



# ISLANDVIEW GREATER VILLAGES PUBLIC LAND STRATEGY

Michigan State University Practicum Project & the Detroit Planning and Development Department

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## WHY A PUBLIC LAND STRATEGY IS NEEDED

While the city of Detroit is in the midst of incredible investments in the vertical direction through building renovation, historic preservation, adaptive re-use, and varying scales of redevelopment, there is equal energy and enthusiasm towards Detroit's horizontal landscape—its unoccupied land, particularly land owned by the City of Detroit.

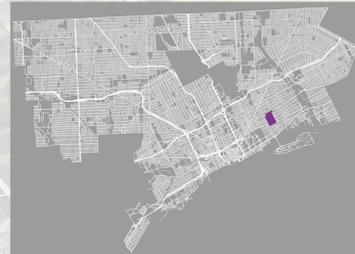
There is definitive interest from the existing and emerging Detroit community to purchase publicly-owned vacant land for a variety of land based ventures. Land-based ventures use land for urban agriculture, gardening, beautification, or other productive uses, whether for profit or as a community-based activity.

The overall objective of the Public Land Strategy is to fully obtain a pulse on the city's vacant land inventory and identify land bundles the city can be actively marketing for a menu of future land uses to serve and support neighborhood growth and community health.

## NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION AREA (NSA)

The NSA was targeted by the City of Detroit due to the large portion of vacant land with a high density of public land holdings. The outer boundaries of the NSA include: Mack Avenue (North); Van Dyke Street (East); Kercheval Avenue (South); East Grand Boulevard (West).

The MSU practicum team has identified land configurations within the NSA and developed a public land catalog that will be used to market public land for both near- and long-term developments.



## VISION & MISSION

This Public Land Strategy will improve the overall vitality of the NSA, by outlining strategic recommendations for the disposition of vacant land. Taking into consideration the neighborhood's existing assets and challenges, this project will provide the City of Detroit's Planning and Development Department with the research, marketing tools, and specific recommendations necessary to create economic and social value from underutilized land that will benefit the area's current and future residents.



## RESEARCH

Once a vibrant, stable neighborhood, today 37% of the NSA's parcels are vacant. As indicated in the maps below, the NSA has experienced major population decline since 1950, causing a significant decrease in housing stock, housing occupancy, and population over the past 70 years. The housing stock was never replenished due to high poverty and disinvestment in the area, resulting in many low-density urban residential environments with an abundance of vacant land in many of the city's neighborhoods.

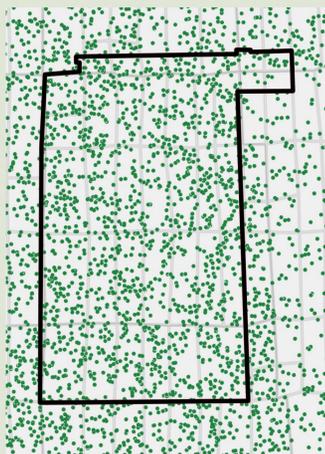
Low incomes, high poverty rates, low vehicle ownership, and high unemployment pose significant challenges for residents. When creating a public land strategy, potential uses should cater to the needs of existing residents and address gaps in access to basic goods, services, jobs, and education. The images below indicate the population change from 1950 to 2010.

36.6% HOUSING STOCK DECLINE SINCE 1950

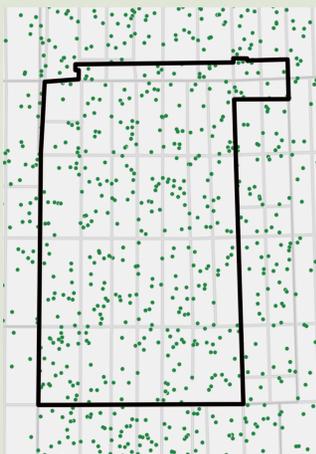
29.4% HOUSING OCCUPANCY DECLINE SINCE 1950

63.2% POPULATION DECLINE SINCE 1950

1950



2010



## PUBLICLY-OWNED VACANT LAND IN NSA



There is a total of 1,128 parcels within the NSA, with 605 of these parcels currently listed as vacant. Publicly-owned vacant parcels make up 321 of the 605 vacant parcels. When combined, the publicly-owned vacant parcels make up a total of 25.82 acres.

Four land typologies, F, G, A, and E have been identified by the City of Detroit Planning and Development Department (PDD), as shown below.

- F** F-Bundles are made up of four or more contiguous parcels. 22 publicly owned bundles. F-Bundles have a total acreage of 10.18.
- G** G-Bundles are made up of at least four parcels on one side of the road and at least two parcels on the other side of the road. 7 publicly owned bundles. G-Bundles have a total acreage of 5.61.
- A** A-Bundles are made up of at least four parcels on one side of an alley and at least two parcels on the other side of the alley. 8 publicly owned bundles. A-Bundles have a total acreage of 5.74.
- E** E-Bundles contain two or more adjacent parcels located in a commercially zoned area. 2 publicly owned bundles. E-Bundles have a total acreage of 0.61.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus of this project is to identify project sites for land-based ventures on publicly-owned vacant land. Land-based ventures are prioritized because they will compliment other projects currently underway in the Islandview Greater Villages Area and implement a productive land use at a low cost.

Through this Public Land Strategy, specific bundles of land within the NSA were identified as the most beneficial to the community through a land-based venture as its primary use. The City of Detroit prioritized two different land-based ventures within the NSA:

- Community Garden
- Urban Agriculture

Four publicly-owned bundles were selected as near-term development recommendations and were categorized as either a community garden or urban agriculture. Two of the recommendations were selected to be community gardens and two were selected for urban agriculture. The image below highlights, in yellow the four selected recommendations.

