

RECOMMENDATIONS: CLEAN AIR

Improve indoor and outdoor air quality to reduce harmful effects to health.



Sandra Turner-Handy (MEC) at U.S. Social Forum Detroit Incinerator Protest

Courtesy: Langelle/Global Justice Ecology Project

PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH IN ZONING POLICIES AND DECISIONS

- Ensure distance and pollution buffers along highway and industrial zones, particularly near residential area
- Ensure that the zoning ordinance accounts for cumulative air impacts from concentration of pollution sources

REDUCE POLLUTION FROM FACILITIES

- Work with companies to implement “Best Available Control Technologies” to prevent pollution at its source
- Work with state and federal regulators to address cumulative air impacts when reviewing permit applications
- Be an advocate for local air quality and work with regulators to enforce air permits and address violators

REDUCE POLLUTION FROM TRUCKS AND DIESEL EQUIPMENT

- Enforce the 2010 anti-idling ordinance, a city law that prohibits trucks from idling for more than five minutes
- Designate and enforce truck routes in the city, and clearly publicize the information so that residents know where trucks can and can't go
- Pursue federal Clean Diesel Initiative funding to upgrade diesel equipment for cleaner emissions

CREATE MECHANISMS FOR COMMUNITIES TO HELP MONITOR FACILITIES AND TRUCKS

- Develop a phone hotline, online tracking system, and/or mobile app for residents to report and track the status of violations (e.g., Code for America has developed an online blight violations tracker for New Orleans: <http://blightstatus.nola.gov/>; Code for America Chicago has established an online 311 service tracker system: <http://servicetracker.cityofchicago.org/requests/13-00332586>)
- Update City website to properly inform residents how to report violations to the appropriate authority, and include phone numbers

RECOMMENDATIONS: CLEAN WATER

Adopt a comprehensive water master plan for Detroit using the Detroit Water Agenda as guidance

Protect and restore our waterways by reducing pollution from industries and stormwater runoff, including fertilizers and pesticides.



Green Garage Green Alley

Photo: Marvin Shaouni

OPTIMIZE AVAILABLE LAND FOR BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- Coordinate stormwater management with open space development and outdoor recreation in master plan and zoning updates
- Support and expand the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department's efforts for green infrastructure in coordination with regional efforts (visit <http://greenvalues.cnt.org/national/calculator.php> to calculate the performance, costs, and benefits of green infrastructure compared to conventional stormwater management)
- Take a leadership role in the regional green infrastructure planning efforts, recognizing the impact of regional water consumption and wastewater on Detroit's water and sewage system

SUPPORT WATER CONSERVATION AND STORMWATER INFILTRATION

- Reconfigure the water bill to create incentives for water customers to help reduce pressure on water infrastructure (e.g., stormwater user fees, water conservation discounts, discounts for urban gardens that do not use the sewer system. See the EPA's online municipal handbook for green infrastructure incentives.)
- Incentivize low-impact development (e.g., fast track site plan review for low-impact designs)
- Ensure that zoning and building-inspection standards support low-impact development and other creative solutions for water conservation and natural drainage (visit SEMCOG's guide to Integrating LID at the Community Level, including examples of LID-friendly regulations.)
- Act on ready opportunities for natural drainage (e.g., backfilling demolition sites with water permeable soil)
- Educate water users regarding the use of grey water

REDUCE WATER POLLUTION

- Continue expanding non-motorized transportation options that reduce stormwater runoff
- Encourage pollution prevention in industrial facilities
- Limit industrial land uses and the expansion of existing ones near waterways and in disadvantaged communities already burdened, such as 48217 and 48209
- Upgrade DWSD facilities and infrastructure for improved efficiencies and better water quality
- Institute land use policies and zoning to protect against impact of land uses near waterways
- Emphasize healthy fish consumption education to vulnerable populations (pregnant/nursing women, children)

RECOMMENDATIONS: CLEAN ENERGY

Use or generate clean energy, and encourage resource-efficient buildings, homes, and neighborhoods.



Photo and Info Source: Chris Deffen, NextEnergy

Since 2011, Detroit has installed about 1800 LED lights in seven locations through a combination of public and private funds. Highly efficient, LED lights can pay for themselves in six years.

SUPPORT POLICIES THAT CREATE A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE FOR DETROIT

- Support development of Climate Action Plan for Detroit (Detroit Climate Action Collaborative)
- Support increasing the State Renewable Portfolio Standard, with the exclusion of waste-to-energy as a renewable energy source
- Increase public transit options (see mobility section) to reduce reliance on dirty fuels
- Encourage renewable energy innovation in the reuse of vacant property
- Learn from the U.S. Conference of Mayors Best Practices Guide in Energy and Environment (http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/best_practices/EandEBP07.pdf)

REDUCE MUNICIPAL ENERGY USAGE AND COSTS

- Maintain the municipal building inventory to prioritize cost-saving energy efficiency upgrades
- Upgrade city vehicle fleet for fuel efficiency and pollution reduction (visit www.fueleconomy.gov for the Department of Energy's green vehicle guide)
- Upgrade public lighting infrastructure for energy efficiency, durability, and public safety
- Increase energy efficiency in City operations, especially the Detroit Water and Sewerage Dept.

REDUCE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL ENERGY USAGE AND COSTS

- Work with Wayne County to coordinate weatherization efforts with other home repair programs to stabilize neighborhoods
- Incentivize and/or set high performance green building standards for new development and major rehabilitation projects
- Allow and encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to create energy-secure neighborhoods
- Create incentives for businesses, institutions, and industry to reduce their energy consumption

RECOMMENDATIONS: ZERO WASTE

Adopt a city waste management policy that prioritizes reduce, reuse, and recycle—including diversion of food and construction/demolition waste.



Detroiters rally for single-stream curbside recycling.

Courtesy: Zero Waste Detroit

IMPLEMENT RECYCLING IN EVERY DISTRICT

- Enact an ordinance implementing the 2010 Charter mandate for recycling; include business and multifamily dwellings

ENCOURAGE MARKETS FOR RECOVERED MATERIALS

- Implement the 2010 Green Purchasing Ordinance
- Establish policies that require a percentage of recycled materials to be used in public infrastructure
- Attract manufacturers that reuse or recycle tires, food waste, furniture, e-scrap, plastic, glass, and other recoverable materials
- Develop a program to locally capture the value of compostables (e.g., sell fertilizer created from collected yard and food waste; establish composting program at Eastern Market)

REDUCE CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE

- Require waste diversion plans for construction and demolition permits
- Establish procedures for architectural salvage (skimming for valuable materials) prior to a scheduled demolition
- Set aside a percentage of abandoned structures for full deconstruction
- Establish demolition backfill standards that adequately prepare land for future use (e.g., use uncontaminated, permeable soils for natural drainage)

REDUCE ILLEGAL DUMPING

- Promote Keep Detroit Beautiful for year-round coordination and support of public, private, and neighborhood cleanup efforts
- Develop a transparent tracking system for addressing illegal dumping reports

REDUCE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WASTE

- Establish a policy that encourages reduction of waste production and/or promotes efficient and waste-free “cradle to cradle” philosophy
- Limit hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities in Detroit
- Hold accountable owners of brownfields

RECOMMENDATIONS: HEALTHY LAND

Repurpose vacant land and structures to protect human and natural health.



Photo: kaitlyfresh.blogspot.com

Brightmoor Farmway House Board

CLEAN UP CONTAMINATED LAND AND REDUCE EXPOSURE TO HEALTH HAZARDS

- Identify and prioritize communities bearing disproportionate environmental burden
- Pursue negligent property owners to take responsibility for cleanup
- Properly assess lead and other soil contamination to make informed land use decisions such as school and residential siting
- Institute soil testing and best practices for urban gardens and urban farms

COMMUNITIZE CARE OF VACANT LAND

- Expedite side-lot disposition and adopt-a-lot programs: make it quicker, easier, and cheaper for residents to purchase adjacent vacant city lots
- Implement the 2013 Urban Agriculture Ordinance
- Support community-based land management efforts (e.g., land trusts, community land banks, public/neighborhood service agreements)

RESTORE AND PROTECT NATURAL AREAS AND ASSETS

- Develop an open space plan that creates a long-term community vision for connected, accessible green space
- Work with regional land conservancies and local/regional/state/federal agencies to restore environmentally sensitive areas and create blue/green infrastructure in Detroit
- Restore neighborhood trees and maintain standards for equitable tree cover in each district
- Support community efforts that can help address ownership and maintenance barriers to implementing blue/green infrastructure; learn from traditional land conservancies in the region

RECOMMENDATIONS: HEALTHY HOUSING

Ensure that residents have access to safe, lead-free, healthy, energy-efficient housing options.



Southeast Michigan Regional Energy Office's Better Buildings Program.

Courtesy: Better Buildings Program, Regional Energy Office

IMPLEMENT A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HOUSING

- Continue to increase interagency and public/private coordination for rehabilitating housing (e.g., Green and Healthy Homes Initiative's efforts to coordinate lead abatement, weatherization, minor home repair, indoor air quality)
- Reconfigure the Community Development Block Grant system to be more effective and distribute resources directly and efficiently into the community
- Adopt a comprehensive home assessment for rehabilitating affordable housing such as the one recommended by the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative

INCREASE RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Train City inspectors on current energy standards: 2009 IECC energy code (residential) or ASHRAE Standard 90.1-2007 with Amendments (commercial)
- Create incentives for energy-efficient, healthy housing development (e.g., a voluntary Green and Healthy label)
- Require an energy audit or disclosure of energy bills upon lease signing or purchase agreement so that renters and buyers have full energy information

IMPROVE RESIDENTIAL INDOOR AIR QUALITY

- Use citizen contact opportunities to educate around personal practices that impact indoor air quality such as smoking, use of air fresheners, use of certain cleaning products and pesticides, installation/use of products that off-gas and/or contain VOCs
- Include in affordable home programs elimination of conditions that cause mold

REDUCE LEAD PAINT HAZARDS

- Enforce the 2010 Detroit Lead Ordinance in the Property Maintenance Code to protect children from lead paint exposure in rental properties
- Work with the County Prosecutor to enforce 2004 State Lead Abatement Act
- Restore funding for Elevated Blood Lead Level (EBLL) investigations to determine and eliminate the source of lead poisoning; coordinate investigations with enforcement of Detroit Lead Ordinance
- Vigorously pursue federal and state funding for lead abatement in houses where children reside

RECOMMENDATIONS: HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

Establish policies that encourage City and community to work together to design and implement healthy, active, sustainable neighborhoods.



Courtesy: LEAP

Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD) Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Framework Plan pilot project Lower Eastside Action Plan (LEAP) Stakeholder Advisory Group

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRESERVING NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY

- Enforce Property Maintenance Code, including properly resourcing the Department of Administrative Hearings for code enforcement
- Designate and enforce local truck routes to protect neighborhood health
- Aggressively pursue illegal dumpers
- Upgrade and maintain sufficient public lighting for public safety

ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

- Adopt predictable, transparent process to support community-driven neighborhood planning and development
- Prioritize health, sustainability, equity, and civic participation in master plan and zoning updates
- Work with Detroit Public Schools to ensure school-siting decisions enhance healthy neighborhoods and reduce pollution exposure to children
- Update the Recreation Master Plan with community inclusion, ensuring equitable access to open space network
- Support local efforts for alternative community-building housing models such as intentional communities, co-housing, eco-blocks
- Support efforts to increase healthy, affordable food access through farmers markets, urban agriculture, local food production, and so on through zoning and regulatory reform

SUPPORT TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT

- Designate City champions for establishing community-driven Community Benefit Agreements, Good Neighbor Agreements, and conducting Health Impact Assessments
- Facilitate early public participation in state water and air permitting processes
- Implement a transparent tracking system for illegal dumping and other citizen reports

SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS THAT IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY

- Increase tree canopy, which studies show correlates with reduced crime rates
- Prioritize child lead poisoning prevention to combat its IQ-lowering and aggression-increasing effects
- Upgrade public lighting to a durable, resource-efficient system for safer streets and neighborhoods
- Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and neighborhood walkability

RECOMMENDATIONS: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Ensure that all residents, especially our most vulnerable, can safely and reliably get to desired destinations.



Kids biking Lincoln Street

Photo: Sandra Yu

MAKE EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION DECISIONS

- Ensure that transit-dependent populations benefit from transportation investments
- Ensure an equitable level of service for all residents in Detroit (e.g., frequency, access, etc.)
- Reevaluate the need for highway expansions in Detroit (e.g., I-94 expansion)
- Advocate for improved public health outcomes in SEMCOG transportation planning

IMPROVE LOCAL AND REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSIT

- Improve transit efficiency by aligning local and regional service, and ensuring convenient connections between different modes of transportation
- Assess and improve local transit service (DDOT, paratransit)
- Advocate for Regional Transit Authority to have dedicated funding
- Support regional Bus Rapid Transit efforts
- Support transit-oriented development through planning, zoning, and incentives

MAKE NON-MOTORIZED TRANSIT A MORE VIABLE CHOICE

- Continue implementation of the 2006 Non-Motorized (NM) Plan to expand routes and facilities for walking and biking
- Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance that aligns with the NM plan
- Implement mixed-use zoning designations (SD1, SD2) to create walkable neighborhoods
- Support Safe Routes to School and other public safety initiatives that increase walkability
- Support a bike-share system that would increase bike use and access

RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Ensure that public investments benefit youth development, increase job access, and improve community well-being.



Photo: Kevin Hamilton, SCA

Schcari Wade with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) cuts trails in Rouge Park.

IMPROVE PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IN PLANNING AND ZONING

- Ensure that the planning and zoning revision process makes a special effort to include health, transportation, natural resources, energy, and waste considerations

LEVERAGE ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Charter-mandated Green Initiatives and Sustainable Technologies Plan should research how to support businesses that address key challenges such as municipal waste, illegal dumping, fossil fuel dependence, and vacant buildings and land
- Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation should work closely with community-based trainers, organized labor, the Purchasing Department, and all agencies that let contracts to maintain a skilled workforce and increase local hiring in public projects
- City agencies and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation should actively support “buy local” initiatives and the cleanup/repurposing of vacant properties to encourage the local urban agriculture economy

ENGAGE YOUTH AND RESIDENTS IN CREATING NATURAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

- Support community-driven efforts to develop an open space network of parks, trails, and greenways to increase recreational opportunities
- Involve residents and youth in environmental initiatives and the design, construction, and maintenance of natural areas to create ownership, jobs, and community pride. (Local examples include the Detroit Youth Energy Squad and Green Schools [WARM Training Center], Student Conservation Corps [The Greening of Detroit], Greening the Mack [Lower Eastside Alliance])

EQUIP COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

- Public officials have the responsibility to inform the community of city processes and policies, as well as their environmental impacts and benefits, so that citizens are better equipped to help keep our communities safe, healthy, and well-maintained