PRESERVING NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC THROUGH THE FOOD SYSTEM

Flint, Michigan
Weak Market Case Study

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Flint, MI – Weak Market Case

- Population Decline
- Tax base does not support infrastructure that was built during boom times
- Neighborhoods Structured around industry and schools - neighborhood fabric
- Lack of new vision = need for stabilization
- Social polarization – young people do not remember the good times
Urban Gardening and Agriculture in Flint

Cities have always grown and changed because of the food system – Food is universal
Why Local Food in Flint?

- **Vacant land** – declining tax base/increasing maintenance cost
- **Health** – critical health outcomes/limited individual access to fundamentals for healthier lives
- **Empowerment** – the difference that can be made with a shovel
- **Neighborhood fabric** – increased sense of safety, building neighbor relationships
## HEALTH

### Should and Do Diets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Flint 2008 &quot;Do&quot;</th>
<th>Flint 2008 &quot;Should&quot;</th>
<th>Genesee County 2008 &quot;Do&quot;</th>
<th>Genesee County 2008 &quot;Should&quot;</th>
<th>Deficit / Excess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>8,512,479</td>
<td>14,751,672</td>
<td>33,434,877</td>
<td>58,744,863</td>
<td>-6,239,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>2,610,617</td>
<td>5,508,308</td>
<td>10,253,847</td>
<td>21,946,275</td>
<td>-2,897,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>19,238,985</td>
<td>16,109,317</td>
<td>75,565,900</td>
<td>63,948,083</td>
<td>3,129,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/Eggs</td>
<td>28,962,653</td>
<td>23,472,725</td>
<td>113,758,025</td>
<td>93,668,337</td>
<td>5,489,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>29,672,782</td>
<td>47,735,708</td>
<td>116,547,234</td>
<td>189,337,690</td>
<td>-18,062,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Food Consumption</strong></td>
<td><strong>89,689,399</strong></td>
<td><strong>108,138,465</strong></td>
<td><strong>352,277,425</strong></td>
<td><strong>429,882,872</strong></td>
<td><strong>-18,449,066</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers represent pounds of food
Harvesting Earth Educational Farm

Urban Self Defense

Or

Sustainable neighborhood design
Vacant Land in Flint

Created by Rick Sadler, GIS Analyst
rsadler4@gmail.com
Distress and emergency food
Urban gardens and farms
Local Food in Genesee County
Neighborhood Food Security

20 Families

Goals:
- Feed 20 families for one year with a core diet of fresh, locally produced food.
- Develop an economically sustainable model for creating healthy food access at market rate.

Teaching Garden - Cavalry Lutheran

Buying Cooperative
- Local Farm/Garden Produce
- Other local food products
- Dry Goods, Staples, other

Community Food Hub
- Food aggregation
- Preservation (Freezing, Canning)
- Processing and distribution

Farmers
- Trim Pines
- Knickerbocker
- Urban Farmers

Gardeners
- Cavalry Lutheran
- Resurrection Reform
- Asbury Methodist
- Community/Market gardens

Other
- Local food businesses
- Conventional
Food Waste

40% of Food Produced in the current system is wasted due to long value chain and over portioning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Consumed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grain Products</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and Vegetables</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages calculated collectively for USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.
Thoughts for Discussion

- Low Maintenance strategies
- Zoning – form follows function
- Ecological services and biodiversity – Rethink the value of land
- Developing a sense of neighborhood commons
- Creativity/exploration – tolerance for risk
- “Space carries a burden”
- Food Security