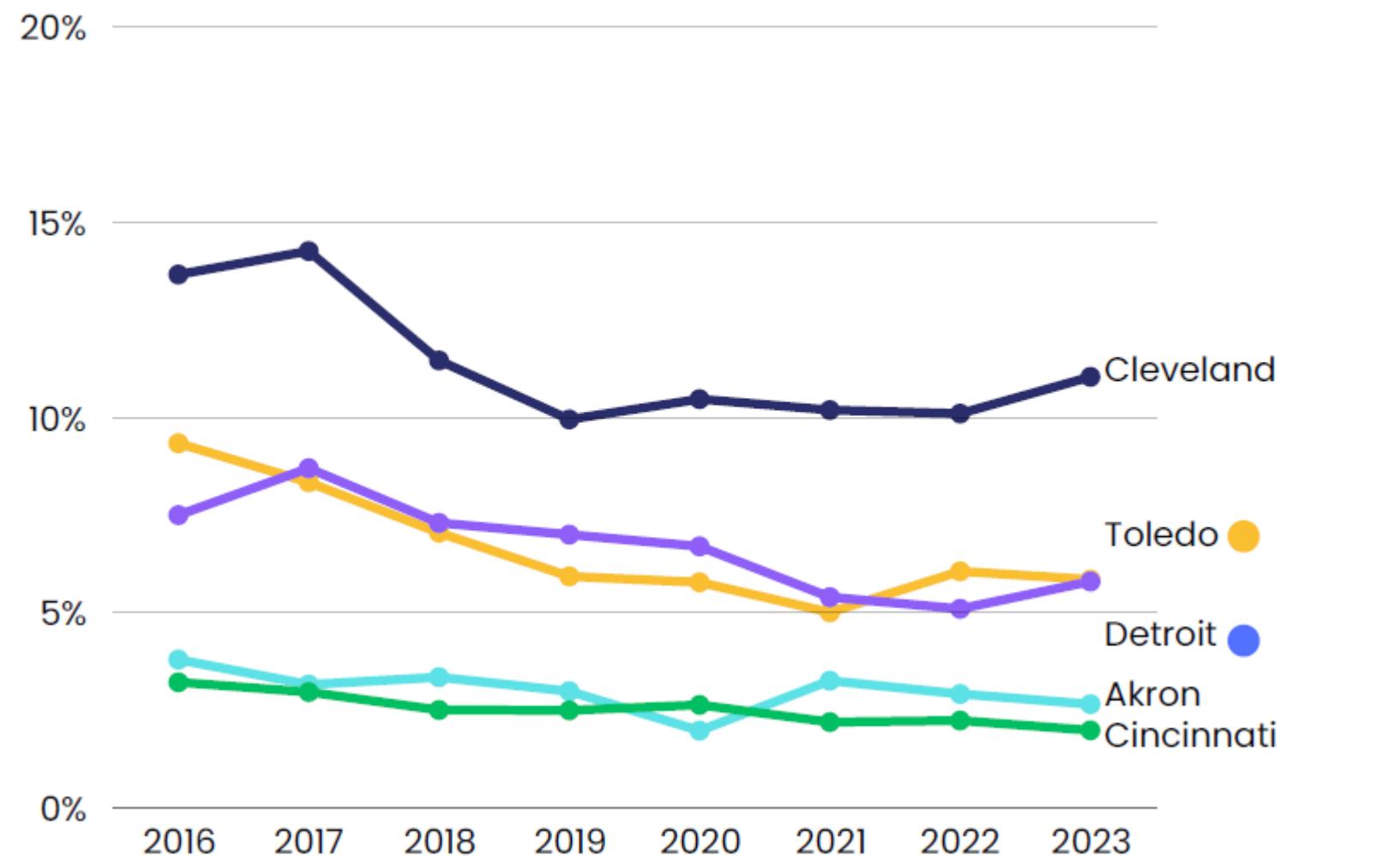


Cleveland's Lead Poisoning rate is more than double our peer cities.

Why?

Largely due to Median age of Housing stock:
Cleveland – 65; Toledo – 64; Akron – 63; Detroit – 59; Cincinnati – 46; Columbus – 37; Austin – 8.

Percentage of children <6 yrs old with Blood Lead Levels $\geq 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ among those tested shows how we compare to our peer cities.





Increasing the number of Lead Safe Certificates alone was not reducing Lead Poisoning rates.

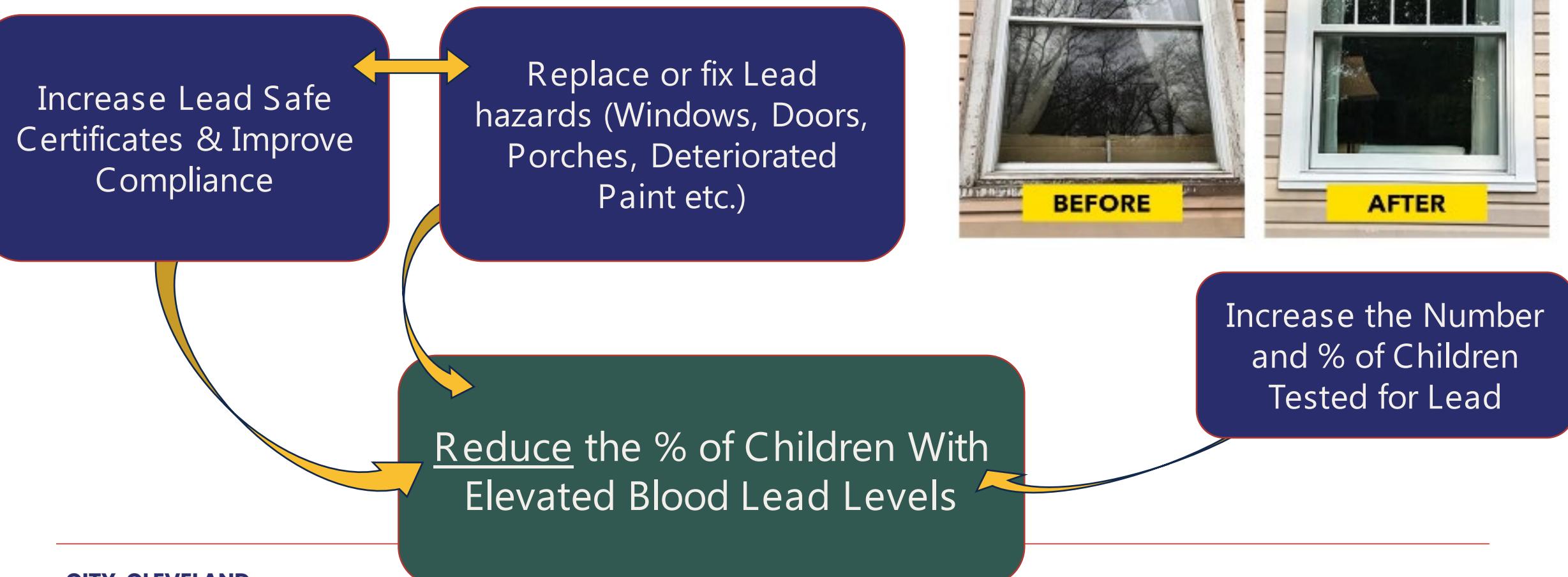
Increase Lead Safe Certificates & Improve Compliance



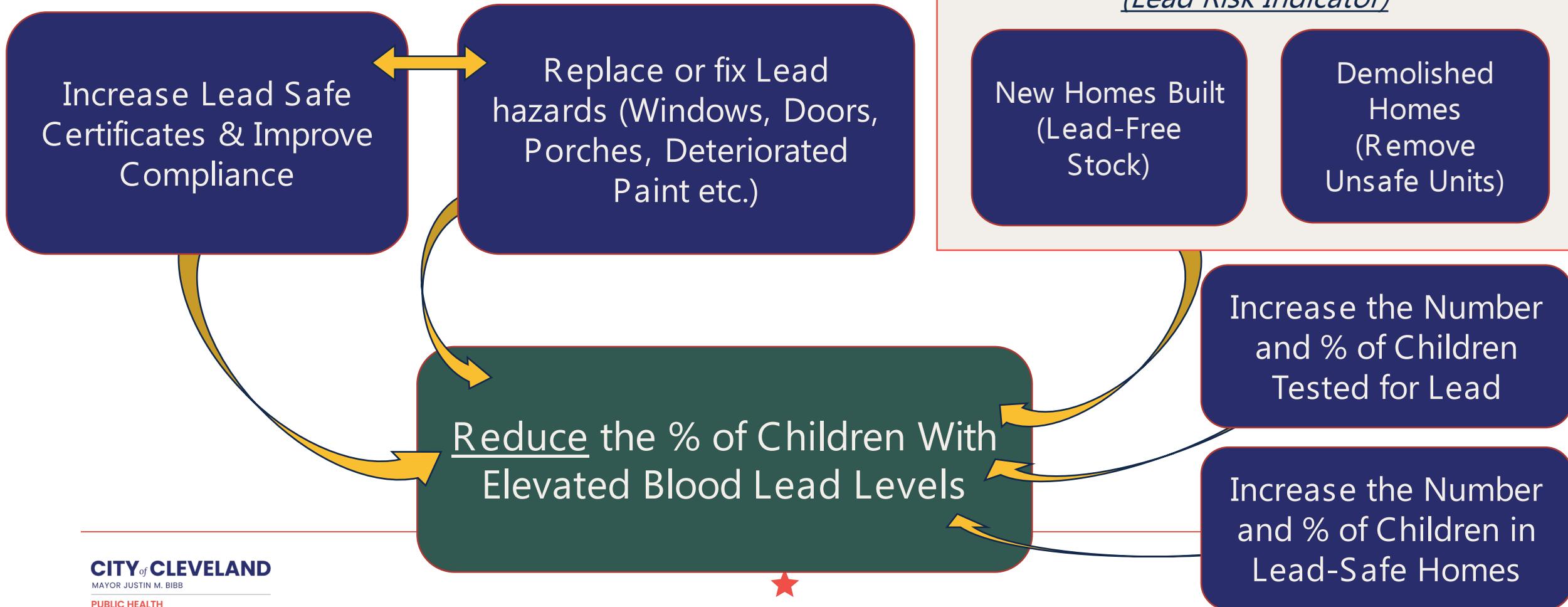
Increase the Number and % of Children Tested for Lead

Reduce the % of Children With Elevated Blood Lead Levels

We need more property owners to address Lead Hazards in their homes:



Goal: Ensure every baby grows up in a home free from Lead Paint Hazards.



We are building new homes, tearing down or fixing old homes, training lead workers, ticketing and prosecuting property owners who do not comply, and spreading the word.



Cleveland City Council is building new homes and fixing old homes!



Local Officials, The NRP Group, and University Hospitals, Cut Ribbon on The Davis, an Affordable Housing Community in Cleveland, Ohio



Cleveland City Council is building new homes and fixing old homes!



October 03, 2025 12:45 PM

First home rehabbed for Cleveland's SES Promise hits market — and sells fast

[ZACHARY SMITH](#) [✉](#)



CHN Housing Partners Announces
Closing of Parkside Homes

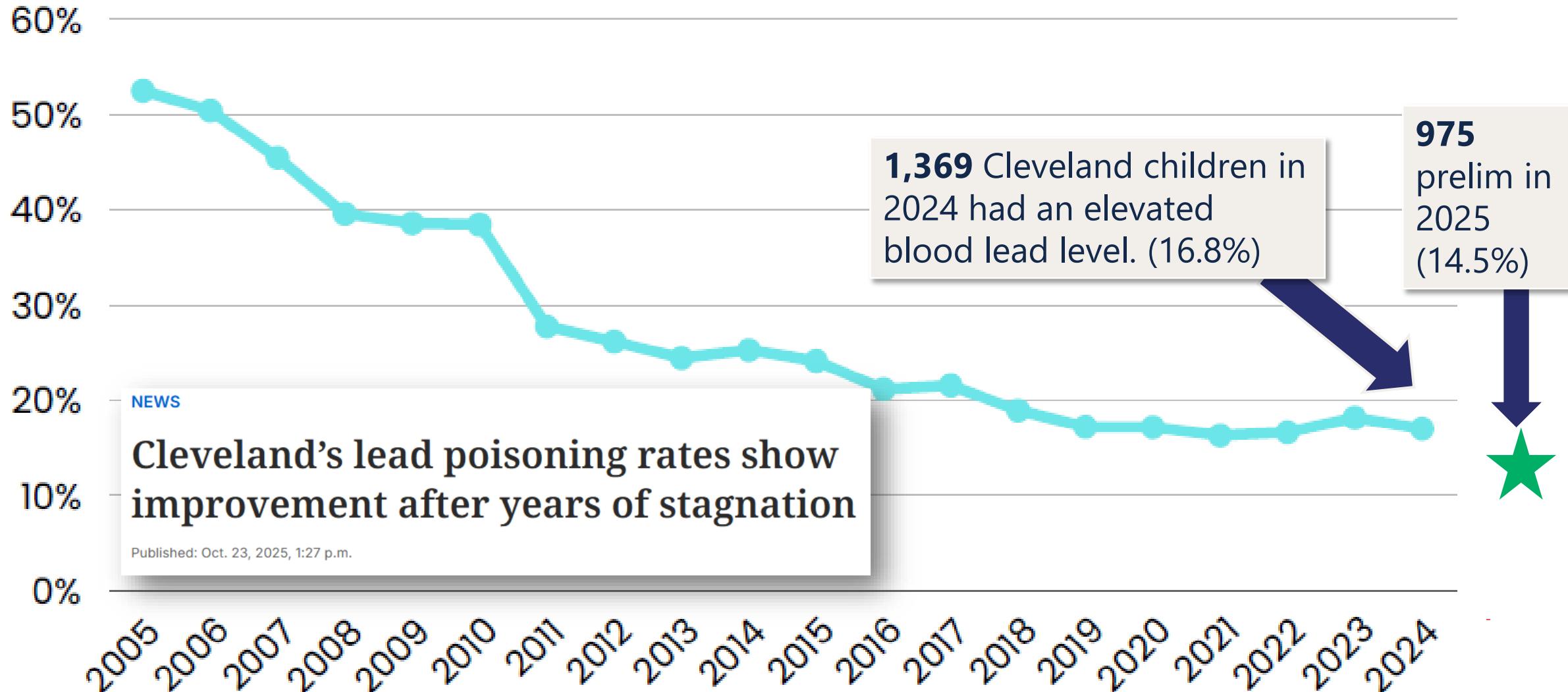
PARKSIDE HOMES WILL PROVIDE A PATH TO HOMEOWNERSHIP FOR 55 CLEVELAND FAMILIES

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to reduce Lead Poisoning in Cleveland:

1. The Number of **Homes tested** for Lead Hazards.
2. The Number of **Homes upgraded or improved**.
(i.e. replaced windows, doors, porches)
3. The Number of **Homes demolished**.
4. The Number of **New Houses and Apartments**.
5. The Number of **Children Tested** for Lead.
6. The Number of **Children in Lead-Safe Homes**.



Of children in Cleveland 1-5 years old who tested at least once each year, the percentage of tests with results $\geq 3.5 \text{ \mu g/dL}$ has improved 2 years in a row – and now is lowest ever.



Are these the correct metrics associated with Lead exposure?

How do we measure them?

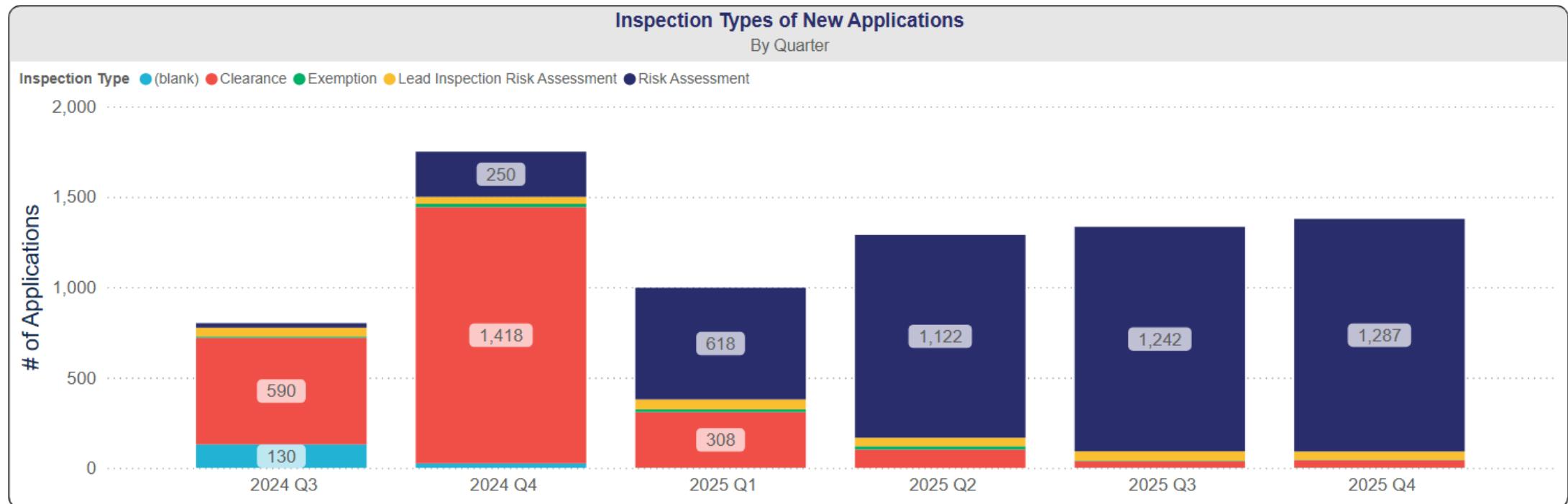
How can we improve them?

Appendix

Data for each KPI



The number of homes tested with a Lead Risk Assessment is Increased in 2025.



Inspection Type	4 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4
(blank)	130	25	1	0	1	1
Clearance	590	1,418	308	102	36	42
Exemption	7	19	15	18	3	2
Lead Inspection Risk Assessment	49	38	55	47	52	46
Risk Assessment	25	250	618	1,122	1,242	1,287
Total New Reports Filed	801	1,750	997	1,289	1,334	1,378

The number of tickets issued for Lead Safe Certification & Rental Registration is increasing:



BUILDING AND HOUSING

Tickets:

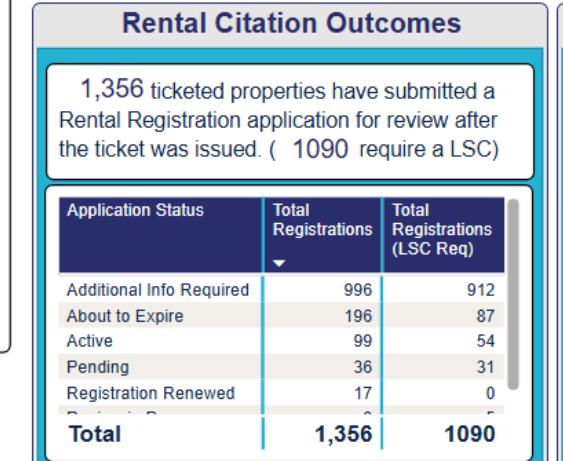
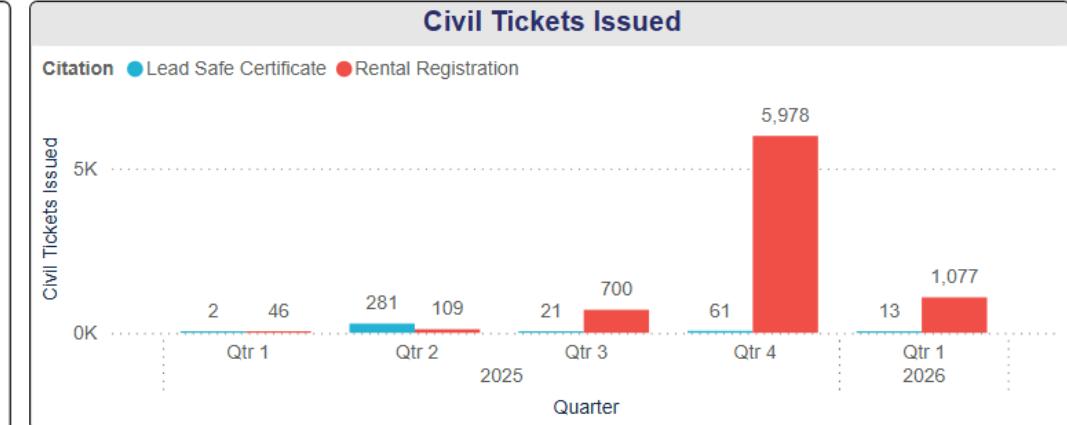
- 6,038 in Q4 2025
- 721 in Q3
- 390 in Q2
- 48 in Q1

Ticket Status	Total Tickets	% of Total
Awaiting Payment - Late	5,214	62.91%
Closed Payment Received	1,163	14.03%
Awaiting Payment	1,005	12.13%
Administrative Appeal Filed	306	3.69%
Sent to DAL	223	2.69%
Appeal Denied	185	2.23%
Admin Closed	109	1.32%
Closed Appeal Granted	80	0.97%
BBS Appeal Filed	2	0.02%
Hearing Scheduled	1	0.01%
Total	8,288	100.00%

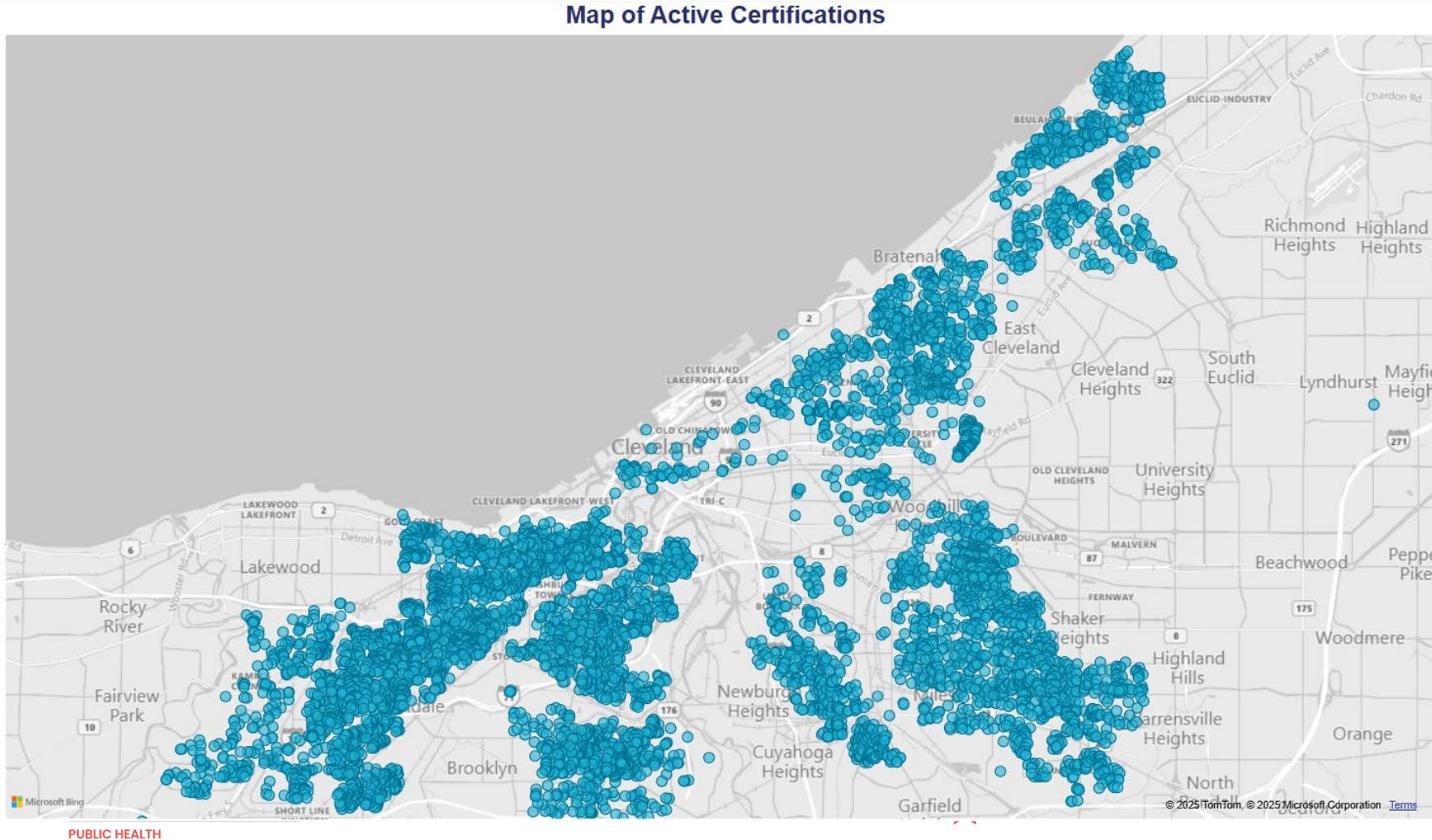
Property Use (zoning)	Total Tickets	% of Total
2F	5,146	62.09%
1F	1,904	22.97%
(blank)	632	7.63%
MF	603	7.28%
1F-A	3	0.04%
Total	8,288	100.00%

Civil Tickets Issued for Lead Safe Certification & Rental Registration as of: 2/5/2026

ZIP	Total Tickets	% of Total
44105	1,090	13.15%
44102	948	11.44%
44109	772	9.31%
44120	735	8.87%
44111	721	8.70%
44108	656	7.92%
44110	644	7.77%
44128	581	7.01%
44103	394	4.75%
44104	375	4.52%
44135	355	4.28%
44113	208	2.51%
44106	184	2.22%
44112	132	1.59%
44144	123	1.48%
44119	120	1.45%
44127	120	1.45%
44122	48	0.58%
44114	29	0.35%
44121	28	0.34%
44115	14	0.17%
	11	0.13%
Total	8,288	100.00%



Homes all over Cleveland have been tested – which matters most if process compels homes being improved:

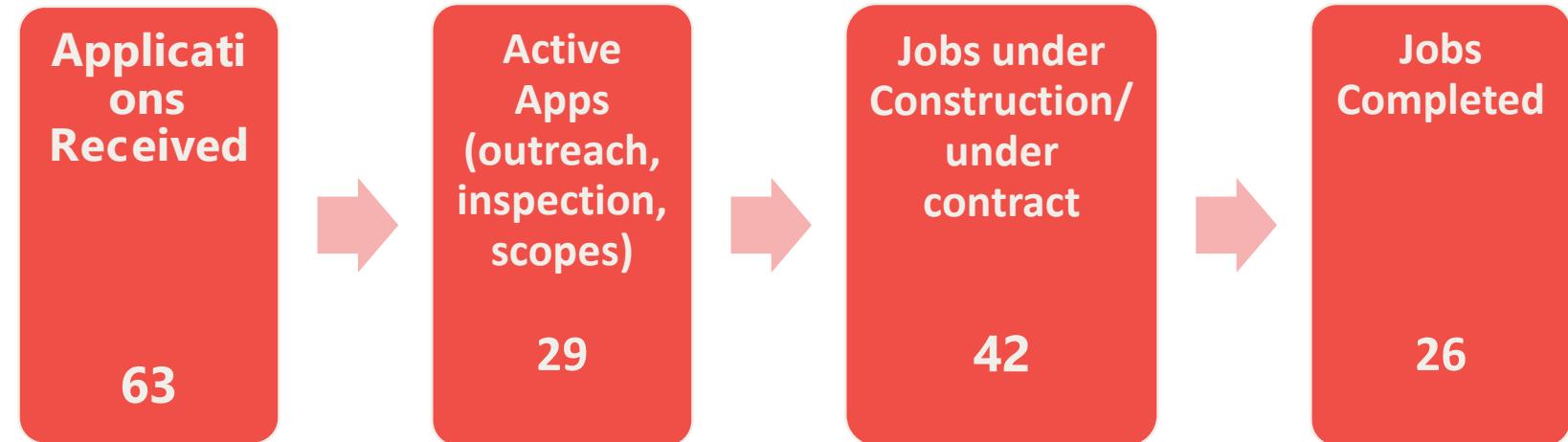


2. More residential permits are being pulled for windows and/or porches:



Government Funding Progress on reducing Lead Hazards: (through February 2026)

ODOD Lead
Safe Ohio
Grant:



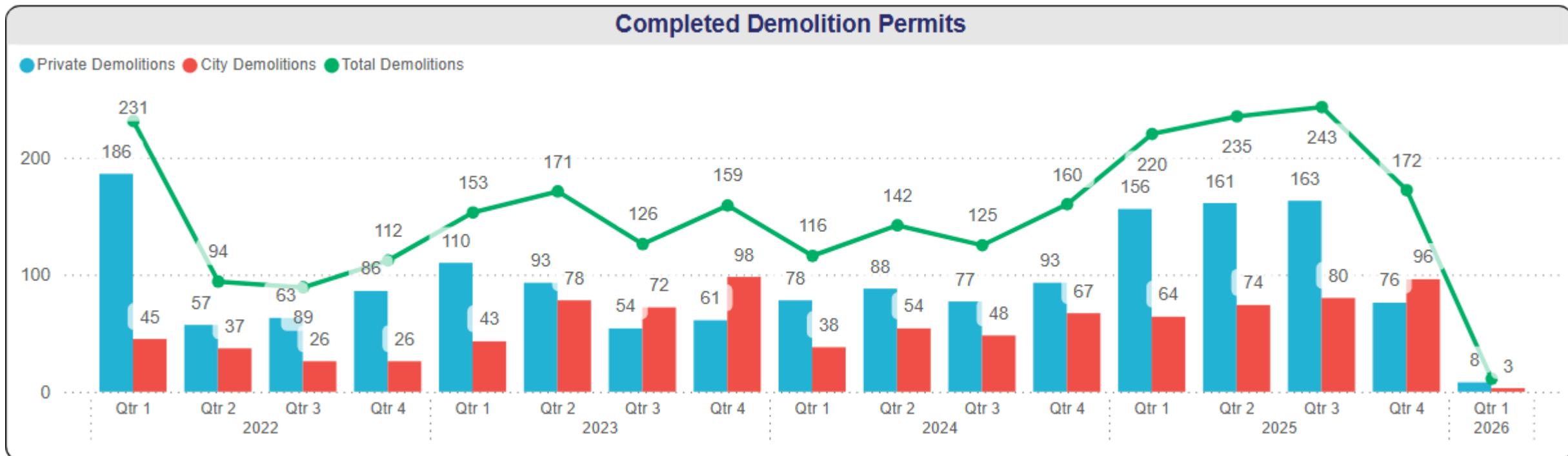
HUD Lead
Grants:

Program	Completed Projects since 1/2025	Under Construction	Project Assigned to a Contractor or Vendor	Total Completed for life of the grant
LEAD High Impact	21	7	32	75
LEAD Citywide	10	7	27	45
Healthy Homes Production	27	11	21	55

The number of homes demolished year-over-year is increasing:

Demolitions since 1/2022:

- 2,559 Total Demolitions
- 1,610 Private Demolitions
- 949 City Demolitions



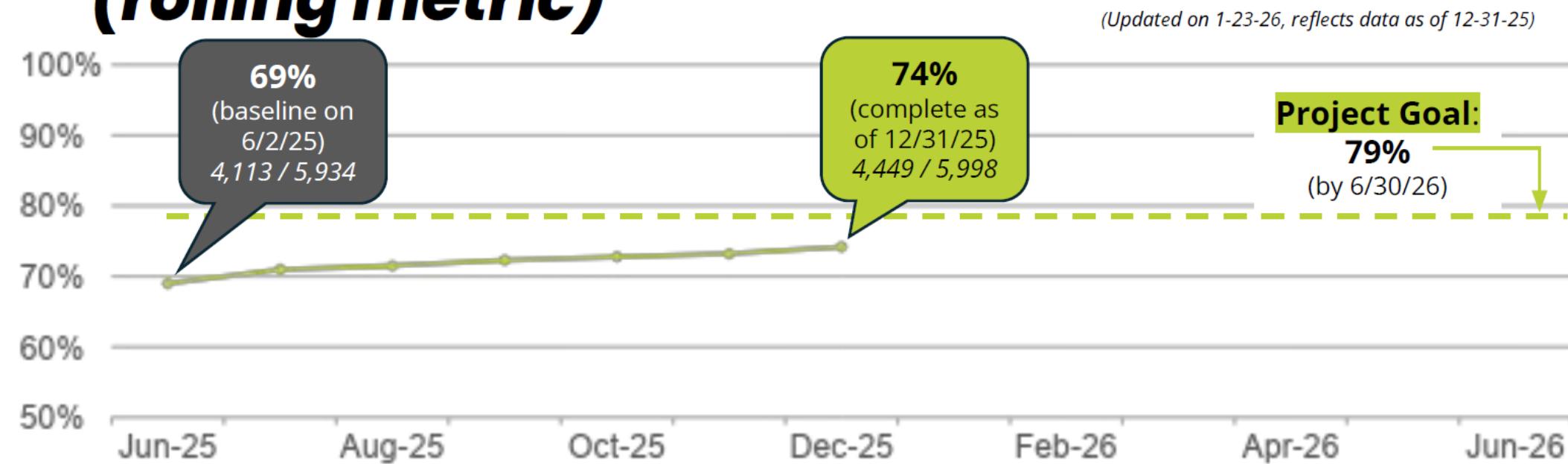
The number of new homes being built is increasing:

Source:
Residential Building Permit
Database – HUD Office of
Policy Development &
Research

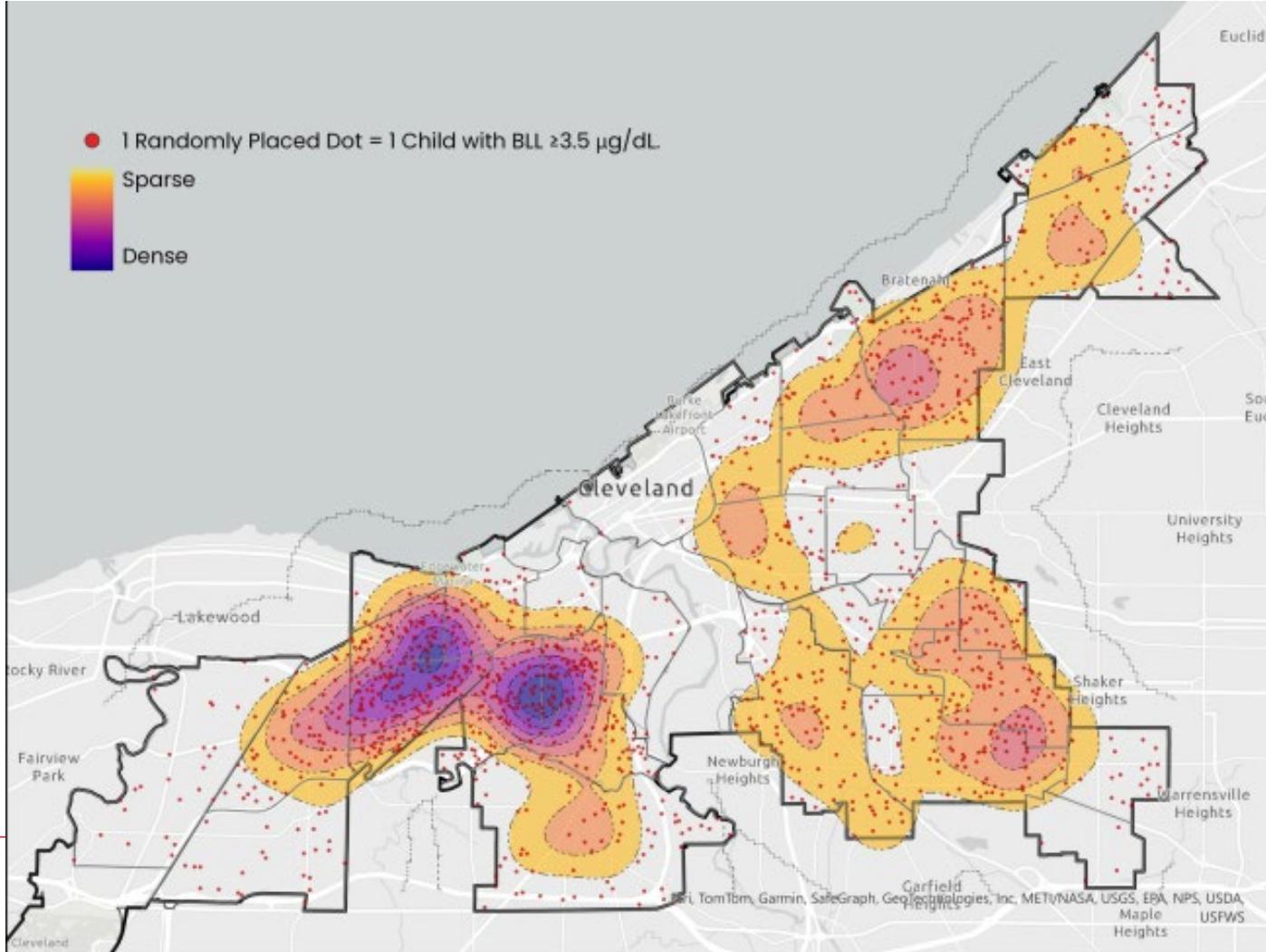
Type of House	single family	2 units	3/4 units	5+ units	Totals	through 8/2025
2025*	86	0	0	160	246	246 8/2025
2024	234	0	16	646	896	
2023	161	0	0	644	805	
2022	158	0	0	363	521	
2021	104	12	15	0	131	
2020	95	10	12	0	117	
2019	78	10	9	0	97	
2018	114	22	12	0	148	
2017	144	36	0	0	180	
2016	137	36	0	0	173	
2015	130	42	0	0	172	
Totals	1,441	168	64	1813	3,486	housing units

The number of children being tested for blood lead levels is increasing:

Lead testing completion rate for Cleveland children seen for a well visit (rolling metric)



The homes that children grow up in are increasingly lead-safe:



Potential Changes to 2019 Lead Safe Law

Based on stakeholder engagement to date

Goals of Lead Safe Law Changes:

- **Increase the relative number of higher risk rental properties** going through the Lead Safe Certificate Process.
- **Increase the number of rental units that make home improvements** that address active lead hazards.
- **Decrease the number of required inspections for lower risk rental properties** that have done the right thing.

Amendment #1:

Must use form provided by the Director:

(1) To obtain a lead-safe certification, an owner of a residential rental unit constructed prior to January 1, 1978, shall provide to the Director a copy of a clearance examination report or lead risk assessment, completed pursuant to applicable Ohio laws and rules, **and submitted on a template issued by the Director**, within 90 days prior to the date of submission evidencing that lead hazards were not identified in the unit.

Why? Consistency for Lead Inspectors and Reviewers.

Amendment #2:

Lead-based Paint Inspection Risk Assessment (LIRA) that is negative for lead-based paint or a negative clearance exam after abatement is completed - provides a life-time Lead Safe Certification for the property. (rather than 20-year “exemption”)

- New Jersey does not require ongoing lead inspections for:**

Dwellings that have been certified to be free of lead-based paint pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:17-3.16(b) either after an abatement is completed or an evaluation has confirmed that there is no lead-based paint in the dwelling.

Why? We want more property owners to choose this option. And New Jersey does it.



Amendment #3:

Properties built 1960 or later require one submitted Lead Risk Assessment or Lead Hazard Screen with no lead hazards identified.

- ◆ Per HUD guidelines, “only 11% of the U.S. housing built between 1960 and 1977 is estimated to have “significant” lead-based paint hazards compared to 39% of housing built in the period 1940-1959 and 67% of housing before 1940”; (<https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/lbph-07.pdf>) Page 5-12.
- **Of 343 Cleveland properties with a Lead Hazard Control order: 1 was built in 1953; 2 in 1944; 2 in 1941; 2 in 1940. 336 were built before 1940.**



Amendment #4:

Multi-Unit Apartment Buildings built before 1978 that have been converted after 1978 from commercial uses (office buildings; warehouses) to residential apartments require one submitted Lead Risk Assessment or Lead Hazard Screen with no lead hazards identified.

- ◆ “Commercial Conversions” or “Gut Rehabs” of multiunit apartment buildings have not been found to be the source of childhood lead poisoning in Cleveland.
- **Need to figure out how we would measure or confirm above. (architect letter? General Contractor letter?)**

Amendment #5:

A 3rd consecutive Lead Inspection showing no active lead hazards, would grant a 5-year (or longer?) Lead Safe Certificate for the property.

- ◆ Reevaluation is generally not needed after: — Two consecutive reevaluations are conducted two years apart without finding a lead-based paint hazard; (<https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/lbph-07.pdf>) Section VII-B, Reevaluation Schedule.
- **However, HUD regulations and guidelines outline the need for periodic reevaluations and ongoing maintenance.**

Amendment #6:

Rental properties found to have post-1978 window, door, and porch replacements documented on their Lead Risk Assessment submission, and no active lead hazards, will be granted a 5-year (or longer?) Lead Safe Certificate.

- ◆ Windows, Doors, Porches are the most likely source of lead paint dust per HUD – if those components have all been replaced, risk of lead poisoning is lower and property owner is rewarded for home improvement with extended interval.
- **Need to figure out how we would measure or confirm above. (photos of each component?)**

Other amendment considerations?

- **Extend timeline to address active Lead Hazards?** *Current language gives 90 days from date of inspection to submission to address lead hazards and submit report.*
- *Clarify Lead Risk Assessment versus Clearance requirement for Lead Safe Certificate – law already states “per State and Federal Guidelines” which is our current standard.*

Goal of Lead Safe Law Changes:

- Increase the number of higher risk rental properties going through the Lead Safe Certificate Process.
- Increase the number of rental units that make home improvements that address active lead hazards.

Changes recommended so far:	Why?
1) Standard Template	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Better reports – better review
2) Lifetime for abated properties (neg LIRA or clearance after completed abatement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Incentivize doing the right thing through longer intervals.
3) Only 1 LRA or Screen for post-1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- More time for our teams to spend on higher-risk properties.
4) Only 1 LRA or Screen for “Commercial Conversions”	
5) Extend interval for 3 negative lead inspections	
6) Extend interval for replaced components	





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Questions?

