



### Ohio Attorney General's Office Moving Ohio Forward

Demolition Grant Program

Program Summary **2012–2014** 







February 2015

Dear Fellow Ohioan,

In February 2012, we launched the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" to help repair and rebuild our communities from the mortgage foreclosure crisis. Ohio received almost \$93 million in funds from our settlement with five of the nation's largest mortgage servicers. \$75 million of those funds was earmarked for a demolition program. The Program enabled communities across the state to remove vacant, blighted, or abandoned structures and reclaim neighborhoods. I'm pleased to present the details of the program, which concluded in December 2014, in the enclosed report.

Each of Ohio's 88 counties participated in the program and was allocated a pro-rated amount of grant funds. Those funds helped demolish vacant properties that scarred neighborhoods already hit hard by the economic downturn and that too often were magnets for drug use, vagrancy, and other crimes.

While I am proud of the numbers of housing units demolished by the settlement funds, the program also brought benefits such as additional green space, improved property values, and rejuvenated economic activity to their communities. When abandoned apartments in one Cincinnati neighborhood were torn down, a city official called it "...the end of an era of crime, violence, and disorder. We're finally closing the door on that past, and opening the door to revitalization and investment...."

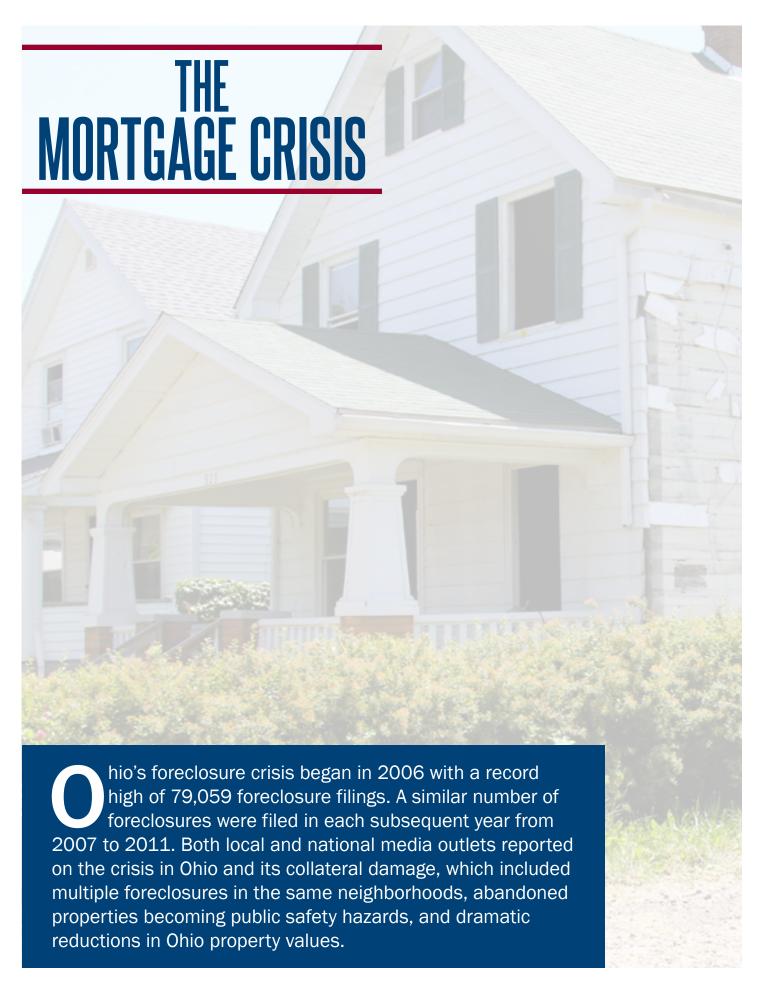
I am grateful to our county and community partners for helping make the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" a success.

Very respectfully yours,

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Mike DeWine

Ohio Attorney General





In February of 2012, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine and 48 other state attorneys general settled with five of the nation's largest mortgage servicers over foreclosure abuses, fraud, and unfair and deceptive mortgage practices. Coined "The National Mortgage Settlement," DeWine said during the settlement's announcement, "This settlement will provide much-needed relief to Ohio homeowners and communities and help our state to recover from the destruction left behind from the mortgage financing crisis."

43.618 Ohioans received direct benefits from the settlement's consumer relief provisions. In total, more than \$526 million in relief was provided to Ohio borrowers. Foreclosed borrowers in Ohio received \$49.8 million in cash payments. Ohio consumers obtained loan modifications amounting to \$306 million, and interest rate reductions saving them \$77 million over the life of their loans. Consumers were able to refinance underwater homes, achieving an average interest rate reduction of 2.95% and \$38,100 in average loan modifications.

"Thanks for 'getting it' and putting real money toward the solution - no other Attorney General in the nation took this approach."

-Carolyn Rice, Montgomery County Treasurer



The Ohio Attorney General's Office was allocated \$93 million from the settlement to address Ohiospecific foreclosure issues. Each state involved in the settlement received funds to distribute at their discretion. While other states transferred some or all of these funds to their state budget, Attorney General Mike DeWine put Ohio's share into rebuilding our communities.

Of all states to use 100% of the funds on housingrelated activities, Ohio had the largest allocation of \$93 million.1 The centerpiece of these housing efforts was the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Jakabovics, Andrew, and William McHale. "States Fall Short on Help for Housing." Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., 17 Oct. 2012.





he "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" for the demolition of blighted residential structures was created in February 2012 with \$75 million of Ohio's mortgage settlement funds. For the first time, residential demolition dollars were made available to all 88 counties in Ohio to demolish vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties. Attorney General DeWine dedicated these funds to demolition to ensure that communities benefitted from the settlement, in addition to individuals directly affected by the foreclosure crisis. Communities were also victims of the crisis as they struggled to combat diminished property values and public safety hazards caused by the blight of abandoned and foreclosed properties.







Grant funds were allocated to each county based on the number of foreclosure filings from 2008–2011. To maximize the effectiveness of the program and to stretch the dollars further, the program was designed as a matching grant program. And, to ensure all counties could participate regardless of fiscal situation, each county was only required to match grant dollars after receiving the first \$500,000.

Once the grant funds were allocated, the counties were required to submit an application to the Attorney General's Office requesting the funds. The application process encouraged counties to take a more meaningful look at the demolition needs in their cities and towns and to provide a general strategy for using the funds. All 88 counties submitted applications expressing the need for demolition funds.

"Sincerest thanks to Attorney General Michael DeWine...for this visionary use of settlement funds that has made a profound and lasting change in Allen County. Your leadership and support of smaller communities is deeply appreciated as we work together to maintain the quality of life that Ohio is famous for."

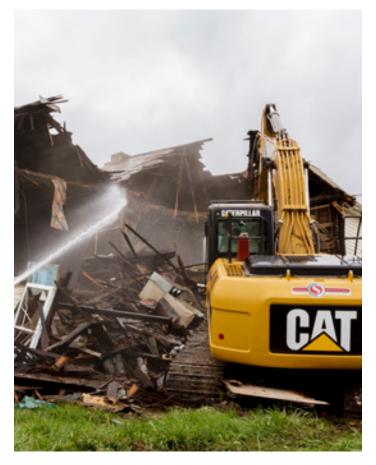
- Amy Sackman Odum, Director of Community Development

The City of Lima praised the Attorney General for including all counties in the program.

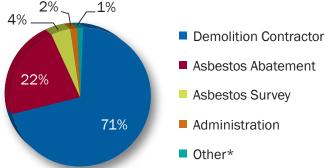
Next, counties were tasked with prioritizing how they would choose properties for demolition based on their economic development plans. Most counties targeted properties that detracted from existing home values and created a toxic breeding ground for crime. We gave counties the freedom to choose which structures to demolish provided that they were able to gain control of the property or get permission to demolish.

In the summer of 2012, the demolitions began.

### THE RESULTS



#### **Demolition Expenses - \$119 million**



\*"Other" includes title searches, engineering fees, advertising and postage expenses, etc.

By combining the Program's grant funds with local matching funds, the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" dedicated more than \$119 million to the demolition of more than **14,600** blighted housing units.

Ohio's 88 counties employed hundreds of different contractors to facilitate the demolition process, from pre-demolition asbestos testing and abatement to demolition. In addition, contractors and building materials were sourced locally for new construction, further bolstering local economies. See the Appendix for a full listing of results achieved in each county as a result of the program.





oungstown and Toledo used their own city employees and equipment to more efficiently and cost-effectively demolish blighted properties.

### IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOODS

While these numbers are impressive, the Program's real success is felt in the neighborhoods and communities that benefitted from the demolition of a blighted property. Public hazards, such as infestations, unsecure structures, and criminal activity, are declining. Neighborhood values are improving, abandoned eyesores have been removed, and neighborhoods are being revitalized.



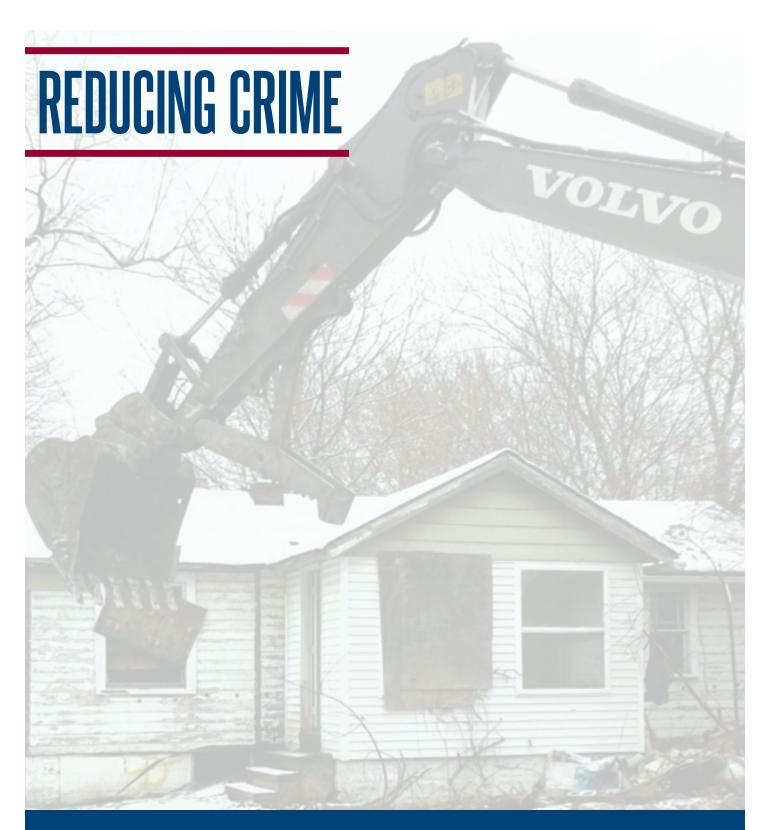


"Neighbors have been thrilled with the results. It's cleaning up the neighborhood. It's getting rid of the drug houses. It's getting rid of child danger and stray cats and dogs and all sorts of wildlife that wants to move in."

-Katie Steinberger, Office Manager at the Marion County Regional Commission



Blighted properties are transformed into a cleared lot in Van Wert County (top row) and a community garden in Trumbull County (bottom row).



common problem in many communities is vacant housing becoming havens for criminal activity. Specifically, these homes often become the site for illegal drug activity and manufacturing of methamphetamine. The "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" allowed communities to demolish these structures, resulting in greater community pride and security.

One of the demolished units in Hardin County had so many police calls for drug activity that it became known as "The Heroin Hotel." This former stately and respected building had turned into a deteriorated state of blight due to neglect. The three-story structure had eight unsecured apartments. The building was in such poor condition that at times a side street was closed due to falling debris from the unstable roof. The demolition took longer than expected as the contractors took extra precautions to avoid the large number of needles they found during inspections and debris removal. The owners were so happy with the results they deeded the land to the Village of Forest to be used in a positive way as passive green space downtown. The Village is grateful for the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" and the positive impact on the community.



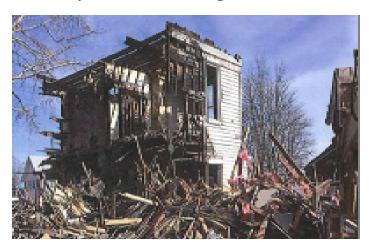


Aerial photograph of the "Heroin Hotel" in Hardin County (above left). The lot was seeded after demolition and will be used as green space (above right).

Asbestos contractors discovered a decomposing body in a vacant house slated for demolition under the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" in Lucas County. The victim, who had been reported missing two months earlier, was shot multiple times. Toledo Police investigated the crime leading to the arrest of two defendants who have been charged with murder in this case.



There were 60 arsons in abandoned homes in Mansfield in 2012. One property in particular had 21 police and fire calls in one year. These constant calls were a drain on the city's police and fire resources. Using the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" grant funds, Mansfield finally had the resources to demolish this property and eradicate the health and safety threats in that neighborhood.



This house (below) on Granite Street in Mansfield suffered four fires between 2007 and 2011. The number of arsons in Mansfield dropped to 39 in 2013 and 15 in 2014, due, in part, to removing blighted properties.





### PROMOTING RE-USE ounties across Ohio are finding innovative ways to use the new spaces opened up by the demolition program. Redevelopment, community gardens, side lots, and parks are among the most popular types of re-use. Data Source: Site visits to 88 counties by the

Attorney General's Office program staff.

### RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

Habitat for Humanity partnered with local governments throughout Ohio to provide housing to low-income families or families with disabled individuals. Until recently, a property in Mahoning County was the site of a long-vacant and moldy home. A blight on an otherwise well-kept street, the property was taken over by the Mahoning County Land Bank and sold to Habitat for Humanity. The organization bulldozed the old home (below) using the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" funds and built a new ADA-accessible house for a retired Marine staff sergeant and his family.





Similarly, Knox County partnered with Knox County Habitat for Humanity and the Ariel Foundation to acquire a property. Funds from the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" were used to demolish the house, opening up enough land for Habitat for Humanity to build two houses. Construction on the first house, featured below, is completed and construction on the second house will begin in 2015.



A new house built by Knox County Habitat for Humanity in Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

In Toledo, the Lucas County Land Bank also helped to revitalize neighborhoods. Partnering with NeighborWorks Toledo Region, numerous abandoned properties throughout the Old Towne neighborhood were demolished using the "Ohio Attorney General's Moving Ohio Forward Program" grant funds. Construction is now almost complete on 40 new homes in the Cherry Legacy Homes project for low-income residents. Most units in the complex are now occupied.

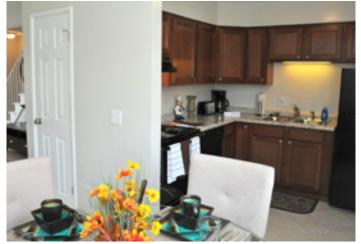




A cleared lot in the Cherry Legacy Homes project (top) and one of the newly constructed homes (bottom).

The Franklin County Land Bank pursued a large-scale residential demolition project to bring major revitalization to key areas of Franklin County. Partnering with Prairie and Franklin townships, 35 blighted multi-unit residential apartments at the old Metro West were demolished. Each structure comprised approximately 8–24 derelict apartment units that had been subject to fires, vandalism, and multiple ownership changes. The Land Bank strategically demolished the worst clusters of buildings, allowing for reinvestment and renovation of the remaining apartments and townhouses. The complex is now under new ownership and has been renamed Havenwood Townhomes.









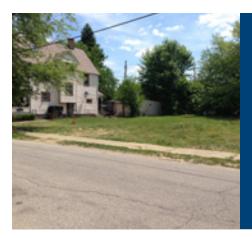
Three clusters of blighted apartment buildings were demolished throughout the complex. One area now features a new public park including soccer fields and brand new playground equipment. A separate area visible from Hollywood Casino Columbus created prime space for possible future development. Finally, some of the worst blight was removed from nearby I-270. In total, 714 blighted units were removed from the property – a great step forward for the revitalization of the Georgesville and Broad Street area.







any counties are leaving their cleared lots as green space. As a best practice, counties grade and seed the demolition sites for green space or potential future development. For example, Adams County strategically targeted properties in small villages because the effect of removing a few abandoned homes can be even greater in smaller areas. Children now have a safe environment to play in nearby playgrounds. Local officials in Adams County have noticed that neighbors began taking better care of their properties once the surrounding eyesores were removed.



ensely populated areas are limited in the types of re-use available for the newly cleared lots due to the lack of space and new minimum lot sizes. Therefore, many urban areas are creating side lot programs for neighbors to expand yards, plant gardens, build additions or install driveways. The Trumbull County Land Bank sold 300 vacant lots to neighbors to expand their yards. Cuyahoga County is making use of lots for affordable housing, community gardens, side yards, and expanded parking. As time passes, it is expected there will be many more examples of cleared lots returning to productive use.







A blighted house (above left) sits in front of a neighbor's trampoline and slide in Adams County. After demolition, parents no longer have to worry about children playing near a deteriorating house (above right).







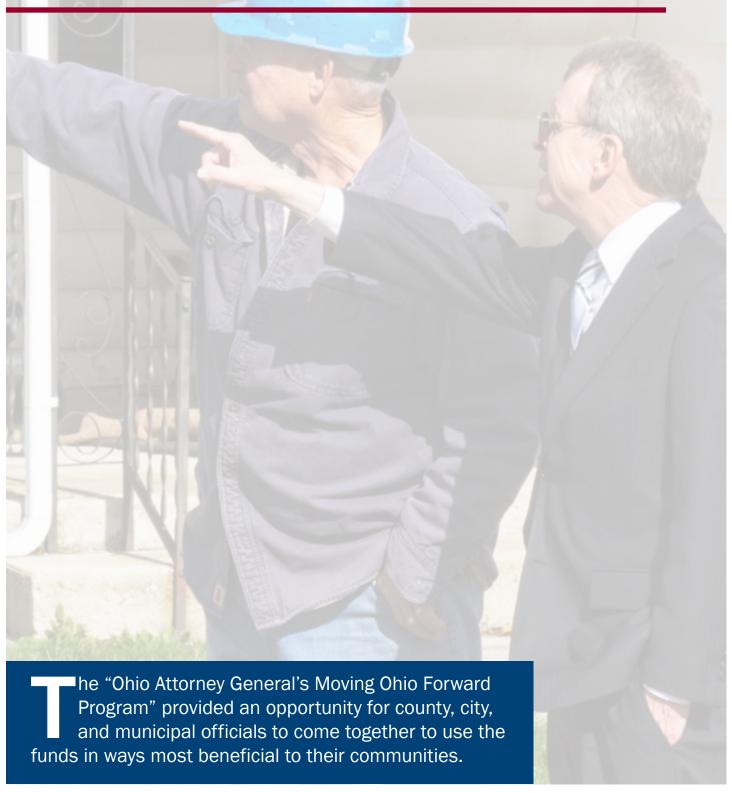






In urban settings, such as Cleveland (above), it is often hard to imagine side lots were once blighted properties because the lots are so small.

## FOSTERING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES















County, city, and state officials come together to speak to community members and the press about the importance of removing blighted properties in Zanesville, Cincinnati, and Newark.









The Attorney General meets with city and county officials and local contractors at demolition sites around the state.



everal counties employed deconstruction techniques during demolition. Deconstruction is a method of removing a house while saving valuable, high-quality materials for future use. In addition, numerous counties recycled materials such as furnaces, kitchen cabinets, aluminum, barn wood, tires, and concrete found at demolition sites. Tons of debris and materials were diverted from landfills thanks to re-use and recycling methods.





The Hamilton County Land Reutilization Corporation partnered with Building Value, a non-profit organization that promotes re-use of building materials and on-the-job-training for people with workforce disadvantages, in the deconstruction of 13 structures. At one site in St. Bernard, Ohio, workers salvaged trusses, rafters, antique doors, windows, pine flooring, and other valuable building materials.





Salvaged housing materials from a deconstruction in Hamilton County (left). A local worker removes building materials at the deconstruction site (right).

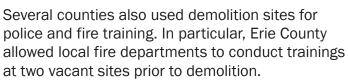
### SUPPORTING EMERGENCY PERSONNEL TRAINING













A local fire department member in Huron, Ohio (Erie County), participating in fire safety training at a property prior to demolition.













A series of photos from Summit County and Richfield Township of a controlled burn.

In Warren County, the City of Franklin conducted **50 FIRE AND EMS** training classes at demolition sites.





# THE REVITALIZATION CONTINUES...

ounties have seen significant benefits since razing some of the most problematic blight. The Attorney General's Office expects to continue to hear of demolition success stories in the years to come. While this funding did not eradicate the blight in the state, it was an important step in our efforts to protect Ohio's families.









FOSTER CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
STRENGTHEN TAX BASE BOLSTER HEALTH
CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED EFFORTS AND SAFETY
MPROVE QUALITY OF THE BEAUTIFICATION COMMUNITY
HOUSING BOOST PROPERTY VALUES DID I DE
LOCAL ERUNOMIC STIMULUS CONSERVE LOCAL FILLIANT RESOURCES
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<sup>\*</sup> Counties reported both the anticipated and realized re-uses and benefits of removing blighted properties.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Data Source: Final performance reports submitted by 80 counties, and site visits to 88 counties by the Attorney General's Office program staff.

### **APPENDIX**

	Attorney General	County	Total Funds Used for		
County	Payment	Payment	Program*	Units Razed	Average Demo Cost
Adams	\$137,507.00	\$2,654.92	\$140,161.92	23	\$6,094.00
Allen	\$688,320.67	\$169,428.06	\$857,748.73	135	\$6,353.69
Ashland	\$281,736.36		\$281,736.36	33	\$8,537.47
Ashtabula	\$533,498.29		\$533,498.29	48	\$11,114.55
Athens	\$158,364.48		\$158,364.48	18	\$8,798.03
Auglaize	\$233,464.00	\$41,473.02	\$274,937.02	23	\$11,953.78
Belmont	\$207,750.70		\$207,750.70	22	\$9,443.21
Brown	\$354,001.95		\$354,001.95	49	\$7,224.53
Butler	\$2,598,333.68	\$2,015,234.62	\$4,613,568.30	511	\$9,028.51
Carroll	\$149,012.23		\$149,012.23	19	\$7,842.75
Champaign	\$264,629.14		\$264,629.14	32	\$8,269.66
Clark	\$880,528.50	\$340,944.52	\$1,215,092.79	186	\$6,532.76
Clermont	\$558,235.00		\$558,235.00	69	\$8,090.36
Clinton	\$312,995.00	\$34,910.88	\$347,905.88	38	\$9,155.42
Columbiana	\$557,823.00	\$32,766.38	\$590,589.38	72	\$8,202.63
Coshocton	\$214,029.17		\$214,029.17	23	\$9,305.62
Crawford	\$297,319.01	\$18,590.88	\$315,909.89	40	\$7,897.75
Cuyahoga	\$12,904,931.00	\$11,380,840.17	\$24,285,771.16	3,449	\$7,041.39
Darke	\$246,582.78		\$246,582.78	20	\$12,329.14
Defiance	\$196,707.48	\$3,100.00	\$199,807.48	20	\$9,990.37
Delaware	\$499,999.71		\$499,999.71	37	\$13,513.51
Erie	\$486,218.01		\$486,218.01	47	\$10,345.06
Fairfield	\$612,771.00	\$71,260.00	\$684,031.00	47	\$14,553.85
Fayette	\$204,054.75	\$1,859.00	\$205,913.75	19	\$10,837.57
Franklin	\$8,619,466.00	\$7,850,216.32	\$16,469,682.32	1,800	\$9,149.82
Fulton	\$217,918.00		\$217,918.00	15	\$14,527.87
Gallia	\$96,800.00		\$96,800.00	17	\$5,694.12
Geauga	\$433,600.05		\$433,600.05	33	\$13,139.40
Greene	\$652,305.00	\$132,897.99	\$785,202.99	118	\$6,654.26
Guernsey	\$199,814.75	\$6,935.93	\$206,750.68	28	\$7,383.95
Hamilton	\$6,357,205.00	\$5,354,832.02	\$11,712,037.02	1,626	\$7,202.97
Hancock	\$425,267.00	\$8,999.49	\$434,266.49	54	\$8,041.97
Hardin	\$175,670.00	\$599.95	\$176,269.95	17	\$10,368.82
Harrison	\$84,010.00	\$6,092.00	\$90,102.00	7	\$12,871.71
Henry	\$150,941.75	\$8,214.75	\$159,156.50	17	\$9,362.15
Highland	\$315,783.00	\$259.75	\$316,042.75	41	\$7,708.36
Hocking	\$165,575.00	\$1,406.36	\$166,981.36	18	\$9,276.74
Holmes	\$114,588.00	\$12,044.21	\$126,632.21	17	\$7,448.95
Huron	\$319,206.31	\$123,704.00	\$442,910.31	27	\$16,404.09
Jackson	\$181,352.00		\$181,352.00	22	\$8,243.27
Jefferson	\$294,928.00		\$294,928.00	26	\$11,343.38
Knox	\$423,400.00		\$423,400.00	48	\$8,820.83
Lake	\$812,431.00	\$149,999.99	\$962,430.99	59	\$16,312.39
Lawrence	\$241,824.14		\$241,824.14	45	\$5,373.87

County	Attorney General	County	Total Funds Used for	Units Razed	Avorada Dama Cost
County	Payment	Payment	Program*	Units Razeu	Average Demo Cost
Licking	\$934,446.00	\$355,451.65	\$1,289,897.65	139	\$9,279.84
Logan	\$308,435.25		\$308,435.25	46	\$6,705.11
Lorain	\$2,265,410.00	\$1,582,236.17	\$3,847,646.17	229	\$16,801.95
Lucas	\$3,829,224.54	\$3,129,294.11	\$6,958,518.65	1,008	\$6,903.29
Madison	\$185,824.75		\$185,824.75	16	\$11,614.05
Mahoning	\$1,556,018.40	\$1,000,302.34	\$2,556,320.74	308	\$8,299.74
Marion	\$498,339.21	\$14,186.91	\$512,526.12	75	\$6,833.68
Medina	\$578,391.23		\$578,391.23	35	\$16,525.46
Meigs	\$77,605.00	\$1,365.00	\$78,970.00	8	\$9,871.25
Mercer	\$145,335.00	\$2,648.46	\$147,983.46	16	\$9,248.97
Miami	\$575,354.38	\$46,660.00	\$622,014.38	55	\$11,309.35
Monroe	\$38,169.60	·	\$38,169.60	3	\$12,723.20
Montgomery	\$4,150,001.87	\$3,438,645.87	\$7,588,647.74	938	\$8,090.24
Morgan	\$68,199.00	\$12,309.70	\$80,508.70	11	\$7,318.97
Morrow	\$234,483.90	•	\$234,483.90	21	\$11,165.90
Muskingum	\$466,590.00	\$711.86	\$467,301.86	43	\$10,867.49
Noble	\$70,973.00	·	\$70,973.00	8	\$8,871.63
Ottawa	\$240,465.05	\$3,181.00	\$243,646.05	27	\$9,023.93
Paulding	\$119,883.85	\$2,362.33	\$122,246.18	13	\$9,403.55
Perry	\$215,144.50	, _,	\$215,144.50	23	\$9,354.11
Pickaway	\$299,042.00		\$299,042.00	49	\$6,102.90
Pike	\$101,837.33		\$101,837.33	14	\$7,274.10
Portage	\$883,595.81	\$327,990.79	\$1,211,586.60	129	\$9,392.14
Preble	\$358,231.00	\$27,731.45	\$385,962.45	35	\$11,027.50
Putnam	\$102,824.75	Ψ=:,: σ=::σ	\$102,824.75	14	\$7,344.63
Richland	\$797,150.83	\$251,568.35	\$1,048,719.18	121	\$8,667.10
Ross	\$402,059.00	\$7,998.31	\$410,057.31	36	\$11,390.48
Sandusky	\$302,882.00	\$2,500.00	\$305,382.00	25	\$12,215.28
Scioto	\$295,587.30	<del>+2,000.00</del>	\$295,587.30	37	\$7,988.85
Seneca	\$307,652.00	\$626.93	\$308,278.93	30	\$10,275.96
Shelby	\$273,274.00	\$46,671.35	\$319,945.35	23	\$13,910.67
Stark	\$2,169,567.70	\$1,669,567.70	\$3,839,135.40	492	\$7,803.12
Summit	\$3,971,632.00	\$3,425,620.80	\$7,397,252.80	872	\$8,483.09
Trumbull	\$1,388,088.00	\$823,774.32	\$2,211,862.32	374	\$5,914.07
Tuscarawas	\$387,273.15	Ψ020,114.02	\$387,273.15	32	\$12,102.29
Union	\$302,698.52		\$302,698.52	20	\$15,134.93
Van Wert	\$172,147.32	\$6,735.00	\$178,882.32	19	\$9,414.86
Vinton	\$62,011.00	\$9,428.78	\$71,439.78	16	\$4,464.99
Warren	\$495,009.09	ψ3,420.10	\$495,009.09	47	\$10,532.11
Washington	\$155,171.00		\$155,171.00	19	\$8,166.89
Wayne	\$470,538.00	\$9,275.00	\$479,813.00	50	\$9,596.26
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Wood	\$204,860.70	\$4,262.35	\$209,123.05 \$641,635,29	19	\$11,006.48
Wood	\$585,220.96	\$56,414.33	\$641,635.29	86	\$7,460.88
Wyandot Crand Tatal	\$106,988.19	¢44,000,700,07	\$106,988.19	14 608	\$8,915.68
Grand Total	\$75,014,534.09	\$44,028,786.07	\$119,036,939.92	14,608	\$8,148.75

<sup>\*</sup>Includes the Attorney General grant, match payments by local governments (if required), and third party contributions



#### Ohio Attorney General's Office Moving Ohio Forward

Demolition Grant Program

2012-2014

Program Summary

