SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES FOR VACANT LAND TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

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DETROIT FUTURE CITY
HYPER-VACANCY

- A term defined in the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy as neighborhoods where vacant buildings and lots comprise 20% or more of the building stock.

The vacancy rates in some legacy cities are surprising, however. For example, Baltimore and Pittsburgh have been doing well by many economic measures but have substantially more hypervacancy than does Milwaukee, a city that in most other respects is doing less well than Baltimore. One factor helping Milwaukee may be that, like Philadelphia, the city's population...
40,000 vacant lots
GROWING AMOUNT OF VACANT LAND

**DETROIT DEMOLITION PROGRAM**

Detroit runs the largest and most transparent demolition program in the country.

Search the new Detroit Neighborhood Improvement Tracker to find the status of upcoming demolitions around your house.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Total Demolitions*</th>
<th>Commercial Demolished</th>
<th>Contracted Residential</th>
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A block containing abandoned lots amid single-family homes in Detroit. Shutterstock
THE CHALLENGES WITH VACANT LOTS

“HYPER-VACANCY”

- Decreased economic opportunity
- Financial strain on cities
- Concentrated poverty
- Health challenges
- Increased crime
- Blight
What can you do with me?
A ROLE FOR EVERYONE!

RESIDENTS  GOVERNMENT  NONPROFITS  PRIVATE SECTOR  PHILANTHROPY  ACADEMIA
ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

OPEN SPACE PLANNING
GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE
BEAUTIFICATION
GARDENING
POLICY SOLUTIONS
Open Space Planning

Productive Landscapes

Vegetated Buffers
Industrial buffers, Highway buffers

Productive Urban Agriculture

Meadows and Natural Areas: Shadocks, wetlands
GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE
Photo by Keep Growing Detroit's Grown in Detroit Program.
POLICY SOLUTIONS

- Enabling residents to acquire vacant land
- Reducing red tape for land uses
- Green infrastructure
- Blight Reduction Policies
DISCUSSION POINT

What examples are taking place in your communities?

Are there any vacant land transformation solutions mentioned that was new to anyone?

Are there vacant land transformation solutions that we didn't touch on?
VACANT LAND TRANSFORMATION

HOW HAVE WE APPLIED SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES IN OUR RESPECTIVE COMMUNITIES?
Transforming City Neighborhoods

Philadelphia LandCare Program
Managed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Under contract with the City of Philadelphia
40,000 vacant lots
The city does not own all of the vacant land, but it does own some of the problems created by vacancy.
Philadelphia LandCare

an interim land treatment
Using funding from the City of Philadelphia, PHS targets key neighborhoods and strategically selects sites for an interim land treatment.

This treatment is a city-wide pre-development tool that is an economical, yet pleasing landscape design that includes a regular maintenance program.
Philadelphia LandCare/ THE TREATMENT

previous condition
Philadelphia LandCare / THE TREATMENT

resulting condition
Philadelphia LandCare/THE TREATMENT

Stabilization Process

- Major trash, debris, and weed removal
- Site grading, amendment, seeding
- Fence installation
- Tree planting
Philadelphia LandCare / WHY IT WORKS

15 hired contractors stabilize and maintain over 11.5 million square feet of land through Philadelphia LandCare.

ongoing maintenance
PHS works with 18 community organizations in the Community LandCare program, which hires local residents to maintain close to 3,000 vacant parcels throughout Philadelphia, totaling 4,500,000 square feet.
Philadelphia LandCare / BEYOND STABILIZATION

Previous Site Condition  Stabilized Site  Developed Site

stimulating new uses
12,000 LandCare lots
THE FIELD GUIDE TO WORKING WITH LOTS
GROWING AMOUNT OF VACANT LAND

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24 SQUARE MILES OF VACANT LAND
CREATING A TOOLKIT

- **TRANSPARENCY:** Information can be hard to find
- **ACCESSIBILITY:** Unfamiliar terms and processes can be difficult to understand
- **CONSISTENCY:** Information might be different depending on who (and when) you ask
- **INSPIRATION:** If you see other people doing it, you have more confidence in your own ability to take on a project
- **SCALE:** In Detroit, there are over 120,000 vacant lots
The Field Guide to Working with Lots is a two-part toolkit that provides step-by-step instruction for 38 landscape designs ranging from installation by beginning gardeners to professional contractors. On this website, you can sort through the designs to find one that meets your budget, maintenance level, and experience. The designs address...
Work Together

Get Organized

Explore Lot Designs

Make Connections

Discover what is important to you and your community.

Identify what you already have and what you might need.

Get to know some of your options.

Open up the door to resources.
Discover Your Lot

Determining type of lot you are starting with is a great way to find the most appropriate Lot Design option(s). Browse and select from Lot Types below to learn more, or take a quick quiz to narrow down to your lot type.
From the Ground, Up.

See Lot Transformations

From entrepreneurial ventures to community building, you are sure to find inspiration from our local and national examples. Browse through the profiles to learn how groups have done amazing work related to lot transformation and the implementation stories of groups that have already installed Field Guide lot designs. Be sure to let us know if you install a design so we can highlight your work and lessons learned!

Local

National

DFC Designs

VIEW LOCAL

VIEW NATIONAL

VIEW DFC DESIGNS
IMPLEMENTATION

1. Partnerships
2. Working with Lots Program
3. Stormwater Track
4. Targeted Outreach
IMPACTS

- 43 Field Guide projects
- Nearly $400,000 invested
- 7 acres transformed
- $50,000+ additional dollars invested
- Several Field Guide inspired transformations
- 5 grantees anticipating or received drainage credit
Grandmont
Rosedale
Development
Corporation
BREAK
ENGAGING CITY LEADER AND COUNCIL

- Connecting land care to the city’s vacant land care program
- Get them more involved by inviting them to outings and events
- Educate at large members
- Council Tours
- Maps of work completed in Council members district areas
ENGAGING COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

- Brochure with program information
- Flyer the block – come on the blocks ahead of time
- Meetings in regards to the lots - have organization come out and explain (who has permission to use the lots and what can they be used for?)
- Education – explain the process -
- Public Announcements
- Email Blast or telephone calls
FUNDING PHILADELPHIA LANDCARE
Clean and Green Treatment Stabilization
Cost per parcel                           $2,100
Cost per square foot                   $1.75

Maintenance of Clean and green parcels (14 visits)
Cost per parcel             $27visit/ $375.00 annual
Cost per square foot     $0.31 annual

Philadelphia LandCare
Cost
Impact studies

- Increase in outdoor exercise and decrease in stress levels
- Safer neighborhood, reduction in violent crime
- Improved mental health of residents
- Increase in property values
JOB TRAINING
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAM

- FUNDING/ COMMUNITY REQUEST
- SHORT DUMPING/ REPAIRS
- QUALIFY CONTRACTORS/ COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
- JUSTIFICATION OF FUNDING
- DATA COLLECTION
- VACANT LAND COMMUNICATION PROCESS WITH CITY AGENCIES
THE FIELD GUIDE: WORKING WITH LOTS PROGRAM
ENGAGING COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

- Multi-lingual one pager document
- Side Lot Purchaser Flyer
- Community Association and Block Club Meetings
- Social Media
- Newsletters
- Utilizing District Managers
TIMELINE

1. Gather your group
2. Determine your priorities
3. Take inventory (people, skills, resources, tools)
4. Learn your lot (size, soil, neighbors, water, sun/shade)
5. Brainstorm! Design!
6. Budget
7. Do it!
8. Perfectly planned and designed
9. Celebrate!

Planting should take place in the spring or fall, so try to adjust your timeline accordingly.
## 15 Month Program Development and Implementation

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Green Stormwater Infrastructure: Achieve a common goal among the eco-system of Detroit NGOs to reduce stormwater overflows

- **Education & Outreach**
  - Communications Planning
  - Curriculum Development
  - Land & Water Summit
  - Land & Water Forum
  - Hands-on Land & Water Workshop
  - Green Ambassadors
  - Green Solutions Competition

- **Planning & Advocacy**
  - Credits: Offsite & Outreach
  - Offsite credit to maximize neighborhood stabilization and access to credits
  - Group stormwater interventions
  - Analysis of most vulnerable
  - BMP research
  - Workforce & supply chain supports

- **GSI Design, Installation & Maintenance**
  - Site Assessment & Design Solutions
  - Installation (Workshops, GSI, Mini-grants, Pilot bioretention, etc.)
  - Giveaways
  - DWSD Credit technical assistance
Capacity Building: Build capacity across sectors to scale vacant land transformation
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<td>The Erb Family Foundation</td>
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<td>Donation support</td>
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$150,000 - $300,000 per year
GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1epieCgj2HNJs_rF0kBh3FCB_OEVxuaSW
LET'S PLAN SOMETHING
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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