



CITY OF CLEVELAND

Mayor Justin M. Bibb

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ord. No. 716-2025

not approved for intro and passage; for intro only

May 29, 2025

The Honorable Blaine A. Griffin
President, Cleveland City Council
601 Lakeside Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114

Subject: Legislation for Introduction & Passage – June 2, 2025

Dear Council President Griffin,

We respectfully request the passage of legislation authorizing the Director of Community Development to enter into a contract with Ohio State University (OSU) to implement the soil lead testing and mitigation components of the 2025 Summer Sprouts community gardening program.

The Summer Sprouts program, administered in partnership with OSU Extension, supports cultivating community gardens on eligible vacant lots throughout the City of Cleveland. These sites include City-owned properties, nonprofit-owned land, and privately owned parcels secured through lease agreements. The program advances food access, environmental stewardship, and neighborhood revitalization by engaging residents in developing and maintaining fruit and vegetable gardens.

Gardeners receive in-kind support such as roto-tilling services, vegetable seeds, starter plants, humus, lumber, and other materials, along with technical assistance and educational programming from OSU Extension. Topics include garden organization, horticultural best practices, pest management, food preservation, nutrition, and crop planning.

In 2025, the City must comply with updated Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines requiring soil re-testing for lead on most program lots. Additionally, increased costs for supplies and materials have impacted the program's overall budget.

To address these challenges, the legislation authorizes using \$67,954 in General Funds from the May Supplemental to cover expenses related to soil lead testing and mitigation, garden materials, equipment, technical assistance, and administrative support. This represents a shift from prior years when the program was funded through CDBG dollars.





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We appreciate your consideration of this legislation to support a vital program that enhances food equity, public health, and neighborhood vitality across Cleveland.

If you should have any additional questions or concerns, you may contact me at (216) 664-6617.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Hernandez, Director
Department of Community Development

cc: All Members of Council
Patricia J. Britt, City Clerk, Clerk of Council
Ryan M. Puente, Chief Government Affairs Officer, Mayor's Office

Blaine A. Griffin, Council President

