

Jefferson-Chalmers Neighborhood Framework Plan

Detroit, Michigan



An historic, waterfront neighborhood plagued by flooding and high vacancy rates is poised for ecological, economic, and community renewal, thanks to a plan that embraces economic redevelopment, land stewardship, and green infrastructure.

several decades, this historic neighborhood has experienced increasing vacancy rates and flooding challenges.

and strengthening neighborhood assets, and improving economic opportunities, social vitality, housing, and mobility.



In an effort to strengthen neighborhood vibrancy, resilience, and economic development, the City of Detroit sought to create a neighborhood development and implementation plan for Jefferson Chalmers. Given the neighborhood's location and history, the City called for a plan with a specific focus on land stewardship and green stormwater infrastructure, commercial corridor improvements, historic preservation, and rehabilitation development. As part of a team led by W Architecture, Biohabitats worked with the City and the community to craft a plan that provides an actionable "road map" for transforming vacant landscapes into productive, sustainable, and beautiful community spaces, preserving

After assessing the neighborhood's past and current ecological and hydrologic conditions, Biohabitats identified opportunities to integrate green infrastructure while making use of the canal system and vacant land to improve the neighborhood's water quality, beauty, ecology, and long-term resilience. Recommended strategies included living shorelines, green bulkheads, wildlife alley corridors, streetscape BMPs, blue and green roofs, and bioretention and native plantings in community gathering spaces.

Located along the Detroit River on the east side of Detroit, the Jefferson-Chalmers neighborhood boasts 160 acres of waterfront parkland and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities. The neighborhood had once been part of the Grand Marais wetlands along the shores of

the Detroit River and Lake Saint Claire, a vibrant and raucous habitat teeming with migratory birds and aquatic species. Now it boasts 100-year old brick streets and the city's only remaining canal system, which once served as a smuggling route during prohibition. Over the last

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800.220.0919
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