



Community & Economic Development

Detroit Future City (DFC) is dedicated to a long-term vision for Detroit built on equitable economic opportunities and outcomes for all Detroiters, and a diverse range of thriving neighborhoods for people of all incomes. DFC promotes strategies that meet the needs of current residents and support local businesses, while also attracting new residents and encouraging economic growth.

The Need for Equitable and Inclusive Development

More than 35 percent of Detroit's residents live at or below the federal poverty line, and the median income for all Detroiters is less than half of that for the metro area. The number of jobs is growing, but unemployment remains high, and many Detroiters must commute outside the city for work. Creating economic opportunity for all Detroiters through business attraction, small-business creation, neighborhood-based enterprises, and workforce development will improve the quality of life across the city.

After decades of population loss, Detroit is stabilizing, even growing in some areas. High levels of vacancy remain across much of the city. Homeownership rates have fallen and the city now has more renters than owners for the first time in decades. Despite low property values overall, affordable housing remains a major challenge for many. Growing concerns about rising housing costs, and the potential for economic displacement, require pro-active strategies to preserve affordable housing and ensure inclusion.

There are more than 900 vacant industrial buildings and thousands of vacant commercial structures in Detroit. Nearly a quarter of the city's land is vacant. These buildings and properties present an opportunity for transformation. With innovative development strategies, some of these vacant buildings could be turned into economic assets that create jobs and wealth within neighborhoods. The development of walkable, higher-density, mixed-use communities can foster an opportunity to create a more sustainable and vibrant economy.

Community and Economic Development Strategic Goals

To advance the vision of an equitable and sustainable city—with employment and wealth-building opportunities for all in healthy, affordable and diverse neighborhoods—DFC has adopted the following five-year goals for community and economic development:

- Strengthen the service delivery system for developing, managing and improving the quality of existing single-family rental properties in Detroit neighborhoods.
- Design pioneering approaches for the adaptive reuse of vacant industrial properties.
- Improve racial and economic equity in entrepreneurship and strengthen local small businesses and commercial corridors.

Community and Economic Development Programs

DFC's initiatives are focused on strategies to encourage safe and affordable housing, stabilize neighborhood housing markets, and encourage the productive reuse of vacant industrial land and buildings. These initiatives include:

- **Detroit Neighborhood Housing Compact:** In partnership with the Urban Institute, DFC is organizing a cross-sector stakeholder group focused on strengthening the single-family housing market in Detroit neighborhoods, including both for-sale and for-rent market segments.
- **Single-family Rental Housing Study:** Working with the University of Michigan's Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, DFC is sponsoring a study of single-family rental housing in two Detroit neighborhoods. The study will develop recommendations for incorporating safe, affordable, single-family rental housing into an integrated strategy for neighborhood stabilization and revitalization.
- **Adaptive Reuse of Industrial Property Study:** DFC is leading an effort to explore strategies for the innovative reuse of vacant industrial land and buildings. Working with a broad group of public- and private-sector partners, the study seeks to catalyze development in ways that reduce blight, mitigate environmental hazards, create neighborhood jobs, and promote healthy, safe and sustainable neighborhoods.
- **Technical Assistance and Collaboration:** DFC is lending support and expertise to a variety of collaborative initiatives on diverse issues, such as commercial corridor revitalization, economic mobility, entrepreneurialism, equitable development, community land trusts, and neighborhood planning.

“Before moving forward, it is important to understanding where Detroit is today, and how the city got here.”



“Creating economic opportunity and increasing the ratio of jobs to Detroit residents is directly tied to the financial stability of the city.”