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GREETINGS FROM THE “MOTOR CITY”
“THE FORMER MOTOR CITY:” 30% LAND VACANT, UNDERMAINTAINED, ABANDONED

Locations of Vacant Parcels and Residential Structures in Detroit

Legend
- Black: Vacant 1-4 Unit Residential Structure
- Red: Vacant Lot

Source: City of Detroit Planning and Development Department. NU/LD, 6-27-2012
TWO PERSPECTIVES ON LAND USE POLICY: MICRO & MACRO

Micro perspective focuses on, e.g.:

- land use zoning
- land banking
- blight removal
- green & blue infrastructure
- urban farming & forestry
- commercial corridor redevelopment
- “right-sizing” city footprint

Macro perspective focuses on:

countering regional forces eroding DEMAND for city land of all types
Describe regional “Urban Disassembly Line” eroding Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit & Philadelphia

Describe 3 federal / state policy foci for countering “Urban Disassembly Line:”

--- where development most profitable

--- where affordable housing is located

--- how local gov’ts raise revenues
URBAN DISASSEMBLY LINE:

OVERVIEW

Suburban new housing construction in excess of regional household formation
→ Excess housing supply in region
→ Chain of moves ultimately vacating least-competitive housing in region (mostly in City)
→ Undermaintained, Vacant & eventually Abandoned buildings & land in City
→ Selective Population loss from City
→ Retail & Commercial Disinvestment in City
→ Erosion of City’s income & property tax revenues, quality of public services
→ City’s competitiveness falls; More demand for suburban land…Perpetuation of process
Suburban new housing construction in excess of regional household formation:

annual ave. 10,000 (1950-2010)

Undermaintained, Vacant & Abandoned buildings in Detroit (2009):

10% of habitable dwellings vacant
30% of land area of Detroit vacant parcels
3% of parcels w/ abandoned dwellings
Selective suburbanization of population

*Detroit lost 60%+ population since peak*

*Vast majority outmovers white & not poor*

*2010 Detroit pop. 90% minority; 38% poor*

Retail and Commercial Disinvestment

*# Establishments ↓ 65% (1972-2002)*
Erosion of Detroit’s income & property tax revenues, quality of public services

Assessed Values ↓ 79% (1958 peak)
Income Tax $↓ 76% (1972 peak)
bankruptcy July 2013; $18 billion debt

→ Less demand for City land; More demand for suburban locations
Population Trends in Metropolitan Detroit Since 1900

- Detroit Total Pop
- Suburban Total Pop
- Regional Total Pop
Federal and/or State gov’ts must require

CHANGE IN THE RULES:

--- where development most profitable

--- where affordable housing is located

--- how local gov’ts raise revenues
WHAT SHOULD BE DONE? EXAMPLES

--- est. growth boundary @ urban fringe

--- adopt inclusionary housing strategy

--- resuscitate revenue sharing
Recognize regional “Urban Disassembly Line” eroding Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit & Philadelphia

Advocate 3 federal / state policy foci countering “Urban Disassembly Line:”

--- where development most profitable

--- where affordable housing is located

--- how local gov’ts raise revenues
THANK YOU