



# DETROIT FUTURE CITY

DETROIT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN  
DECEMBER 2012



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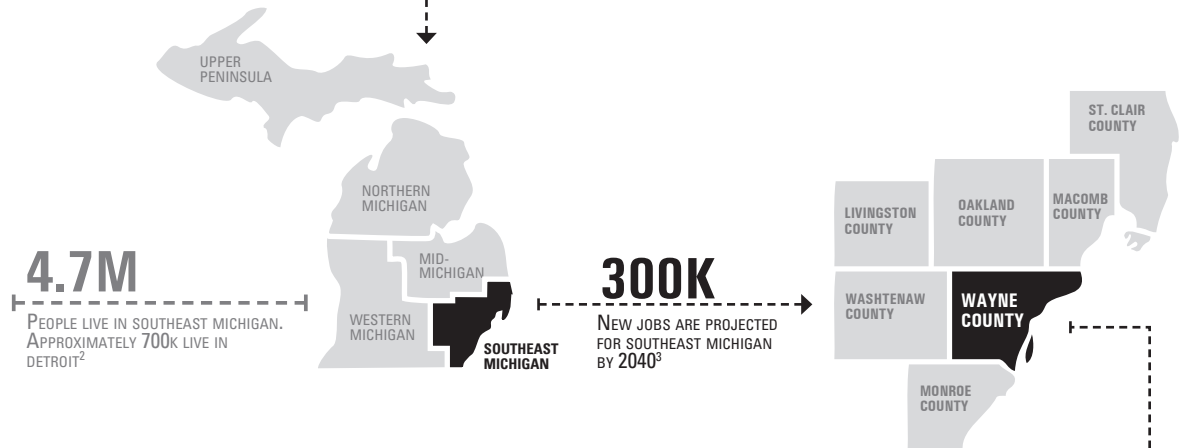
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INTERNATIONAL



REGIONAL



CITY



1) Detroit Regional Chamber; 2) US Census 2010; 3) Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG); 4) DWPLTP Civic Engagement Audit; 5) Detroit Economic Growth Corporation; 6) US Census 2010; 7) US Census 1940;

## DETROIT IS...

...in the **TOP 20 LARGEST AMERICAN CITIES**.

...**HOME TO 714,000 RESIDENTS** who are resilient and already working to change the course of the city's prospects.

...a city of **GLOBAL ECONOMIC ASSETS**, including intermodal border crossings and industrial infrastructure that cannot be replicated anywhere else in the region.

...known globally for **A BRAND OF INNOVATION** in "making things" and growing in reputation for small-scale models of ingenuity.

...home of a civic network of **COMMITTED, PROACTIVE COMMUNITY-BASED AND PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS**.

...**A LAND-RICH ENVIRONMENT** that can accommodate growth and innovation without displacement.

...poised to reposition itself as **MICHIGAN'S LEADING URBAN CENTER** once again, if there is a coordinated regional urban agenda that enables more mutually beneficial relationships with the region, state, and nation.

# DETROIT IS CLOSER TO ITS FUTURE THAN WE IMAGINE.



A BROAD ENGAGEMENT OF LEADERSHIP



# FORWARD

## LEADING DETROIT TOWARD ITS FUTURE

In 2010 an ambitious effort to re-imagine a better future for one of the world's most important and storied cities was launched. The project has been both an exciting and, at times, challenging journey. It has also been a collective journey, inviting diverse input from technical experts within Detroit and around the world and, most importantly, the community experts and everyday citizens who would be most affected by its recommendations. Each has played a critical role in forming what we hope will become a living framework for change and development in Detroit.

Now—after hundreds of meetings, 30,000 conversations, connecting with people over 163,000 times, over 70,000 survey responses and comments from participants, and countless hours spent dissecting and examining critical data about our city—we are proud to present Detroit Future City. We believe that within this document lies a path forward toward realizing the aspirations of an entire city. Within it lies a guide for decision making that is not exclusively for one entity or one mayor or one generation, but for each of us—and those who come after us—in our roles as citizens, philanthropists, developers, business people, neighborhood champions, parents, and beyond.

Ambitious but attainable, Detroit Future City begins to align our assets with opportunity, mapping a framework that best coordinates investment of our resources—people, time, money, brainpower, and more—in ways that can move us forward collectively. How to best use our abundance of land (particularly publicly owned land), create job growth and economic prosperity, ensure vibrant neighborhoods, build an infrastructure that serves citizens at a reasonable cost, and maintain a high level of community engagement that is integral to success. And each is addressed with the understanding that in many ways they are all interlinked.

Perhaps most importantly, we understand that this is not the end, but the end of the beginning. We realize that this document is a large body of work that represents over 2 years of conversations and thinking, and it needs to be understood by the various audiences that will use it. We are committed to turning paper and possibilities into action and accomplishment, and have already begun to construct the mechanisms for doing so.

As we move toward implementation of Detroit Future City, Detroit stakeholders will be able to continue to meet with technical experts so they can dive into the portions of the plan that will best amplify work already being done, while aligning it with a broader vision for the city. The creation of a formal organization that can be a champion for Detroit Future City, evolve it as a living document, act as a service provider for anyone that wants to understand and access the plan, and coordinate targeted projects and the partnerships needed to make them happen, is underway. In addition, we are working to identify on-the-ground pilot projects that can happen quickly and spur bigger things to come.

We are pleased to present and celebrate what's been accomplished so far, thank the thousands of you who have helped get us here, and look to a brighter future that reestablishes Detroit as the center of a vibrant region.

We look forward not only to the great things that will happen, but to the remarkable outcomes of our continued work together.

Sincerely,

**THE DETROIT WORKS PROJECT LONG-TERM PLANNING  
STEERING COMMITTEE**



*“There were times when I thought I couldn’t  
last for long, but now I think I’m able to carry on  
It’s been a long, a long time coming  
but I know a change is gonna come, oh yes it will”*

*“A Change is Gonna Come” Lyrics by Sam Cooke, 1963*

# BLUEPRINT FOR DETROIT’S FUTURE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document, the Detroit Strategic Framework, articulates a shared vision for Detroit’s future, and recommends specific actions for reaching that future. The vision resulted from a 24-month-long public process that drew upon interactions among Detroit residents and civic leaders from both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors, who together formed a broad-based group of community experts. From the results of this citywide public engagement effort, in turn, a team of technical experts crafted and refined the vision, rendered specific strategies for reaching it, shared their work publicly at key points, and shaped it in response to changing information and community feedback throughout the process.

The work of the Detroit Strategic Framework was guided by a talented Steering Committee of individuals from within Detroit, whose knowledge of civic engagement, nonprofit community work, key areas such as land use and economic development, and the city itself were of deep value. Building a blueprint for a city as complex and rich in promise and challenges as Detroit required the integration of local expertise with leading thinkers and practitioners from around the globe. A list of the Planning and Civic Engagement Teams, along with the committees that guided the work and the Process Leaders who helped create the vision, is provided in the acknowledgements appendix of this document.

**A FRAMEWORK THAT BUILDS ON ASSETS.** Detroit is no stranger to plans and proposed solutions to its need for urban revitalization. Twice in the past 15 years, Detroit has prepared a full citywide plan for its future: The 1998 Community Reinvestment Strategy Plan (which was never formally adopted), and the state-mandated Master Plan of Policies governing land use, created in 2004 and adopted by the City Council in 2009. The Detroit Strategic Framework marks the first time in decades that Detroit has considered its future not only from a standpoint of land use or economic growth, but in the context of city systems, neighborhood vision, the critical question of vacant land and buildings, and the need for greater civic capacity to address the systemic change necessary for Detroit’s success. This plan is also the first to accept and address Detroit’s future as a city that will not regain its peak population of nearly 2 million people.

Every city has its challenges and Detroit most certainly has urgent and long-standing ones. But not every city has the assets of Detroit. As Michigan’s largest urban center, Detroit is home to the largest concentration of workers, health, education, cultural, and entertainment institutions; the busiest international border crossing in North America for international trade; host to 50 million annual tourists and visitors; a city of beautiful historic neighborhoods and commercial areas, including 245 sites or districts on the National Register of Historic Places and 8 National Historic Landmarks; and the second largest theater district in the country, second only to New York City. These assets make up the city’s physical and economic capital.

Detroit’s assets also include the resiliency, creativity, and ingenuity of its people and organizations—the city’s human and social capital. Detroit’s impressive talent base includes

- business leaders who forever changed the culture of industrial production and music;
- pioneers in new forms of transportation, infrastructure, and community food production;
- civic leaders who have organized and empowered community residents to exercise their voices and actively participate in the fate of their futures; and
- faith leaders who have held up Detroit communities by tending to their spiritual and human needs.



# HOW WE ARRIVED AT THIS VISION

**A PROCESS ROOTED IN BUILDING TRUST AND AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT.** The history of civic engagement in Detroit includes many examples of commitment and vision, but also includes planning fatigue and lack of trust, which have left residents to feel a sense of hopelessness, confusion, and skepticism about the intentions and outcomes of public conversations. There is a real perception that after years of promises and plans, there has been no visible change in the city. This, coupled with the severity of the city’s current fiscal crisis, has prompted residents to focus on what can be done in the immediate future to meet their critical community needs, making it hard to focus on planning for five, ten, or twenty years out.

Any proposal to lift and transform Detroit must first acknowledge this critical reality, not as a barrier to progress but as a vital reminder that public engagement around the city’s future must be authentic, transparent, interactive, and aligned with neighborhood goals for the well-being of all residents. In addition, the Detroit Strategic Framework was created with an understanding that no single sector—government, business, nonprofit, resident and neighborhood groups, or philanthropy—can achieve the city’s brighter future alone. A broad range of community sectors and leadership will need to act collectively to implement the actions of the Strategic Framework, and to put Detroit on the path to stability, sustainability, and ultimately transformation into a model 21st century American city.

At the present time, many people and organizations remain living and/or working in silos, either by issue (education, housing, environmental justice); sector (public, private, nonprofit); geography (neighborhood, city, region, state); or more destructive divides such as racial and economic disparities, with only a few existing examples where diverse groups sit at the same table for collective dialogue and action. There is no time to lose: Detroit’s future rests on the ability and willingness of these strong, but sometimes separated, groups to come together and help activate the change necessary to enable Detroit’s recovery and resurgence.

The Detroit Strategic Framework emerged from the Detroit Works Project (DWP), launched in 2010. DWP included a track for Short-Term Actions and a Long-Term Planning initiative. The Long-Term Planning initiative was a 24-month planning and civic engagement process that resulted in the vision and strategies described in this document, a comprehensive and action-oriented blueprint for near- and long-range decision making.

The Strategic Framework is **aspirational** toward a physical and social vision for the city; **actionable**, with strategies for new policies and implementation; and **accountable**, with assignment of implementation responsibilities.

Four core values were put in place at the beginning of the process, to create a shared vision and plan of action:

- **Aspirational** where it should be and practical where it must be
- **Respectful** of the city’s history, community efforts, and new ideas
- **Just and equitable** in seeking to create benefits for all
- **Transparent and inclusive** of all voices participating to improve our community

**HOW WE ARRIVED AT THIS VISION.** The Long-Term Planning initiative was led by a Mayor-appointed Steering Committee of 12 civic leaders representing business, philanthropy, community, faith-based institutions, and government. The Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) managed the initiative, overseeing the work of the Planning Team of local, national, and international consultants representing the disciplines of urban planning and design, economics, engineering, landscape architecture, and real estate development. A Civic Engagement Team was also created to interact with many community groups, business leaders, and residents. The local partners led the Civic Engagement process along with a host of community and advocacy organizations as well as Process Leaders who aided in gaining citywide input into the initiative as the Framework took shape.

The work of this diverse collaboration has created a process and a guide for decision making for Detroit’s future—The Detroit Strategic Framework—with innovative strategies to move toward a more efficient and sustainable city and improve the quality of life and business in Detroit.

**INFORMATION-DRIVEN KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY’S ASSETS AND**

**CHALLENGES.** It is no news that Detroit faces serious challenges, including fiscal constraints, unemployment, housing foreclosures, crime, education issues, service delivery challenges, healthy food access, and environmental pollution. Yet these conditions can sometimes change rapidly from year to year. The planning process was based on a careful examination of the best available information about the city’s current conditions and trends.

The recommendations and actions proposed in this Strategic Framework are informed by a wide range of reliable source materials that provide a comprehensive snapshot of the city’s current conditions, policies, and trends. Eight audits were compiled to help shape the Framework recommendations:

1. Public Land Disposition Policies and Procedures
2. Urban and Regional Economy
3. Urban Agriculture and Food Security
4. Neighborhoods, Community Development, and Housing
5. Landscape, Ecology, and Open Space
6. Land Use and Urban Form
7. Environmental Remediation and Health
8. City Systems, Infrastructure, Transportation, and Sustainability

Through the early phases of the Strategic Framework planning initiative, this evidence was shared with the residents and stakeholders of Detroit, and combined with their “on-the-ground” experience of living with these issues in everyday life. It became clear that if we did nothing, the quality of life and businesses in Detroit would continue to decline.

The scope of the planning effort focused on priorities for change and clearly defined goals for improving human health, family and business wealth, safety, and the physical condition of the city. The ultimate objective of the Framework became to uplift the people, businesses, and places of Detroit by improving quality of life and business in the city. A strategic approach to advancing these quality of life and business goals involves a strategic focus on the “things we must do” to bring about change. This focus has been captured in the 12 Imperatives on the following pages.

**A BLEND OF TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY EXPERTISE.** The Long-Term Planning initiative was also designed to balance technical expertise with community expertise that draws on personal and organizational experiences and observations. The leaders of the process developed and implemented a careful methodology for gathering, integrating, and synthesizing anecdotal as well as data-driven inputs to inform the Framework’s final recommendations.

The Community Experts, along with the Planning Team and Civic Engagement Team, collaborated to diversify engagement opportunities beyond traditional meetings, reaching out to people in many different ways, not only to give them information but also to ask them to share information. From the Detroit Stories oral history film project (detroitstoriesproject.com) and the Detroit 24/7 online game to the drop-in HomeBase in Eastern Market, telephone Town Halls, and “Roaming Table” that made the rounds to Detroiters in their own neighborhoods, the Detroit Works civic engagement activities deepened and broadened the available information for the process, adding to the research and data with valuable first-hand experiences and suggestions rooted in daily realities. Such ideas are not usually captured in planning efforts of this scale and comprehensiveness.



# 12 IMPERATIVE ACTIONS

- We must re-energize Detroit’s economy to increase job opportunities for Detroiters within the city and strengthen the tax base.**
- We must support our current residents and attract new residents.**
- We must use innovative approaches to transform our vacant land in ways that increase the value and productivity and promote long-term sustainability.**
- We must use our open space to improve the health of all Detroit’s residents.**
- We must promote a range of sustainable residential densities.**
- We must focus on sizing the networks for a smaller population, making them more efficient, more affordable, and better performing.**
- We must realign city systems in ways that promote areas of economic potential, encourage thriving communities, and improve environmental and human health conditions.**
- We must be strategic and coordinated in our use of land.**
- We must promote stewardship for all areas of the city by implementing short- and long-term strategies.**
- We must provide residents with meaningful ways to make change in their communities and the city at large.**
- We must pursue a collaborative regional agenda that recognizes Detroit’s strengths and our region’s shared destiny.**
- We must dedicate ourselves to implementing this framework for our future.**

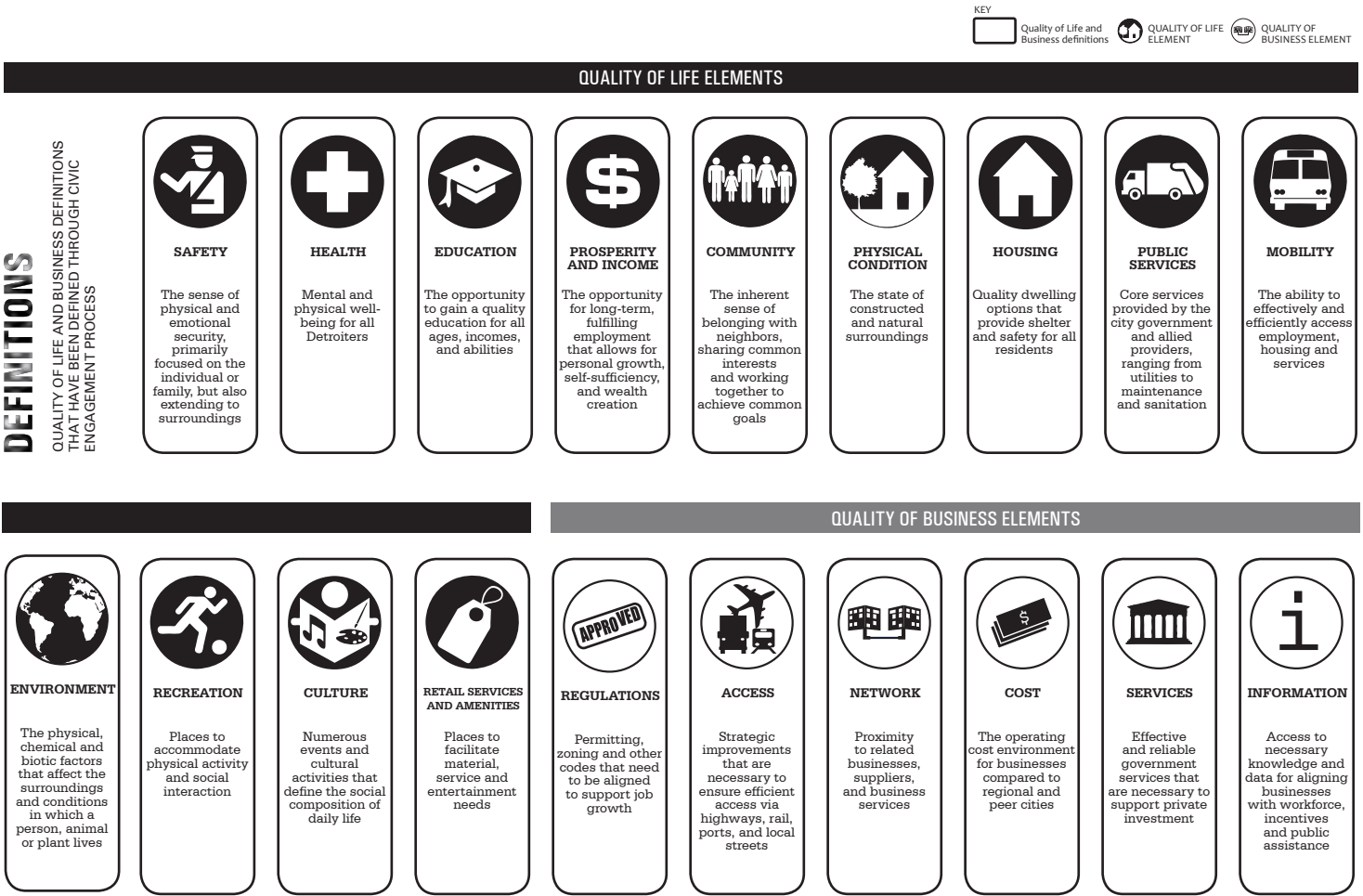
# THE THINGS WE MUST DO

## QUALITY OF LIFE/QUALITY OF BUSINESS IMPERATIVES

The Detroit community and planning experts worked together to identify the important core values, project goals, quality-of-life, and quality-of-business elements that have driven the recommendations in this Framework. Early engagement efforts revealed that issues of access to jobs, safety, education, human health, and neighborhood appearance were universally critical to address. These sentiments were uniformly raised regardless of neighborhood population, ethnicity, income, or geography. Residents and businesses alike wanted an improved city and a better quality of life and business environment.

Through these public conversations, the Long-Term Planning initiative focused its work on defining what an improved quality of life and business would require, and created a set of “mandates” that must be established if Detroit is to achieve visible and sustainable change. These 12 Imperatives are drawn from the quality-of-life and quality-of-business elements identified in the collaborative dialogue between technical and community experts.

Looking carefully at the data revealed by the policy audits described earlier, it became clear that “if we did nothing”, the quality of life and businesses in Detroit would continue to decline. The scope of the planning effort focused on priorities for change as defined by the 12 imperatives.





# DETROIT TODAY

## MAKING THE CASE FOR CHANGE: WHY BUSINESS AS USUAL WILL NOT WORK

It is often difficult to enter into a planning process that talks about the future city when community stakeholders believe that their basic needs are not being sufficiently met. Detroiters have long been anxious about the future of the city—concerned about the safety of their children and property, their increasing taxes and expectations for quality city services, their access to jobs and the cost of driving to work, the value of their homes, the ability to keep up with a mortgage, and the growing vacancy and abandonment surrounding them. Residents and businesses alike have been concerned about whether utilities would be shut off in the more vacant parts of the city, whether families might be forced to move from their homes (as in the days of urban renewal), or whether some city departments or community facilities would be shut down completely.

While there has been much speculation and fear around such unfair, unjust, unacceptable (and unnecessary) actions, one thing has become very clear—the way things are and “business as usual” are no longer acceptable. Detroiters demand and deserve reliable city services, safe streets, healthy environments, access to food, jobs, public transit, and places to play, learn, and engage with one another. Civic leaders in the public, private, nonprofit, grassroots, institutional, and philanthropic sectors understand that the city’s economic drivers, cost to provide service, sources of funding, and service delivery mechanisms must be realigned to achieve a better quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

**RENEWING THE CIVIC CONVERSATION.** The nature of civic interactions, actions, and conversations *about* Detroit’s future also needs to change—both within and beyond the city limits. One of the most important findings from the Strategic Framework process was that although Detroit has many talented people and committed organizations, they are too disconnected from one another for collective dialogue and action on behalf of the city.

Just as there is no shortage of talented leaders in and for Detroit, there has been no shortage of discussion about Detroit. Reclaiming this conversation and reframing it demands that everyone who cares about Detroit set aside what they *think* they know about the city, and cultivate a deep, mutual understanding of what the city really is right now. Then, instead of “What to do about Detroit,” the question becomes, “What can be done *in* Detroit, by Detroit, and *with* Detroiters?” To gain momentum and credibility for this new discussion, Detroit must be ready to show what it *is already doing*, speaking in many voices of a shared vision and specific recommendations that suit Detroit as it is today, and as it could be in ten or twenty years. Fortunately, part of the answer—despite very real barriers and challenges, from under-performing municipal services and constrained resources to decades-old racial and economic tensions—is that Detroit not only can do quite a lot, *Detroit is already doing it*.

New industries. Tech start-ups. Fresh, local food production. Collaborative work spaces. Downtown living. Neighborhood collaborations. Innovative and door-to-door approaches to social and human services. World-class health care institutions and universities. Large-scale public art projects. Youth training and development, infant mortality prevention, and senior housing and other critical residential development by CDCs and churches. All of it happening right now.

**“People do live here,” said Wayne Ramocan, a participant in the Detroit Stories project. “People talk about the city like people don’t actually live here... They just talk about the city as maybe an investment, or ‘it’s only land here,’ or, ‘it’s only blight and vacant houses,’ but it’s more to it than that... Detroit is not barren.”**

The challenge is that Detroiters’ important strides forward have gotten lost in the shuffle because they are often responses to crisis or solely issue- or neighborhood-focused. Yet the emergent or engaged civic institutions and residents who have taken on the city’s toughest challenges at this level of detail have the ability and the vision to do more: They just need the capacity, in the form of information and resources. If these change leaders cannot engage broadly and permanently to speak to the promising reality, real problems, and ambitious vision for Detroit, there will continue to be a flow of “solutions” that don’t fit Detroit’s real needs and aspirations, or a “business as usual” and crisis-driven approach to problem solving for the city. Five key trend areas help to drive this point home and make the case for change:

**SAFETY, EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND PROSPERITY.** **Everyone in Detroit unanimously agrees that the key to Detroit’s recovery and long-term prosperity requires a city to be safe, have better-educated youth and adults, provide healthier living environments, and offer access to jobs that pay at least a living wage.** A recent survey of Detroit residents revealed that nearly one-third of the respondents would leave the city within five years, citing safety as the top reason. Two years ago, attempts to take on wholesale reform of the educational systems failed. Almost one-third of Detroit children suffer from asthma, a rate three times the national average. Two-thirds of the total population suffers from obesity. Poverty increased 40% over the last decade, now affecting 36% of households.

The community’s common response to these conditions is to request more police on the street, lower student-teacher ratios, faster clean-up of land contamination, and more job training. Many people feel that Detroit does not have the luxury to endure a long-term transformation: They need change to happen now.

Effective land use planning can create more densely populated communities that are more affordable to serve and can be safer, with more “eyes on the street.” Innovative landscape treatments can treat contaminated lands while providing a recreational amenity at the same time. Surplus vacant land can become new opportunities to produce in-town jobs and put young people and those in alternative economies to work. And the network of educational institutions (K-12 and higher education) can create campuses and programming that prepare the next generation for the jobs of the future.

**DETROIT’S POPULATION.** **Just over 700,000 people live in a city originally designed for 2 million people.** Detroit’s population has been in decline for decades and this trend is expected to continue. The Southeast Michigan Council of Government (SEMCOG) forecasts for the city predict that the population will fall to from the 2010 Census figure of 717,000 to 610,000 by 2030—a long way from the city’s peak population of over 1.8 million in the early 1950s, but still keeping Detroit in the top 20 largest cities in the U.S. The composition of the city’s population is also undergoing gradual changes. Today, the city has 6% more single-female headed households, 7% fewer children, and a senior population that is expected to grow from 11% to 17% over the next 20 years. Detroit families make on average only \$28,000 per year compared to families in the region making \$48,000 annually, and one-third of Detroit families make less than that.

These factors, together with the demographics of the current population, suggest that the total number of people in the city may not be as important as the diversity of its residents and the robustness of its job base. Detroit can be a vibrant city of 700,000 people or less if deliberate actions are taken to increase family wealth and the earning power of people who are now in poverty, retain young people in the city, attract recent graduates as new workers, welcome foreign-born families, and ensure the city’s oldest residents can choose and afford to age in their homes.

**DETROIT’S EMPLOYMENT.** There is only 1 job for every 4 Detroit residents. The fall in Detroit’s population has been accompanied by a loss of jobs both in Detroit and the region in the last decade.. There are approximately 350,000 in Detroit today, with half being produced by private companies, and the remaining found in self-employment, part-time employment, and state or federal government employment.

SEMCOG’s baseline forecasts for Detroit over the next 20 years project a meager annual growth of only 0.1%. This is well below the 1.2% annual growth Detroit could capture if it had a strategic plan for attracting sectors that are growing nationally. Nor do the projection take into consideration that both Detroit and Wayne County have outperformed the United States as a whole, and forecasts for sectors already located in the city like manufacturing, health and business services. This goes a long way toward signally that Detroit is no longer a “one-company” automobile town.

Much discussion and debate has focused on the availability of jobs and the readiness of Detroit’s workforce to take those potential jobs. That discussion should be framed not as an “either/or” but as a “both/and.” Too few jobs, high unemployment, poverty rates, the challenges of K-12 educational reform, and reduced workforce development funding all have an impact, not only on household incomes, but on the taxes and fees the city takes in to run and maintain essential services. Addressing this “chicken and egg” problem requires a strategy that addresses job creation in Detroit and the reform of K-12 and adult education as equally urgent priorities.

**DETROIT’S LAND VACANCY AND LAND USE.** **The city’s 20 square miles of total vacant land is roughly equal to the size of Manhattan.** This characterization of Detroit is supported by the housing statistics of rising foreclosure rates, falling home and property values, and an excess of vacant land and homes for which there is not enough demand to fill before property deterioration sets in. Many homeowners in particular have been unable to balance their checkbooks as they see housing and transportation expenses account for over 50% of their monthly income, while the value of their investments continues to decrease.

With nearly 150,000 vacant and abandoned parcels scattered throughout the city, every area of the city is vulnerable to some levels of disinvestment. Despite a common perception, the majority of residents in the city live in areas that have only low or moderate levels of vacancy, less than 30%. This is not ideal, especially when more stable neighborhood options exist elsewhere in the region. This still leaves nearly 10,000 residents in areas of the city that are sparsely populated and unlikely to return to their previous traditional residential neighborhood character.

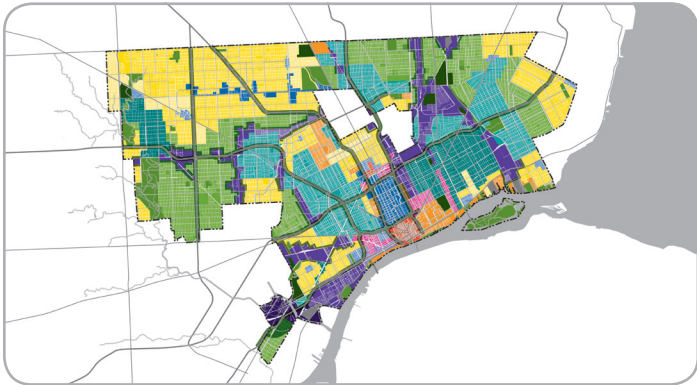
Detroit must transform its image of vacancy into an image informed by the new possibilities for 21st century land uses. This means creating new opportunities for vacant land to become assets that contribute tax dollars, produce jobs, or become a public amenity. Nor does it mean that the people who might remain in higher-vacancy areas should not receive essential city services. It does mean that becoming a more affordable city for families and government means land uses, regulations, and investments must be strategically coordinated to create more efficiency and sustainability now and over the long-term.

**DETROIT’S CITY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS.** **The high taxes and costs of city services do not produce enough to improve service delivery or make the city more affordable.** Detroit has large, centralized infrastructure systems that were designed to support a population of at least 2 million, with large areas of heavy, polluting industry. As a result, today’s Detroit has systems that are oversized for the current population and no longer aligned with where people or businesses now reside or will likely be in the future. The current systems of water, energy, roads, and telecommunications are not sufficiently oriented to a new economy that focuses on less resource-intensive manufacturing and new service sectors.

The systems are also aging. Many have reached the end of their effective design lives, and many more will do so during the next twenty years. Typically, this means that they are less reliable and use more energy and water than necessary to serve people, while contributing to both local and global pollution. Lower demand (fewer users) in fewer areas means low usage levels (sometimes as low as 30-40% of designed capacity), which results in inefficient operations and more system breakdowns. Crucially, it also means significantly reduced revenues from user charges and taxes. In spite of this situation, agencies are required to maintain uniform high service levels across the city and reinvest in maintaining the network as a whole. If we maintain “business as usual”, the gap will continue to widen between the availability of revenues and the cost to provide service, undermining the ability to maintain and upgrade systems, and having unacceptably negative consequences for the city’s people, economy, and environment.

# DETROIT FUTURE CITY

## CLEAR VISION AND APPROACH FOR DETROIT’S FUTURE

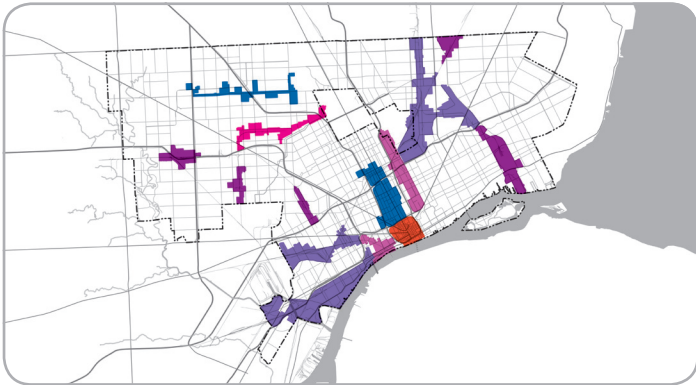


**BY 2030, DETROIT WILL HAVE A STABILIZED POPULATION**

By 2030, Detroit will have a stabilized population between 600,000 – 800,000 residents, and will remain one of the largest top 20 cities in the United States. More importantly, the composition of Detroit’s residents will be diverse and welcoming to all, including

- residents with deep generational roots in the city;
- the children of today’s families deciding to stay in the city for higher education, finding work, and starting a business and a family;
- families and individuals who have transitioned from poverty because of access to new job opportunities and housing choices;
- college graduates from Michigan and around the country relocating to Detroit as a place to live and work as new professionals and young entrepreneurs;
- senior citizens who want to grow older in the city and have the convenience of walkable neighborhoods, access to health care, and cultural amenities; and
- families from other countries seeking new opportunities for themselves and their children.

The future Detroit can be envisioned through a series of time horizons, showing how the experiences of current and future residents, businesses, and visitors could change over the next 5, 10, 20 years and beyond. Details and time horizons for this vision shown on pages 30-31.



**BY 2030 THE CITY WILL HAVE TWO OR THREE JOBS FOR EACH PERSON LIVING IN THE CITY**

Instead of one job for every four Detroiters, by 2030 the city will have two or three jobs for each person living in the city. Seven districts of employment located through all quadrants of the city will provide jobs, business start-ups, and business growth opportunities in modern industry, information technology, creative production, healthcare, education, and local entrepreneurship. City residents, as well as people from the region, will find opportunities to link their specific levels of education with job prospects, as each growth industry will need workers with a wide a range of skills and education to fill jobs.

The current and new residents of the city will also have a range of choices for where to live in the city. Detroit has traditionally been dominated by single-family detached housing. However, with the changing demographics of the city, a more diverse range of housing options will be available by 2030 to support different lifestyle needs and choices. Residents will have the ability to choose from among several options for residential living in the city:

- Traditional neighborhoods with single-family houses, front yards, and garages;
- Neighborhoods that are more dense with townhouses, mid-rise and high rise apartments, and condominiums that have improved access to public transit;
- Neighborhoods where housing is integrated into an open-space environment with recreation opportunities and a connection to nature;
- Neighborhoods that integrate housing with land stewardship and food production; and
- Neighborhoods that allow for the combination of living and production (Live+Make), whether clean manufacturing, processing, or creative arts.

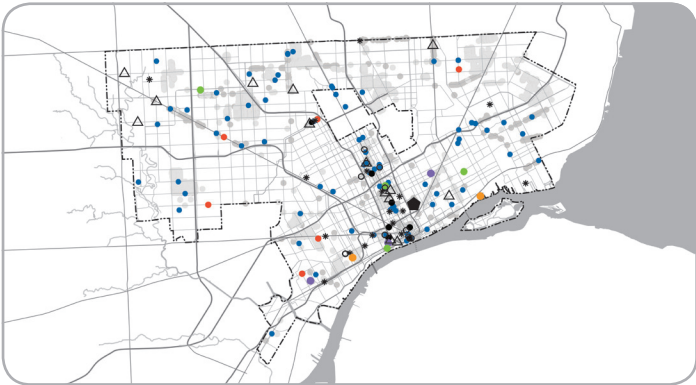


**BY 2030, THE DETROIT METROPOLITAN REGION HAS AN INTEGRATED REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

By 2030, the Detroit metropolitan region has an integrated regional public transportation system that efficiently serves the region’s 21 dispersed, yet interconnected employment centers. A new regional transportation authority aids the region in creating better transit connections, while public transit within Detroit will create better connections among neighborhoods and Detroit’s seven new employment districts. A new public transit loop will create a ring through the middle of the city, intersecting each of the key radial boulevards to provide more efficient intermodal connection points and different vehicle modes of rapid transit, from light rail to bus rapid transit, to mini-buses. The boulevards themselves will be the right size to accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, and motor vehicles within landscaping that helps siphon off stormwater, buffer residents and workers from pollution, and aid in the overall image of a green, sustainable city.

This system complements a multimodal freight and commercial system that upholds Detroit’s role as the nation’s busiest border crossing. This system will build on Detroit’s emerging role as a global hub for transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDR) to contribute to a healthy economy and prosperous households.

In the spirit of innovation that has made the city great, Detroit will lead the world in developing landscape as 21st century infrastructure to transform vacant land areas into community assets that remediate contaminated land, manage stormwater and highway runoff, and create passive recreational amenities to improve human health and elevate adjacent land values—all without residential displacement, a big change from the urban renewal efforts of the 1960s and 1970s. The iconic boulevards and freeway corridors of the city can be transformed to reinforce a new civic identity through the creation of linear carbon forests that clean air, and stormwater management landscapes that collect, treat and recycle water.



**BY 2030, DETROIT WILL BECOME A CITY FOR ALL**

By 2030, Detroit will be enhanced and sustained by a broad-based and ongoing civic stewardship framework of leadership drawn from among philanthropists, business, residents, faith institutions, major civic and cultural institutions, and a range of regional and national supporters.

The Framework recognizes that achieving the future vision for Detroit will not happen overnight, but will require a phased approach, with clearly defined implementation “horizons” or targets with metrics for evaluating the success of change. Along the path toward this goal, stakeholders can review progress and refocus priorities and strategies for the next phase of development.

By 2030, Detroit will become a city for all, with an enhanced range of choices for all residents, especially those who have stayed through the hardest times. By 2030, Detroit is a city of enhanced, varied, and active neighborhoods with strong civic support and a range of approaches to what it means to be “home.” By 2030, the city has developed a strong, collaborative, community-based approach to the most difficult question it faced in 2010: how best to serve the approximately 10% of Detroiters who then lived in areas of highest vacancy, while also making decisions that would support and grow neighborhoods with more population. Residents who chose to stay in the highest-vacancy areas of the city continue to receive services, while residents who formerly had no choices now have opportunities to move to different neighborhoods if they wish, with new incentives such as “home swap” programs and progressive efforts that help increase family wealth and access to affordable homes throughout Detroit. Neighborhoods that were once on the verge of such vacancy have been saved through strategic investment, while areas that had relatively stable population in 2010, or that grew since then, continue along a sustainable path. Because the Strategic Framework also provides the flexibility for neighborhoods to vary their approaches due to special assets or community objectives, no neighborhood has been forced into a “one-type-fits-all” strategy.



# LANDSCAPES AS INFRASTRUCTURE: RETHINKING APPROACHES TO 20TH CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURES

Much of Detroit’s 19th and 20th infrastructure is nearing the end of its productive life. Although replacing and maintaining conventional infrastructure will remain important to Detroit’s future, landscapes can also function in similar ways, yet are less expensive to construct and maintain than conventional systems. Landscape can be adapted to serve stormwater/wastewater, energy, roads/transportation, and waste infrastructure systems.

**Blue infrastructures** are water-based landscapes like retention ponds, and lakes that capture and clean stormwater, reducing the quantity and improving the quality of water that enters the combined stormwater/sewage system.

**Green infrastructures** are forest landscapes that improve air quality by capturing air-borne pollutants from industry, vehicular exhaust along interstates, and infrastructure facilities like the Detroit Recovery Facility, which incinerates household waste. Green infrastructure also includes greenways, paths, and dedicated lanes for bicycling, walking, and running.

Landscape infrastructure can act as multiple kinds of infrastructure at once. For example, a combination blue (water) and green (plants and trees) corridor might capture stormwater along drainage swales alongside a major road, while integrating a greenway for bicycling and walking—to support connections among home, work, and services.

Landscape systems have benefits that carry far beyond the inherent function they serve. Landscape infrastructures provides a wide range of benefits:

- **Environmental benefits:** cleaner air, soil, and water; captured stormwater; habitat for local wildlife and migrating birds.
- **Fiscal and economic benefits:** reduced maintenance and utility costs, fulfilling some roles of traditional systems; job creation, production of fresh food and other tangible products; an attractive, unique environment that can draw new businesses to Detroit.
- **Social benefits:** recreation and social life opportunities; neighborhood stabilization by acting as an amenity that helps to increase property values; improvement of resident health and comfort; new uses for and management of currently vacant land; renewal of the physical image of the city

Landscapes can address environmental justice by cleaning contaminated soil, improving air quality, buffering impacts of industry/infrastructure on residents, and reducing the cost of service (by reducing construction and operating costs). In short, landscape can help ensure that environmental burdens are not born disproportionately by Detroit’s lower income and children.

**By 2030, an enhanced and multi-functional open space system will provide a new and strong identity for the city,** picking up where efforts like the Detroit RiverWalk have set a successful precedent.

A network of parks, plazas, wetlands, ponds and lakes, recreation centers, forests and orchards, community gardens, and remediation fields that clean the air and water through “blue” (water) and “green” (plants and trees) landscapes will populate the city, all connected by a multi-modal greenway for pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles and transit.



**THE TIME IS NOW.** We have known for some time that doing business as usual is no longer an option for Detroit. The financial recession and foreclosure crisis in 2007—which undermined the city’s progress in diversifying its economy and bringing back residents—drove home this reality and provided a distinct moment in time for strategic action. It created a heightened sense of urgency and opportunity among Detroiters, and has resulted in this initial work to solidify a public consensus for systematic reform and innovation.

To transform Detroit into a new, healthier, safer, more prosperous, and socially just city requires a new understanding of the city as it is right now, an imperative to share information and decision-making power, and a willingness to abandon fixed ideas and old approaches, in favor of fresh, clear-eyed understanding.


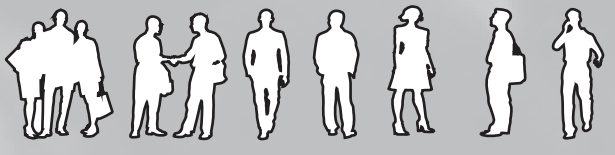
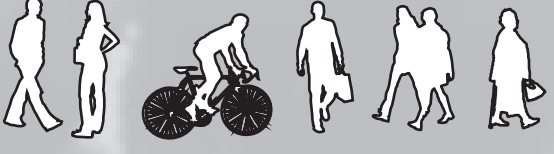
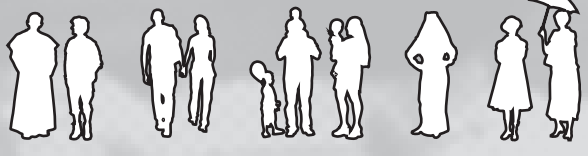


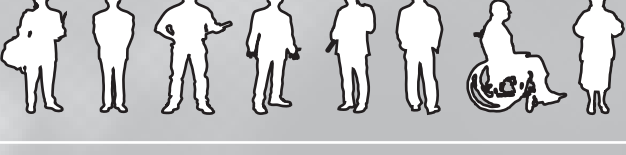

The more than 700,000 Detroiters who have stood their ground or chosen to come here are people who do not shy away from a challenge. That’s good, because many more challenges lie ahead. Many of the recommendations of this plan can create successes in the very short term, perhaps as soon as two years from now. Yet the major and most sweeping innovations will take 20 or more years to realize. The ambition and aspiration embodied in this plan will be needed to continually inspire and replenish action, while its pragmatic approach to building on existing progress and conversations is intended to ground it in realistic possibilities for action.

To reach the goal of a Detroit Future City will call forth and try every one of the traits that have made Detroit great in the past and helped it survive to the present: ingenuity, innovation, civic commitment, and an unflinching, steel-spined ability to stand tall while facing the worst of the city’s daily realities, yet while also embracing its possibilities.

Detroit won’t be “fixed” because no city is ever “fixed.” Cities are living places that require ongoing awareness and firm yet flexible approaches to decision making which acknowledge changing realities and multiple voices, leading to pragmatic and agreed-on solutions. The Planning Elements in the Strategic Framework illustrate specific strategies that can be put in place now to create permanent change and transform Detroit.

# THE TIME IS NOW



	WHO USES THE PLAN?	
ADVOCACY GROUPS		For Advocacy Groups, the plan helps to elevate many of the policies and strategies advocacy and professional organizations have been developing and seeking adoption for. By lifting up these ideas, the further helps to illustrate their importance and potential to address key priorities identified by the Detroit community.
BUSINESSES		For the Business Sector, the plan provides service predictability and a clear direction for where and what kinds of private investment are needed and sought after in the city to grow existing and new businesses and target training for new growth sectors.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT		For the Community Development Sector, the plan recognizes the added value of small-scale interventions, and recommends a range of currently accepted as well as innovative strategies to be deployed for different areas of the city.
FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY		For the Faith-Based Development Sector, the plan recognizes the added value of neighborhoods and small-scale interventions, and recommends a range of currently accepted as well as innovative strategies to be deployed for different areas of the city. These organizations can also use the plan as a tool to design and facilitate more localized community planning efforts.
INSTITUTIONS		For Institutions, the plan identifies key areas of business sector growth, investment, and human capital development that can inform current and future programming, hiring, contracting, and the long-term growth of education, medical, and cultural institutions in the city.
PHILANTHROPIC SECTOR		For the Philanthropic, Intermediary, and Community Banking Sector, the plan outlines the areas where strategic investment and collaboration between public, private, and nonprofit sectors can be best leveraged.
PUBLIC SECTOR		For the Public Sector, including city, county, state, and federal governments, the plan provides policy recommendations designed to help guide public investments and seek the regulatory reforms necessary to execute the plan. The public sector can incorporate the key policy and intervention strategies into the appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks, including the Master Plan of Policies, Zoning Ordinance, and City Sustainability Plan.
RESIDENTS		For Residents, the plan communicates a clear direction for the city's improvement and growth, and establishes metrics by which progress can be measured and evaluated. Residents can find strategies for improvements to their communities at the block or neighborhood scales that can be implemented by their neighbors. Grassroots groups can also use the plan as a tool to design and facilitate more localized community planning efforts.

# GUIDE TO THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

## HOW IT IS USED

The Detroit Strategic Framework establishes a set of policy directions and actions designed to achieve a more desirable and sustainable Detroit in the near term and for future generations. The Strategic Framework is organized into Five Planning Elements and a civic engagement chapter. These Five Elements include:

- The Economic Growth Element: The Equitable City
- The Land Use Element: The Image of the City
- The City Systems and Environment Element: The Sustainable City
- The Neighborhoods Element: The City of Distinct and Regionally Competitive Neighborhoods
- The Land and Buildings Assets Element: A Strategic Approach to Public Land

These Elements outline a detailed approach to addressing the realities and imperatives that will enable Detroit to move toward a more prosperous future.

**PRAGMATIC, ADAPTABLE BLUEPRINT.** The Framework represents the specifics of a vision that can remain flexible and be refined and enriched over time. It is not a master plan, but a shared framework that guides decision making among individuals, institutions, businesses, organizations, and neighborhoods toward a future city, which is culturally rich and offers opportunities for all of Detroit's residents, institutions, businesses, and neighborhoods.

The Strategic Framework is an inclusive shared vision that uses engagement to look beyond the city's historic barriers of geography, race, and economic differences. Equally important, it focuses on the assets of all areas to illustrate that all communities can be unique and be a part of the bigger image of Detroit, where a variety of neighborhood types is encouraged.

**WHAT THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IS AND ISN'T.** As the Detroit Works process went forward, many people asked, "How is this plan different from any other?" and "How will it improve the quality of life in my community or for my business?" The answer is that, while the Strategic Framework addresses issues and presents recommendations in a similar format to other planning documents, it also is not intended to be a conventional "Vision Plan." That type of plan is usually highly aspirational and often presents static illustrative projection for what the future of a region, city, or community will look like, with little detail on how to achieve the vision.

The Strategic Framework is also not the Master Plan of Policies, the legally mandated, long-range document of land development policies that support the social, economic, and physical development and conservation of the city, proposed by the Mayor and approved by the city council in 2009. There are specific statutory procedures and formats required for that type of document, and it is typically executed by the municipality's planning agency.

The aim of the Strategic Framework is to recognize and adapt to an unpredictable future. The Strategic Framework is designed for flexibility and choices that will enable different sectors in Detroit to act both collaboratively and independently, and over different periods of time, but in a coordinated way. As a comprehensive and action-oriented blueprint for near- and long-range decision-making, the Strategic Framework Plan is 1) **aspirational** toward a physical and social vision for the city; and 2) **actionable**, with strategies for new policies and implementation; and 3) **accountable**, with assignment of implementation responsibilities.

**WHO THE FRAMEWORK IS FOR, AND WHO SHOULD MAKE IT HAPPEN.** The Detroit Strategic Framework is one shared vision designed to guide the decisions of a wide range of implementers, investors, and regulators participating in the revitalization of Detroit. Every sector of Detroit will play an important and critical role in executing the vision, both independently and in collaboration with one another. Each sector can use the plan to guide its own decisions about investments, localize planning, align with public funding programs, conduct or encourage interim and permanent development, inform decisions about buying and selling land and businesses, and create partnerships across sectors.

**HORIZONS FOR CHANGE.** Just as the Strategic Framework is intended to offer recommendations and approaches that can adapt to changing realities in Detroit, so also the 10-, 20-, and 50-year Horizons adopted for the Framework are intended not as literal forecasts, but as aspirational possibilities and an aid to imagining the city's changes. These Horizons also offer three useful ways to look at progress and change in Detroit: Stabilization, Improvement, and Sustainability.



# THE PLANNING ELEMENTS

## AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TRANSFORMING THE CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS



The Economic Growth Element proposes five strategies to grow Detroit's economy in a way that is equitable for all Detroiters, supports Detroit's economic sectors, and can attract new residents and businesses:

- Support the Four Key Economic Growth Pillars that have already demonstrated promising job growth: education and medical employment (“Eds and Meds”), digital and creative jobs, industrial employment (both traditional and new technologies, large-scale and artisanal, manufacture, and processes), and local entrepreneurship.
- Use place-based strategies to create core investment and employment corridors, focusing on seven employment districts where job growth is already occurring.
- Encourage local entrepreneurship and minority-owned business.
- Improve education and skills development.
- Transform the city's land into an economic asset.



The Land Use Element offers land use strategies that are situated between the city's existing conditions and a range of preferred futures. The Detroit Strategic Framework organizes a wide variety of potential land use types within three levels of scale and purpose:

- FRAMEWORK ZONES that guide citywide and investment decisions in terms of the best ways to make positive change in areas with a range of physical and market characteristics. The most influential characteristic is vacancy, because of its drastic effect on physical and market conditions of an area.
- LAND USE TYPOLOGIES that provide the future vision for land use within the city. They are divided into three primary categories: neighborhood, industrial, and landscape.
- DEVELOPMENT TYPES that visualize how the physical development of buildings and landscape may occur within a particular land use typology. They are divided into four major categories: residential, commercial, landscape, and industrial.

In addition, the Detroit Strategic Framework recommends the following supportive strategies for land use:

- Create a new and diverse open space system for the city,
- Redefine corridors and complete streets, and
- Develop innovative regulatory reform.



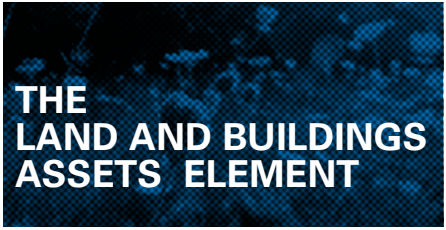
This Element describes the imperative of moving toward a more affordable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable city through reforms to how services are delivered throughout the city, and through transformation of the systems and networks that carry the city's water, waste, energy, and transportation. This chapter proposes six strategies:

- Reform system delivery to adapt to the current population and to better coordinate public and private service provision for more efficient and reliable services that will adapt to future needs.
- Create innovative landscapes (green and blue infrastructure) that actively clean the air and water to provide better environmental quality and public health for Detroit.
- Reshape transportation to establish Detroit within a regional, multimodal network that better serves commercial and personal transportation needs, especially in terms of connecting neighborhoods and employment districts, as well as better serving Detroit's freight industry.
- Improve lighting efficiency throughout the city.
- Enhance communications access in Detroit.
- Actively manage change, by continuing discussions that have already begun removing regulatory barriers, to interagency cooperation at the city and regional levels, as well as establishing an interagency platform for coordinated decision making about city services.



This Element proposes six specific strategies to create a diverse range of neighborhood styles and choices that will appeal to a wide variety of people, while strengthening all neighborhoods across the city:

- Address quality-of-life issues that affect all Detroiters with a set of citywide strategies that work in all Detroit neighborhoods.
- Create dense, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods in some parts of Detroit.
- Fuse art and industry in “Live+Make” neighborhoods in functionally obsolete areas of Detroit.
- Repurpose vacant land to make Urban Green neighborhoods that take landscape as the predominant transformative element;
- Renew amenities in traditional, usually historic neighborhoods of single-family housing;
- Use productive landscape as a basis for a sustainable city by tapping innovative broad-scale alternative uses of green and blue infrastructure and other productive landscapes, while upholding the quality of life for residents already in these areas of increasing vacancy.



To transform the vacant land of Detroit into a potential asset for the city's future, this Element calls for all the different public agencies that hold land to align their missions around a single shared vision that reflects the aspirations for the city as a whole, as expressed in its land use and environmental plans, economic growth strategies, and neighborhood revitalization efforts. Such a transformative strategy must provide an integrated approach to land and buildings across the entire city, whether publicly or privately owned. Specifically, the Land and Buildings Assets Element proposes six strategies:

- Target vacant public land and buildings in employment districts for growth.
- Use vacant public land in neighborhoods as a tool for neighborhood stabilization.
- Transform largely vacant areas through blue and green infrastructure.
- Link public facility and property decisions to larger strategies.
- Make landscape interventions central to Detroit's revival.
- Use aggressive regulatory tools to reinforce land development, reuse, and management strategies.

### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: A CRITICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE CITY'S FUTURE

The Civic Engagement initiative resulted in five specific recommendations to create civic support for the Strategic Framework, itself, and calls for three central strategies to establish long-term civic capacity for the City of Detroit.

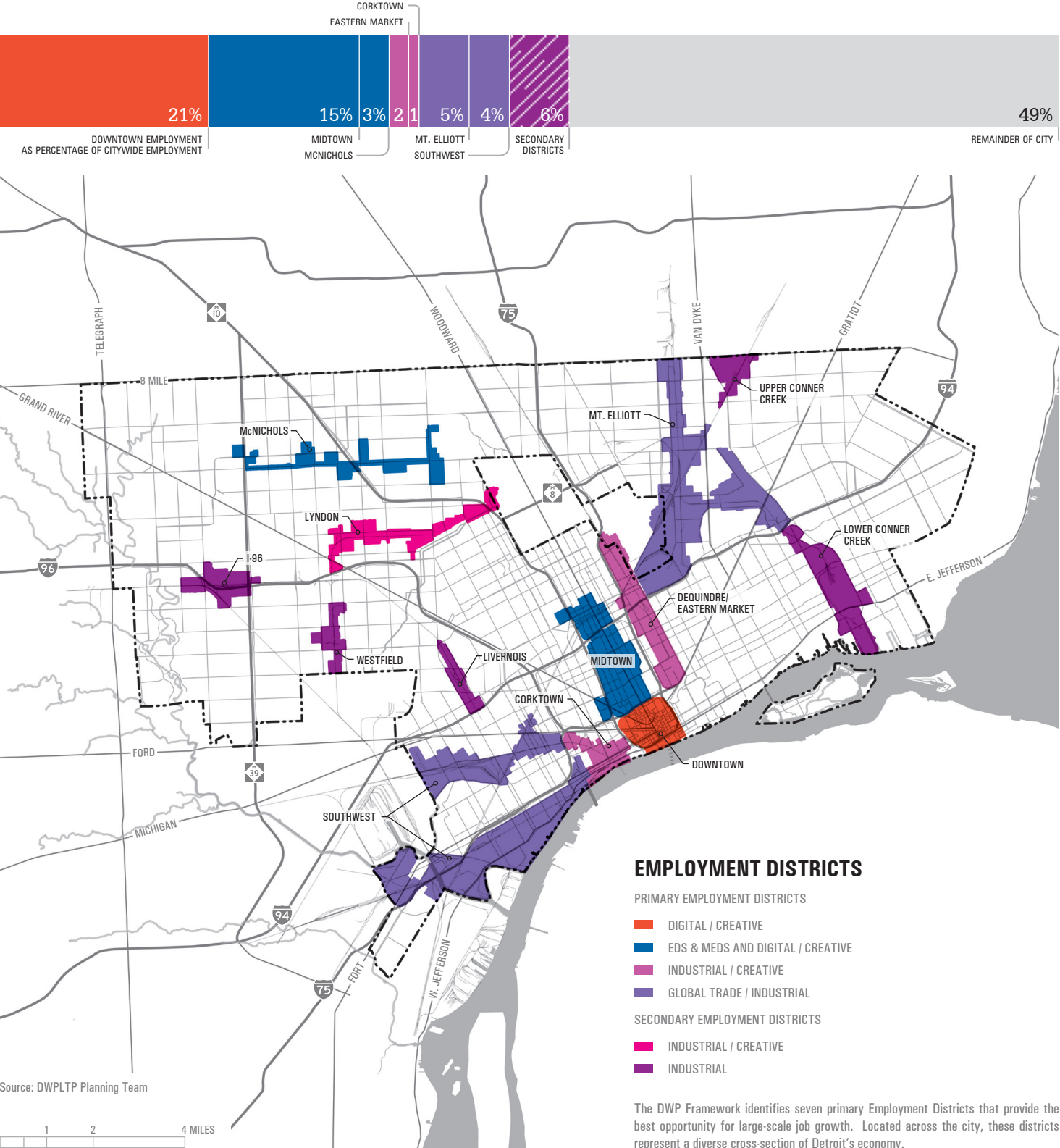
The five implementing recommendations related to the Strategic Framework are

- Establish a Detroit Strategic Framework Consortium, charged with stewarding the implementation and the civic engagement of the Strategic Framework into the future. Enlist additional champions for implementation and policy reform.
- Enlist additional champions for implementation and policy reform in addition to the Consortium membership.
- Inform, educate, and equip key stakeholders to continue to “take the plan to the city.”
- Strengthen and complement the public sector with a regional agenda that recognizes Detroit's strength and the region's shared destiny, and that extends and shares ownership of civic engagement in recognition of Detroit's role in the nation and the world.
- Report back for transparent and ongoing progress.

The three engagement strategies for a sustainable civic capacity on behalf of Detroit over the long-term are

- Extend capacity by building on four key components of long-term civic capacity: city government; philanthropy; Detroit institutions (including the nonprofit and business sectors; and Detroit residents).
- Develop and share knowledge and information inclusively, continually, with transparency, and demonstrating that the input has value and is being used.
- Engage people with a mosaic of tactics that have varied and broad appeals and possibilities, and that are woven together to have combined effectiveness.





# THE ECONOMIC GROWTH ELEMENT

## TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

- 1

A CITY OF ROBUST JOB GROWTH
- 2

A CITY OF EQUITABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 3

A CITY OF PHYSICALLY AND STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED ECONOMIC ASSETS
- 4

A LEADER IN URBAN INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY
- 5

A CITY OF REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ECONOMIC ASSETS
- 6

A CITY THAT ENCOURAGES MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES
- 7

A CITY OF IMMEDIATE AND LONG-RANGING STRATEGIES FOR RESIDENT PROSPERITY

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- A

SUPPORT FOUR KEY ECONOMIC PILLARS

1

Align cluster strategies with the Detroit Strategic Framework.

2

Establish cluster-based collaboration with labor market intermediaries.

B

USE A PLACE-BASED STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

1

Align public, private, and philanthropic investments in employment districts.

2

Develop detailed action plans for primary employment districts.

3

Encourage industrial business improvement districts (IBIDs).

4

Become a national leader in green industrial districts.

C

ENCOURAGE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MINORITY BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

1

Promote short-term approaches to increase the number and success of MBEs and DBEs in the City.

2

Support the development of low-cost, shared spaces for clusters with high levels of self employment.

3

Provide young Detroiters with exposure to and experience in Digital / Creative and other new economy clusters.

4

Develop a comprehensive long-term strategy to increase and strengthen the City's MBEs.

D

IMPROVE SKILLS AND SUPPORT EDUCATION REFORM

1

"Hire Detroit": Strengthen local hiring practices.

2

Link workforce investments to transportation.

3

Coordinate workforce development best practices.

4

Revitalize incumbent workforce training.

5

Expand public-private partnerships for workforce development.

6

Commission a study to identify levers to improve graduation rates and poor labor market outcomes of Detroiters.

E

LAND REGULATIONS, TRANSACTIONS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

1

Create an industrial side-lot program.

2

Create a priority permitting process for employment districts.

3

Focus on land banking industrial and commercial property.

4

Identify alternative capital sources for real estate development.

5

Articulate a reverse change-of-use policy.

6

Create master-planned industrial hubs.

7

Address underutilization of industrial building space and land.

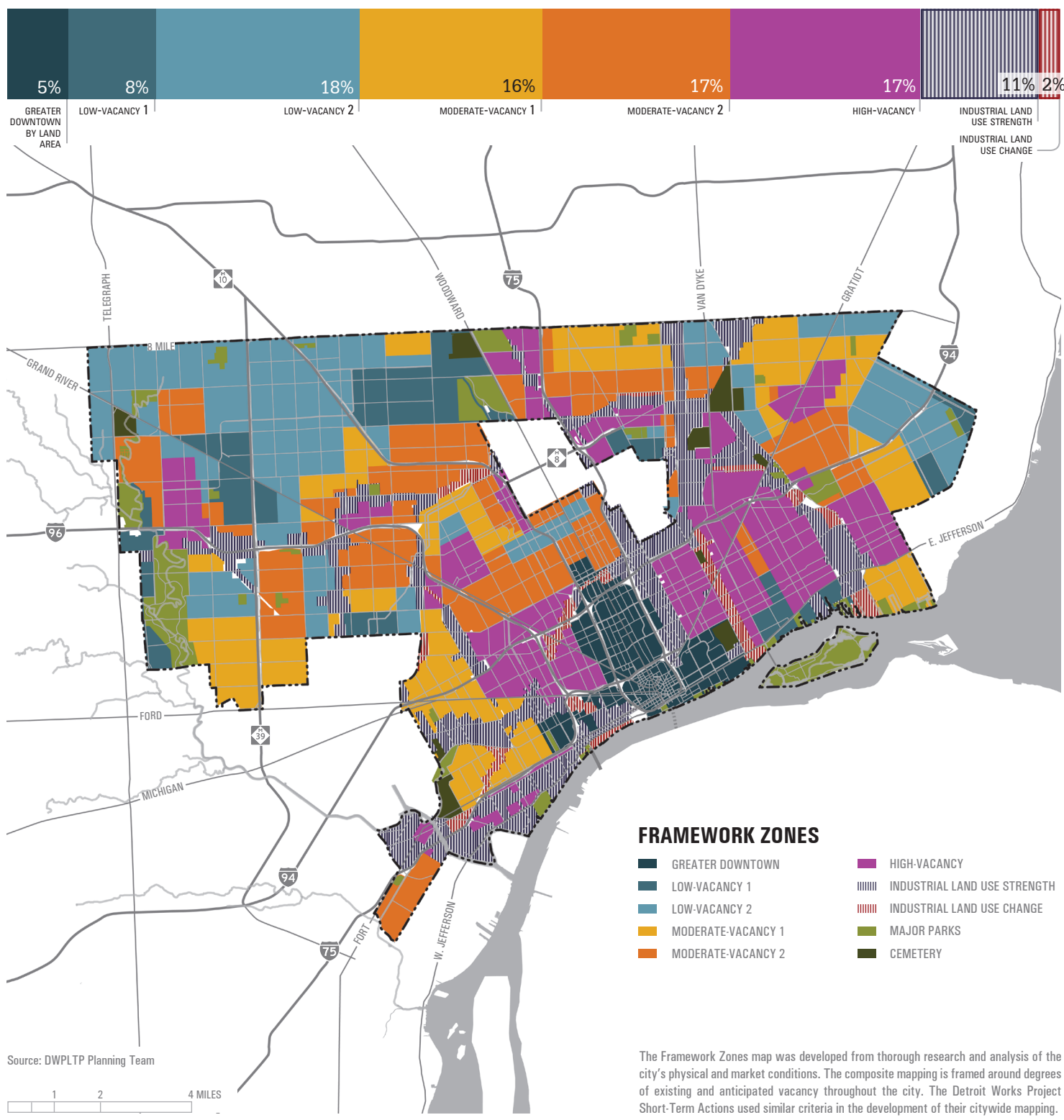
8

Address weaknesses in the local brokerage sector.

WE MUST RE-ENERGIZE DETROIT'S ECONOMY TO INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR DETROITERS WITHIN THE CITY AND STRENGTHEN THE TAX BASE.

WE MUST SUPPORT OUR CURRENT RESIDENTS AND ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS.





# THE LAND USE ELEMENT

## TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

- 1 A CITY OF MULTIPLE EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS
- 2 A CITY CONNECTING PEOPLE TO OPPORTUNITY
- 3 A GREEN CITY WHERE LANDSCAPES CONTRIBUTE TO HEALTH
- 4 A CITY OF DISTINCT, ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBORHOODS

WE MUST USE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO TRANSFORM OUR VACANT LAND IN WAYS THAT INCREASE ITS VALUE AND PRODUCTIVITY AND PROMOTE LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY.

WE MUST USE OUR OPEN SPACE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALL DETROIT RESIDENTS.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- A** CREATE A CITYWIDE FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH AND INVESTMENT

  - 1 Establish framework zones and future land use maps as the basis for public, private and philanthropic investment.
  - 2 Base land use decisions on the fundamental physical and market conditions of the city: low-vacancy, moderate-vacancy, high-vacancy and Greater Downtown areas.
  - 3 Update framework zones map on a 5 year basis to reflect changes to physical and market conditions.
- B** SUPPORT A NETWORK OF NEW AND EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

  - 1 Establish land use typologies as the vision for the future city.
  - 2 Reorganize land use around neighborhoods, industry, and landscape.
- C** INTRODUCE NEW FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT

  - 1 Align framework zones and future land use typologies to determine appropriate locations and types of development across the city.
  - 2 Introduce new and innovative landscape-based development types.
  - 3 Introduce form-based development criteria.
- D** CREATE A NEW AND DIVERSE OPEN SPACE SYSTEM FOR THE CITY

  - 1 Implement blue and green infrastructure.
  - 2 Encourage reuse of vacant land with productive landscapes.
  - 3 Diversify park networks.
  - 4 Encourage partnerships between universities and firms in productive landscapes to conduct research and provide job training opportunities.
- E** REDEFINE CORRIDORS AND COMPLETE STREETS












  - 1 Develop tiered transit network that ties into regional system.
  - 2 Incorporate multi-modal transit design into all street improvements.
  - 3 Focus commercial development in walkable nodes or auto-oriented strips based on physical/market conditions and future land use vision.
  - 4 Introduce blue and green infrastructure as integral to corridor development.
  - 5 Implement blue infrastructure along arterial and other roads.
- F** ENACT INNOVATIVE REGULATORY REFORM

  - 1 Phase land use vision over 3 horizons (stabilize/improve, sustain, transform).
  - 2 Revise/amend City Master Plan of Policies and Zoning Ordinance.
  - 3 Update public, private, and philanthropic policy guiding documents.





PROPOSED PUBLIC TRANSIT BY TIER      PROJECTED 2030 POPULATION DENSITY

- |   |                          |   |                     |
|---|--------------------------|---|---------------------|
|  | LIGHT RAIL               |  | 0-2 PEOPLE PER ACRE |
|  | TIER 1 BRT ROUTES        |  | 3-6                 |
|  | TIER 2 CROSS TOWN ROUTES |  | 7-10                |
|  | EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS     |  | 11-14               |
|  | TRANSIT NODES            |  | 15-18               |
|   |                          |  | > 19                |

A simpler and more reliable transit system that creates space for alternative modes of transportation and provides for faster transfer between those modes.

## TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

- 1 STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL
- 2 LANDSCAPE AS 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE
- 3 DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION FOR DETROIT AND THE REGION

**WE MUST FOCUS ON SIZING THE NETWORKS FOR A SMALLER POPULATION, MAKING THEM MORE EFFICIENT, MORE AFFORDABLE, AND BETTER PERFORMING.**

**WE MUST REALIGN CITY SYSTEMS** IN WAYS THAT PROMOTE AREAS OF ECONOMIC POTENTIAL, ENCOURAGE THRIVING COMMUNITIES, AND IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN HEALTH CONDITIONS.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- A**

**REFORM DELIVERY SYSTEM**

  - 1 Use the framework plan to create certainty around residential and employment density in each area of the city.
  - 2 Right-size systems so that network capacity matches residential and employment demand for each area in the medium term.
  - 3 Balance investment in areas of greatest need with investment in areas of greatest potential.
  - 4 Address equity: ensure that a good standard of core services are provided to all groups in all areas including high-vacancy areas.

**B**

**CREATE LANDSCAPES THAT WORK**

  - 1 Deploy surplus land as multifunctional infrastructure landscapes, primarily addressing flood water mitigation and air quality.
  - 2 Bring health and social benefits associated with landscapes and green facilities to lower income groups with poor access to transportation.

**C**

**RECONFIGURE TRANSPORTATION**

  - 1 Realign city road hierarchy to provide faster connections between employment, district, and neighborhood centers.
  - 2 Enhance transit service and increased ridership by realigning transit system to provide integrated network based on fast connections between regional employment centers, supported by feeder services from residential areas.
  - 3 For higher-vacancy areas, provide smaller-scale, flexible on-demand services.
  - 4 Align pattern of development in centers and neighborhoods to support greater number of walking and cycle trips, including promotion of greenways.
  - 5 Support freight and logistics industries through upgrade of key routes and provision of enhanced connections across the border to Canada.
  - 6 Provide large-scale multimodal freight interchange facilities to support local industry and overall city logistics role.

**D**

**ENHANCE COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS**

  - 1 Ensure high-speed data networks are in place to serve existing and new economic sectors and wider community.
  - 2 Develop e-government platform to maximize efficiency of social service delivery.
  - 3 Utilize improved data network to develop smart infrastructure systems which deliver improved service with smaller capacity infrastructure.

**E**

**IMPROVE LIGHTING EFFICIENCY**

  - 1 Reduce number of lights and upgrade all remaining lights to low-energy LED type.
  - 2 In high-vacancy areas, take some parts of the network off-grid, using solar power for generation.
  - 3 Transfer ownership of the network to a new Public Lighting Authority which can procure services from the private sector competitively.

**F**

**REDUCE WASTE AND INCREASE RECYCLING**

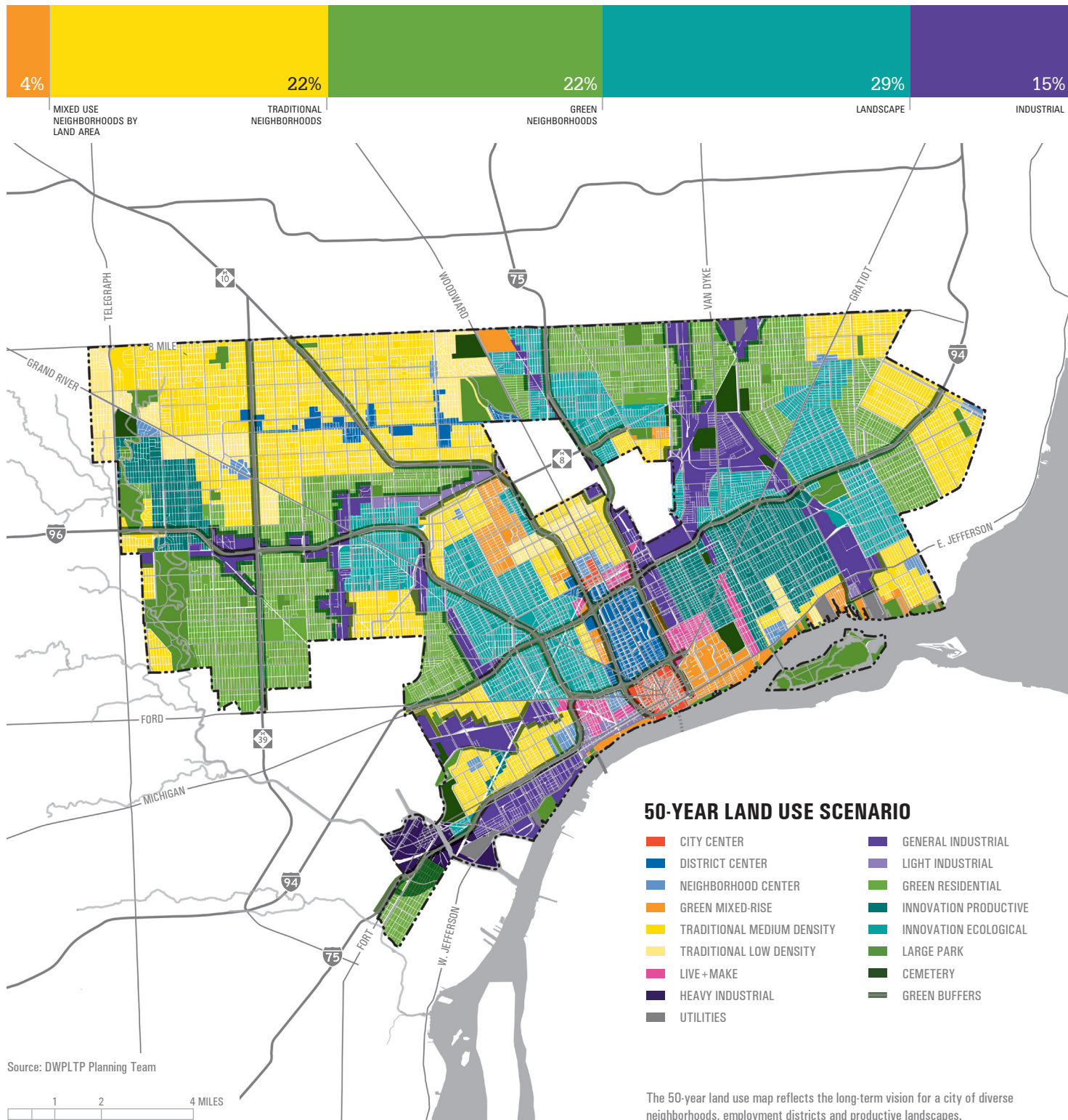
  - 1 Reduce total levels of waste through citizen education and work with packaging industry.
  - 2 Develop targeted and citywide curbside recycling program.
  - 3 Ensure that incinerator emissions remain at or below US EPA standards and international best practice.

**G**

**ACTIVELY MANAGE CHANGE**

  - 1 Adopt Strategic Framework Plan as basis for systems transformation and put in place rolling review program.
  - 2 Create an interagency platform to coordinate change across public and private sector bodies.
  - 3 Communicate with affected communities and monitor processes for emerging success and unforeseen adverse impacts.





# THE NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT

## TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

- 1

A CITY OF MANY KEY ASSETS
- 2

A CITY OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHOICES
- 3

A CITY OF DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS
- 4

A CITY OF DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS
- 5

A CITY OF RESIDENTS WHO ENGAGE IN THEIR OWN FUTURES

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- A

**ADDRESS QUALITY OF LIFE CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT ALL DETROITERS**
  - 1 Realign public safety network to reinforce neighborhood stability.
  - 2 Establish neighborhood-based/community-based schools as neighborhood anchors.
  - 3 Develop strategies to address the divide between high taxation rates and low quality city services. Develop regional transit system.
  - 4 Support programs that promote diverse, mixed-income communities.
- B

**CREATE DENSE, WALKABLE, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS**
  - 1 Stimulate residential market demand (LIVE programs, equity insurance, etc.)
  - 2 Establish dedicated public, private and philanthropic gap funding sources.
  - 3 Create financial and regulatory density incentives. Develop walkable retail nodes.
  - 4 Guide development to reinforce transit/public space investment (TOD).
- C

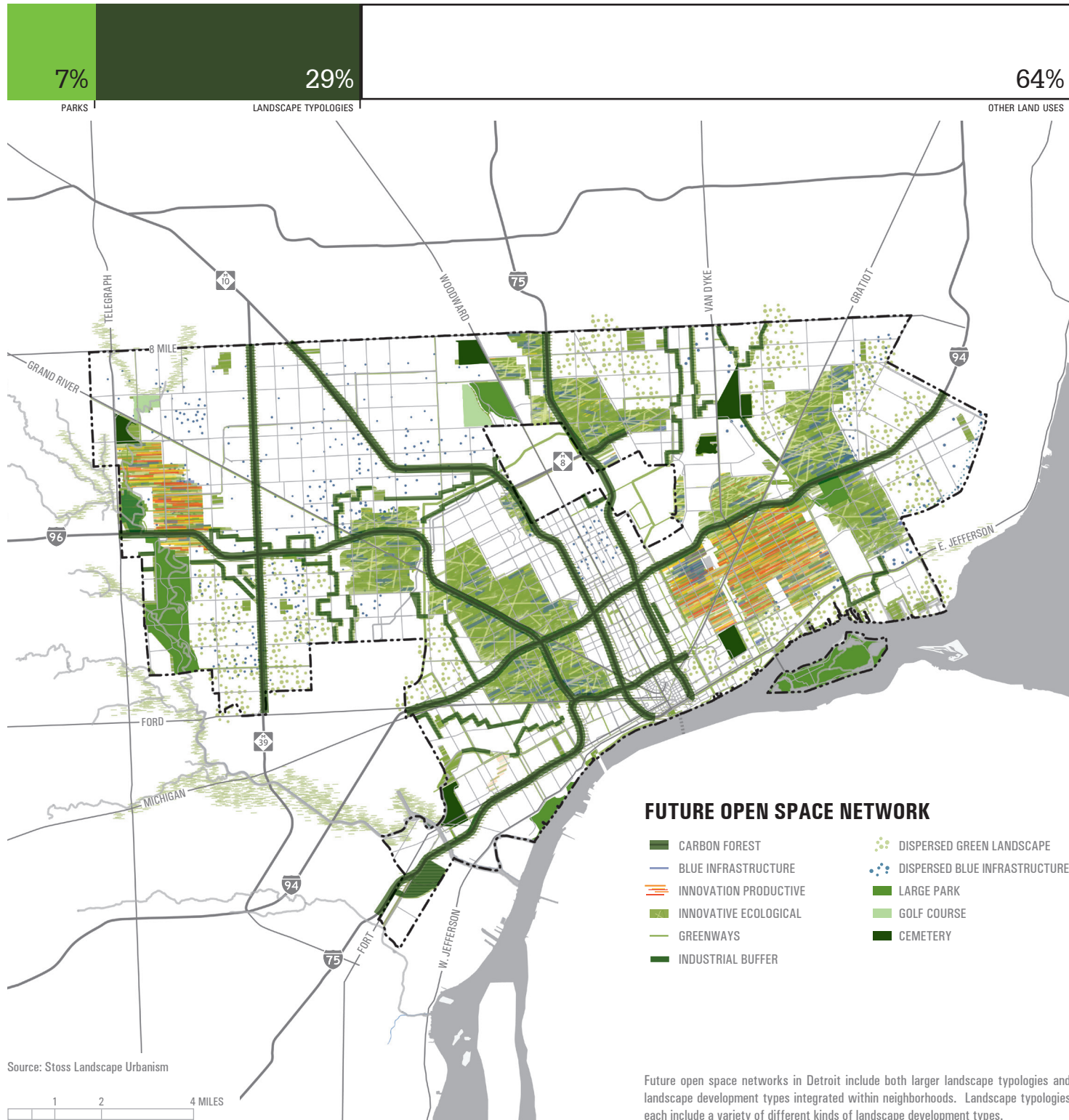
**REGENERATE NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGH FUSION OF ART AND INDUSTRY**
  - 1 Relax business start-up and use regulations to stimulate entrepreneurship.
  - 2 Develop comprehensive start-up incentives and support packages for small businesses.
  - 3 Support training and skills development programs to unique local industries (advanced manufacturing, urban agriculture, green tech).
  - 4 Create tailored development package for industrial adaptive reuse including brownfield remediation costs.
  - 5 Develop a variety of colocation spaces for residential, artistic and entrepreneurial uses.
  - 6 Incorporate local arts into comprehensive public space master plan.
- D

**REPURPOSE VACANT LAND TO CREATE GREEN NEIGHBORHOODS**
  - 1 Undertake massive demolition/deconstruction program.
  - 2 Create community-based open space master plan.
  - 3 Deploy a variety of low cost, low maintenance open space improvements.
  - 4 Assemble large areas of public land for green reuse.
  - 5 Prioritize rehabilitation of historic or significant structures.
  - 6 Integrate blue and green infrastructure as part of open space plan.
- E

**RENEW TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS**
  - 1 Prioritize safety initiatives including streetlight renewal in target areas.
  - 2 Prioritize city services maintenance and renewal in target areas.
  - 3 Prioritize neighborhood stabilization within 1/2 mile of schools.
  - 4 Colocate services and amenities at schools to anchor neighborhoods.
  - 5 Target code enforcement on absentee property owners and landlords.
  - 6 Incentivize neighborhood retail nodes with links to transit network.
- F

**UTILIZE PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES AS THE BASIS FOR A SUSTAINABLE CITY**
  - 1 Establish voluntary house-to-house program.
  - 2 Assemble large contiguous areas of public land for productive reuse.
  - 3 Revise regulatory framework to allow wider range of landscape-based uses.





# THE LAND AND BUILDINGS ASSETS ELEMENT

## TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

**1** A CITY THAT SHARES A VISION: COORDINATING THE MANAGEMENT OF VACANT LAND

**2** A CITY WHERE EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED: VIEWING VACANT AND PROBLEM PROPERTIES WITHIN INTERRELATED SYSTEM

**3** A CITY OF STRATEGIC APPROACHES: RECOGNIZING THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH PROPERTY'S VALUE AND CHALLENGES

**4** A NEW URBAN LANDSCAPE: USING LAND FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND INNOVATION

**5** A CITY WHERE PUBLIC FACILITY INVESTMENTS COUNT: ALIGNING PUBLIC FACILITIES WITH LAND USE TRANSFORMATION

WE MUST BE **STRATEGIC AND COORDINATED** IN OUR USE OF LAND.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

**A** **TARGET VACANT LAND AND BUILDINGS IN EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

- 1 Identify strategic targets for acquisition of properties by public entities.
- 2 Adopt policies for targeted disposition and holding of properties in economic growth areas.
- 3 Increase the cost of holding vacant property.
- 4 Adopt program to foster greater use of underused buildings.

**B** **USE VACANT LAND AS A TOOL FOR NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION**

- 1 Reuse vacant lots to enhance neighborhood stability.
- 2 Adopt targeted demolition strategy based on stabilization priorities.
- 3 Address problem landlords.
- 4 Increase the cost of holding vacant property.
- 5 Pursue targeted neighborhood stabilization strategies.

**C** **TRANSFORM LARGELY VACANT AREAS THROUGH BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

- 1 Hold land between interstates/industrial areas and neighborhoods for green infrastructure (do not release for future residential development).
- 2 Acquire available land for blue infrastructure in key locations.

**D** **LINK PUBLIC FACILITY AND PROPERTY DECISIONS TO LARGER STRATEGIES**

- 1 Create priority system for public land acquisition.
- 2 Create joint policies and system for disposition of public property.
- 3 Adopt coordinated maintenance strategy for public land.
- 4 Adopt targeted demolition strategy based on stabilization priorities.
- 5 Use new and upgraded schools as community anchors for stabilization.
- 6 Review criteria for school closing to reflect neighborhood stability factors.
- 7 Update parks and recreation facilities planning to reflect current and future populations and budgets (update aspects of 2006 Strategic Master Plan by the DRD).
- 8 Parks and recreation planning at neighborhood scales: refine city wide strategy of Detroit Strategic Framework through smaller-scaled analysis.

**E** **MAKE LANDSCAPE INTERVENTIONS CENTRAL TO DETROIT'S RENEWAL**

- 1 Adjust city maintenance standards, strategies, and practices to vary by framework zone and future land use (do not mow all vacant lots in city regardless of location, but instead adopt different lower-cost maintenance strategies in different areas); look for partnerships to help with land maintenance.
- 2 Form partnerships with community groups and other organizations, businesses, and individuals to help maintain land.
- 3 Refine set of landscape maintenance typologies and develop cost estimates to implement.

**F** **USE AGGRESSIVE REGULATORY TOOLS TO REINFORCE LAND DEVELOPMENT, REUSE, AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

- 1 Increase the cost of holding vacant property.
- 2 Address problem landlords.
- 3 Create formal partnership with Wayne County Treasurer for tax foreclosure auctions.



# IMPLEMENTATION HORIZONS FOR CHANGE



## NOW STABILIZE HORIZON 1

Over the next five years, residents and stakeholders of Detroit will believe a new future is possible if they begin to see an elevated level of reliable and quality services to meet their basic needs, as well as stabilization of physical conditions through more efficient operational reforms, strategic investments, and stabilization or modest improvement in the economic conditions in the city.

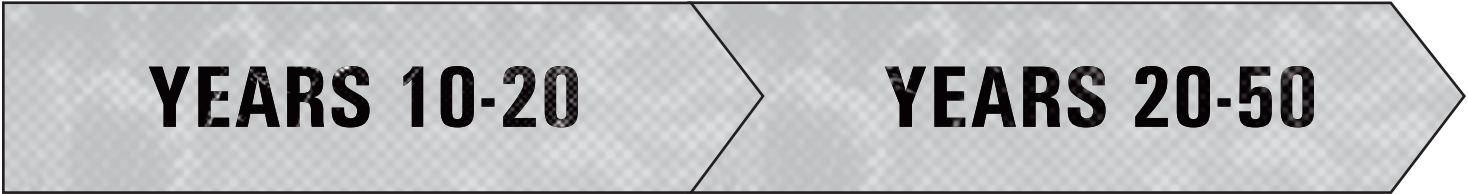
A 21st century city must have 21st century regulations that recognize the changing needs of the city's demographics and their requirements for new forms of land use and the long-term sustainability of those uses. Zoning, land use, and land dispositions policies and regulations must be realigned to accommodate these needs and opportunities. Other signs of stability in Detroit would include

- Increased efforts to expand existing businesses in the target economic sectors of industry, education, medical, information technology, creative industries, and local entrepreneurial development, especially among minority-owned businesses and independent sole proprietors who could move from the informal economy to create businesses that have the capacity to grow and to hire.
- Education reform is passed and critical workforce development funding is preserved.
- The necessary land use regulations are revised that make the vision legal.
- The rates of blight and home foreclosures are visibly slowed.
- Essential public facilities have been co-located and programming enhanced to meet the needs of residents in convenient locations.
- All public land dispositions are aligned and coordinated with the Framework.
- Pilot projects that are testing new ideas for infrastructure, land maintenance, housing, environmental remediation, urban agriculture, cooperative retailing, and others are underway in neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Local governance has been stabilized.
- An implementation organization has been identified and is working to ensure the vision of the Framework is achieved with local, regional, and national partners.

## 2020 IMPROVE HORIZON 2

Over the next 10 years, Detroit is beginning to see the results of preparing residents and business (existing and new) for economic growth opportunities and household prosperity by growing, recruiting, educating, and training in traditional and emerging economic sectors. Residents are finding it a more affordable place to live and are beginning to find job opportunities in town.

- Public land is being positioned for new development of businesses, retail and housing, especially in areas with the potential for employment growth.
- Growth in local entrepreneurship is measurably increasing, especially among African Americans and young people.
- Traditional neighborhoods and the more mixed-use urban centers of the city are starting to increase in residential and population density.
- The demotion program has slowed and is transitioning to reconstruction and rehabilitation.
- A visible increase in mature landscapes for recreation and infrastructure are emerging throughout the city.
- Reliable and schedule public transit is in place along the busiest transit routes in the city and region.
- Infrastructure upgrades to areas of growth are underway.



## 2030 SUSTAIN HORIZON 3

Within 20 years time, Detroit should see a more stabilized population and an increase in local jobs per resident. As such, the city should be well on its way to implementing innovative, 21st-century systems of infrastructure and transportation, storm water management, power, and waste management to support new growth.

- The population has stabilized, and net loss in population has slowed.
- The gap between the number of job per resident in decreasing, with unemployment declining.
- The first generation of youth coming out of education reform are entering the workforce with jobs in the city.
- All neighborhoods have become regionally competitive places to live because of housing and transportation affordability.
- New and convenient public transit options have been expanded to all parts of the city.
- Strategic upgrades to water, energy, and telecommunications networks are advanced.
- The city is visibly more green, with air, land, and water quality metrics improving.

## 2050 TRANSFORM HORIZON 4

Detroit regains its position as one of the most competitive cities in the nation, the top employment center in the region, and a global leader in technology and innovation, creating a healthy and sustainable jobs- to-resident ratio and economic opportunities for a broad range of residents. Traditional and mixed-use neighborhoods of the city, including city center, district centers and live+make areas, have filled their density capacities and opportunities for new residential growth can be expanded into green residential areas. Productive and ecological landscapes are now firmly established as the new form and image of the city.