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The Spatial Injustice of Crisis-Driven Neoliberal Urban Restructuring in Detroit

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THE SPATIAL INJUSTICE OF CRISIS-DRIVEN NEOLIBERAL URBAN
RESTRUCTURING IN DETROIT

By

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Struggling to provide basic services due to a dwindling tax base and confronted with

significant pockets of vacant land, Detroit has proposed a radical urban restructuring.

The Detroit Future City framework aims to reappropriate large swaths of land in order to

concentrate people and services in select locations throughout the city. Characterizing

this plan as typical of the contemporary trends of neoliberal urban governance, this

research examines the basis for and proposed results of this crisis-driven urban

restructuring. Using comparative statistics of populations within proposed future land

uses, this research suggests that the most severe spatial injustices will be leveled against

the poorest and most vulnerable citizens. Contrary to publicized efforts of civic

engagement by the project's development team, it is suggested that citizen input was

bypassed in favor of market-driven measures when delineating future land use.

Furthermore, opportunities for resistance to the plan are complicated by historical racial

tension, reduced democratic opportunity, and a fragmented and competitive local

territory.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

Urban Restructuring in Detroit

"Obsolescence is the very hallmark of progress." – Henry Ford II

If obsolescence is the hallmark of progress, many would consider Detroit fully progressed. Contrasting from its 1950 heyday as the 5th largest city in America and the undisputed manufacturing capital of the world, Detroit by 2010 had regressed to a city with only 713,000 residents, the nation's highest unemployment rate, the nation's highest violent crime rate, and an estimated 67,000 vacant property parcels – accounting for 20% of the city. Coping with a reduced tax base, the city approaches insolvency as evidenced by the March 2013 state-appointment of an Emergency Financial Manager granted broad and controversial powers to attempt economic recovery. A city on the brink, Detroit embarks on an ambitious urban restructuring plan to address perceived inefficiencies in service provision – the Detroit Works Project.

Introduced in 2010 as a way to address Detroit's vacant land, streamline its service provision, and improve the quality of life for residents, the Detroit Works Project entails "planned shrinkage," characterized by renewed investment and service provision in select areas of the city and the reversion to woodlands, grasslands, or productive agriculture in many other areas of the city. Justified on the premise that shrinking the availability of habitable land and intensifying services and investment in those areas, Detroit Works argues it will improve the quality of life for all Detroiters. However to accomplish this, relocation of citizens is essential and will be achieved through drastically reducing essential services in geographies intended for clearance in an attempt

to force an entrenched citizenry no choice but to move. Relocation of citizens serves multiple purposes for Detroit Works. Adding to the population density of targeted areas for investment will increase the economic potential of commercial districts in those areas. Additionally, removal of citizens from large geographic areas precludes the need to provide police and fire protection, water and sewer services, trash collection, public transportation, electricity, or any other essential service; potentially saving the city a substantial amount of money in annual service provision costs. Lastly, the Detroit Works Project aims to leverage the city's vacant land as an asset, and clearing poorly-provisioned land of its physical and racial inscription increases real estate liquidity and creates the form most desired by potential investors. In accomplishing such, Detroit will continue its rebranding initiative as a well-funded and well-connected decision-making elite works to reposition the region as a global hub of mobility technology while distancing itself from the conventional view of the city as an obsolete and largely-irrelevant post-industrial city.

The Detroit Works Project is an embodiment of contemporary trends of neoliberal urban governance across the United States. Typified by increasing numbers of public-private partnerships, withdrawn redistributive policy, privatization of public services, and in the case of Detroit Works – the complete shedding of responsibility of a government to its citizens – neoliberal urban governance trends focus on the cultivation and attraction of global capital. Detroit Works would attract this global capital by offering cheap, cleared, and advantageously located land within a region under the increasing control of a few powerful decision-makers intent on elevating the city and regions position on capitalism's global hierarchy of cities. A debate on the ethical practices of a downsizing

plan like this aside, the project is further complicated by a history of tense racial conflict in metropolitan Detroit. The inner-city, predominantly black and less economically powerful, looks warily towards its suburban neighbors due to a history of oppression, racism, and abuse. Relatedly, political plans incorporating a regional approach are dismissed as exploitative by city-dwellers based on fears of outsider reproach. Even more troubling, suburbanites view their inner-city neighbors through the lens of archaic stereotypes and with an air of superiority, falsely believing the outer suburban ring can survive without its core and that the suburbs could at any time "let Detroit die." Thus, social mobilization against the Detroit Works Project will likely have to come from the scaled-up linkages of the most distressed neighborhoods, a result complicated by their disadvantaged access to resources and democratic outlets. A regionally-based collaboration of powerful and diverse stakeholders has interest in the implementation of the Detroit Works Project; its opposition is much less able to raise awareness or concern. Additionally, Detroit Works capitalizes on a fragmented local territory; creating competitive factions within the city which precludes the most disadvantaged neighborhoods from working with stronger, more organized community networks.

This study intends to add to the critical geographic research engaged with neoliberal urbanism by analyzing the Detroit Works Project and its implications; with contextual consideration of the city's history and continued racial contention. Keeping with the tradition of turning to cities to locate neoliberal policy processes, implementation, and outcomes; I frame the city of Detroit as an active creator of neoliberal policy, and the Detroit Works Project as an example of "actually existing neoliberalism". Cognizant of the reliance of the Detroit Works Project on market-

indicators to delineate the geographies of both areas of renewed investment as well as reduced services; I aim to uncover additional ways in which populations with divergent land uses differ. Furthermore, as the Detroit Works Project embarked on a well-publicized community engagement process and frames citizen input as crucial to the crafting of its published framework – *Detroit Future City* – I intend to discover how citizen input transformed the directives of the Detroit Works Project. Relatedly, I conduct aspects of this research in order to illustrate the ways in which neoliberal modes of governance have altered opportunities for democratic resistance – specifically to this plan. Central to questions which I address is the conception of justice – and its spatial manifestation within Detroit. In order to directly dialogue with the "right to the city" literature, I construct a demographic portrait of Detroiters facing injustices through Detroit Works restructuring while locating them spatially. Through consideration of the political atmosphere driving the Detroit Works Project and presentation of a marginalized population facing further dispossession at its hands, I hope to provide a compelling case study of neoliberal urbanism and a provide a point of discussion for how to change the course of a once-great American city.

Chapter 2 serves as an in-depth introduction to the theoretical underpinnings of this research. I frame neoliberalism as a process, one informed by national-level policies as well as global interaction. Showing cities to be burdened with increasing responsibility, I describe their implementation of neoliberal policy processes and related territorial rescaling in attempts to become more globally relevant, often with detrimental effects for citizens. With these citizens in mind, I address the tendency for neoliberalism to engender social injustices, and consider the burgeoning right to the city literature – and

its theorizations and implications for marginalized citizens. In an attempt to reconcile the neoliberal urbanism literature with the right to the city, I address contemporary urban democracy – highlighting the institutional limitations to democracy caused by neoliberal governance. Lastly, I argue that this research addresses a gap in the literature on neoliberal contestations in places perceived as less-important arbiters of global capitalism, with its importance enhanced by the potential for similar projects to be adopted in comparable American cities.

Chapter 3 provides a historical basis for understanding the plight of Detroit, and frames the experience of African Americans within this transformation. Tracing Detroit's history of workplace discrimination, deindustrialization, and housing segregation, I portray Detroit's 1967 race riots as the culmination of years of institutional oppression, as well as the event which solidified a racially segregated metropolis characterized by a poor and predominantly black inner-city. I then describe the neoliberalization of Detroit which began around the same time. Believed to be symbolic in the turning-point for the fortunes of a historically oppressed race in Detroit, the election of the city's first black Mayor – Coleman Young – in 1973 provides instead the starting point for four decades of neoliberal policy implementation. Characterized by central business district investment at the expense of increasingly decaying neighborhoods, decision-makers desperate to slow the deindustrialization gripping the city repeatedly utilized public funds meant for low-income citizens to lure private investment. As a result, sometimes cyclical residential abandonment went unchecked as neighborhood disinvestment devolved into the city's current-state of hollowed out instability observable today.

Building upon the illustration of Detroit as a city marked by struggle and neighborhood decay, the Detroit Works Project is reintroduced in Chapter 4. Initially framed as a neoliberal policy process, I subsequently discuss formation of the plan through philanthropic and public-private partnership; as well as early implementations of the plan realized through school closings and changes in the public lighting department. Using the Detroit Works Project's published framework as basis, I then describe the radical land use changes proposed for large areas of the city. Focusing on the divergent land use types realized through increased investment and reduced services, I show populations in proposed areas of reduced service to be the poorest, most marginalized, least educated, and most service-dependent populations in the city. While the Detroit Works Project proposes injustices no matter the demographic characteristics of the areas facing sharply reduced services and investment, the exhibition of citizens in these areas to have greater dependence on the very services the project aims to reduce highlights the associated spatial injustices. To contrast with the large-scale, intensive, and generalized strategy to deal with vacant land proposed in Detroit Works, I provide at the end of Chapter 4 an alternative strategy used in Philadelphia which has been successful in reengineering vacant land while benefitting nearby residents.

Shown to be facing unjust realities, I consider citizen mobilization against the Detroit Works Project in Chapter 5. After discussing the initial public opposition towards the plan which precipitated the reformulation, delay, and reengagement of Detroit Works with the community, I then analyze the Detroit Works civic engagement process. Utilizing interviews conducted with various community leaders and the director for the Detroit Works community engagement team, I illustrate the process to lack significantly

meaningful engagement with citizens prior to the crafting of the plan. Furthermore, I show opposition towards the plan to be complicated by new democratic outlets and a fragmented local territory whose boundaries are sharpened by the Detroit Works Project. With these considerations, I show the citizens most negatively affected by plans in the Detroit Works Project to be extremely marginalized from the decision-making process, without realistic chances to voice concerns.

This research concludes that the Detroit Works Project proposes unjust realities for the most dispossessed citizens in Detroit. Based on the comprehensive analysis, I advocate for alternative political practices distanced from contemporary trends of neoliberal urban governance – namely long-term intensified investment in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods. Furthermore, Detroit Works must conduct meaningful civic engagement within specifically focused geographies in order to create an equitable framework on which to build Detroit's future, or justly implement any urban restructuring. The Detroit Works Project highlights many regional shortcomings which Metropolitan Detroit can begin working to address. The decayed state of Detroit's neighborhoods is at least partially attributable to disinvestment in light of intra-regional competition. As Detroit's institutional environment is not conducive to citizen mobilization, the city's isolation within its region is magnified. Furthermore, Detroit's detachment from the region exacerbates the isolation of the poorest and most marginalized citizens central to this study. Considering these shortcomings in light of a top-down administrative urban restructuring program like Detroit Works renews questions of social and spatial justice, and calls for an institutional realignment based on principles of justice which any subsequent urban restructuring should adhere to. While

most regions compete against one another, Detroit competes amongst itself as historical racial contention is manifested in the political arena – a reality which must end for Detroit to improve the quality of life for all its metropolitan inhabitants.

Chapter 2: A Right to the Neoliberal City

Background and Framework

Emerging in response to the 1970s breakdown of the Fordist-Keynesian accumulation regime and aggressively critiqued by economic geographers and urban academics, "neoliberalism" describes processes of deregulation, economic liberalization, and state retrenchment observable at many different geographical scales. Extending the academic revival of Marxist theorizations on urban economics and space (Lefebvre 1991; Harvey 1985), critics observe "pervasive market failures, new forms of social polarization, and a dramatic intensification of uneven development at all spatial scales" attributable to neoliberal political policy (Brenner and Theodore 2002a). However, neoliberal generalizations aren't easily translated to the local scale. While many municipal politicians shape decisions in response to global transformations such as the "financialization of capital" and the "intensification of interspatial capital" (Brenner and Theodore 2002b), specific forms of neoliberal institutions are rarely applicable between cities. Aware that the American inner-city is seen widely as a vestige of the Keynesian welfare state, and viewed as an area of extreme transition where new policy experiments and political strategies are deployed, academics have turned to cities in order to locate and describe the neoliberal policy process, implementation, and outcomes (Hackworth 2007; Jessop 2002; Brenner and Theodore 2002a; Peck and Tickell 2002).

It is important, as Jessop (2002) warns, not to fuse the overarching global trends of neoliberal governance with the on-the-ground-changes in economic, political, and

social life. While the former certainly plays a role in shaping the latter, changes in diurnal urban life are context-specific. Jessop (2002) articulates neoliberalism as a process, one that informs and is informed by many other processes affecting urbanization. While implementation of neoliberal policy measures will differ from place to place, Jessop (2002: 459) argues that contemporary national-level neoliberal governance features distinguishing characteristics which shape local policy. These regime features are (1) it seeks to promote international competitiveness and sociotechnical innovation at the expense of full employment and planning; (2) social policy is being subordinated to economic policy, as "labor markets become more flexible and downward pressure is placed on a social wage that is now considered as a cost of production rather than a means of redistribution and social cohesion"; (3) the national scale of policymaking and implementation is weakened as local, regional, and supranational levels of government gain power; and (4) a growing reliance on "partnership, networks, consultation, negotiation, and other forms of reflexive self-organization" in favor of the traditional triumvirate of big business, big labor, and the national state typical in the Keynesian welfare national state (Jessop 2002: 459-460). With consideration of these characteristics we can understand the environment in which increasingly powerful and responsible local governments dictate policy aimed to enhance their competitiveness in a dynamic global economy.

Armed with new power and burdened with increased responsibility, cities find themselves not as the sites upon which broader neoliberal projects unfold, but instead become central participants to the "reproduction, mutation, and continual reconstitution of neoliberalism itself" (Brenner and Theodore 2002a). By understanding cities as

central actors in the constitution of "actually existing neoliberalism", the "context-, territory-, and/or place-specific" forms of neoliberal production are more easily realized (Brenner and Theodore 2002b). For example, neoliberal governance and policy will manifest itself differently in New York and Detroit due to their contextual, territorial, and place-specific differences. Leaving the articulations of specific instances of neoliberalism within these places to further research (like this study), Brenner and Theodore (2002a) conceptualize what they term "actually existing neoliberalism" as a dialectical process of destruction and creation.

Dynamically occurring in time and space, the creative and destructive moments of neoliberalism are inextricably linked (Brenner and Theodore 2002a). Neoliberal destruction is primarily concerned with a dismantling of the political, institutional, and regulatory traces of the Keynesian welfare state. Keynesian artifacts, like public housing and public space are literally destroyed; Keynesian policies, such as redistributive welfare and food stamps are withdrawn; Keynesian institutions, like labor unions and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are weakened; and Keynesian agreements such as federal redistribution to cities and states are contracted (Hackworth 2007). Concomitantly, neoliberal creation "consists of the establishment of new, or cooptation of extant, institutions and practices to reproduce neoliberalism in the future" (Hackworth 2007: 11). Examples of neoliberal creation include public-private partnerships and networked forms of governance, privatization of public goods and services, competitive deregulation, creation of competitive space through subsidization, and policies to promote capital mobility (Brenner and Theodore 2002a: 364-366).

While equally concerned with neoliberal constitution in the urban sphere, Peck and Tickell (2002) apply a more linear approach to the aforementioned creative destruction in contemporary neoliberalism. Similar to both Jessop (2002) and Brenner and Theodore (2002a), the authors do not analyze neoliberalism as a 'thing' but instead as a process. Peck and Tickell (2002) conceptualize the formation of contemporary neoliberal urban governance through distinct phases of "roll-back" and "roll-out" neoliberalism in a process they describe as *neoliberalization*. During the "roll-back" phase of neoliberal governance – to which the authors assign the 1980s to – municipalities aggressively contracted government costs by leveraging the politicization of failing institutions and offering radical alternatives (Peck and Tickell 2002: 393). By way of tax-abatements, land grants, reductions in public services, and the privatization of infrastructure; local governments were able to reduce administrative costs while easing capital production and lowering the costs of social reproduction (Brenner and Theodore 2002a). More importantly to this study, the "roll-out" phase of neoliberalism observable in the 1990s occurred through a reconstitution of neoliberal policy in response to the "perverse economic consequences and pronounced social externalities of narrowly marketcentric forms of neoliberalism" put forth by the Thatcher and Reagan administrations of the 1980s (Peck and Tickell 2002: 388). This reconstitution came in the form of "new modes of social and penal policy-making, concerned specifically with the aggressive reregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s" (Peck and Tickell 2002: 389). The authors argue that this new form of neoliberalism is not due to a reduced interest in economic policy, but rather the normalization of such. Thus, no longer merely concerned

with policy-making, leadership concerns itself with creating new forms of institutional control to advance the neoliberal agenda. Most strikingly, Peck and Tickell (2002) observe the self-perpetuating nature of contemporary neoliberalization, in which shortcomings caused by an increasingly technocratic rule are met with a deeply interventionist agenda centered on issues like "crime, immigration, policing, welfare reform, urban order and surveillance, and community regeneration".

> In complex simultaneity, these social and penal policy incursions represent both the advancement of the neoliberal project – of extending and bolstering market logics, socializing individualized subjects, and disciplining the noncompliant – and a recognition of sorts that earlier manifestations of this project, rooted in dogmatic deregulation and marketization, clearly had serious limitations and contradictions. Consequently, what we characterize here as "roll-out" neoliberalism reflects a series of politically and institutionally mediated responses to the manifest failings of the Thatcher/Reagan project, formulated in the context of ongoing neoliberal hegemony in the sphere of economic regulation. In a sense, therefore, it represents *both* the frailty of the neoliberal project *and* its deepening (Peck and Tickell 2002: 389-390).

The deepening of neoliberal urban governance has facilitated new forms of scalar relations between the local and the global economy within which it competes. The destruction of previous forms of national-level social interventions has left cities and regions to either finance the programs themselves, or abandon them entirely (Hackworth 2007). This hollowing-out of national power in which its absence is reconciled by an upward propulsion from the local to the global economy, and simultaneous downward from the global to the local; is referred to as "glocalization" by Erik Swyngedouw (1997, 2004). Burdened with increasing responsibility, governments have utilized global markets as justification for a range of deleterious withdrawals of social and civic service provisions. Citing the "forces of globalization" and the "demands of global competitiveness", economic elites have shaped local spaces in their desired image of a

low-costing yet highly capital-productive place with an absentee state (Swyngedouw 2004: 38).

In addition to new scalar relations between global and local power brokers, Swyngedouw (2004) argues that strategies of locating key forms of industrial, service, and financial capital leads to a territorial rescaling of government rule (see also: Brenner 1999). As localities have been largely abandoned by the national-state and have become immersed in the global competition for the location of capital, inter-local *cooperation* has given way to inter-local *competition* (Swyngedouw 2004: 41; see also: Harvey 1989). Increased inter-urban competition leads to the rescaling or reterritorialization of emerging forms of governance which can be severely damaging to large segments of the urban population. Fueled by inter-local competition, advantages are realized by those who can jump scales either vertically or horizontally (Swyngedouw 2004: 41). The regional coalition becomes more powerful than the municipal government which it encompasses (vertical scale), and the inter-urban coalition grants powers to its members at the expense of those it bypasses (horizontal scale). However, these changes in governing scale often coincide with a sharp reduction in social welfare provisions and an increase in privatization of public goods and services, shielding the powerful through processes of "social, cultural, economic, or ethnic exclusion" (Swyngedouw 2004: 41). Further troubling when considering the "deeply uneven, socio-spatially polarizing and selectively disempowering effects" of glocalization is the occurrence by which this rescaling of governance is realized through undemocratic measures (Swyngedouw 2004: 41). The public-private partnership which Harvey (1989) labels as the "centerpiece" of new forms

of entrepreneurial government is often composed of an amalgamation of appointed (unelected) officials and business elites with no constituency for which to answer to.

While contemporary urban governance is shown to be outwardly globally oriented, it is necessary to examine on-the-ground strategies for locating global capital before we consider its intersection with right to the city literature and theories of spatial justice. As cities are subject to "a highly territorialized fiscal dependency, and they operate within a more delimited and competitive space than do national regimes," unique challenges imposed by the globalization of real-estate capital are introduced (Weber 2002). Limited by debt caps, municipal governments cannot freely bid for private investment. As a result, the "roll-out" phase of neoliberalism has given rise to a proliferation of local governments crafting new forms of creative measures to attract and retain elusive and fleeting global capital (Swyngedouw 1997; Weber 2002). Weber (2002: 531) describes a new form of local government labeled the "contract" state, composed of:

> Private consulting firms (who draft neighborhood plans), bond underwriters (who help municipalities privatize infrastructure development and management and then underwrite the bonds to help pay for those activities), and nonprofits (who build and manage housing and social services for those displaced from public housing).

Using legal ambiguities like "obsolescence," these entrepreneurial governments are able to devalorize property while also absolving themselves from social responsibility to the victims of this devaluation by blaming market tendencies for the obsolescence. Subsequently, using the aforementioned creative measures to attract capital, municipalities revalorize obsolete property by luring private investment through land write-downs and tax-abatements (Weber 2002). Tax increment financing, a popular tool

for government subsidized private redevelopment within cities, depends upon the increases in land value to fund development – inherently placing the lowest provisioned yet most advantageously located residents squarely in the path of urban redevelopment's bulldozer. However, untangling the policy circulations leading to observable neoliberalism is not an easy task. Robinson (2011) outlines the difficulty in uncovering these networked-connections by characterizing them as "multi-directional, prolific, and considerably complex," advocating for a "globalized, transnational, and deterritorialized perspective on urban processes" in order to base influential theoretical perspectives on cities outside of the conventional rolodex of neoliberal cities.

Returning to earlier theorization stressing the contextual embeddeddness of path-dependent neoliberalism; Peck, Theodore and Brenner (2009) argue that the urban existence as a zone of institutional experimentation places cities as important nodes in the evolving scalar politics of neoliberalization, while their urban condition makes them particularly conducive to the roll-out of neoliberal processes. As cities find themselves within a highly unstable geo-economic environment characterized by "monetary instability, speculative movements of financial capital, global location strategies by major transnational corporations and intensifying interlocal competition;" their governments are forced to adjust, often by "engaging in short-termist forms of interspatial competition, place-marketing and regulatory undercutting in order to attract investment and jobs" (Peck et al. 2009: 57-58). Meanwhile, the previously illustrated retrenchment of the national welfare-state imposes powerful new fiscal constraints on cities facing "profound socioeconomic dislocation and new competitive challenges" (Peck et al. 2009: 58). Contrasting with local articulations of neoliberalism in which the locality acts reflexively

under the broad pressures of global capitalism is the often direct induction of neoliberal policy in an attempt to rejuvenate the local economy. Characterizing these methods as a "shock treatment of deregulation, privatization, liberalization and enhanced fiscal austerity," Peck, Theodore, and Brenner (2009: 58) illustrate the aggressive means by which cities compete:

> Cities and their suburban zones of influence have become increasingly important geographical targets and institutional laboratories for a variety of neoliberal policy experiments, from place-marketing, enterprise zones, local tax abatements, public-private partnerships and new forms of local boosterism, through to workfare policies, property redevelopment schemes, new strategies of social control, policing and surveillance, and a host of other institutional modifications within the local state apparatus. The overarching goal of such policy experiments is to mobilize city space as an arena both for market-oriented economic growth and for elite consumption practices, while at the same time securing order and control amongst marginalized populations.

Detroit is well-illustrative of these means, and Peck (2009) argues that the city has been "*consuming* a transnational policy fix." In efforts to shed its reputation as a staid, inconsequential, and antiquated city of the past, Detroit has embraced *creative urbanism* as a "policy-making imaginary" predicated upon a "hypercomptetive urban order" (Peck 2009: 52). To do so, the city and powerful business-led economic development organizations like Detroit Renaissance have advocated for and input strategies to (1) reposition the city and its automotive industry as a global center for mobility and logistics, and (2) grow the city's creative economy while securing its talent base (Peck 2009; Pedroni 2011). The establishment of a "creative corridor" along Woodward Avenue, development of a creative business incubator, and the city's packaging of land and incentives for local magnate Mike Ilitch to construct a new arena and "cultural district" illustrate

the city's attempts to re-brand itself, culminating in the hosting of the 2008 Creative Cities Summit 2.0 (Peck 2009: 56). Providing a backdrop for this re-branding is Detroit's existence as America's poorest big city; fending off massive job, business, and population losses while home values plummet and the city becomes synonymous with industrial and corporate failure (Peck 2009: 58). Despite obstacles, Detroit moves forward with its symbolic makeover. The 2009 creation of a $100 million "New Economy Initiative" launched to turn the region's economic tide by offering grants for innovative ideas highlights well the contrast between a city of hollowed-out neighborhoods where half of the children live below the poverty level and the well-invested-in downtown central to rebranding Detroit as destination for mobility technology capital (see Chapter 4).

Elevating further the importance of contemporary urbanism and territorial restructuring as arenas in which global capitalism is played out; the actual spaces within cities have become sites for surplus circulation (Harvey 2009). As demonstrated by creative measures to appropriate urban spaces in order to attract global capital investment, real estate speculation has replaced productive labor as the mode in which capitalist surplus is invested. With this new importance, parcels of vacant, unproductive land in Detroit have been reimagined to become places of potential capital production. Henri Lefebvre (1991) described this process as the "production of space". By viewing space and spatial relations as a social construction, Lefebvre (1991) gives precedence to research investigating the (social) processes of spatial production. Furthermore, both Lefebvre (1991) and Harvey (2012) attribute the production of space to an elite ruling class which

concerns its spatial reproduction with exerting and advancing its hegemonic rule. This research frames aspects of the Detroit Works Project as typical of the commodification of urban space as a means to advance the (neoliberal) agenda of an elite ruling few.

The reshaping of cities in order to satisfy the location of global capital raises imminent questions regarding the equitability of the commodification of urban space. At the core of these debates is justice: "a principle (or set of principles) for resolving conflict claims" (Harvey 2009). Articulating these claims – in this case claims to both urban space and its remaking – and placing them within the proper historical, social, political, and spatial perspective is a portion of what this work intends to do.

Cognizant of the tradition in investigations of the idea of 'justice' to elevate more prominently social and historical perspectives above spatial inputs, Soja (2010) calls for a more critical spatial perspective when analyzing urban social justice. Reminiscent of and undoubtedly influenced by Lefebvre – Soja (2010: 4) argues that there exists a "mutually influential and formative relation between the social and spatial dimensions of human life, each shaping the other in similar ways." This *socio-spatial dialectic* as coined by Soja (2010) suggests that the spatiality of whatever subject one considers shapes social relations and societal development just as much as social processes give meaning to the geographies in which we live. Additionally, Soja (2010) argues for an equal consideration of social, spatial, and historical perspectives in analysis of social injustice within cities.

Questions regarding social justice and citizen rights in the globally-oriented and transformative urban realm are addressed in the burgeoning 'right to the city' literature. Building upon Lefebvre's seminal 1968 essay (translated and published in English in 1996) in which he argued for the need for those most negatively affected by their urban condition to take a greater control over the production of urban space, a host of theorists and researchers have applied Lefebvre's ideas to contemporary urbanism. Using Robert Park's (1967) assertion that the city is the foremost creation of man to remake the world he lives in more after his own desire – and thus by condemning himself to live there he has indirectly remade himself – David Harvey (2012) constructs an inseparable relation between a collective population and its city's *transformation:*

> The right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts' desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the process of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.

Soja (2010: 7) conceptualizes the right to the city in a similar way: "as a demand for greater control over how the spaces in which we live are socially produced wherever we may be located."

Citizen rights – specifically citizen rights to the city – have been points of contention in Detroit's history and the fight for such has been literal at times. 1967 demonstrations against symbols of white authority were the culmination of decades of frustration caused by the oppressed rights of African Americans in social arenas of housing, labor, and politics. Subsequently, Detroiter's (specifically impoverished

African American Detroiter's) limited right to inhabit the city were exposed in Bunge's 1971 *Fitzgerald* (republished in 2011), a groundbreaking exploration into the daily life of a disinvested, violent, capitalist city in which he argues strongly for the rights of residents over "foreign invaders" (such as outside capital or suburban commuters) and for the rights of people over machines (such as cars) (Mitchell 2003). Today, the poorest citizens cope with a further limiting of their right to inhabit as proposed by the Detroit Works Project, additionally complicated by a neoliberal limitation on even the right to public space. Mitchell (2003) argues that successful rights struggles – by women or African Americans, for example – has "led to a strong backlash that has sought to reconfigure urban public space in such a way as to limit the threat of democratic social power to dominant social and economic interests." This reconfiguration places security over interaction and entertainment over politics (Mitchell 2003). Furthermore, public spaces are seemingly created for consumption in the form of downtown or riverside festival marketplaces, gentrified historic districts, or in Detroit's case – corporate-sponsored central plazas replete with outdoor dining and retail[1] – highlighting the increasing tendency for public space to be ordered, under surveillance, and in control over the behavior of the public (Mitchell 2003).

Neoliberal urban governance has heightened the calls for a right to the city movement. Urban restructuring through creative destruction overwhelmingly carries with it a class dimension as the poor, the underprivileged, and – most prominently – those marginalized from political power bear the brunt of the negative aspects of this process (Harvey 2012). Supporting this theorization; statistically significant levels of

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[1] Segal, David. "A Missionary's Quest to Remake Motor City" *The New York Times.* Online. April 14, 2013

impoverished, female-headed household, poorly provisioned, and lesser educated populations reside in areas slated for the most impactful change in urban fabric put forth in the Detroit Future City framework. But as neoliberal policy has become institutionalized, exertion of any right to the city becomes increasingly difficult. Harvey (2012) argues that neoliberal creative destruction entails "the dispossession of the urban masses of any right to the city whatsoever." Due in large part to over thirty years of neoliberalization, the actually existing right to the city – and thus the ability to reshape it in the way they see fit – resides in the hands of a few political and economic elite (Harvey 2012). Harvey and Lefebvre come to the disheartening conclusion that any meaningful exertion of a right to the city will occur through urban revolution, as the institutional constraints imposed by the aforementioned ruling elite strips the masses of any real voice. While I don't believe full-scale economic and urban revolution is either possible or prudent in contemporary America, the reasons that revolution is considered the only path towards urban justice are worth exploring.

A right to the city encompasses a right to inhabit, a right to appropriate, and a right to participate. However, neoliberal urban governance has seriously limited participatory methods which can contribute to collective inhabitation and appropriation of urban spaces, and tends to produce a considerable democratic deficit (Purcell 2008). Facing the previously outlined perceived need to remain globally competitive, broad anti-democratic measures become part of the neoliberal agenda. Considered either an unnecessary expense or a constraint to privatized, more acute revenue-producing uses, public spaces for citizens (parks, plazas, and squares) are removed or reduced (Purcell 2008). As the traditional spaces for democratic demonstration, their increasing

elimination is noteworthy. Unable to procure a return on investment fast enough to match the pace of global capital; long-term neighborhood investment is bypassed in favor of funding corporate relocation. More broadly, the "disciplinary structures of neoliberalism ensure (or make it seem, at least) that cities don't have choice in making public policy" (Purcell 2008). In this "limited-capacity urban governance," democracy is relegated to irrelevance due to the competitive practices of neoliberalism: political contention and vigorous debate typical of traditional democracy is seen as too slow and messy to fit within the quick demands of the global marketplace (Miller 2007).

Varied and often veiled, neoliberalism builds power-structures immune from democratic resistance, input, or consequence. Transparency is circumvented through oligarchic institutions like the public-private partnership, appointed council, and quasi-governmental agency (Krumholz 1999; Purcell 2008). Often composed of local business-leaders; city-dwellers become consumers before citizens, as "individuals who pursue their material self-interest in the marketplace are valued over those who cultivate their civic virtue in the public square" (Purcell 2008; Miller 2007). The fourteen mayoral-appointed members of the Detroit Works Project Steering Committee drawn from "the business, non-profit, government, and philanthropic sectors" do well to illustrate this point. Furthermore, neoliberalism works to exclude actual physical spaces within the city from the democratic realm. Created to govern measures like Enterprise Zones, Business Investment Districts, tax-increment financing, and the associated mega-projects often housed within; specially-appointed non- or quasi-governmental agencies rule specific geographies without input or consequence of the larger citizen body. Moreover, these areas are often tax-exempt or lure investment through modified tax laws, exempting

private entities from contributing to city-wide public services like schools, police and fire response, or parks.

While elevating the call for a right to the city movement, the seemingly ubiquitous nature of neoliberal urban governance and its associated democratic deficit illustrates the difficulties for citizen mobilization. Furthermore, neoliberalization will be shown to be pervasive even in the most distressed post-industrial city believed to be only marginally important in the global economy. While the urban poor in Detroit may not be comparatively worse-off than their counterparts in a city better-positioned to the global financial markets – such as Chicago – it is my contention that Detroit's position on the global backburner exacerbates the damaging effects of neoliberal urban restructuring on the most vulnerable citizens. Though social mobilization has been well-documented in "world cities" of the global north (see: Harvey 2012, Soja 2010, Purcell 2008, Brenner, Marcuse and Mayer 2012), a gap in the literature exists illustrating neoliberal contestations in those places perceived to be less important arbiters of global capitalism. Additionally, Detroit's dubious distinction as the poster-child of decaying post-industrial cities elevates the importance of the proposed Detroit Future City framework; as there exists potential for copy-cat installations in places facing similar challenges (Philadelphia, Cleveland, Buffalo, Youngstown, and Flint). Because of the potential for such, this examination of both the development of neoliberalism in Detroit as well as the potential ramifications of crisis-driven urban restructuring on the most poorly-provisioned residents aims to inform future policy installation to ensure a just, civically-engaged, and equitable framework on which to build Detroit's future.

Chapter 3: Building an Isolated City

Deindustrialization, Segregation, and Neoliberalization in Detroit

I. African American Navigation of Detroit's Deindustrialization

Detroit is a paradoxical city at a seemingly pivotal moment of its tumultuous historical fortune. Continual disinvestment in the central city has given way to rock-bottom real estate and a burgeoning renaissance of downtown business and residential investment. A large, depreciated building stock is increasingly captured by migrant artists and opportunists who purchase live/work spaces at a fraction of their comparative cost in another major city. And what seems to be no shortage of barren and abandoned land is confronted by an influx in urban planners and theorists, non-profit think-tanks, and the Detroit Works Project; who have come to envision Detroit as a blank slate, so dissolute and discounted that the city can somehow be *remade*. The irony of such thought is not lost on Mark Binelli (2012), who notes: "Detroit, having done more than any other city to promote the sprawl and suburbanization that had so despoiled the past century, could now become a model green city for the new century, with bike paths and urban farms and grass-roots sustainability nudging aside planned obsolescence."

The prevailing presentation of Detroit as a post-industrial wasteland characterized by abandoned houses, vacant lots, and perpetual nothingness is juxtaposed by the existence of 713,000 residents which call the city home. These residents are almost always neglected in the dystopian narratives or eulogies of the city in publications catering to a fascination of the spectacular downfall of America's once-great

manufacturing powerhouse. Similarly, these residents are vestiges of a population at best neglected – and at worst systematically oppressed – by a government and elite class of decision makers which have contributed to the sharply segregated and economically inequitable metropolitan region observable today. The remarkability of Detroit's current state – a poor, desolate, unemployed, uneducated, and largely black inner city surrounded by a wealthy, well-educated, highly-employed ring of nearly all white suburbs – is most remarkable when considering the lofty status the city held merely fifty years ago. The convergence of the disparate forces of deindustrialization, racial transformation, and political and ideological conformity which laid the groundwork for the urban crisis that underlies Detroit's decline also forms the base for the current racial strife which characterizes the region today (Sugrue 1996). As such, exploration of Detroit's decline is essential to understanding the regional disconnect which presently plagues the metropolis.

Boom – Employment Discrimination in Detroit's Soaring Economy

Well situated geographically with an infrastructure able to capitalize on the demand for heavy industrial goods during World War II, Detroit reappropriated its automobile factories to become a pioneer of the military-industrial complex and emerge almost overnight from an industrial boomtown into America's capital of manufacturing. Sugrue (1996: 17) suggests that mid-twentieth century Detroit "embodied the melding of human labor and technology that together had made the United States the apotheosis of world capitalism." Detroit's reputation as a city of endless economic opportunity is expressed

in its growing population observable up to 1950 – then ranking as the 4th largest city in America – while the automobile industry's reputation as being hospitable to black laborers engendered changes in the city's demographic makeup. Fewer than 10 percent of Detroit's population at the outbreak of World War II, African Americans compromised nearly thirty percent of the city's residents by 1960.

Initially drawn to Detroit during the Great Migration – the movement of rural southern blacks to northern industrialized cities – Detroit's black population was reinforced due to labor demands related to World War II. Within a few short years the major issue in Detroit flipped from a shortage of jobs to a shortage of labor, as the number of unemployed workers in Detroit fell from 134,000 to a mere 4,000 between 1940 and 1943 (Farley et al. 2000; Sugrue 1996). The increased demand for labor broadened the opportunities of industrial labor positions for blacks from a few select automotive companies to most industries and employers (Lewis-Colman 2008). However, industry in Detroit was hardly a racially equitable venture even in the economically successful 1940s as African Americans faced discriminatory hiring practices and a much more difficult navigation of the labor market.

Mid-century employers in Detroit applied discriminatory hiring practices by choice. Citing the cost of training new workers, relying on racial stereotypes which labeled black laborers as unreliable, unproductive, and often absent while making assumptions about the impact of racial mixing on productivity, racial discrimination was an undeniable outcome of hiring practices in postwar Detroit (Lewis-Colman 2008). In addition to the simple choice of a hiring manager, black Detroiters were also burdened by a strict division of labor within large industrial firms. Intricately divided, labor was

separated as skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled. Though working under the same roof, this division of labor was strictly adhered to when considering the promotion of an individual. As blacks were invariably concentrated in the most subordinate jobs (unskilled, janitorial, and assembly work), upward mobility was nearly impossible. Further cementing workplace discrimination were social factors which structured labor markets. When workers formed a sense of "brotherhood" on the shop floor, it was often defined through commonly-held beliefs of racial and gender exclusion (Sugrue 1996: 93). These beliefs shaped both hiring practices and union agendas for an individual plant, often leading to a very racially exclusive place of work. The role of individual beliefs and practices regarding racial equality in the workplace led to largely varying opportunities for African American laborers in mid-century Detroit, contextually-dependent upon the history of a given plant and the ideology of its management and labor. Thus, blacks navigated their search for employment in the automobile industry amid a bewildering environment in which the color line was in no way definitively drawn. However, even in the most racially integrated places of work, blacks were aggregately confined to Detroit's most dangerous, lowest paying, and most insecure jobs.

Though discriminatory hiring practices dependent on culture, attitudes, and customs are difficult to express empirically, the active screening of race by employment agencies through job advertisements is not. Nearly two-thirds of June 1948 job orders with the Michigan State Employment Service (MSES) contained discriminatory clauses barring non-whites from applying (Sugrue 1996: 94). Furthermore, even employers seeking unskilled labor – the types of jobs traditionally open to blacks – refused to consider hiring black workers as documented in the May 1948 listings for unskilled jobs,

of which 75% barred blacks (Sugrue 1996: 94). Employers went so far as to choose unproductivity over hiring black workers. In 1951 during a month of acute labor shortage, 508 unskilled jobs, 423 semiskilled jobs, and 719 skilled jobs listed in Detroit MSES offices went unfilled despite 874 unskilled, 523 semiskilled, and 148 skilled black applicants available for immediate employment (Sugrue 1996: 94).

Frustrations for African American industrial laborers in Detroit didn't end after receipt of an elusive job offer. The automobile industry was comprised of 15% African American labor in 1950; offering blacks their "greatest opportunity as well as most reliable frustration in the postwar era" (Sugrue 1996: 95). Taking advantage of their insecure place in the labor market, employers almost invariably placed blacks in the least desirable jobs. Even after discriminatory job orders and advertisements were outlawed in 1952, exclusionary placement was practiced normally. As the unskilled positions which blacks were almost exclusively placed allowed no upward mobility or future supervisory responsibilities, promotion potential was almost non-existent for African American auto workers. Further contributing to the tenuous nature of black employment in mid-century Detroit was the provision of seniority in UAW contracts. Seniority rationalized corporate hiring and firing practices by making length of service the primary consideration while also serving as a basis for promotion (Sugrue 1996: 103). Most importantly, seniority served as a security-blanket for a large portion of the workforce vulnerable to previously arbitrary lay-off policies (Lewis-Colman 2008). A double-edged sword in the trajectory of black employment in the automotive industry, seniority provided enormous benefits to those hired earliest. However, for most seniority served to reinforce the traditional hiring patterns of black workers: "last hired and first fired" (Sugrue 1996: 104). Those black

workers who entered the industry during and immediately after World War II weren't overwhelmingly benefitted or harmed by the strict adherence to seniority. However the younger black workforce who entered the industry around 1950 was severely affected as they were almost always the first ones to lose their job in response to the market fluctuations of the auto industry.

Bust – The Deindustrialization of Detroit

> *"Unemployment is not a crime. It is a social ill full of hardships, set-backs, anxieties, needs and sacrifices which would be lauded under any other circumstances. It is truly the weakest spot in Democracy's armor, the likely erosion point in the social structure, and the damning mark of false, unstable, or lopsided prosperities." – William Wakeham, displaced iron foundry worker, Ford Rouge Plant, Detroit 1951*

For the young workers most affected by the market fluctuations of the 1950s, the decade served as a turning point in the economic structure of metropolitan Detroit whose effects are still visible upon the landscape. Characterized by relocation and automation, the deindustrialization of Detroit is punctuated by the loss of 134,000 manufacturing jobs between 1947 and 1963 – while its population of working-aged men and women increased during that period (Sugrue 1996: 126). Coping with fleeting labor opportunities, the loss of purchasing power by now-out-of-work consumers rippled through the economy, as the reduction in manufacturing directly affected commercial retail and service success in Detroit. Unable to follow jobs to suburban and rural locations, the growing gap between job seekers and job opportunities created a perpetuating underclass of discontented African Americans in Detroit whose frustrations would explode on the streets of the city just over a decade later.

While a trickling industrial decentralization had been ongoing in twentieth-century America, the 1950s served as the flood which weathered the iron-built structures of the great Midwestern manufacturing cities and created the "Rust Belt". Driven by increased national and international demand and citing lack of available land for expansion in Detroit; the automobile companies were at the forefront of industrial capital mobility in the 1950s. From the immediate postwar to 1957, the Big Three automakers (Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler) spent a cumulative $6.6 billion on plant expansion. Of the twenty-five new plants in the Detroit metropolitan area built over this time period, all were located in suburban areas with most over 15 miles from the center city (Sugrue 1996: 128). Labeled "runaway shops" by Detroiters, production expansion to suburban and rural locations decimated not only Detroit's but also Michigan's share of national automobile employment. Employing a staggering 56% of US autoworkers in 1950, Michigan's share had dropped precipitously to 40% by 1960 (Sugrue 1996: 128). This number has mostly held true, as the state employs about 35% of US autoworkers today[2]. Compounding the effects of the large automakers leaving Detroit was the flood of related and dependent automotive supply firms at their heels. The second largest industry of employment behind autoworkers, these small independent parts manufacturers, metalworking firms, and tool manufacturers employed about 20% of Detroit's workforce (Sugrue 1996: 129). In addition to the loss of jobs, runaway shops left a physical footprint in Detroit, as empty factories became concrete shells and vacant lots.

Just as market-centric measures drive decision making in contemporary governance, they have been used as explanations for the decentralization of industry and

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[2] Bureau of Labor Statistics

reduction in center city manufacturing observable in 1950s Detroit. But much like discriminatory hiring practices, decisions to relocate plants and jobs were made by individuals within a specific political, cultural, and institutional context. In Detroit's case, Sugrue (1996: 130) points to the "rise of a powerful union movement in the midst of a shop-floor struggle over work rules and worker control." Founded in Detroit in 1935, the United Auto Workers (UAW) were by the 1950s America's most powerful labor union, forging high wages and attractive benefits for its large member-base and forming the backing of Detroit's large middle-class. Conscientious of the rise in power of its labor as an impediment to the maximization of capital production, auto companies utilized decentralization and especially automation as tools to both maintain power over labor unions while decreasing labor costs.

Keeping well with their tradition of innovation, the Detroit automotive companies expanded their use of automation in the 1950s with highly beneficial corporate results and largely deleterious effects for production laborers. Aware of the benefits derived from increasing output while decreasing costs, the Big Three invested heavily in automation, and it played a role in the relocation of plants as manufacturing decentralized. No longer fit to house the sprawling mechanisms required in automated plants, multi-story factories in Detroit were abandoned in favor of enormous single-story complexes in suburbia which had enough land to accommodate both the island facility and the necessary ocean of parking lot which contained it. For employers, the costs of acquiring new land and building new facilities were quickly offset by increased production. While automation contributed to the closings of some factories which clearly

hurt urban autoworkers, installation of automated processes in other plants accounted for massive job reductions.

Although automated processes served to replace some of the most dangerous work with machines, they were largely detrimental to Detroit autoworkers. By replacing large numbers of laborers with machines, the Big Three had a new point of leverage in their battles with the UAW. As a manager in the newly automated Ford plant in Cleveland reminded UAW President Walter Reuther: "You are going to have trouble collecting union dues from all those machines" (Sugrue 1996: 132). The effects of automation on labor are best exhibited in Ford's Detroit Rouge plant. Tasked with assembling every Ford and Mercury engine, the Rouge plant was the largest and arguably the most important factory in the production of Ford vehicles, while also employing 85,000 workers in 1945 and being the largest employer of blacks in metro Detroit (Farley et al. 2000). The plant was also represented by the UAW Local 600, one of the most militant and powerful in the industry (Sugrue 1996). Sugrue (1996: 132) argues that Ford officials targeted the Rouge plant in order to weaken union strength on the shop floor:

> By 1954 Ford had shifted all engine production to the new automated Cleveland plant. Rouge workers with seniority were transferred to Cleveland or to the new Dearborn Engine Plant that built engines for Lincolns. Stamping, machine casting, forging, steel production, glassmaking, and dozens of other operations were shifted from the Rouge to new Ford plants throughout the 1950s. As a result, employment at the Rouge fell from 85,000 in 1945, to 54,000 in 1954, to only 30,000 in 1960.

The drastic reduction in automotive labor in Detroit due to decentralization and automation was downplayed by corporate executives who cited national employment statistics, masking the local effect. Disproportionately, it was blacks who bore the brunt

of wholesale economic restructuring in manufacturing in Detroit. Automated processes precluded the need for unskilled and many semiskilled positions – exactly those jobs blacks were almost invariably forced into. Those entering the workforce with only a high school education and few skills found a dearth of available manufacturing positions than they would have encountered ten years prior (Farley et al. 2000). Persistent racial discrimination magnified the effects of deindustrialization on blacks. In 1960 metro Detroit, nearly 20% of black autoworkers were unemployed as opposed to only 6% of white autoworkers (Sugrue 1996: 144). Following the jobs to the suburbs was simply not possible for black Detroiters, who faced legal and social barriers to living in many white Detroit neighborhoods let alone the suburbs.

The permanent effects of economic restructuring and large-scale deindustrialization in 1950s Detroit is still visible today. Population reduction imperiled Detroit's fiscal base as droves of residents have moved out of the city, observable through unbroken population decline since 1950 (Conot 1973). Once filled with the smoke and sounds of non-stop manufacturing production, Detroit's landscape became dominated by rotting factory buildings and their associated empty lots. Detroit's Eastside – home to 23 factories and 102,967 workers in 1953 – lost an astonishing 71,137 jobs in only seven years (Sugrue 1996: 149). Once the epicenter of the auto industry, the Eastside had become an "economic slum" in less than a decade (Sugrue 1996: 149). Physical reminders of the disinvestment on the Eastside are still visible, as it will be shown to be central in the Detroit Works Projects plans to commodify empty space. As people followed jobs out of Detroit, its population grew increasingly impoverished and overwhelmingly black. It became "a home for the dispossessed, those marginalized in

the housing market, in greater peril of unemployment, and most subject to the vagaries of a troubled economy" (Sugrue 1996: 149). Most disastrously, forces were coalescing to create a generation of young black men who could not find suitable employment or suitable living arrangements, whose anger over such would soon be translated through conflicts permanently altering the trajectory of the city.

II. Race and Housing in Post-War Detroit

Opportunistic African American migrants who reached Detroit in the 1940s during its meteoric industrial ascent did not find housing opportunities to match their job opportunities. Faced with strict residential segregation, nearly every black migrant to the city in the 1940s was restricted to settling in Detroit's prominent black ghetto located on its Lower Eastside. The ghetto, bisected by Gratiot Avenue, was the aggregate of the optimistically named northern Paradise Valley section home to black business and cultural centers, and the aptly named southern Black Bottom section home to the most dilapidated African American housing (as the names are used interchangeably in the literature 'Black Bottom' will be used subsequently in reference to the whole). Composed of roughly sixty city blocks, Black Bottom had Detroit's oldest housing stock – wooden frame row houses constructed by European immigrants 100 years ago (Binelli 2012). Doubling in population between 1940 and 1950, Detroit's African American population almost entirely resided in the Black Bottom ghetto, as much as 75% of black Detroiters in the early 1940s are estimated to have resided in the area (Sugrue 1996: 37). Capitalizing on an emerging black population restricted to a small area and the frequency

in which a single migrant needed a small apartment, real estate brokers began to subdivide their units and subsequently rent them to several African American men at exorbitantly high prices (Farley et al. 2000: 146). This practice of "piling up" residents led to crowded and dangerous living conditions and the emergence of the first racial ghettos (Farley et al. 2000: 146). Hemmed in geographically and repressed occupationally, Detroit's emergent African American middle-class began to challenge the conventional racial segregation in Detroit, leading to a contested and often violent demographic transformation of the metropolis (Conot 1973).

Finding reliable if unglamorous industrial work as well as building the largest amount of independently owned black businesses of any city in the United States, Detroit's emerging black bourgeoisie began searching for residential security and comforts outside of the traditional black neighborhoods (Sugrue 1996). Ardently opposed to racial integration from its inception, Detroit's white residents mounted challenges to blacks relocating within areas perceived to be 'off-limits'. African Americans audacious enough to cross racial barriers in the 1920s were met with "xenophobic violence in which no other migrants to the city had ever experienced" (Zunz 1982). Violence and firebombing of homes helped create and perpetuate the black ghettos, as victims of such were often forced blacks to move back into Black Bottom for safety (Levine 1976). While often effective, violence was a "troubling, costly and unacceptable way to preserve neighborhood purity" (Farley et al. 2000: 147-148). Searching for alternatives, restrictive covenants materialized as a more gentle and effective way to combat integration.

Restrictive covenants – legal documents specifying the restriction of property to be owned, rented, or sold to minorities – helped to establish the sweeping segregation observable in mid-twentieth century Detroit. Written into most postwar developments, by the late 1940s approximately 80% of residential properties in Detroit were protected by restrictive covenants (Farley et al. 2000: 148). Exacerbating the restriction of black Detroiters from white neighborhoods was a complicit real estate industry that operationalized the segregated ideals of white Detroiters. Agents and brokers believed they were violating a norm and breaking their code of ethics if they introduced blacks or other minorities to houses in white neighborhoods, while white homeowners believed they had a moral obligation to preserve the quality of their former neighborhood by excluding "undesirable" minorities (Farley et al. 2000: 148-149). Perhaps fueling the vigilance with which individuals in the real estate industry protected racial purity in Detroit was the federally prescribed racism outlined in the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC).

Signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, the HOLC refinanced tens of thousands of mortgages in danger of default or foreclosure related to the Depression, while also "introducing, perfecting, and proving in practice the feasibility of the long-term, self-amortizing mortgage with uniform payments spread over the life of the debt" (Jackson 1985). The agency essentially made homeownership accessible and possible for a large portion of Americans. Being federal, the agency sought national-standards for property assessment to ensure smartly-provisioned investment. The resultant uniformity was realized through the Residential Security Maps, which gave "official sanction to discriminatory real estate sales and bank lending practices" (Sugrue

1996: 43). The maps coded each residential area from A to D – and correspondingly Green to Red – in a ranking of residential desirability and speculative property valuation. While the surveys considered the building stock, amenities, and infrastructure of a neighborhood when determining the classification; racial and ethnic composition served as the most important determining factor. Rules explicitly stated that neighborhoods with a Jewish population could not be labeled Green (Farley et al. 2000: 149). Similarly, neighborhoods with any black presence or even believed to be at risk of black residence were immediately marked Red, since "there was consensus that property values would fall if African Americans lived there or might live there" (Farley et al. 2000: 149). Every Detroit neighborhood with an African American presence was "redlined", considered hazardous by federal appraisers, and barred from reception of mortgages, home loans, and other financial backing for the purchase, construction, improvement, or development of housing (Sugrue 1996: 44). A well-illustrative instance of the capricious and often absurd decisions to approve financing occurred around the black enclave residing in the Eight Mile/Wyoming area on Detroit's northern boundary. Originally an African American rural outpost in the 1920s, due to Detroit's rapid expansion it was squarely in the way of white development in the 1940s. Unable to receive funding for an all-white development immediately adjacent to the black neighborhood due to the proximity of an "inharmonious" racial group, a developer erected a six-foot high concrete wall between the white and black areas and was subsequently approved for government-backed mortgages (Jackson 1985).

Empowered by the burgeoning civil rights movement and free from restrictive covenants due to a 1948 Supreme Court ruling, Detroit's growing segment of middle-

class African Americans began expanding their areas of residence around 1950. The transition of many neighborhoods from predominantly white to predominantly black was neither equitable nor peaceful, as 'blockbusting' real estate agents exploited race hysteria and white homeowners violently protected the homogeneity of their community.

Capitalizing on the high demand for improved black housing and an unwillingness of traditional realtors to break the race barrier, a fringe real estate industry emerged which accelerated the racial turnover of Detroit neighborhoods by 'blockbusting' (Farley et al. 2000: 153-154). A speculator would choose a white neighborhood near a black one, and then elicit emotional responses by outwardly showing a home for sale to a black family. These speculators would go so far as to hire teenaged African Americans to go through the neighborhood passing out flyers to sell their homes "before it's too late" (Farley et al. 2000: 154). Taking advantage of the racial hysteria they created, the brokers would buy the homes from white families at "fire-sale prices", subsequently selling to blacks desperate to improve their living situation at markedly higher prices (Farley et al. 2000: 154). Furthering the exploitation of African American Detroiters was the common-place use of the land contract to purchase a home. This instrument, which "maximized the racial discrepancy in power," allowed for the seller to obtain 20% of the purchase price as a down payment from the buyer, and subsequently required monthly payments for 12 years following (Farley et al. 2000: 153). If the buyer missed a single payment, the owner could repossess the property without foreclosure proceedings, placing desperate black buyers at great risk for loss of their home (Farley et al. 2000: 153).

Uniting across races in their opposition of blockbusting practices, whites and blacks worked to largely remove the practice by the early 1960s. However, contestations over housing would continue unabated as white homeowners and organizations turned to violence and intimidation as a last resort of maintaining the purity of their communities. White resistance to integrated housing consisted of one of the "largest grassroots movements in the city's history" (Sugrue 1996: 211). Mobilizing with the support of many newly formed neighborhood associations, white residents who felt their only options were to flee or to hold their ground and fight chose the latter option. White Detroiters instigated countless attacks against blacks moving into formerly all-white neighborhoods, including "harassment, mass demonstrations, picketing, effigy burning, window breaking, arson, vandalism, and physical attacks" (Sugrue 1996: 233). Upon moving to a predominantly white neighborhood in Northeast Detroit, a black man was informed by neighbors that he was unwelcome. To further advise him of their seriousness, they burned down his garage (Darden et al. 1987). Incidents like this, while commonplace, were not prevented by Detroit police. Often times this damage would occur under the watch of police who were stationed at the home, yet did not act due to their shared belief of "the black invader" (Darden et al. 1987).

Already possessing a deep distrust of whites and white institutions, sustained violence related to housing conflicts and the lack of police action deepened this distrust and pushed black Detroiters to the brink of rebellion. Sugrue (1996: 258) quotes a prominent African American minister in 1963 equating the ability and desire to move without the right to do it to "refined slavery." Having profound effects on whites as well,

residential contestations in mid-century Detroit defined race relations of the future, Sugrue (1996: 257) argues:

> Racial violence had far-reaching effects in the city. It hardened definitions of white and black identities, objectifying them by plotting them on the map of the city. The combination of neighborhood violence, real estate practices, covenants, and the operations of the housing market sharply circumscribed the housing opportunities available to Detroit's African American population. Persistent housing segregation stigmatized blacks, reinforced unequal race relations, and perpetuated racial divisions.

The racial battles in which Detroit's neighborhoods served as the arena for would soon reach a climactic moment; igniting rebellious destruction, overwhelming white flight, and leading to events which would cement the city-suburb divide observable to this day.

Young black Detroiters, pushed to the brink by residential segregation, workplace discrimination, and the effects of deindustrialization, reached a tipping point on July 23, 1967. Around 3 a.m. on a Sunday morning in the middle of a summer heat wave, a Detroit police unit specializing in raids of illegal after-hour gambling parties entered one on Twelfth Street on the city's near Westside (Farley et al., 2000). A common occurrence at the time, police expecting to find about a dozen customers instead encountered eighty-five people welcoming home a pair of Vietnam veterans. While it was common to arrest the owners and a few patrons, the police decided to arrest all eighty-five present (Sugrue, 1996). Unable to transport all of the arrested patrons at once, most sat for over an hour on Twelfth Street, inebriated and irritable; eventually attracting a large crowd of on-lookers who began jeering the police with accusations of police brutality and threw bottles and rocks at the officers (Sugrue, 1996). By 8 a.m. a crowd of over three thousand had gathered, and a full-scale riot began to rage out of control (Farley et al., 2000). The riot, typified by looting and property destruction by fire

and force, continued for five days until finally suppressed by nearly seventeen thousand law enforcement officers, National Guardsmen, and Army Paratroopers (Sugrue, 1996; Farley et al., 2000). The 1967 riot was the costliest in United States history in terms of property damage – causing an estimated $50 million in damage (Darden et al., 1987). The death count totaled 43, including 33 blacks – three of which were unarmed men murdered execution-style by white Detroit policemen (Darden et al., 1987).

The 1967 riots – or rebellions – while racially motivated were not interracial. The looting and destruction was carried out by black men rebelling against *symbols* of white American society – property and authority – and not against white persons (Darden et al. 1987). The events irreversibly deepened the racial rift which plagued the metropolis, as black Detroiters were further enraged when news of the execution murders was released, while Detroit's predominantly white police force was crippled with fear of a black citizenship they now knew was past settling for systematic oppression. The events also expedited the already swift flight of white Detroiters to the suburbs. Between 1950 and 1980, the white population in Detroit fell from 1.5 million to 414,000; while the black population increased from 300,000 to 750,000 (Farley et al. 2000: 149-151). Whites largely relocated to Detroit's suburbs. In the same thirty-year span, the three counties which make up the Detroit metro area – Oakland, Macomb, and Wayne (excluding Detroit) – experienced an increase of 1.67 million people while Detroit lost 646,000 residents. Further illustrating the racial trends of this suburban expansion was the almost purely white composition of the suburbs amid this transformation. In 1970, the three biggest suburbs of Detroit – Warren, Livonia, and Dearborn – were home to nearly 400,000 residents, of which only 186 were African American (Farley et al. 2000: 159).

Suburban proximity did not soften the sharp segregation. Warren and Dearborn both share boundaries with the City of Detroit, and Livonia is only 2 miles removed. Furthermore the most-integrated bordering suburb of Detroit in 1970 was Oak Park, which boasted 72 African Americans making up 0.2% of its population.

Not much has changed since metropolitan Detroit reached its apex of racial segregation, if anything whites have become more isolated in the suburbs while the city is increasingly composed of isolated blacks. By 1990, metro Detroit was more residentially segregated than any other US metropolis (Farley et al. 2000: 161). To emphasize the role of race on residential segregation, Farley and his co-authors (2000) compared race with income, occupation, and education on an index of dissimilarity, concluding skin color to be the most significant explanatory factor in residential segregation. A further study concerned with finding out 'why?' this segregation persists concluded that it is the desire of white Detroiters to live separate from blacks as driving this continued segregation. White participants were only willing to move into overwhelmingly white neighborhoods, less inclined to live in even 65% white neighborhoods. Black Detroiters, on the other hand, were well-inclined to move into any racially composed neighborhood *except* those in which they would be the only black family (as one with an understanding of Detroit's tumultuous historical transition may understand). Seldom citing better services, lower crime rates, or improved schools; blacks in the study endorsed the attractiveness of a racial mix, feeling the balanced neighborhoods would be free of hostility and beneficial to all residents. Whites on the other hand, cited decreased property values and increased crime as reasons they would not want to live in even a 35% black neighborhood (see Farley et al. 2000: Chapter 8).

III. The Neoliberalization of Detroit

Faced with increasing racial polarization, metropolitan Detroit's city and suburbs have gone forward on divergent political paths, marred by intra-regional competition and intractability. Each exhibiting increasing characteristics of neoliberal governance, Detroit's growing population of out-of-work, impoverished, and racially isolated African Americans has been severely harmed by government retrenchment. Continuing to hide behind historical racial strife, white suburban leaders worked to disinvest in the central city while defiant new black leadership in Detroit worked to make sure the city was entirely in the hands of black decision-makers. Fostering an uncooperative regional environment, leadership on each side has harmed its citizens as competition for capital investment has led to reduced services and an almost non-existent regional dialogue. Only recently has metropolitan Detroit seen any regional cooperation lead to successful execution of projects, but unification comes due to the shared goal of advancing a neoliberal agenda which favors capital over its citizens – most especially poor Detroiters – as will be reflected in the following analysis.

Detroit's election in 1973 of its first black mayor, Coleman Young, was a symbolic moment of the fullness in which racial transformation altered the city. After decades of discrimination, African American Detroiters believed they finally had elected not just a voice but an agent of change. Coleman Young did benefit oppressed black Detroiters in some ways. As an example, he diversified the historically white Detroit Police Department which resulted in a drastic reduction in claims of police brutality. However, working within an increasingly neoliberalized environment consisting of reduced national investment towards cities, Coleman Young turned away from the

neighborhoods in which the vast majority of his constituency lived, instead focusing on a series of large-scale developments meant to spur economic growth. Furthermore, the central business district and riverfront areas with miniscule populations received the bulk of funding meant to improve the situations of low- and moderate-income residents. Neoliberal governance in Detroit since 1970 is characterized by targeted investment to lure businesses downtown, often in favor of or at the expense of residents in decaying outer neighborhoods.

Grappling with wide deindustrialization and a struggling member of the Big Three (Chrysler), Detroit faced a "crisis for economic development" in the late 1970s (Darden et al. 1987: 175). In desperate attempts to retain a manufacturing base in the city, Coleman Young began utilizing grant funds to lure companies. The federal Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) provides local communities with funds to apply towards a broad range of activities with the specification that they benefit low- and moderate-income citizens. Included in this broad range of activities are economic development initiatives as well as job creation and retention. As sources of federal funding became more elusive, CDBG dollars gained importance as local governments competed in an increasingly global economy. Coleman Young exhibited creativity with his applications for CDBG funding, illustrated in his request for $5 million to acquire property in Southwest Detroit with which he planned to lure niche automaker DeLorean. After assembly of a $38 million package of land and subsidies to DeLorean, Young was spurned and the company located in Northern Ireland in 1979 (Darden et al. 1987: 176).

With the wounds of rejection still fresh, General Motors challenged Coleman Young in May 1980 to locate a 500 acre site large enough to accommodate a modern facility, sited near major freeways and railroads, and to clear the site and deliver it to GM within a year (Darden et al. 1987: 177). Placing the development at the top of his administration's priorities, Coleman Young targeted Poletown. Poletown, officially recognized as the Central Industrial Park Project, consisted of 465 acres spanning the boundary of Detroit and Hamtramck which contained over 1,100 residential, commercial, and industrial structures as well as 996 families and 634 individual residents (Darden et al. 1987: 177). Utilizing broad powers of condemnation and eminent domain, the city began aggressive removal of residents and businesses for the benefit of General Motors. Providing 6,000 direct jobs and up to an estimated 20,000 indirect jobs through suppliers and services associated, the Poletown site would cost Detroit over $200 million in procurement and clearing, and be sold to GM for $8 million (Darden et al. 1987: 177). For their troubles, the city of Detroit expected a 4.5% increase in its tax base, and after twelve years to split an expected $21 million in annual tax revenue with Hamtramck (Darden et al. 1987: 177). The long-term benefits the city expected from the development came at staggering short-term costs. Without $200 million in cash at hand, the city borrowed $100 million from HUD's Section 108 loan program (leveraging future CDBG funding), $65 million from CDBG funding meant for low- and moderate-income residents, as well as various loans from state and federal agencies (Darden et al. 1987: 178). In addition to the application of grant funding to aid General Motors, Detroit was offering a twelve year, 50% tax rebate on the company which would cost the city $60 million in lost tax revenue over that period (Darden et al. 1987: 178).

Ardently opposed, residents united to fight the takeover of their community. The attorney of their newly formed neighborhood council, Ronald Reosti, observed the flaws in emerging neoliberal governance: "Cities and communities have to surrender their constitutions if necessary to get private development. In essence, private development is so essential that the only way the city can compete and make greener pastures is to keep giving the city away. It's a nothing strategy" (Darden et al. 1987: 178). Filing suit against the city, the neighborhood council was eventually rejected by the Michigan Supreme Court which upheld the city's right to proceed with the Poletown condemnation, believing it to be in the public's best interest to do so (Darden et al. 1987: 180). Already decimated by rapid condemnation and clearing by the city as well as the existence of some residents eager to sell and move, eventually there lacked much of a neighborhood to be protected and the site was cleared for General Motors. Despite the rush to clear, GM didn't open its Poletown Plant until 1985. Even before the plant opened, Coleman Young was struggling with the economic effects of borrowing so much in order to appease what was at the time the world's second richest company. In 1983, Young eliminated nine neighborhood projects approved by the city council in order to avert their funds toward bills related to the Poletown development, and he used $3 million in Neighborhood Opportunity Funds to pay legal debts incurred fighting the Poletown residents (Darden et al. 1987: 181). Serving to highlight the short-sightedness of the Poletown development; Chrysler alone shed more city jobs between the time of the site's clearance and the plant's opening than the Poletown plant provided. Furthermore, Young did not learn from this mistake. In 1986 he announced the city would use $50 million from its Urban Development Action Grant to help refurbish Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue

plant, an additional example of what would prove to be a series of instances in which Detroit's government would choose the well-being of capital over the well-being of its citizens.

The vicious cycle of decay which struck Detroit's neighborhoods due to deindustrialization, white flight, and abandonment serves as a backdrop for the application of CDBG funding to locate a new General Motors plant. One single abandoned home would often lead to a sharp reduction in property values, in turn leading to cyclical abandonment and decay. As such, the city primarily used neighborhood funds for demolition, a strategy existing residents viewed as favoring future developers rather than those which remained (Darden et al. 1987: 185). With dwindling federal support, neighborhoods lost the battle for resources to the central business district and riverfront areas of the city. Exacerbating this loss and the 'hollowing out' of Detroit's neighborhoods, regional corporate leaders chose investments in the suburbs over the city, leading to Coleman Young's focused effort on reinvigorating Detroit's CBD. Having to choose between CBD investment and neighborhood investment, Detroit's leaders made clear choices time and time again.

Highly competitive and essential for neighborhood stabilization, CDBG funds were often used to finance large public and industrial development projects. If used for such, the funds were completely directed away from residential areas outside the CBD. Detroit officials were aware of the criticism of diverting essential neighborhood funding, claiming that all $25 million in CDBG funds spend in the central business district between 1979 and 1982 would benefit low- and moderate-income residents, a claim difficult to prove (Darden et al. 1987: 190). The city's spending actions also work to

disprove any claim that the city was concerned more with improving the situations of low-income residents. The Millender Center, an upscale high-rise apartment completed in 1985 was built using $29 million in Urban Development Action Grants and other HUD funds, a $33 million loan from the State Employee Pension Fund, and was further sweetened by $17 million in tax abatements which would otherwise have benefitted Detroit citizens (Darden et al. 1987: 187). Joe Louis Arena – home of the NHL's Detroit Red Wings – was built in 1979 on Detroit's downtown riverfront. Stating his intention to borrow $38 million from future CDBG funds to finance the arena's construction, Coleman Young was strongly opposed by the Detroit City Council before eventually winning out and rerouting neighborhood funds towards the arena. The greatest example of Detroit leadership's delusion regarding their CBD is provided by the proposed Cadillac Center. An enormous commercial and retail center, Cadillac Center would be anchored by three department stores and abetted by 100 small shops, all interconnected through a series of pedestrian plazas and skywalks. Coleman Young planned to use $108 million in public monies to fund the $235 million development, which died when the city couldn't find three major department stores willing to move into Detroit's central business district (Darden et al. 1987: 187). Coleman Young – like most politicians – conjures polarized opinions by metro-Detroiters. Celebrated for his facilitation of numerous large-scale development projects, Young's tenure is also marred by undeniable neighborhood decay.

After decades of neighborhood disinvestment in favor of the suburbs or central business district, Detroit's hollowed out neighborhoods provide the basis for the stigma it carries as the archetype of post-industrial American failure. Cyclical abandonment,

staggering poverty, soaring unemployment, and rampant drug-related crime personify many neighborhoods in the city, serving as justification for Detroit's top spot on countless, arbitrary "Most Miserable," and "Most Dangerous," lists (see: Forbes, CNN). However, while the regions largely neoliberal corporate and political leadership rightly does not view the city as a center of global finance, it does work to reposition the city as a global hub of mobility technology, advancing particular development strategies in education, housing, infrastructure, and governance, all with implications for social exclusion (Pedroni 2011). Pedroni (2011) argues that corporate and political leadership navigates a process of reimagining the city, utilizing branding initiatives to supplant the dominant "racially-coded narrative of Black, chaotic, crime-ridden hulk with a vision of the metropolitan region as a gleaming, dynamic, hip (and discursively white) global hub of emergent mobility technology" (see also: Peck 2009). Embedded in this policy environment are racial undertones well-illustrated throughout this chapter, while the city's corporate and political leadership have put forth a radical urban restructuring project which would completely liberate vast expanses of the poorest, blackest, and worst-provisioned Detroit land from the residents perceived to hinder both its reappropriation as productive urban space and the elevation of Metro Detroit as a global hub of transportation technology.

Chapter 4: The Detroit Works Project
Governance, Proposition, Implementation, and Spatial Impacts

I. Background, Methodology, and History

> *"There are areas in our city where we are going to have to make hard decisions to get people to move, and move into those communities that I think we can support. Relocation? Absolutely. That's the reality that we are in." – Detroit Mayor Dave Bing, February 24, 2010*

Introduced by Detroit Mayor Dave Bing in 2010 as a "process to create a shared, achievable vision for our future that would serve as a guide for improving the physical, social and economic landscape of our city," the Detroit Works Project aims to selectively concentrate and eliminate city services in broad areas of the city as illustrated in its released framework: *Detroit Future City*, which specifies the reappropriation of land-uses with varying intensity. Created through a collaboration of public-private entities including the City of Detroit, Bing administration, Kresge Foundation, and Ford Foundation; the Detroit Works Project believes that increased investment and focused service provision in already strong or potentially strong neighborhoods will engender economic development and population growth in those areas. Conversely, as services are focused in those areas, they will be withdrawn from others, forcing the relocation of citizens living in the most desolate areas of the city. Relocation of citizens will serve multiple interests of the city's government. First, it is assumed that displaced residents can be enticed to settle in the areas the city has deemed strong, adding to the density of these areas. Second, the complete removal of citizens from a given area precludes the need to provide public services like police coverage, fire coverage, trash removal, street lighting, and sewer services; reducing the comprehensive cost of public service provision

by the city. Third, the removal of the poorest citizens from these areas allows for them to be figuratively wiped-clean in a "purification of their discursive blackness" in which cleared land can be subsequently remade, free of its racial and physical inscription, with enhanced liquidity for investors (Weber 2002; Pedroni 2012). The Detroit Works Project is essentially an attempt of 'planned shrinkage' or 'downsizing', ideas that have often been used in rhetoric for how to plan for the future of America's post-industrial cities, but ideas that have never successfully been applied to a city as major as Detroit.
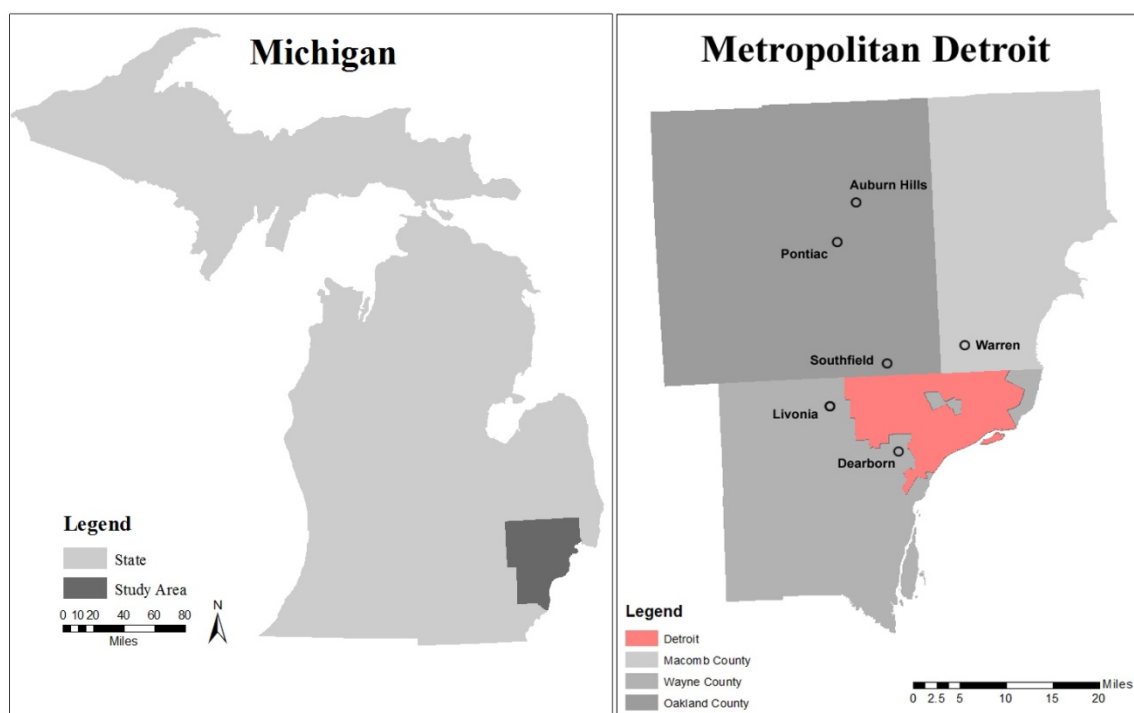
Figure 1 – Study Area of Metropolitan Detroit within the State of Michigan

Strengthening the seriousness in which regional leaders approach the implementation of the plan is an initial commitment of $150 million from the Kresge Foundation toward its early stages. As could be expected from a plan so radical, local resistance was swift and remains persistent. In the following paragraphs, I will place the Detroit Works Project within contemporary trends of neoliberal urban governance – and show a city to be under

the increasing control of the public-private partnership and corporate elites. Furthermore, I will show that the *Detroit Future City* framework levels the most severe spatial injustices upon the poorest and most vulnerable citizens whose opportunities for resistance to the plan are further complicated by historical racial tension, new and unfamiliar democratic outlets, and a fragmented local territory (see Chapter 5).

Methodology

A mixed-methodology using both qualitative and quantitative approaches was required to fully illustrate the formation and governance of the Detroit Works Project, elucidate its land-use propositions, and highlight the characteristic differences of populations in areas facing divergent land-use futures. Secondary research concerned with the formation of the Detroit Works Project was synthesized in order to fully describe its creation and governance; relying on local newspapers, local business periodicals, the Detroit Works Project's website, and the Detroit Works Project's released framework – *Detroit Future City*. Similar sources were used to depict in detail the aligned service reduction that has occurred in Detroit ahead of the formal release of *Detroit Future City*.

As the Detroit Works Project does not release geographic shapefiles of the boundaries which concern this research, I relied on maps included in released documentation which I then manually digitized in order to create an editable spatial reference for additional analysis. The map of Framework Zones (Figure 2) and map of Future Land Use Typologies (Figure 3) are examples of such. Because the Detroit Works Project envisions five predominant land use futures for areas currently characterized by

traditional single-family residential housing typical of Detroit – and as four of those land use futures sit on opposite ends of sharply divergent fortunes; there exists a natural division for which to apply comparative analysis. Thus, due to their shared selection as geographies targeted for increased service provision and investment, Traditional Low Density and Traditional Medium Density Future Land Use types were considered together in what I label "Traditional" land use types. Likewise, due to their shared selection as geographies targeted for drastic service reduction and eventual reversion back to woodlands or farms void of significant population, Innovation Ecological and Innovation Productive Land Use areas were merged and considered together in what I label "Innovation" land use areas (see Table 4). While each group exists in similar form today as traditional single-family residential areas, it is the divergent nature of their planned future by Detroit Works which justifies their grouping.

Cognizant of the Detroit Works Project's reliance on what it describes as "market-indicators" in delineating the geographies for service reduction, I aimed to more fully flesh out the population characteristics of areas with divergent land-use futures. Using United States Census tabulation data at the block-level, I appended various socioeconomic and sociodemographic variables to the maps which I created as described above. The creation of a large database appending these variables as well as future land use typologies to each block in Detroit allowed for statistical analysis of the grouped land use types against one another. Relying on simple Z-tests to determine the statistical significance in differences of means for each variable in each grouping against the city-wide average, a more comprehensive portrait of the populations in each grouping can be observed (see Table 5).

Lastly, I rely on secondary research to describe alternative strategies for the management and rehabilitation of urban land vacancy – focusing on Philadelphia's LandCare Program. Consideration of the Philadelphia LandCare Program augments in-depth consideration of Detroit Works as a large-scale, top-down administration of urban restructuring; heightening related questions of social justice in light of the provided population characteristics while framing the following chapter's focus on citizen engagement, entrenchment, and mobilization.

II. Governance and Service Provision

Governance

Creative moments in neoliberalism as theorized by Brenner and Theodore (2002a) are typified by public-private partnership, networked forms of governance, privatization of goods and services, creation of competitive space through subsidization, and the promotion of capital mobility; and the Detroit Works Project is exhibitive of such. Additionally, objectives of the Detroit Works Project serve as an example of the creation of new forms of institutional control which Peck and Tickell (2002) argued are aimed to advance and deepen the neoliberal agenda.

Detroit is under increasing policy-control by a powerful assortment of venture philanthropic foundations, prominent nonprofit organizations mostly comprised of CEOs of major regional corporations, various quasi-governmental agencies, and a neoliberal mayor with a business background as founder/chairman of a locally-based steel conglomerate. Mindful of David Harvey's (1989) assertion that the public-private

partnership is the "centerpiece" of new entrepreneurial modes of governance, Detroit

provides plentiful examples of such. The Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, Detroit

The Detroit Works Project: Steering Committee		
Name	Title/Organization	Sector
George W. Jackson	President and CEO of Detroit Economic Growth Corporation	Quasi-Governmental
Charles Ellis	Bishop - Greater Grace Temple	Religious
Lydia Gutierrez	President of Hacienda Mexican Products	Private
Hester Wheeler	Assistant CEO of Wayne County	Government
Alice Thompson	CEO of Black Family Development	Non-Profit
Phillip Cooley	Owner of Slows BBQ	Private
Rod Rickman	President and CEO of Rickman Enterprises	Private
Dr. George Swan III	Vice Chancellor of Wayne County Community College District	Educational
Tyrone Davenport	CEO of Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History	Private
Laura Trudeau	Senior Program Director of the Kresge Foundation	Non-Profit
Don Chen	Senior Program Officer of the Ford Foundation	Non-Profit
Marja Winters	Deputy Director of the City of Detroit Planning & Development	Government
Marcell Todd	Director of the City of Detroit City Planning Commission	Government
Linda Jo Doctor	Program Officer of W.K. Kellogg Foundation	Non-Profit

Table 1 – The Detroit Works Project Steering Committee

RiverFront Conservancy, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Neighborhood

Development Corporation are only a few of the many quasi-governmental organizations

that leverage public authority and space for private gain (Gallagher, 2010). They are

informed by prominent nonprofits like Business Leaders for Michigan, New Detroit, and

the United Way of Southeastern Michigan (Pedroni 2011). Outside of dwindling federal

dollars, these organizations are largely funded through contributions from the region's

powerful group of venture philanthropic foundations: the Kresge Foundation, the Kellogg

Foundation, the Skillman Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the McGregor Foundation,

and the Broad Foundation. The Detroit Works Project exhibits this blend of public-

private partnership. Of the fourteen-member steering committee created by Dave Bing,

four each come from either a corporate business, governmental, or non-profit

background, and one each come from religious and educational backgrounds (see Table

1). Initiated by the Mayor's office, the Detroit Works Project was created through

funding from the Ford Foundation and Kresge Foundation, and moves forward with significant contributions from the Kellogg Foundation and the aforementioned $150 million commitment from the Kresge Foundation. Further illustrating Detroit Works' use of networked forms of governance is the composition of their long-term planning team. Tasked with crafting the *Detroit Future City* document, the Detroit Collaborative Design Center – a non-profit urban design firm at the University of Detroit Mercy's School of Architecture – worked with Harvard-based Urban Planner Toni Griffin and eleven private urban planning firms to outline proposed changes (see Table 2).

Detroit Works Project: Community Engagement and Technical Teams	
Group Name	**Role**
Detroit Collaborative Design Center	Community Engagement
Hamilton Anderson	Project Management, Land Use, Neighborhoods
Stoss Landscape Urbanism	Landscape, Ecology, Environment
Initiative for a Competitive Inner City	Economic Growth
Mass Economics	Economic Growth
Interface Studios	Economic Growth
Happold Consulting	City Systems
Center for Community Progress	Public Assets
Carlisle Wortman	Zoning
AECOM	Landscape, Ecology, Environmental Audit
Skidmore Owings & Merrill LLP	Urban Design Audit
HRA Advisors	Public Land Audit

Table 2 – The Detroit Works Project Community Engagement and Technical Teams

Despite the Detroit Works Project's introduction to the public in 2010, its structural seeds were planted years earlier as major philanthropic organizations gained a greater stake in the region's fortunes amid economic crisis which gripped the central city and was characterized by prevailing home foreclosures and the near-bankruptcy of Detroit's "Big Three" automakers. Additionally hindered by mayoral corruption resulting in the 2008 resignation of Kwame Kilpatrick and the May, 2009 election of

Dave Bing; the major philanthropic powers and well-connected business leaders found in Bing a government official willing to work with them towards radically remaking the city as they worked to position Southeast Michigan as a global hub of mobility technology (Pedroni 2011).

One year prior to Bing's election amid a local economic crisis and national recession, ten philanthropic organizations teamed together with the ambitious goal of "helping to restore southeast Michigan to a position of leadership in the new global economy.[3]" Titled the New Economy Initiative and pledging $100 million to accelerate this transformation, the partnership included metro-Detroit mainstays like the Kresge Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation; but also lured prominent national organizations including the Ford Foundation and the Knight Foundation. Kresge Foundation CEO, Rip Rapson described it as: "the largest aggregation of philanthropic capital ever directed to a city, maybe with the exception of New Orleans" (Berman 2010). Fueled by inter-urban competition, the reterritorialization of emerging regional governance exhibited by the New Economy Initiative allows for increased power and advantages as illustrated by Swyngedouw (2004). Furthermore, Swyngedouw's (2004) conceptualization of glocalization poses that changes in governing scale similar to that of the New Economy Initiative often coincide with a sharp reduction in social welfare provisions and an increase in privatization of public goods and services – certainly exhibited by the Detroit Works Project which shares major stakeholders with the New Economy Initiative (see following section). Despite the unsteady economic climate in which the New Economy Initiative was formed and in which Bing ascended to office, early signs of a gathering

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[3] http:// http://neweconomyinitiative.cfsem.org/about

momentum towards the ultimate realization of the Detroit Works Project are observable at this time. Dan Pitera, the future Executive Director of the Detroit Works Project engagement team, described in 2009 the need to reduce government management and alluded to his ideas for the repurposing of vacant land in Detroit by creating "farms, theaters, or wind projects" (Economist 2009). At the same time, former interim-Mayor and then-City Council President Kenneth Cockrel Jr. advocated what he described as "creative downsizing" (Economist 2009).

In addition to spearheading the philanthropic collaboration resultant in the New Economy Initiative, suburban-Detroit based Kresge Foundation laid the groundwork for the Detroit Works Project through its commissioning of the Detroit Residential Parcel Survey. After the 2006 appointment of Rapson as CEO – an urban-centric leader who argues that "you cannot revitalize the regional economy without focusing your energies along Woodward Avenue, the region's central nervous system" as the justification for Kresge's renewed attention in Detroit; the Kresge Foundation exhibited an expanded scope in the city (Hodges 2009). Kresge Board member Steve Hemp described Rapson as: "Interested in what he refers to as place-based philanthropy. Rather than a little here and a little there, what if you concentrate resources in a specific geographic zone?" (Hodges 2009). While the New Economy Initiative is certainly exhibitive of this place-specific concentration, the Kresge Foundation's creation and funding of the Detroit Residential Parcel Survey – a key tool in early neighborhood prioritization and accelerator of discussions regarding downsizing – serves to illustrate its increasingly powerful role in policy formation in Detroit (MacDonald and Wilkinson 2010).

The Detroit Residential Parcel Survey – consisting of direct field survey of the conditions of every residential parcel in the city – was commissioned by the Detroit Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response (FPR). Detroit FPR was created through and is funded by the Kresge Foundation, illustrating Kresge's direct involvement in urban planning meant to shrink the city, including "relocation" as described by Rapson (MacDonald and Wilkinson 2010). Used as a vehicle to engender discussions about potentially downsizing the city, the report was embraced by local politicians. City Council President Pro Tem Gary Brown argued for the necessity to debate the merits of incentivizing resident relocation: "We know that we have neighborhoods that aren't viable. I'm very much for prioritizing viable neighborhoods" (MacDonald and Wilkinson 2010). Bing also embraced the parcel survey as a justification for targeted investment ahead of the Detroit Works Project, describing the deployment of most federal stimulus dollars to align with certain neighborhoods while considering the "earmarking of federal block grant funds for certain neighborhoods" (MacDonald and Wilkinson 2010). Less than one month after the delivery of the Detroit Residential Parcel Survey to Mayor Bing, the mayor admitted he was moving forward with plans to downsize Detroit. To help formulate the plan, the city enlisted Harvard-based urban planner Toni Griffin. Underscoring the influence of private foundations in Bing's downsizing initiative, the Kresge Foundation paid Griffin's salary – creating the unusual arrangement where she worked for the Kresge Foundation yet served the city's Planning and Economic Development Department (Nichols 2010).

The Detroit Works Project shares ambitious economic goals with the New Economy Initiative. Arguing that with proactive and coordinated investment, "Detroit

can remain an innovative hub for production," the *Detroit Future City* framework outlines targeted investment in order to create seven primary employment districts. Additionally, after creation of these districts with tools such as "zoning, public land disposition, and incentives," and the "pooling of public, private, and philanthropic investment," the implications will be "far-reaching and have the potential to improve the cost-structure, innovative capacity, and competitive position of the city's business in regional, national, and international markets" (Detroit Works Project 2013). However it is through the reappropriation of land – specifically residential land – by which Detroit Works aims to rescale its local economy. Describing land as the city's greatest and most challenging asset, Detroit Works outlines its intention to "transform the city's land into an economic asset" by "unlocking the vast potential of the city's land assets through preferential zoning, targeted infrastructure investments, attraction of new capital into the city, and innovative approaches to address the under-utilization of land" (Detroit Works Project 2013). The innovative approaches proposed by the Detroit Works Project, however, have dramatic implications for residents located in areas to be transformed into economic assets – as it is their removal and subsequent clearing of land which forms the basis for increased land value.

Services

While the *Detroit Future City* framework was not released until January 2013, reduction in services aligning with its proposed geographies has preceded it, observable through school closings and the creation of a new lighting authority working to remove street

light fixtures in specified areas. Just weeks after Bing unveiled the Detroit Works Project, a school facilities closure plan was released by the city. "Clearly and radically demonstrating education's centrality to the highly racialized process of remaking urban space and place as a prerequisite for neoliberal urbanism's bottom line of accumulation by dispossession centered on the realty market", the Detroit Public Schools closure plan was the first tangible implementation of the city's spatial reorganization (Pedroni 2011).

Struggling with plummeting enrolments, a $219 million budget deficit, and among the nation's lowest average test scores and academic progress rates, Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm appointed Robert Bobb as Emergency Financial Manager of Detroit Public Schools in March 2009. Bobb, an owner of a private consulting firm and graduate of the Broad Foundation's Superintendent Academy, was granted sweeping authority with power to eliminate contracts, fire existing officials, and disregard public input in decision making. In addition to his $280,000 government-funded salary, Bobb was paid $145,000 a year by the Kellogg and Broad Foundations – one of the leading organizations promoting school choice and privatization in America (Kain 2011). Despite Bobb's closing of 29 schools in his first year of leadership, Detroit Public Schools' deficit rose from $219 million to $363 million (Brayton 2010). In his second year, Bobb announced the planned closures of 44 additional schools coinciding with Bing's unveiling of Detroit Works, while also filing a plan with the state that would close half of the district's schools by 2014 and raise class sizes to nearly 60 students (Chambers 2011). To offset the stresses placed on citizens through school closings, Bobb favored creating 41 charter schools which would serve over 16,000 students (Chambers 2011). Despite criticism that the plan would merely break old contracts and eliminate

teacher's pensions while privatizing schools, the State approved Bobb's plan and ordered it to be immediately implemented in 2011. By 2013, seventeen charter schools had been created in spaces formerly occupied by public schools, and they had been found to be among the worst-performing charter schools statewide (Higgins 2013).

The utilization of market-based measures as justification for school closings raises questions as residents bear the brunt of associated negative consequences. Basing school closings on market-characteristics and disregarding the social makeup of affected students has caused embarrassment for DPS realignment. In 2010, plans called for the closing and merging of eastside Kettering and Southeastern High Schools, a directive only scrapped after officials were made aware of the control of each school by rival gangs (LeDuff 2010). School closures aligned with the Detroit Works Project not only harm citizens socially, but financially as well. In apparent disregard for building quality, Bobb's policies have closed, sold, or demolished numerous schools that had undergone recent renovations – as recently as two years prior (Dawsey 2010). Additionally, Detroit taxpayers are responsible for the repayment of $65 million borrowed to renovate now defunct buildings (Dawsey 2010). Thus, citizens who are forced to deal with the closing of neighborhood schools also see their tax-dollars spent on wasted projects while the city struggles to provide other essential services. Furthermore, it is residents facing the sharpest reduction in service provision that have seen their schools closed. Nine of the fourteen High Schools closed since 2009 relied on populations from Innovative landscape areas (to be described below) while only one was located in a Traditional area, and that school – Detroit Mumford – was set to be rebuilt in the same location. As part of Bobb's school closing plan, $200 million would be invested in schools chosen to be sites of

consolidation, ostensibly in the Traditional areas of increased investment and service provision.

While not occurring as early as school closures, targeted elimination of street lighting has been implemented in policy and provides an additional example of the initial remaking of space in Detroit. Largely praised by the media due to its initially positive goals, the city of Detroit and Michigan lawmakers in late 2012 agreed to the transfer of power over the city's 88,000 street lights from the city's Public Lighting Department to a Public Lighting Authority, which is able to capture taxes and issue bonds to address the estimated failure of 50% of light fixtures city-wide each day (Gray 2012). Aiming to reconcile the entire backlog of 3,300 reported outages within the first six months, the Public Lighting Authority has committed over $14 million in "steady" neighborhoods to improve lighting, maintenance, and supporting infrastructure (City of Detroit 2012). While upgrades and fixes are certainly welcome and needed, the Authority subsequently plans to invest heavily in the elimination of street lights in "distressed" neighborhoods. Between April 2013 and April 2014, over $34 million has been committed to address lighting in "transitional" neighborhoods, with plans to remove 25% of light fixtures depending on the neighborhood trajectory. Furthermore, between April 2014 and April 2016 over $60 million will be applied towards reducing up to 70% of the light fixtures in neighborhoods deemed "distressed". The utilization of tax money to actually *reduce* services seems contradictory to government's basic role of serving its citizens. To spend money on the removal of street lights in selected areas while the money could be spent on replacing bulbs and improving fixtures raises important questions regarding the

motivation of the Public Lighting Authority while indicting Detroit's governors as using service reduction to effectively force residents of those areas to move.

The use of obsolescence is important in the consideration of service reduction and in subsequent considerations of land use. Revisiting Weber's (2002) theorization, obsolescence is relied upon to blame market forces for the devaluation of property while governments absolve themselves from the social responsibility owed to the victims of this devaluation. Through a process of actual disinvestment and the prescription of neighborhoods as 'distressed' the city "creates new urban greenfields both physically and discursively" (Pedroni 2011). As building new is preferable to the rehabilitation of existing housing and commercial stock, creating obsolescence and subsequently clearing land allows municipalities the real-estate liquidity that neoliberal governance yearns for. The removal of anchors of the local community like schools weakens neighborhood strength and civic capacity while the reduction in street lights decreases standards of living for a population already under great diurnal stress. As will be a reflected in this research, it is the residents of these areas who are the main victims of restructuring as Detroit Works proposes a radical repurposing of large swaths of urban land.

III. Proposed Land Use and Affected Populations

Land Use

Detroit's abundance of vacant land is increasingly presented as a critical problem which needs resolution to align city services with a decreasing population, and it is posed as the central justification for the Detroit Works Project. In apparent nostalgia for childhood

jigsaw puzzles, journalists often place other cities within the 40 square miles of vacant land in Detroit while describing the imminence of the problem. *All of Paris could fit into Detroit's abandoned land, or two Manhattans!* However, characterizing vacant land in Detroit this way inevitably leads to a perception of large, contiguous swaths of grasslands, easily remedied by simple detachment from the city as a whole. In reality, Detroit's vacant land is dotted throughout its 139 square mile entirety, usually in the form of a single residential lot. It pervades the most densely populated neighborhoods, historic avenues lined by 1920s mansions, and working-class Eastside neighborhoods. It can be found on the riverfront as well as near Eight Mile, in industrial areas as well as downtown. Vacant, abandoned land is ubiquitous yet discontiguous. Additionally, Detroit's population density compares well with peer cities as presented in the *Detroit Future City* framework (see Table 3). Low density areas comprised of 0-5 people per acre are equally represented in Detroit and Portland, Oregon – only 6% of each city; while being much more pervasive in Atlanta (22%). The medium density areas composed of 5-25 people per acre which make up an overwhelming 88% of Detroit; outpace Denver (78%), Atlanta (61%), and Portland (82%). Detroit lags behind its three peer cities in high density areas of 30+ people per acre as only 6% of the city exhibits this rate, behind Denver (19%), Atlanta (17%), and Portland (13%). Detroit's exhibition of comparative normal density, calls into question the reappropriation of Detroit's traditional low- and medium-density neighborhoods on the basis of a lagging and unsustainable population density, which Detroit Works often does.

Population Density: Detroit vs. Peer Cities			
City	Population	Area (Square Miles)	Persons/Sq Mi
Detroit	714,000	139	5123
Atlanta	420,000	133	3158
Portland	584,000	133	4391
Denver	600,000	153	3922

Table 3 – Population Density: Detroit vs. Peer Cities (US Census Bureau 2010)

Despite the city's normal exhibition of density, leaders have utilized recent economic crises to justify a radical reappropriation of neighborhood land use as presented in the *Detroit Future City* framework. Relying on market-driven indicators including: vacant land and homes, the median sales prices of homes, subsidized rental stock, dangerous structures, foreclosures, and bank-owned property; the Detroit Works Project's technical team has placed each block in Detroit within 'Framework Zones' which will guide investment and service provision towards realization of their 'Land Use Typologies' observable in their 50-year land use goals. The Framework Zones are

> Meant to guide citywide and investment decisions in terms of the best ways to make positive change in areas with differing characteristics. These zones seek to categorize the city's residential, commercial, and industrial land based on similar physical and market characteristics. The most influential characteristic is vacancy, because of its drastic effect on physical and market conditions of an area. (Detroit Future Cit*y* 2013)

Intensifying investment in specified Framework Zones while reducing services and barring investment in others, Detroit Works aims to realize the Land Use Typologies which "provide the future vision for land use within the city" (Detroit Future City 2013). Labeling these typologies the second-highest level tool in decision making behind Framework Zones, the city intends to re-write its zoning based on this map (see Figures 2 and 3). "Instead of standard zoning practices that classify each property within the city, land use typologies seek to generate complete neighborhoods by prescribing densities and

allowable development types for larger areas" (Detroit Future City 2013). As they will affect the overwhelming majority of Detroit citizens, analysis of overlooked social characteristics of the 'neighborhood' and 'landscape' Land Use Typologies follows a brief consideration of the market-driven measures the Detroit Works Project used to classify both these geographies and their Framework Zones.
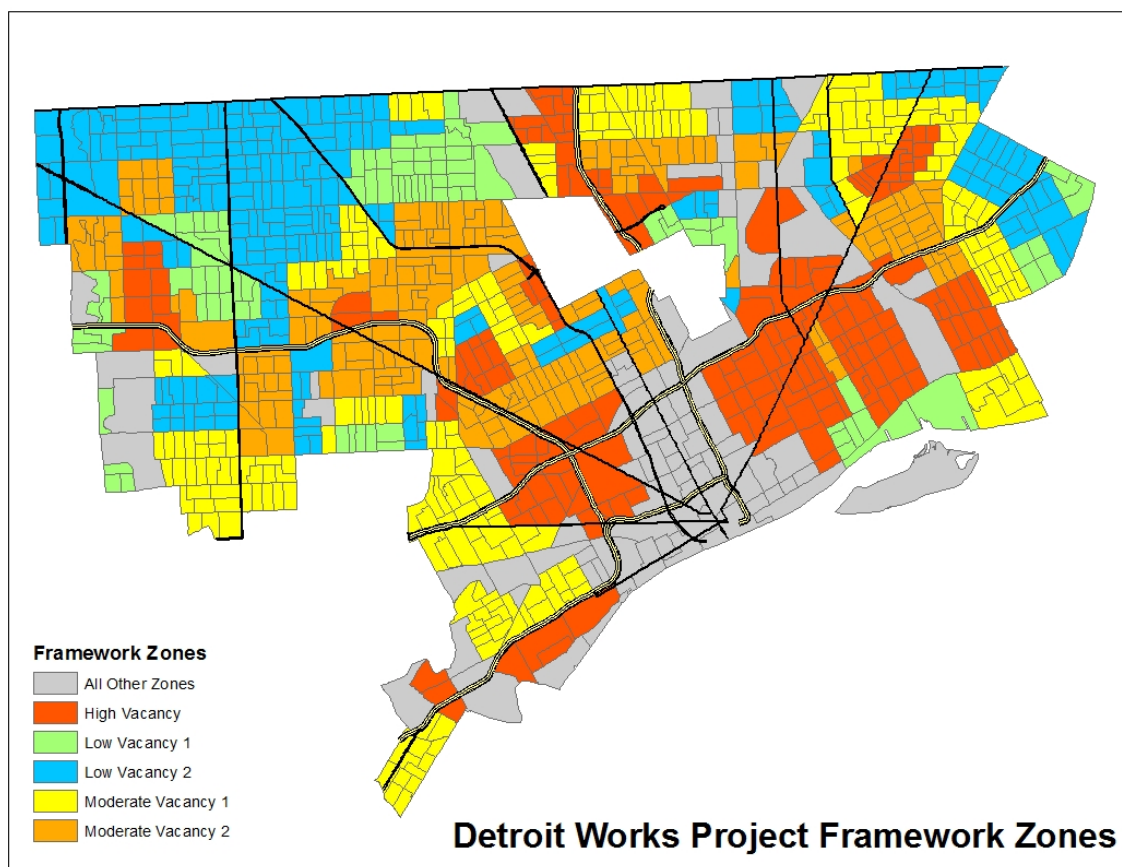
Figure 2 – Detroit Works Project Framework Zones

Characterized by their low land and building vacancy, Low Vacancy Framework Zones are composed of the stately homes in the neighborhoods of Palmer Woods, Sherwood Forest, University District, Indian Village, Boston Edison, and East English Village; and the attractive homes in the steady Grandmont-Rosedale and Cornerstone Village neighborhoods. In addition, Detroit Works included transitional areas between

these neighborhoods in the Low Vacancy Framework Zones, while noting their "elevated rates of home vacancy as well as high rates of home foreclosure" and conceding that they are "vulnerable to future depopulation and increased vacancy". All areas labeled either Low Vacancy I or Low Vacancy II are slated for intensified services and investment as part of their classification of traditional neighborhoods in the Land Use Typologies goal (see Figures 2 and 3). Contrasting with this classification are the Moderate Vacancy and High Vacancy Framework Zones. As could be expected, Detroit Works paints a bleak outlook for these areas; citing their high vacancy rates, absence of market demand, high foreclosure rates, and residential isolation. While Moderate Vacancy and High Vacancy areas exhibit very similar rates of housing vacancy – 26% to 30% – one statistic clearly separates areas labeled High Vacancy from their Low and Moderately labeled counterparts. The city of Detroit owns a staggering 56% of vacant parcels located in High Vacancy Zones, compared with only 22% in Moderate Vacancy Zones and 7% in Low Vacancy Zones (Detroit Future City 2013). Thus, the prospects for city-guided land transformation are significantly greater in the areas labeled as High Vacancy Zones by the Detroit Works Project. Each block within the High Vacancy category is slated for drastic service reduction and will be bypassed of targeted investment as part of their 'Innovation' future as directed in the 50 year Land Use Typologies. Moderate Vacancy Framework Zones are split between Innovation typologies or the uncertain 'Green Residential' – areas in which judgment is deferred until it can be determined if populations are stabilized.
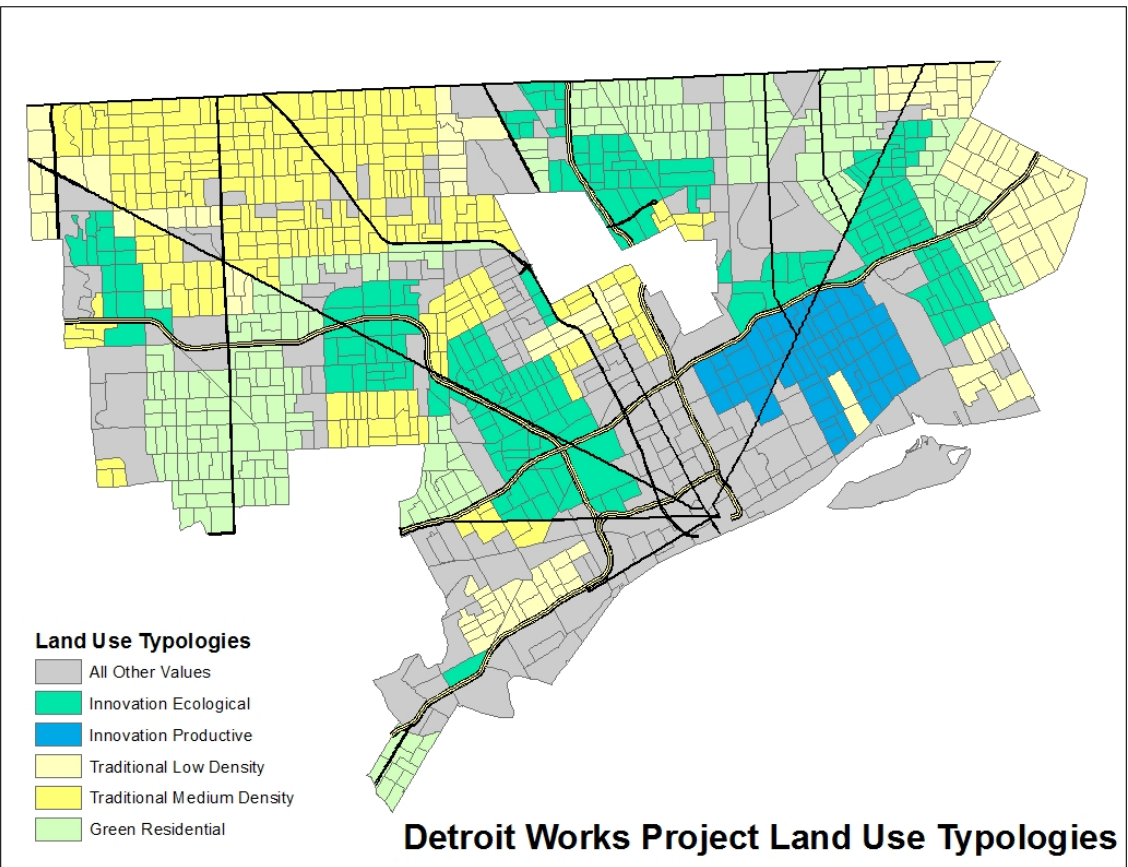
Figure 3 – Detroit Works Project Land Use Typologies

The Land Use Typologies observable in *Detroit Future City* offer the most divergent paths of residential futures for citizens of Detroit. Those located in the 'Innovation Productive' and 'Innovation Ecological' typologies will see essential services like sewer, trash collection, street lighting, and road maintenance "replaced, repurposed, or decommissioned" as they regress back to natural ecological or agriculturally productive landscapes (Detroit Future City 2013). Conversely, areas deemed low vacancy as described earlier will receive intensified investment to improve infrastructure, city services, and housing as they make their way towards Traditional Low Density and Traditional Medium Density neighborhoods as outlined in the 50 year land use goals (see Figure 4).
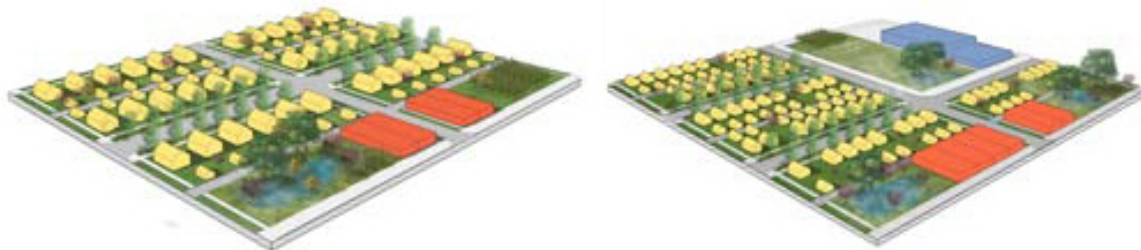
Figure 4 – Traditional Low Density (L) and Traditional Medium Density (R) Typologies

While *Detroit Future City* repeatedly stresses that no resident will be forced to move, they imply service-cutting strategies which will leave residents no choice. Will the elimination of street lights, reversion to dirt roads, and reliance on well water be strong enough forces to break even the most entrenched residents? Detroit Works seems willing to find out. Stretching urban farming to an entirely new scale, Innovation Productive areas:

> Put vacant land to productive, active uses: growing food and productive forests, reducing maintenance costs, cleaning soil, generating new knowledge, and reshaping public perceptions of vacant land. These innovative landscapes primarily include flowering fields that clean contaminated soils, research plots to test ideas, urban farms with greenhouses or cultivated forests (silviculture), and aquaculture and algae-culture facilities. (Detroit Future City 2013) (see Figure 5)

The contradictory nature of this proposed landscape is striking. As a way to eliminate costly service provision, they propose installation of productive agricultural sites which will undoubtedly add to the city's water and sewer burden as farms demand intense irrigation. Furthermore they describe contaminated soils, understandable for a built-out city over 300 years old with a strong industrial history, but not ideal for a farming initiative.
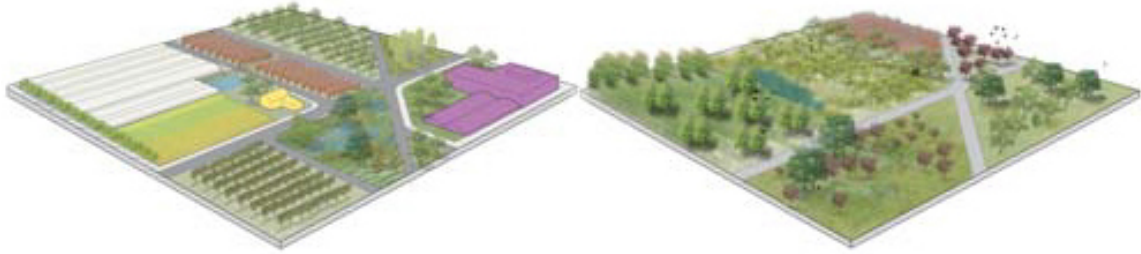
Figure 5 – Innovation Productive (L) and Innovation Ecological (R) Land Use Typologies

Contrasting with the Innovation Productive sites in which land, devoid of people, is used for productive means, the Innovation Ecological typology offers a complete reversion back to nature (see Figure 5). Filled with endless stretches of working class families only 50 years ago and still maintaining a sizable population, these areas once cleared become:

> Forests, meadows, and other landscapes developing gradually over time and costing very little (or nothing!) to 'construct' and maintain. These landscapes can develop on their own, or can be guided to different types of desirable landscapes, which may be especially suitable for a particular species. (Detroit Future City 2013)

While Detroit Works seems willing to guide these geographies in order to suit different species of wildlife, decision makers seem to have given up on the citizens which call these areas home. Over 400,000 Detroit citizens live in Moderate or High Vacancy Framework Zones, and over 200,000 live in areas which have an Innovation Productive or Innovation Ecological future. While the Detroit Works Project technical team cites market-driven measures as justification for these future land uses, further analysis of the populations affected shows that it will be the poorest and most vulnerable citizens disparately affected by the injustices associated with the Detroit Works Project.

Population Characteristics

Aware of the market-based shortcomings used by the Detroit Works Project as justification for the reversion of neighborhoods to agricultural and ecological areas, I attempt to give further description to the populations within these geographies as part of the research questions articulated in Chapter 1. Grouping together Innovation Ecological and Innovation Productive future land use typologies, these areas will be referred to as simply 'Innovation' landscapes. Similarly, the grouping of Traditional Low Density and Traditional Medium Density future land use types creates what will be referenced as 'Traditional' areas. As each of the four typologies exists today in similar form as single-family residential housing, the Detroit Works Project's two divergent futures (as either intensified investment or complete disinvestment) for land use provides a natural grouping (see Table 4 and *Methodology* sub-section).

Traditional Land Use Typologies		Innovation Land Use Typologies	
Traditional Low Density Typology	Traditional Medium Density Typology	Innovation Productive Typology	Innovation Ecological Typology

Table 4 – Explanation of Merged Land Use Typologies

The population characteristics of an average city block located within Innovation areas stands in sharp contrast to one located in Traditional zones, as well as those of the larger city (see Table 5). Using data at the Census block-level to determine if differences in key social and economic characteristics are significantly different between both Innovation and Traditional landscapes, as well as that of the city comprehensively, a portrait of the citizens with divergent futures can be more clearly understood. Based on Z-tests determining the statistical significance of the differences in means, residents in Innovation areas slated for drastic service reduction are found to be significantly poorer,

more unemployed, more dependent on public transportation, and decidedly less educated than the average Detroit resident. Conversely, residents in Traditional areas the Detroit Works Project aims to renew through increased investment and service are on average significantly more affluent, more educated, and less dependent on public transportation than an average Detroiter. The spatial injustices created through initiatives put forth in the Detroit Works Project are further exacerbated by the exhibition of households in Innovation landscapes to be overwhelmingly headed by a single female, in neighborhoods almost exclusively black. While Traditional landscapes possess on average less households headed by a single female and more white residents than the average Detroit city block, the differences aren't at a statistically significant level.
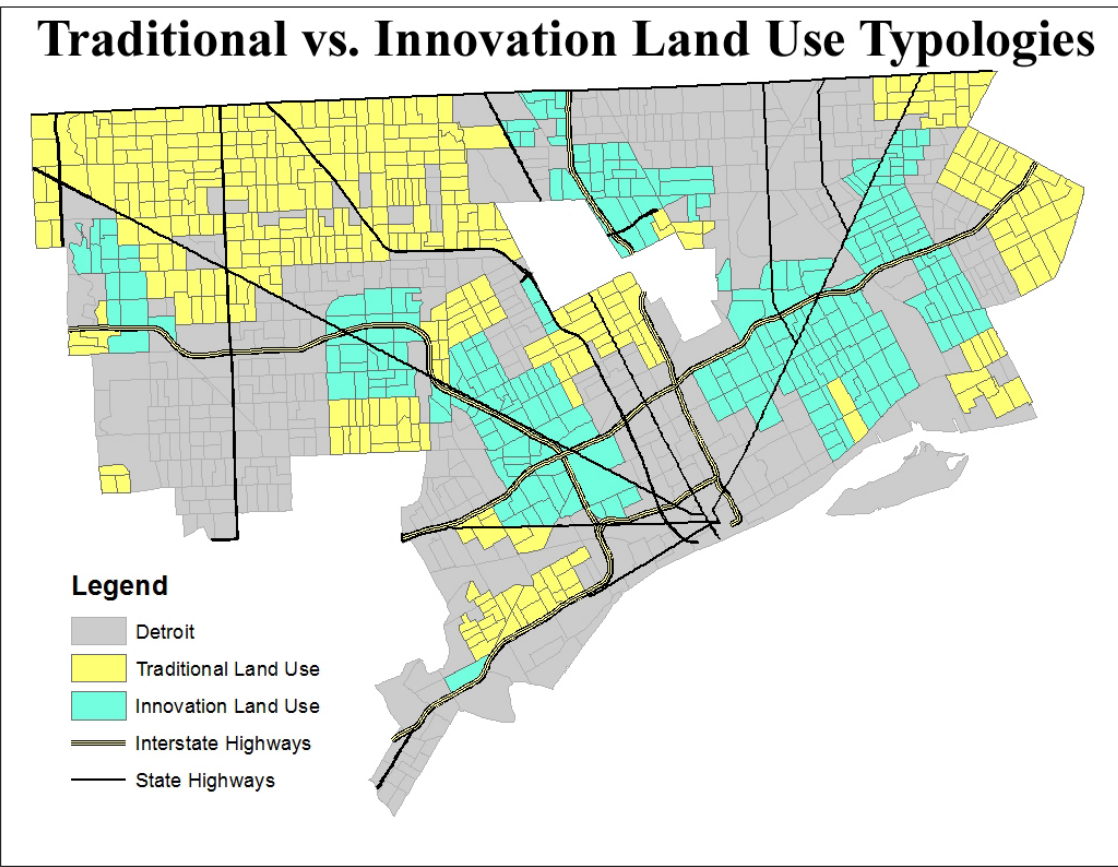

Figure 6 – Traditional vs. Innovation Land Use Typologies Map

However, blocks in Innovation areas are composed of on average 58.24% households headed by a single female, well beyond the city average of 48.64% and statistically significant with only a 1% chance of error. Furthermore, the population of blocks in Innovation areas is on average only 5.43% white, well below the city average of 11.15% and statistically significant with likewise 99% certainty. To contrast this while straying from this grouped data, Traditional Low Density areas are on average 27.16% white, a staggering rate compared to the overall city's rate of 11% white.

In addition to the concentration of single mothers and African Americans, Innovation areas display an increased dependence on the exact services and investments that the Detroit Works Project aims to reduce or eliminate. The average composition of residents in these blocks shows over 30% which do not own a vehicle. Dependent on public transportation, bicycle, or foot, these residents rely on nearby commercial establishments and their lack of mobility usually precludes them from employment opportunities far from home. The Detroit Works Project proposes targeted investment which compounds injustices for these citizens. Planning to leverage public incentives to create commercial corridors in and around Traditional typologies, businesses already unlikely to serve Innovation areas will be barred from doing so, placing an already immobile constituency further away from grocery stores, medical facilities, and other retail services they depend on. Additionally, the Detroit Works Project aims to reroute existing bus service away from Innovation areas in a cost-saving measure, eliminating an essential city service more heavily depended upon by residents in these areas.

Population Characteristics of Traditional vs. Innovation Land Uses			
	Innovation LU	Traditional LU	City
Population	200,587	348,084	714,000
City Blocks	246	375	1071
Percent of HH Below Poverty	33.8*	18.5*	24.9
Unemployment Rate	19.4	11.4	14.6
Percent of Female Headed HH	58.2*	43.4	48.6
Percent of Elderly Below Poverty Level	24.1*	14.5	18.3
Percent of Youths Below Poverty Level	45.9*	25.1*	33.9
Percent of Occupied HU with no Vehicle	30*	16.5*	22
Percent with HS Degree or more	61.3*	74.8*	68.2
Percent with Associate Degree or more	8.9*	19.8*	15
Percent White	5.4*	12.7	11.2
Median HH Income	$22,855 *	$37,130 *	$30,009

Table 5 – Population Characteristics of Traditional vs. Innovation Land Use Typologies (* signifies statistical significant difference compared to city average)

Already stressed with school closings strategically aligned with the Detroit Works Project as described earlier, residents in Innovation areas are at risk for further social isolation due to prevailing rates of youth poverty and education. With only 61.3% of their population possessing a high school degree or more, residents in Innovation areas lag behind the city-wide average of 68.18%. Accounting for a 5% chance of error, this difference is statistically significant, and sharply contrasts with the near 75% of residents who possess a high school degree or more in Traditional areas. As could be expected based on the predominance of households below poverty and single female headed

households in Innovation areas, youth poverty is pervasive. Almost one of every two children in these areas live in poverty, as the Innovation landscapes 45.94% rate of youth poverty far exceeds the city average of 33.88%. It is easy to imagine a cyclical under-education of residents within these neighborhoods when considering the prevailing rates of single female headed households and youth poverty, escape from such undoubtedly made more difficult due to school closings. Dropping out of school becomes an attractive option when it is both easier and more important to the family to work a low-paying job. Furthermore, the potential for security and income associated with gang and illegal activities is often more attractive and accessible than formal education. While the overwhelming rates of single female headed households and youth poverty calls for much more intensive investment and service provision in these areas, the Detroit Works Project proposes the opposite.

Alternatives

The strategy of creating vacant land through generalized characterization, wide-spread service reduction, and associated population reduction observable in Detroit lends itself to comparisons from similarly-challenged American cities. Struggling with deindustrialization, drastic population reduction, and associated land vacancy similar to Detroit; Philadelphia has addressed its land vacancy problem aggressively. The Philadelphia LandCare Program, while simple in design, has produced effective results while empowering communities. Funded by the Philadelphia City Office of Housing and Community who contracts the work to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS),

more than 8,000 vacant lots have been transformed through "cleaning and greening.[4]"
The cleaning and greening includes removing trash and debris, grading, and planting
grass and trees. The park-like setting is surrounded by a signature post-and-rail fence and
receives regular mowing and maintenance during the growing season (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 – Before and After of Philadelphia LandCare Site (© Pennsylvania Horticultural Society)

Despite its simple design and seemingly humble actions, the Philadelphia
LandCare Program has produced dramatically positive results since its inception. In
addition to the 8,000 lots selected to be rehabilitated by the PHS, an extension program
called Community LandCare funds local community-based organizations to clean
additional lots in their area. Over 2,000 lots have been improved through Community
LandCare, and neighborhood residents are hired to maintain and mow the lots on a
monthly-basis, empowering the community. The LandCare Program also provides
beneficial economic outcomes. Since the program began in 2000, an estimated 15% of
the properties have been developed for new business or housing[5]. In addition to
stimulating development, the LandCare Program has been shown to create neighborhood
wealth. Nearby housing-values were found to have increased a median $30,000 after
improvement of vacant lots; for each dollar spent cleaning and greening $224 in housing

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[4] http://pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org
[5] http://pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org

value was created (Wachter and Wong 2008; Wachter and Gillen 2006). Adjacency next to a vacant lot was found to decrease housing values an average $16,000, but adjacency next to a stabilized and greened vacant lot *improved* housing value by $14,000 (Wachter and Gillen 2006).

As program director Robert Grossman notes, "The city didn't own the land, but they owned the problem," and the Philadelphia LandCare Program through municipal investment has increased citizen wealth and well-being[6]. Using a randomized controlled trial, researchers found residents living near greened lots to feel significantly safer than residents unaffected by vacant lot greening (Garvin et al. 2012). That feeling of safety was also illustrated in crime statistics, as areas impacted by lot cleaning and greening displayed a reduction in total crime as well as violent assaults (Garvin et al. 2012). Possibly attributable to the increased feelings of safety and neighborhood pride, cleaning and greening also provides residential health benefits. A decade-long study concluded that greened vacant lots – in addition to reducing crime – also promoted well-being as residents reported decreased rates of stress and exhibited an increased tendency for regular exercise (Branas et al. 2011).

Facing similar issues of abandonment and disinvestment as seen in Detroit, the Philadelphia LandCare Program illustrates the benefits of reinvesting in 'blighted' communities. The seemingly simple act of cleaning and maintaining lots has increased citizen wealth, created jobs, improved safety while reducing crime, and provided health-benefits for nearby residents. Most importantly, the program has empowered residents

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[6] "Inquirer Editorial: City is attacking crime by removing grime" *Philadelphia Enquirer* online, December 2, 2011. http://articles.philly.com/2011-12-02/news/30467565_1_crime-data-violent-crime-cuts-stress

and communities by intrinsically elevating social capital and engendering a pride of place which will work to prevent future recurrences of the disinvestment that the program attempts to answer.

Justice

The Detroit Works Project is aware of the disadvantaged population at risk for radically altered service provision due to its plans. However, their plan realizes justice through upheaval and relocation, as opposed to long-term stabilization and investment for the most disadvantaged areas advocated here. While their framework repeatedly stresses that citizens will not be forced to relocate, they admit that "(reallocation of resources and) systems renewal will be coordinated with land use change to better relate neighborhoods and employment districts, as well as the systems that serve them" (Detroit Future City 2013). The dangers of reducing a service such as transit are also intimated in their plan:

> The very people who need jobs most are left behind, struggling with transit routes that don't connect them to work, or sharing an old car along with all the upkeep. Detroiters who can't afford a car are also cut off from fair access to healthy food, recreation, health care, and a whole range of necessities for a healthy, balanced life. (Detroit Future City 2013)

Despite realizations of the daily struggles of citizens in Innovation areas, the Detroit Works Project believes that "if we confront these tough decisions now, we can improve the quality of life for Detroiters and put the city back on the path to financial security within 10 years" (Detroit Future City 2013). The three highest service priorities for citizens who participated in feedback with the Detroit Works Project are (1) improved public transportation for all, (2) improved and replaced street lighting, and (3) improved

public safety. Detroit Works removes the burden of the city to accomplish these imperatives and places it on the ability of Detroit residents to leave to-be-forgotten-areas and relocate to areas deemed more suitable. Implementation of this plan will undoubtedly test Detroiters' right to the city and their ability to remake it in ways they see fit. As will be shown, most residents are ardently opposed to leaving their homes, signaling the need for Detroit Works to consider alternative and more equitable ways of creating a shared vision for the city's future.

Chapter 5: Citizen Engagement with Detroit Works

I. Background and Methods

Civic Infrastructure can be considered an intrinsic system for the city of Detroit. It is an abundant asset that, like Detroit's physical systems, has been stressed and burdened by economic and population losses, deferred or inconsistent maintenance, and a lack of renewal. (Detroit Future City 2013)

The reliance on market-characteristics as justification for the radical repurposing of land in Detroit calls into question the importance of civic engagement and social input in crafting the Detroit Future City framework. Claiming to have connected with Detroit residents over 163,000 times, the Detroit Works Project has undergone an ideological shift from one of top-down project implementation at its inception to one anchored in civic engagement and shared processes observable today. However, research shows this ideological shift to have been borne out of necessity, as the Detroit Works Project scrambled to smooth unrest caused by Dave Bing's earliest comments on the project. Equally concerning is the appearance of Detroit Works to have completed their technical analysis prior to the community engagement portion of their process, frustrating residents eager to provide input towards the project. Furthermore, the Detroit Works Project engagement with residents has not been based on specifically proposed plans for certain areas, rather it asked citizens open-ended questions on how their quality of life could improve, precluding productive discussion which may have altered land use plans in the released framework. Arguing that intensified investment in chosen neighborhoods will engender the positive quality of life changes desired by Detroiters, the Detroit Works

Project believes its plan is a just and equitable block on which to build Detroit's future. However, by not taking into account the widespread desire of residents to remain in their homes no matter the vacancy rate, median home value, or any other market-measure of their neighborhood; the Detroit Works Project will leave behind hundreds of thousands of entrenched residents in areas deemed unsuitable, denying their right to the city and their right to remake the spaces in which they live as they see fit. Additionally, I argue that collective mobilization by these populations in resistance to the plan is complicated by historical racial tension, new and unfamiliar democratic outlets, and a fragmented local territory.

Methods

Interactions with the Detroit Works Project began in April 2012 during their initial "Community Conversations." I attended the event for the Northwest quadrant of the city on April 21, 2012; and attended the event for the Northeast quadrant of the city a day later. My participation in these events was no greater or less than any other citizen attending. Additionally, I participated as a listener in two Detroit Works Project "Telephone Town Halls." While I do not draw conclusions based on my personal experiences, participation helped create questions which would drive much of the following research.

Augmenting personal participation, semi-structured interviews were conducted with multiple community development leaders in Detroit as well as with Dan Pitera – the Detroit Works Project Executive Director of Community Engagement. Occurring

between September 4 and September 7, 2012; the interviews concerned local leaders located on opposite sides of the city in areas facing divergent land use futures. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended, primarily focused on (1) the role of community development organizations as a provider of services to its citizens; (2) citizen demand driving the work of community development organizations; (3) the Detroit Works Project community engagement process; and (4) the citizen perception of the Detroit Works Project. Additionally, a semi-structured and open-ended interview with Dan Pitera occurred on September 6, 2012 and was primarily focused on (1) citizen input transforming the directives of the Detroit Works Project; (2) techniques used to gather citizen input; (3) initial public resistance to the project; and (4) Detroit Works Project experiences with the regional disconnect.

To supplement the interviews, I conducted a comparative analysis of the Detroit Works Project's citizen engagement with the Lower Eastside Action Plan (LEAP) – a small-scale community redevelopment project that began one year prior to Detroit Works. Due to the nearly identical goals but sharply differing methods of the Detroit Works Project and LEAP, the projects offer a useful comparison. Furthermore, LEAP offers a rare survey of Detroit residents and their views on the reappropriation of land in their communities which is used to raise questions on the equitability of the Detroit Works Project and their process.

II. Introductory Unrest and Detroit Works Re-Engagement

Why do we have to move? Why can't you build around us and do what you need to do instead of one: trying to burn us out, and two: trying to take us out? And then thirdly, I want to know what is going to be done to that land once you move us out? Because it seems like your downsizing is just another form of segregation. And in my forty years of age, I thought my Momma and them already been through that. And I don't want to have to go through it again. And if we don't understand that, we who live in the city of Detroit have to stick together or they're gonna take this city away from us – Unnamed Resident, September 14, 2010; initial Detroit Works public forum

On September 14, 2010; hundreds of Detroit citizens packed the Greater Grace Temple in the northwest corner of the city for the first of five scheduled public forums to address Mayor Dave Bing's signature policy initiative – the Detroit Works Project. Disconcerted by his February comments in which he stated the city would be concentrated in seven to nine neighborhoods and that there would be winners and losers, the crowd's agita was further stoked by months of silence and Bing's late arrival to the event (Kaffer 2011). As horse-mounted police worked crowd control outside the church, Bing and Detroit Works officials auspiciously approached the event with no semblance of an agenda or plan in an apparent attempt of information gathering. Angered that even in an organized public forum the project's plans were still being withheld from citizens, the town hall meeting devolved into "straight mayhem and chaos" (Detropia 2013). Residents already feeling disrespected by apparent downsizing plans were further incensed by the disorganization of the forum, as participant Maureen Taylor intimated: "Whoever organized this dog and pony show, this should have been handled better, we deserve better than this" (MacDonald 2010). Despite labeling the series of events a success, Bing's administration and Detroit Works Project officials soon veered off their scheduled deliverance of a comprehensive restructuring plan in December 2011, splitting the project into Short-Term and Long-Term Planning Departments amid public decry of its merits. Under new

guidance ostensibly separated from Bing, the Detroit Works Long-Term Planning team undertook a massive publicity campaign to quell fears of forced relocation and municipal downsizing.

In July 2011, nearly a year after the contentious initial public meetings, the Detroit Works Project was split. As a "response from nearly 10,000 Detroiters" who argued that "action is needed today while we continue to plan for tomorrow", Bing introduced and spearheaded the Detroit Works Short-Term actions (Detroit Future City 2013). Selecting three neighborhoods termed 'demonstration areas,' Detroit Works Short-Term aimed to "realign some city services, and leverage investments, while working with the community to improve the market conditions in these areas." The areas chosen for intensified investment were Hubbard Farms in Detroit's southwest, the North End neighborhood located just north of Detroit's main commercial corridor, and the Sherwood Forest and University District neighborhoods located near Detroit's northern border. While these neighborhoods, like every other in the city, can utilize intensified investment, they are traditionally some of the most affluent and successful areas in the city. In addition to enjoying the advantages of historic and well-built housing stocks, these areas remain some of Detroit's most dense, steady, and desirable neighborhoods. Although the three demonstration areas are perhaps less needy than other neighborhoods, it is hard to fault any increased investment and service provision in Detroit. However, the rationality and sustainability of Mayoral-sponsored housing improvements has come under questioning when it was reported that it cost $5.5 million of city, state, and federal funds to rehab a home sold for $225,000 as part of Detroit Works' targeting in the North

End (Satyanarayana 2012). The rehabilitated home is one of thirteen scheduled to be improved and sold in the stately Boston-Edison neighborhood.

Aware of the potentially explosive public reaction to plans contained within the Detroit Future City framework and the negative stigma attached to Bing's initial comments, the Detroit Works Project created a long-term planning department outside of Bing's administration. Led by Harvard-based Urban Planner Toni Griffin, the Detroit Works Project Long-Term Planning (DWPLTP) relies on eleven private urban planning and design firms to provide technical analysis which produced the Detroit Future City framework. In addition, Dan Pitera, executive director of the Detroit Collaborative Design Center housed in the University of Detroit Mercy's School of Architecture led the team responsible for community engagement related to the DWPLTP. Beginning in December 2011, Pitera and his team undertook a massive civic engagement campaign as a means of damage control of the harm that Bing caused by his off-the-cuff statements a year and a half earlier. This public awareness effort is being trumpeted by the DWLTPT as meaningful civic engagement which has resulted in the reshaping of the Detroit Future City framework due to citizen demands. However through semi-structured interviews with Dan Pitera and key community leaders in Detroit, as well as personal participation in many DWPLTP civic engagement events, I will show the process to be administered to rather than inclusive of Detroit citizens as their personal desires and grassroots efforts are disregarded in favor of market-driven measures.

The Detroit Works Engagement Process

Asserting that community input is vital to the process of producing a framework for future development in Detroit, the DWPLTP team dedicated 2012 towards reaching a large number of citizens. Through an array of advertising, community meetings, telephone conferences, interactive games, a street team, creation of video shorts, and attendance at various city events, DWPLTP claims to have reached over 100,000 people in 2012 alone (Detroit Future City 2013). Though the DWPLTP team made a commendable effort to engage the community and educate curious citizens on the comprehensive plan, no evidence exists to suggest that citizen input changed the directives for any single geographic area. Furthermore, through personal participation in the engagement process as well as discussions with key community leaders, the process is found to have exhibited less interest on the neighborhood-specific wishes of residents and more interest in disseminating already established land use goals.

Occurring in April and May of 2012, the DWPLTP team organized the first civic engagement events titled the 'Community Conversation' series. After dividing the city into four quadrants – Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and Central/Near East – each geographic area hosted a three-part meeting to "work on possible solutions to improve the quality of life for all Detroiters" (Detroit Future City 2013). Mindful of the disorganization which characterized the earliest public forums on this project; these events were highly structured and revolved around the DWPLTP team's goal of improving quality of life for all Detroiters. During the first meeting, attendees were asked to discuss the quality of life elements most important to them, while also identifying assets specific to their neighborhood. The second meeting, occurring about a

week later, mostly consisted of a DWPLTP team presentation on the most imperative actions believed to improve quality of life for all (Detroit Future City 2013). The final meeting in the initial Community Conversations included information on the strategies needed to achieve the imperatives discussed previously.

Though certainly informative of the strategies to be included in the Detroit Future City framework, in my experience the Community Conversation series left attendees feeling more like subjects than participants – a sentiment shared by multiple community organization leaders (see below). Additionally, the scale of the quadrants precluded focused discussions on goals for neighborhood-level development as more generalized city-wide actions dominated the presentations. Due to the large areas encompassed by a single quadrant residents were often grouped with people with whom they shared no neighborhood characteristics and were asked to come up with common quality of life concerns. Similarly, most quadrants offer multi-varied future land use types, complicating the ability to discuss specific development strategies while also pitting neighbor against neighbor in the same meeting depending on which side they fell on. Further highlighting the tendency for the DWPLTP engagement process to be less inclusive and more administrative was the unchanged nature of the technical land use outputs between the Community Conversations and the *Detroit Future City* framework. Maps and typologies presented in the May 2012 meetings were crafted before any formal community engagement and remain unchanged as observable in *Detroit Future City*.

Following the Community Conversations, the DWPLTP team worked to remain engaged with residents while the technical team assembled the *Detroit Future City* framework. An hour-long 'Telephone Town Hall' on June 19, 2012 aimed to further

educate residents on the project. Despite the well-publicized effort to increase participation, only 3,652 people participated in the call and an unknown amount of others were excluded due to a technical flaw which did not call hopeful participants to join – which I experienced. Despite the relatively low participation and technical errors, the Telephone Town Hall provides insight into the rate at which the technical analysis arm of the Detroit Works Project outpaced citizen engagement. Of the 3,652 participants, 57% had never heard of the Detroit Works Project. Assuming that a citizen participating on a telephone town hall is more civically engaged than an average Detroiter, the city-wide awareness of the Detroit Works Project would potentially be very low. Contradicting the statistics of citizen awareness is the insistence of the DWPLTP team that public input guides decision making in the crafting of *Detroit Future City*. While addressing a question on what information is needed to create a plan like *Detroit Future City* and where it comes from, Dan Kincaid – representing lead design firm Hamilton Anderson – cited "existing physical conditions, vacancy, population trends, and market indicators" before stressing that input from the community was the most important factor (Detroit Works Project 2012). Contradicting this assertion is Kincaid's following comments responding to concerns over whether this is a plan to consolidate the city. After stating that more efficient service delivery was necessary in the city and that they needed to "develop strategies in high vacancy areas to destruct or demolish homes, then transform the underused land and bring it back," Kincaid argued that

> We need to make sure we can identify ways that people living in (high vacancy) areas can have improved quality of life. It may mean they're identifying other places to live. Everyone needs to have an opportunity to live where they want to, but maybe they can recognize another area provides a better opportunity to live. (Detroit Works Project 2012)

III. The Lower Eastside Action Plan

Truly engaged communication with Detroit residents would inform the Detroit Works Project of the overwhelming opposition of Detroiters to move out of their neighborhoods, no matter the physical condition or vacancy rate. Operating in a much smaller geographic area and created through collaboration of seven community development or neighborhood service organizations, the Lower Eastside Action Plan's (LEAP) mission statement reads almost interchangeably with the Detroit Works Project: "a community-driven project designed to engage people in a process to transform vacant land and property into uses that improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods and surrounding areas." Covering Detroit's lower east side, the program aims to engage with one of the most blighted and population-reduced areas in the city. Though nearly the entire area covered by LEAP is slated for Innovation Productive landscapes devoid of people by Detroit Works, LEAP's grassroots process revealed a much different desire by the over 50,000 citizens living in the 15 square mile area (see Figure 7).

If you would consider moving, would you prefer to move to...

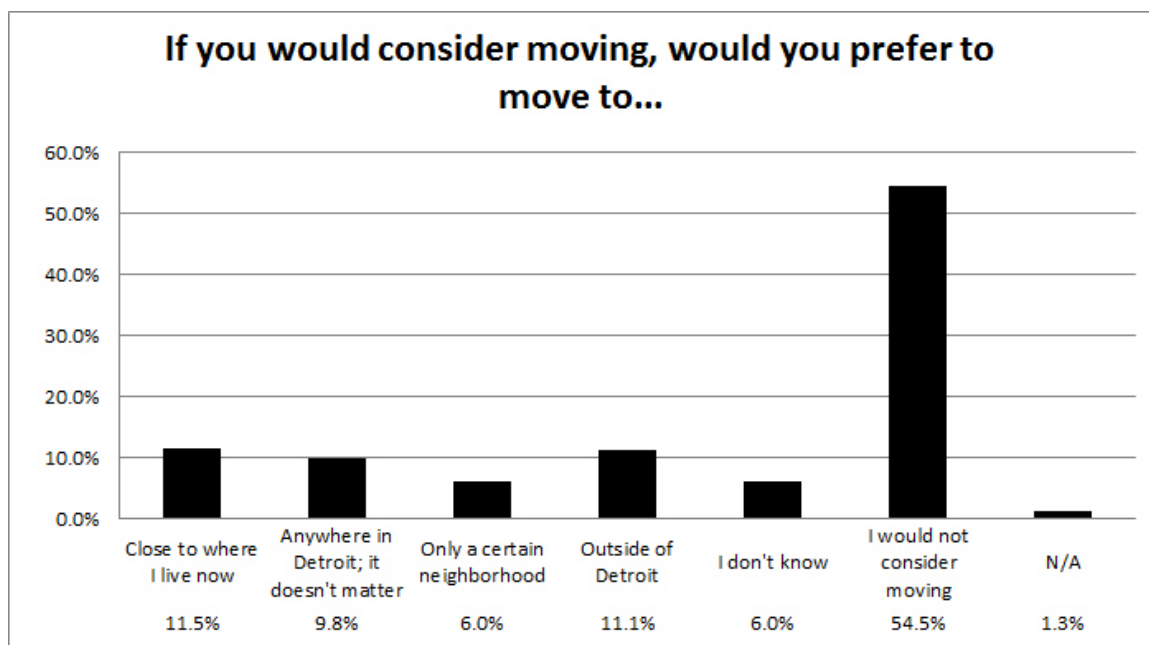| Close to where I live now	Anywhere in Detroit; it doesn't matter	Only a certain neighborhood	Outside of Detroit	I don't know	I would not consider moving	N/A
11.5%	9.8%	6.0%	11.1%	6.0%	54.5%	1.3%

Figure 8 – Lower Eastside Action Plan Survey of Residents (LEAP 2012)

After surveying over 1,000 east side residents, LEAP offers a glimpse into the entrenched and committed Detroit resident overlooked by the Detroit Works Project who assumes those citizens will relocate for the greater good of the city. The struggle for mid-century African American's to break the racial barrier in Detroit's neighborhoods as illustrated in Chapter 3 has led to a pride of place, and the passing of homes through familial generations. When asked why they moved into this neighborhood, the most common response was "this is where I've always lived" (LEAP 2012). Long-term community building is also illustrated in questions regarding the most attractive elements of the Lower East Side neighborhoods. The three most attractive elements in the survey were (1) the sense of community, (2) access to grocery stores and (3) schools (LEAP 2012). Government retrenchment and widespread neighborhood disinvestment as illustrated in the second half of Chapter 3 is illustrated in the least attractive neighborhood characteristics observable in the survey results: (1) safety, (2) neighborhood cleanliness and appearance and (3) city services (LEAP 2012). Reduced

investment and eliminated services in Detroit's east side as proposed in the Detroit Future City framework would work to restrict access to grocery stores and eliminate schools – two of the most attractive elements of the existing neighborhood. Furthermore, Detroit Works would exacerbate two of the three least attractive elements of the Eastside by withdrawing services from the area. Highlighting the harm that neoliberally-driven disinvestment has caused the neighborhoods, a full 70% of Eastside residents listed housing rehabilitation assistance, vacant housing demolition, or neighborhood cleanup as the single most important element which would stabilize the area in which they live. Serving as an additional contradiction to Detroit Works' perception of what Detroiters want is the consistently low importance of low vacancy rates across all ages, ownership statuses, and tenures of people surveyed.

The most important social characteristic of residents on Detroit's Eastside that is overlooked by the Detroit Works Project and its planned reappropriation of space is their overwhelming tendency to refuse relocation. When asked if they would consider moving, 54.5% of residents stated they would not consider moving under any circumstance (LEAP 2012). Only 9.8% would consent to relocation anywhere in Detroit, surpassed by the 11.5% who would consent to relocate only if it was to a neighborhood close to where they live now (LEAP 2012). Additionally, when presented with hypothetical incentives and amenities aimed to entice relocation, 38.4% and 37.2% of residents refused to even consider the compensations, respectively.

While illustrating a strong opposition to any relocation plans, Detroit residents also seem aware of the potential dangers of consolidating populations which the Detroit Works Project overlooks. Though 64% of Eastside residents would strongly or

somewhat support the influx of new residents into their neighborhood, nearly 53% would be most worried about the effects on neighborhood safety and the impact on the community. As illustrated in the cancelled plan to integrate schools once it was learned rival gangs would be mixed, residents understand the deep but sometimes concealed contention between neighborhood factions across the city which top-down programs like the Detroit Works Project seem to ignore.

The Lower Eastside Action Plan's manageable scope allows for proposed redevelopment that fits within the fabric of the community and within the wishes of its citizens. As Detroit's highly-varying neighborhoods do not fit neatly into the Detroit Works Project's classification of 'High Vacancy' or 'Moderate Vacancy' areas, and blocks often differ wildly from one street to the next, the wide brush which Detroit Works paints with labels shared land use futures for often very different urban areas. The eastside area in which LEAP focuses illustrates such. In areas west of the large Conner Creek Industrial Park, vacant residential lots – while present – do not dominate the landscape. The area is dominated by the transection of Indian Village; home to some of the most stately and impressive single-family homes in southeastern Michigan, which is surrounded by moderately dense traditional single-family housing. The areas in which vacant lots are predominant lie directly east of Indian Village, but this pocket is bound in addition to Indian Village by a significantly denser neighborhood anchored by Detroit Southeastern High School. Conversely, areas east of the Conner Creek Industrial Park suffer from overwhelming residential land vacancy, yet this area also exhibits high variability. Dickerson Street, Marlborough Street, and Lakewood Street offer examples of traditional residential life within this otherwise urban prairie. Furthermore,

neighborhoods from Canfield Street north to Interstate-94 offer some of the most successful near-eastside neighborhoods. Despite the prevailing variability in Detroit – often adjacent streets exhibit vast characteristic differences – the Detroit Works Project places large swaths of the city under the same labels. All of the aforementioned areas, excluding Indian Village, are labeled as High or Moderate Vacancy in the Detroit Works Framework Zones and face an Innovation land use future.

While not explicitly described here, after years of resident engagement LEAP constructed a bottom-up plan for future development on the Lower Eastside. Contrasting with the public opposition of and widespread apathy towards the Detroit Works Project, nearly 80% of surveyed residents believe directives in LEAP were a good fit for the area. While the plan acknowledges the physical changes observable in the area after decades of population loss and disinvestment, it utilized committed citizen engagement to build an urban development plan widely supported by the residents which it will directly affect. Furthermore, LEAP contracted with various organizations and businesses to provide an array of projects ready to be implemented with the government cooperation necessary to change land use zoning or philanthropic commitment to funding. For each project – including partnerships with Michigan State University, the Greening of Detroit, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, the Hantz Group, and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation – LEAP defined the project scope as well as the role of city government needed to implement the project. Considering the impressive construction of the Lower Eastside Action Plan it would seem inherent that the Detroit Works Project would not only consider but incorporate LEAP into its framework. However, Detroit Works long-term goals do not align with LEAP, as market-driven

indicators superseded community input in the creation of the Detroit Future City framework.

IV. Community Development Organizations and Impediments to Citizen Mobilization against Detroit Works

In September 2012 I met with multiple community development professionals in Detroit as well as with Dan Pitera and conducted semi-structured interviews to more fully articulate the community engagement process of the Detroit Works Project and the experiences of those involved directly. Though participants were from varying geographic areas slated for vastly different futures as outlined by the Detroit Works Project, each recounted similar experiences in the engagement process, describing amorphous questioning and frustration caused by the withholding of place-specific plans. While it is important to note that each interviewee described exponentially better engagement and dialogue once Dan Pitera began managing the Long-Term Planning team; the shared concerns highlight the overarching problems with Detroit Works' top-down approach and the shortcomings of its community engagement process.

Tom Goddeeris is Executive Director of the Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation (GRDC), a non-profit development organization dedicated to preservation and revitalization of Detroit's northwest Grandmont Rosedale communities. Additionally, Goddeeris sits on the mayor's 50-person Advisory Taskforce for the Detroit Works Project, whose members serve as the community voice informing the Steering Committee, so he has the unique perspective of each side of the dialogue between Detroit Works and Detroit's communities. Grandmont Rosedale also enjoys a relatively stable

population, a well-built and attractive housing stock, and designation as Traditional Residential in Detroit Works future land use goals. Because of the alignment with GRDC's perception of their future and the Detroit Works designation of Traditional Residential, Goddeeris is largely positive towards the project while also conscientious of the concerns of residents in other areas. However, despite his involvement in Detroit Works and his neighborhood's prospective increase in investment and service provision, Goddeeris acknowledges the shortcomings in the Detroit Works community engagement process. He relates disappointment regarding the Community Conversation series due to the vague questioning combined with the perception of withheld plans:

> They went into this whole community engagement, where they really weren't saying what they were going to be doing, they just wanted input. Which I also found frustrating because it's hard to give input; you know engagement isn't a one way street. It shouldn't be "this is what we're gonna do take it or leave it," on the other hand it shouldn't be "just tell us what you want. (Goddeeris 2012)

Goddeeris' comments support the assertion that Detroit Works did not rely on community input as a central factor in constructing land use plans. Goddeeris also acknowledges the divisive nature of the Detroit Works Project, conceding that "not everyone is going to be as happy with it as others" (Godderris 2012). The divisive nature of the project also works against the large-scale quadrants used to group sections of the city, which Goddeeris also found fault with: "They also had these conversations around the city, in different areas, but the agendas and presentations was always the same. It would help people if you could start to zoom in on the area they are familiar with" (Goddeeris 2012).

Contrasting with Grandmont Rosedale's stable neighborhoods is Detroit's near east side which contends with widespread deindustrialization, large population losses,

and a greater rate of vacancy. As previously illustrated, the Detroit Works Project has labeled most of the near east side with either Innovation Productive or Innovation Ecological landscapes. The Warren Conner Development Coalition (WCDC) serves the citizens located in the near east side, and I met with its President – Maggie DeSantis, as well as with Khalil Ligon, Executive Director of the Detroit Neighborhood Parntership East (DNPE) and Alisha Opperman, DNPE Community Engagement Project Manager. Ligon also serves as the Program Manager of LEAP, providing valuable insight into LEAP's interaction with the Detroit Works Project. DeSantis shared concerns similar to Goddeeris regarding Detroit Works' community engagement:

> It took a long, long time before they had these Community Conversations. Then it was a lot of talking at. No mention of LEAP when they came out to the areas that LEAP worked in. Their process with the community was not (engaged). It wasn't: "this is what the recommendations are starting to look like, what do you think? Let's talk, they're going to change as a result of us talking. Now what do you think?" None of that took place. It was: the technical team is over here, and the community engagement process is over here, then they had some Community Conversations, some of which I still don't know how the questions they were asking had any connection. (DeSantis 2012)

Though Ligon says LEAP was never formally contacted to provide input towards the Detroit Works Project, she states "they were very aware of what we were doing" (Ligon 2012). As such, the Detroit Works technical planning team actually relied on the Lower Eastside Action Plan more than the community engagement section did. Opperman's work with the technical team at the same time as the Community Conversations led her to see through the importance of the Detroit Works engagement process:

> Having been at some of those technical meetings around the same time as the Community Conversations you could see at the technical process they

were already at this step down here, but the community engagement level they were still asking questions way back here. And they would flat out – I don't want to say lie – but in a way it is dishonest when you're not being honest to the community saying "Yeah we've already got these maps and we've already got these ideas about what we want to do" and they're asking questions like "What are the assets in your community? What are the quality of life elements that are important to you?" That's so far behind where the technical pieces were working that it's very dishonest (Opperman 2012).

Though aware of the superficial nature of the Detroit Works engagement process, all three Eastside community leaders advocated for the improvement in engagement between the Detroit Works Project and local community organizations once Dan Pitera assumed control over the Long-Term Planning team. Ligon stated that "community engagement has improved dramatically" while DeSantis stated that "if Dan (Pitera) is funded to do the next step I think it will be better" (Ligon 2012, DeSantis 2012).

Dan Pitera, though clearly well respected by community leaders and committed to some semblance of community engagement related to the Detroit Works Project, also admits shortcomings in the engagement process. Pitera admits the abbreviated period of engagement, stating that he would have liked more time while also lamenting the lack of citizen input in the early stages of the process: "(This) started as a top-down process. We are not blind, it's not a bottom up, but what we're trying to do now is force a bottom up and top down to meet" (Pitera 2012). Reeling from a city-wide negative association of the Detroit Works Project due to Mayor Bing's off-the-cuff remarks about only having seven to nine neighborhoods, Pitera and his team have had to utilize resources to quell citizen fears at the expense of meaningful engagement. Carrying with it such a stigma that LEAP was advised by its board members not to host a Detroit Works event for fear

that it may be confused as the same city-run project, Detroit Works Long Term Planning

has worked hard to distance itself from the mayor.

> "The reason we need more time, is because you could argue that much of what happened in the beginning is living down all the stuff that we've been hearing – were still hearing that. We're still hearing people come through frustrated thinking this is all a relocation project and so on. And then when they start looking around they say "Oh no it really isn't." Every area shown has habitation opportunities. It's not shown that you're closing neighborhoods. So with all that said though, you could say we didn't really start meaningful engagement until April or May. So we've been doing it for four months! So that's definitely not long enough. The first part was really building trust and enthusiasm back into the project." – Dan Pitera (Pitera 2012)

In addition to attempting to shed the negative association with Bing's early comments,

DWLTP has operated under an expedited timeline. Originally scheduled to be released in

late 2011, the Detroit Future City framework was not released until January 2013, and

without saying that the large donors like the Kresge Foundation wanted it done, Pitera

implied as much: "We were proposing that we needed more time. We rushed through a

lot of this. But it was insistent that it had to be done by this time" (Pitera 2012).

Impediments to Citizen Mobilization

Shown to have been constructed without meaningful community input, the Detroit Works

Project's plan to reappropriate large swaths of land through service reduction raises

questions of justice and the right to the city which Harvey and Lefebvre would argue

could only be remedied through social revolution. More traditional in America is citizen

mobilization against perceived injustices. Industrial labor rights, women's suffrage, and

civil rights were all achieved with the help of traditional citizen mobilization. While not

a national issue, the Detroit Works Project has raised ire of citizens who have questioned its equitability and mobilized against its implementation in public forums. However, contemporary neoliberal governance in Detroit has created institutional barriers to organized opposition to Detroit Works. New and unfamiliar democratic outlets emerge as retrenched government forces community development organizations to provide services traditionally offered by formal elected governors. A fragmented local territory has emerged where likeminded community development organizations compete for funds instead of working together for similar goals. Furthermore, the organizations work within a city under increasing public-private and philanthropic control, forcing them to get on-board with policies they disagree with or risk losing the funding they rely on to operate. And as the metropolitan region continues to grapple with a contentious racial history, the plight of the inner-city poor being rallied against by suburbanites seems very far-fetched. These realities and the makeup of the most negatively affected to be the poorest and least provisioned population highlights the difficulties for citizen mobilization against the Detroit Works Project.

With increasing needs unmet by traditional government, community organizations have emerged as a provider of services, and Detroit is an excellent example of such. Vogel (2005: 468) attributes reduced government service to the molding of Detroiters as "lean and mean, self-reliant, and incredibly supporting of neighbors in need." He goes on to describe the city's varied non-traditional governance: "Detroit is a hotbed of social experimentation in utopian self-reliance, though one coupled with its counterpart of gang-controlled streets in the no-man's land that exists between these well-organized neighborhoods" (Vogel 2005: 468). Self-provided services incomprehensible elsewhere

are commonplace in Detroit, including privately funded security patrols in middle-class neighborhoods like North Rosedale Park, and volunteer services like the Detroit Area Residents East which uses citizen-band radios to facilitate quicker police responses and also train neighborhood residents to patrol (Vogel 2005: 463). Though community groups have evolved to pick up the slack left by a struggling urban government, democratic outlets have not kept up. The new power structure involves non-elected officials and is funded mostly through grants and donations, preventing residents the opportunity to speak with their votes. In the case of Detroit Works, it is the community organizations that are left without a voice as the powerful philanthropic organizations they rely on for funding are also backing the Detroit Works, leaving them no choice but to withhold opposition to the plan.

Shared reliance on the same philanthropic organizations funding the Detroit Works Project has crippled community development organizations – and by association their citizens – from voicing concerns about the plan. As Dan Pitera implied, it was because of the philanthropic foundation's insistence that the Detroit Works Project expedited its civic engagement process, and a prominent community leader and member of the Community Development Advocates of Detroit (identity withheld) offers insight into the power these foundations have on the city while discussing pressure to refrain from criticizing the Detroit Works Project:

> But here's the other dynamic and I don't mind saying this. At CDAD (Community Development Advocates of Detroit), we were really having a hard time voicing – or having these kind of comments heard. Partially because the funders who decided to fund the second version of DWP were absolutely charmed by Dan's process, and raving about the community engagement process. And CDAD, in no uncertain terms, was basically told "Quit complaining, because the funders like this. And if you want

money from those funders, stop complaining about DWP." We – at the CDAD board level – had lots and lots and lots of very tense debate, I mean, I was saying "If a funder asks me what I really think, I'm not going to speak what I think is not the truth. So you better not have me at some of these meetings." So I temper it a little bit, but that's the other dynamic that was going on. And that speaks to the whole dynamic of the horrible need for funding to carry on this way, and leads to some people shutting up, when they really shouldn't.

Protected by its composition as a public-private partnership, the Detroit Works is insulated from voter reprimand as well as community organization backlash. As a result, citizens struggle to have their concerns heard as their neighborhood organization acquiesces to the top-down implementation.

Compounding the top-down plan which forces even the most negatively affected areas to quietly accept their fate is a fragmented local territory borne out of the neoliberally-driven ascent to power of community organizations. Supplying an increasing amount of services to residents, community organizations have become more powerful in the city. However, as Tom Goddeeris notes, organizations compete with one another because: "You know there's only so much money to go around" (Goddeeris 2012). The competition for funds has hindered potentially beneficial scaled-up linkages between likeminded community organizations. Goddeeris, whose organization oversees five cooperating and contiguous neighborhoods, believes that scaling-up even further would especially benefit the most poorly-organized communities:

> I will say, that there may be some logic to the consolidation of some of these neighborhood organizations, like they are not all equally well-organized, so there may be some advantage to having some of the weaker organizations merge with some of the stronger ones, so instead of having five neighborhoods maybe we'd have three – that's a touchy subject because people have these loyalties to their neighborhoods and their organizations so we haven't fully explored that but I think down the road that may make some sense. Because there is a lot of duplication of efforts

> – like putting out a newsletter, collecting dues, there's all sorts of things that we're all doing; if there'd be some economy of scale I think it could all be done better. (Goddeeris 2012)

However idealistic, scaled-up cooperation between neighborhoods in Detroit is highly unlikely as Detroit Works differentiates neighborhoods as what Mayor Bing has described as "winners and losers." By labeling areas in the various ways in which Detroit Works has – Steady, Transitional, and Distressed – the figurative lines are drawn; by proposing increased funding and services towards certain areas the borders are accentuated and strengthened. Goddeeris, while grateful to be in a targeted area and sympathetic towards those who are not, reflects the neighborhood divisions in his comments: "In terms of what DWP is proposing in our neighborhood it's very much in line with how we see the future of our neighborhood. I can definitely see how some other neighborhoods – that's not going to be the case, there's going to be a lot more contention about what should the future look like?" (Goddeeris 2012). The hardening of neighborhood boundaries through decades of neoliberal urban governance is exacerbated by the rhetoric in the Detroit Works Project. Citizens in areas in which the Mayor would deem 'winners' on average fall below national averages in many quality of life characteristics. As such, it is unlikely for a population conditioned by austerity to reject renewal on the basis of social justice. Goddeeris sums this thought succinctly: "I'd be interested to know whether our residents had strong opinions about changing other areas of the city. People tend to focus on the things that affect their lives more directly" (Goddeeris 2012).

Isolated from other neighborhoods through decades of competition, rendered obsolete by rhetoric from Detroit Works, and further fragmented through school closings

and continued upheaval; Detroit's forgotten neighborhoods float among a rising tide of inequality. The isolation of these areas within the city is more magnified when considering the city's isolation within its region. The racial segregation outlined in Chapter 3 is persistent and matched by a political and ideological separation between city and suburb. The regional disconnect is so marked that it is unfathomable to imagine any regional mobilization against injustices engendered by the Detroit Works Project. "We can barely get cooperation between local government and ourselves, so I can't even imagine a regional cooperation" is the opinion of Khalil Ligon, a common sentiment across the city (Ligon 2012). Additionally, appointment of an Emergency Financial Manager who can supersede conventional law may benefit the suburbs at the expense of the city, as city assets such as the Water and Sewerage Department may be sold to a regional authority – something largely viewed as beneficial by those living outside of Detroit but dependent on city water. However, there have been recent signs of a thawing of the icy relationship between Detroit and its region. In 2009, Detroit's main convention center – Cobo – became owned and operated under a regional authority crucial to funding a $300 million upgrade. In 2012, voters in Wayne County, Oakland County, and Macomb County voted to increase property taxes in order to fund the city's well-respected Detroit Institute of Arts in exchange for free admission to residents of those metropolitan counties. Small steps like these are large victories for a region characterized by a regional racial divide, but the changing environment is noticeable to DeSantis: "In regards to DWP, I think city-wide you have these undertones of racial tension. I think in Southeast Michigan that's the norm and everyone is used to it. I think the leadership there's a different sort of attitude that goes on, it may not always manifest itself

politically, but I think there's more willingness to go there (DeSantis 2012). Goddeeris

also holds an optimistic view about the future of regional cooperation, citing slowly

changing racial demographics:

> Well the long history of contention between city and suburb has, I think, held the whole region back; that may go away as some of the old leadership goes away and retires. Already there is a lot of integration in the suburbs, and as the suburbs diversify there may be less of a black-white thing between city and suburbs… we still have a lot of that baggage to work through. But I do think that will lessen over time, I feel like that racial tension will lesson as the demographics of the suburbs and the city changes over time. (Goddeeris 2012)

As discussions become more prominent in political circles and are supported by powerful

philanthropic foundations like Kresge, regionalization measures are sure to increase in

metropolitan Detroit, with potential benefits for all citizens in Southeastern Michigan.

However, as studies like this reflect, realization of such often comes at the expense of the

most vulnerable citizens. Detroit must remain steadfast in assuring equitability for its

citizens.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Justice and Implementation of Detroit Works

Urban downsizing plans raise questions of morality left unaddressed in this research. Instead, the potential ramifications for citizens within certain geographies were analyzed through the lens of contemporary neoliberal urban governance with consideration of their contextual embeddedness in a city isolated from its region on the basis of historical racial strife. Without questioning the morality of the plan, the injustices it would engender were put forth through statistical presentation of the population within the areas chosen to be cleared of its physical and racial inscription (Pedroni 2011). Contrary to Lefebvre's (1968) call for those most negatively affected by their urban condition to take a greater control over the production of urban space, the Detroit Works Project asserts top-down restructuring to further dispossess these residents from control over their immediate urban space. The Detroit Works Project provides a cogent example of David Harvey's (2012) assertion that urban restructuring through creative destruction overwhelmingly carries with it a class dimension. As Harvey theorized, it is the poorest, most underprivileged, and most marginalized Detroiters from political power that stand to bear the brunt of the most negative aspects of the Detroit Works Project. Furthermore, the citizens facing the harshest realities face dispossession of any right to the city they currently claim. In a cyclical deepening of neoliberalism similar to that described by Peck and Tickell (2002), Detroit aims to answer the neighborhood decay exacerbated by neoliberal policy with more neoliberal policy. Illustrating the top-down nature of this restructuring is the lack of meaningful citizen input in the creation of the framework as

decision makers relied on market-characteristics invariably detrimental to the most poorly provisioned citizens. Increasing isolation of the populations facing service elimination complicates their prospects for mobilization against the plan, as they navigate unfamiliar democratic outlets and destruction of historical anchors of community like their public schools. Resultant is neoliberal policy crafted in response to economic crisis which places the financial well-being of Detroit and its businesses over the well-being of its citizens, and creates spatial injustices for a historically oppressed segment of the population yearning for the opposite of what Detroit Works proposes.

This research advocates a renewed municipal investment in traditionally disinvested residential areas. The Detroit Works Project utilizes neighborhood decay and expensive service provision for justification of its implementation, however, this research shows neoliberal policy as leveraging public funding at the expense of neighborhoods. I argue that Community Development Block Grant funding used to locate businesses should be spent on the citizenry it is meant to serve – those with low- and moderate-income. The administration of large subsidies and tax-breaks to corporations and billionaires who subsequently avoid paying taxes critical to the provision of services which Detroit Works aims to make more efficient has created detrimental effects for Detroit's residential neighborhoods. As opposed to dramatic spatial restructuring in which the most marginal citizens face austerity in order to save the city money on service provision, it is argued that prevailing corporate subsidizations and tax-breaks be relaxed and in turn invested in the most impoverished areas. Detroit has been shown to repeatedly choose investment in the CBD and its resident corporations over investment in the neighborhoods and its resident citizens, a trend which continues with the Detroit

Works Project. While the city works to implement a project based off a shortage of civic funds, they also work to package land and tax-breaks to local magnate Mike Ilitch for construction of a new arena for the Detroit Red Wings. In December 2012, Ilitch was given nearly $13 million in TIF funding from the Downtown Development Authority to help pay for the potential arena site (Helms and Gray 2012). In addition to using public money to pay for land, the Ilitch family – whose companies earn annual revenues of $2.4 billion – are demanding a tax-exemption for the site, and lawmakers seem quick to acquiesce (Shea 2013). In December 2012, the Michigan House approved legislation allowing Ilitch tax breaks including exemption from the state school-aid fund, benefitting a company who is already delinquent $2 million in property taxes while indirectly withdrawing tax dollars from a city and citizenry clearly desperate for them (Helms and Gray 2012).

The general goals of Detroit Works – such as improving the quality of life for all Detroiters – are commendable and deserved to be realized; however the methods which they propose to achieve those goals carry with them unjust realities for many citizens. As opposed to marked reduction in services and investment in the poorest neighborhoods, this research calls for intensified long-term investment and service provision in those places, a conclusion supported by the Lower Eastside Action Plan and the residents it serves. Withdrawal of services such as education and transportation from the populations most dependent on them is counter-intuitive to what should logically be done. The Detroit Works Project's logic lies in its belief that citizens living in the most underserved areas will jump at the opportunity to relocate in more densely-populated areas, an assumption proved inaccurate in LEAP and in public forums. As entrenched residents

dig-in refusing to leave homes their parents often earned through endurance of racially-charged violence and intimidation, proposed service reduction will be realized in areas occupied by the most marginalized citizens. Detroit Works aims to remedy decay exacerbated by decades of disinvestment with further disinvestment. An alternative strategy for the improvement of vacant land based on the *inclusion* of the existing urban fabric and intensified investment is illustrated by Philadelphia's LandCare Program; and offers an intriguing alternative for Detroit as the city confronts its own problem.

The community engagement process displayed by the Detroit Works Project may help explain some of its shortcomings and proposed injustices. The director of community engagement for the project admits that it began as a top-down approach and they are only recently trying to incorporate more bottom-up approaches. The divergence between a grassroots community revitalization program like LEAP and a top-down project like Detroit Works is striking, and the projects differed most on engaged dialogue with the residents it meant to serve. Aspects of the plan have merits and it should not be dismissed entirely. Rather, a more intensified discussion with residents is encouraged to plan specific actions within specific geographies. Though Dan Pitera argues geographic-specific guidelines were never intended "because then it would be us telling citizens what to do," I argue that their published framework indirectly accomplishes the same (Pitera 2012). By labeling neighborhoods as distressed and proposing their reversion back to woodlands, Detroit Works has discursively rendered them obsolete; setting them as off-limits to potential investors or residents, while further decimating property values for the remaining residents. While many focused revitalization strategies similar to LEAP is the next logical step for Detroit Works, the damage of releasing a broad framework based on

market indicators has further devalued large portions of already marginalized land in Detroit.

Detroit does not offer an environment conducive to effective citizen mobilization against the Detroit Works Project. Neoliberal governance has forced community development organizations to assume roles more traditionally prescribed to formal government, further isolating citizens from decision-making. Additionally, due to the ascent of the public-private partnership, decision-making comes to lie in the hands of a few powerful funders. As community development organizations rely on funding from these foundations, they often have to get-in-line with policies they may not agree with or risk falling out of favor, a risk most are not willing to take. Thus, the voices which citizens now depend on to be heard are muzzled in order to continue receipt of funds. Already competitive for funding, Detroit Works pits its community organizations against one another in its crafting of 'winners and losers,' precluding the opportunity for scaled-up linkages. As such, Detroiters are forced to navigate a fragmented local territory decimated by government retrenchment in order to find democratic outlets; in this case finding those outlets to be working for the same decision-makers which they mean to oppose.

Detroit's regional disconnect magnifies the isolation of the most marginalized Detroiters. Detroit is itself largely isolated within its surrounding region; examples of regional cooperation are hard to provide, beginning with the region's lack of a regional transportation authority. While most American metropolises work to elevate their region in a competitive global hierarchy, Detroit spins its wheels fighting continuous battles between city and suburb. As historic racial tension manifests itself in contemporary

political battles, it is the poorest and most underserved Detroiters left behind as evidenced in the plan of the Detroit Works Project. While some regionalization is implied in the Detroit Works Project (like transportation,) the plan is city-centric and aims to make Detroit more competitive regionally in . However unlikely, this research calls for a regional approach to Detroit's problems due to the nature of their origin. Detroit can survive without regional assistance, and the region can survive without interaction with the center-city, but the shared success of each entity rests with their ability to move beyond historical contention towards a more cooperative future framework. Thus, I advocate not for a radical restructuring of Detroit, but for a radical restructuring of regional politics and interaction which will improve the quality of life for all Detroiters, open the city to a suburban population nostalgic for the past, and elevate the region as it struggles to remain globally and nationally competitive.

Comprehensive consideration of the Detroit Works Project's proposal for reduction in essential services in areas possessing disproportionately impoverished, undereducated, and public transportation-reliant citizens – citizens who face obstacles in mobilization against the plan – elevates the importance of urban social justice and its adherence. As Isis Marion Young (1990) argues, all reasonable persons share the assumption that "basic equality in life for all persons is a moral value; that there are deep injustices in our society that can be rectified only by basic institutional changes; that various social groups are oppressed; and that structures of domination wrongfully pervade our society." Additionally highlighting the importance of institutional changes in order to create a framework allowing for full and effective participation in decision-making by oppressed groups, Young (1990) argues:

> Justice is not identical with the good life as such. Rather social justice concerns the degree to which a society contains and supports the institutional conditions necessary for the realization of... values essential to the construction of the "good life": 1) developing and exercising one's capacities and expressing one's experience, and 2) participating in determining one's action and the conditions of one's action

Young (1990) stresses the importance of these values due to the co-existence of social forces which define injustice: "oppression, the institutional constraint on self-development, and domination, the institutional constraint on self-determination." It is my hope that this research will contribute to a reframing of restructuring in Detroit based on principles of justice outlined by Young – and a distancing from the use of differences (personal, racial, market-based) to reinforce structures of oppression and domination.

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