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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Cleveland's Lakefront Strengthened by Grants  
from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation**

*Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation Awards Aim to Connect Cleveland's East Side  
Lakefront and Surrounding Neighborhoods*

*Cleveland, OH (July 11, 2023)* – The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation announces three major grants for Cleveland's Lakefront. The three grants, totaling nearly \$24 million, look to connect Clevelanders, specifically the St. Clair Superior and Collinwood neighborhoods, to the Lakefront. "The grants awarded to Cleveland Metroparks, LAND studio and Western Reserve Land Conservancy will serve as a catalyst in furthering lakefront access and recreational opportunities for all our citizens, but especially the residents of neighborhoods that are adjacent to Lake Erie within The City of Cleveland," stated Jehuda Reinharz, President & CEO of the Mandel Foundation. "The investments announced today are a significant part of our effort to strengthen neighborhoods and provide our fellow citizens an enhanced quality of life."

These grants build on the Foundation's previous \$5 million challenge grant to Ohio City, Inc. to support **Irishtown Bend Park**. This \$5 million challenge grant serves as a major step forward in raising funds to create Irishtown Bend Park: a 23-acre dynamic, shared public green space that connects downtown and Cleveland neighborhoods to the Cuyahoga River, Lake Erie, and beyond. The grant is not only enhancing the fundraising efforts of the community-based organizations leading these efforts, but is furthering the advancement and strength of the Ohio City neighborhood for generations to come.

With Irishtown Bend as a launching pad, and these three lakefront grants as the next major step forward, the Mandel Foundation is deepening its impact in Cleveland's neighborhoods through stimulating recreation in public greenspaces and furthering economic development in the diverse neighborhoods surrounding these projects. The projects, totaling just under \$29 million, will lead to more investment and more attention on Cleveland as a destination, securing the vision of a more connected lakefront. "The announcements made today by the Mandel Foundation mark significant investments in the neighborhoods of St. Clair Superior and Collinwood and come on the heels of our recent grant to help build Irishtown Bend Park in Ohio City," said Stephen H. Hoffman, Chairman of the Board of the Mandel Foundation. "These grants are centered around our belief that our citizens and neighborhoods are our greatest assets; thus, we want to help in strengthening these communities for all who live, work and play in them. These lakefront projects will not only boost the Foundation's previous investments, but will spark new investments and new interest in these wonderful lakefront neighborhoods."

**Cleveland Metroparks** was awarded a \$13 million grant from the Mandel Foundation to transform Cleveland's east side lakefront. \$5 million will help fund the construction of the Downtown Connector Trail portion of the Cleveland Lakefront Bikeway, which currently exists from East 55<sup>th</sup> Street to MLK, Jr. Boulevard. The new Downtown Connector Trail, which will run from East 9<sup>th</sup> to East 55<sup>th</sup> Street, will provide safe access to the lakefront for pedestrians traveling on foot or bicycle and will connect to the existing trail, linking the Downtown and University Circle neighborhoods. \$8 million will fund the creation of a new Gordon Park Reservation, combining North and South Gordon Parks as one public greenspace under Cleveland Metroparks management. The vision is a cohesive lakefront park, connecting the neighborhoods of St. Clair Superior and Glenville to Lake Erie and activating the entire Gordon Park with a variety of active and passive recreational amenities.

These two projects, born from the Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Strategy (CHEERS) plan, will see initial benefits realized in 2-3 years, in contrast to the

original 20-year timeline, thanks to this funding. "We are honored to receive this monumental gift and transformative neighborhood investment in Cleveland's east side that will improve access from the St. Clair Superior and Glenville neighborhoods to trails, greenspace and our lakefront," said Cleveland Metroparks CEO Brian M. Zimmerman. "The projects supported by the Mandel Foundation will bring to fruition regional connections that allow for recreation opportunities and will elevate Cleveland as a multimodal city."

Local nonprofit **LAND studio** received a \$725,000 grant to lead revitalization efforts in a key Cleveland neighborhood bordering the east side lakefront: St. Clair Superior. Minutes from Downtown Cleveland, St. Clair Superior is one of Cleveland's most racially and ethnically diverse lakefront communities. This grant will allow LAND studio to lead a community-driven process for a redesigned South Gordon Park, initiate placemaking efforts in the neighborhood that include community represented public art, and work in collaboration with the St. Clair Superior Development Corporation to create an economic development strategy.

This multi-year initiative will ensure St. Clair Superior is primed for additional investment and will serve as a catalyst for attracting development in the neighborhood. "This project reflects LAND studio's long-standing commitment to creating inclusive and livable neighborhoods. We believe that every person regardless of their background or location deserves the opportunity to enjoy the benefits that come from having access to parks and public art nearby," says LAND studio Executive Director Greg Peckham. "Through strategic collaborations with community organizations, stakeholders, and residents we will ensure that the vision and creation of public spaces reflect the unique needs and aspirations of the neighborhood."

**Western Reserve Land Conservancy** was granted \$10 million to complete the transformation of three separate parks along Euclid Beach into a single, comprehensive public park and shoreline along Lake Erie. The Land Conservancy and its nearly two dozen local government, nonprofit and housing partners are working together to create the largest public park in Cleveland that is welcoming for all citizens but especially those living in the Collinwood neighborhood.

"For over 40 years, the City of Cleveland and the Collinwood neighborhood have tried to combine Euclid Beach, Villa Angela, and Wildwood Marina into a single public green space that will attract much-needed investment into the community," said Matt Zone, Senior Vice President at Western Reserve Land Conservancy. "With the generous support of the Mandel Foundation, this long-standing vision will finally become reality. We purchased the property to keep it in local hands, ensure it would not become

expensive high-rise apartments, and to treat the residents of the Euclid Beach Mobile Home Community with the kindness and respect they deserve. We are very grateful to the Mandel Foundation for their commitment to Cleveland and the people who call this wonderful city home." In addition to this funding, Western Reserve Land Conservancy received just over \$240,000 from the Mandel Foundation to begin a neighborhood greening project supporting St. Clair Superior through the planting of over 200 trees and improvement of greenspace for St. Clair Superior residents.

These lakefront development projects will greatly assist the St. Clair Superior, Glenville and Collinwood neighborhoods, as they continue their efforts to create strong thriving communities. "St. Clair Superior is a vibrant lakefront neighborhood that was cut off from our region's largest natural asset, Lake Erie," said Jeremy Taylor, Executive Director at St. Clair Superior Development Corporation. "We are greatly appreciative of the announcements being made today by the Mandel Foundation and believe that their confidence in our community is one more reason why St. Clair Superior is Cleveland's next up-and-coming neighborhood."

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### **About the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation**

Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel established their first foundation in 1953 in their hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. Their philanthropic legacy is continued through the **Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation** and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Supporting Foundation. The work of the Foundation is grounded in the belief that exceptional leaders, inspired by powerful ideas, are key to improving society and the lives of people around the world. The Foundations have identified five areas of engagement that receive support, which include: leadership development, management of nonprofits, humanities, Jewish life and urban engagement. For more information, please visit [mandelfoundation.org](http://mandelfoundation.org).

### **About Cleveland Metroparks**

**Cleveland Metroparks** spans 25,000 acres across Northeast Ohio including 18 reservations, more than 300 miles of trails, eight golf courses, eight lakefront parks, dining and retail venues, and nationally acclaimed Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The Park District offers thousands of education and recreation programs and events each year across the 49 communities it serves, helping to create connections to nature and promote conservation and sustainability. Learn more at [clevelandmetroparks.com](http://clevelandmetroparks.com).

### **About LAND studio**

**LAND studio**, a local non-profit organization, is a catalyst, convener, and collaborator. For more than thirty years, LAND and its predecessor organizations have managed a range of public art installations, programming, and civic space development projects across the city of Cleveland, engaging the community, including residents, local leadership, and a network of nonprofit and civic partners. LAND studio expands opportunities for public art investments and seeks ways for its work to reflect Cleveland's diverse neighborhoods.

### **About Western Reserve Land Conservancy**

The nationally accredited **Western Reserve Land Conservancy** — the largest land trust in Ohio — provides the people of northern and eastern Ohio with essential natural assets through land conservation and restoration. The Land Conservancy has preserved natural areas and working farms in 28 counties across Ohio. Its urban program works statewide to clean and green urban centers devastated by the foreclosure crisis. To date, the Land Conservancy has permanently preserved more than 70,000 acres at over 880 properties; helped create and expand nearly 200 public parks and preserves; led the efforts to create 50 county land banks across Ohio; and planted and distributed more than 15,000 robust trees in Cleveland. For more information, please visit [www.wrlandconservancy.org](http://www.wrlandconservancy.org).