Release from Detroit Data Collaborative

Detroit Data Collaborative Releases Landmark Residential Survey Data

Citywide survey shows more than 218,000 homes in good or fair condition

Detroit, Michigan, February 21, 2010 - The Detroit Data Collaborative reported today that a landmark survey of Detroit's residential property showed 86% of the city's single-family homes appear to be in good condition, and another 9% generally only need minor repairs. In all that means more than 218,000, or 95% of the city's single-family homes appear to be suitable for occupancy.

The Data Collaborative, a joint effort by the Detroit Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response (FPR), Community Legal Resources (CLR) and Data Driven Detroit (D3), surveyed every residential property with one to four housing units in Detroit. This includes single-family houses, duplexes, and multi-family structures up to four units, but not large apartment buildings or commercial structures.

The survey also found that 26% of the city's residential parcels - or 91,000 lots - are now vacant. Data from the survey should help planners by showing exactly where the vacant lots are. (The survey did not identify vacant property that is primarily industrial or commercial.)

"This important survey busts the national media myth that all of Detroit has fallen into complete disarray," said Diane McCloskey, Director of Community Initiatives, Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response. "While it is obvious that the city is still in deep housing distress, it is significant that there are more than 200-thousand single-family homes here that form a foundation for stable neighborhoods and growth."

Government officials, community organizations and individuals will have unprecedented access to the data collected in the survey, which is being analyzed by blocks, neighborhoods and larger districts within the city. Individuals visiting the web site: www.detroitparcelsurvey.org will be able to view a block or neighborhood profile just by typing in a residential property address.

Kurt Metzger, Director, D3 said, "What this survey really tells us is that we can't paint Detroit with broad brush strokes. It is a city of neighborhoods - neighborhoods that are just as different from one another as each suburb is from its neighbors. In order to truly understand Detroit, we have to drill down to the neighborhood level and begin to look at all the factors -- housing, environment, health, access, public safety, infrastructure - everything that interactively contributes to quality of life and life outcomes."

Heidi Mucherie, Executive Director of Community Legal Resources said, "This is a valuable tool for every community group trying to stabilize or strengthen its neighborhood. Additionally, the dataset's information on vacancy and condition can help us better understand the impact of foreclosure on the fabric of Detroit's neighborhoods."

McCloskey added, "What we have delivered is a foundation for informed decision-making about the long-term transformation and revitalization of Detroit. The data from

this survey is independent, neutral and transparent."

About the survey

The Detroit Residential Property Survey was conducted during August and September 2009 using University of Michigan students and Detroit residents working in three-person teams. Equipped with maps and lists of individual parcels, the teams drove on every residential street, indicating parcels that were vacant lots and reporting the primary characteristics of each house that was present.

Without leaving the vehicle, surveyors observed the condition of the house, as seen from the street, and made their best assessment of whether or not it appeared to be occupied. They specifically looked for signs that a house had fire damage or seemed suitable for demolition.

The University of Michigan Ginsberg Center, which promotes and organizes community service learning projects, recruited and managed the survey crews. Data Driven Detroit consulted on the survey tools and is managing the data and public web site. Detroit Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response raised funds from Living Cities to conduct the survey and administered the overall project. Community Legal Resources' Detroit Vacant Property Campaign provided technical assistance, drafted the survey tools and provided liaison to community groups who will be using the data and reporting condition changes.

About the partners in the Detroit Data Collaborative

Detroit Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response (FPR)
The Detroit Office of Foreclosure Prevention and Response (FPR) is an independent public/private organization that serves as a centralized clearinghouse to share tools, resources and recommendations to leverage and enhance the work of its partners to reduce the effects of the foreclosure crisis on Detroit families and neighborhoods. FPR is funded by grants through the Detroit Economic Growth Association (DEGA), which is part of the non-profit Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC). FPR does not provide any direct services to homeowners, but supports foreclosure prevention education through a variety of activities including www.foreclosuredetroit.org.

Community Legal Resources, Detroit Vacant Property Campaign
Community Legal Resources (CLR) supports nonprofits and community-based organizations doing business in Detroit and throughout Michigan. CLR's legal and professional services create stronger organizations, more viable community development projects and critically important resources for battling the current foreclosure and vacant property crisis. CLR leads a collaborative initiative called the Detroit Vacant Property Campaign that empowers communities and organizations to turn vacant properties into assets. For more information, visit www.clronline.org.

Data Driven Detroit
Data Driven Detroit (formerly the Detroit-Area Community Information System – D-ACIS) was formed with a mission to gather data and information in order to provide evidence for programs, grants and research that promote economic prosperity for the Detroit Metropolitan Area. Through the combination of advanced information technology, data sharing agreements, professional expertise, research and community partnerships, D3 analyzes neighborhood level indicators and conditions. As a data repository and technical assistance partner, D3 is dedicated to the inclusion of the evolving needs of the community in coordinated and evidence-based planning, program, and policy decisions that improve the quality of life for Metro Detroit area residents. For more information, visit www.datadrivendetroit.org.

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Media Resources

A number of tools and images are available for media use. Click on the links to a download page.

· A web-resolution PDF presentation that includes citywide maps and tables
· A higher resolution PDF set of citywide maps

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