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DEINDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

A NEW ECONOMY FOR DETROIT'S VACANT LANDS

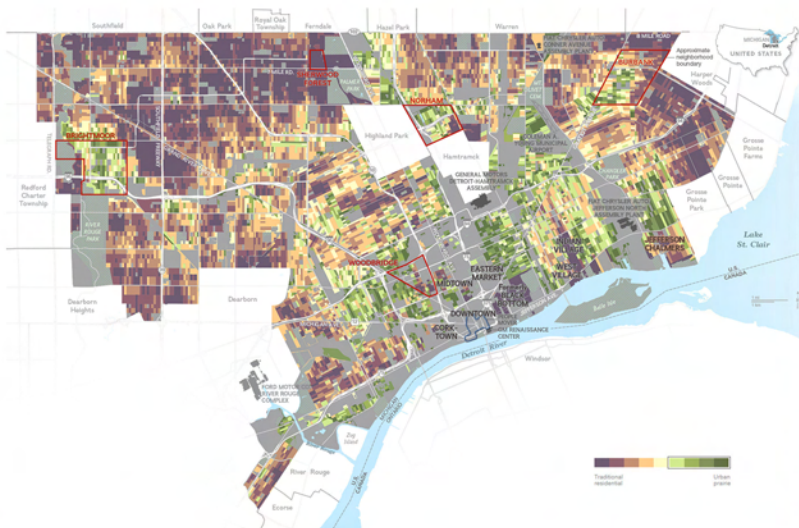
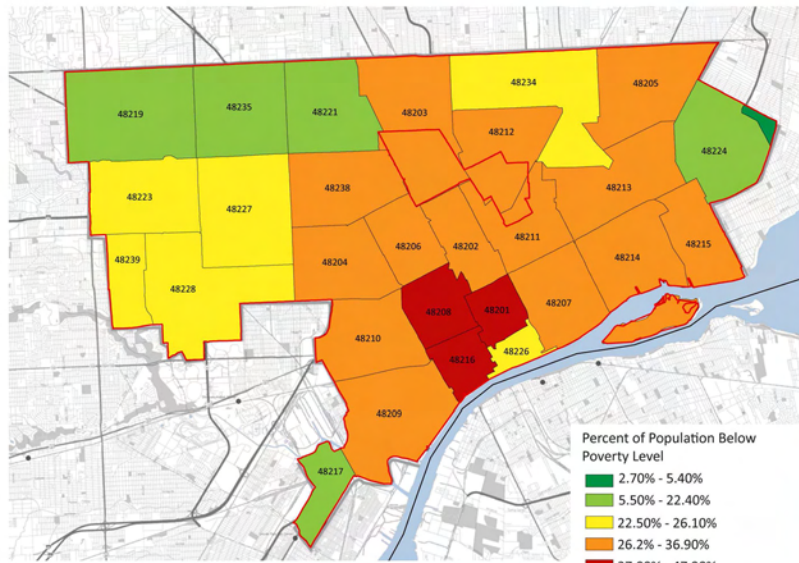
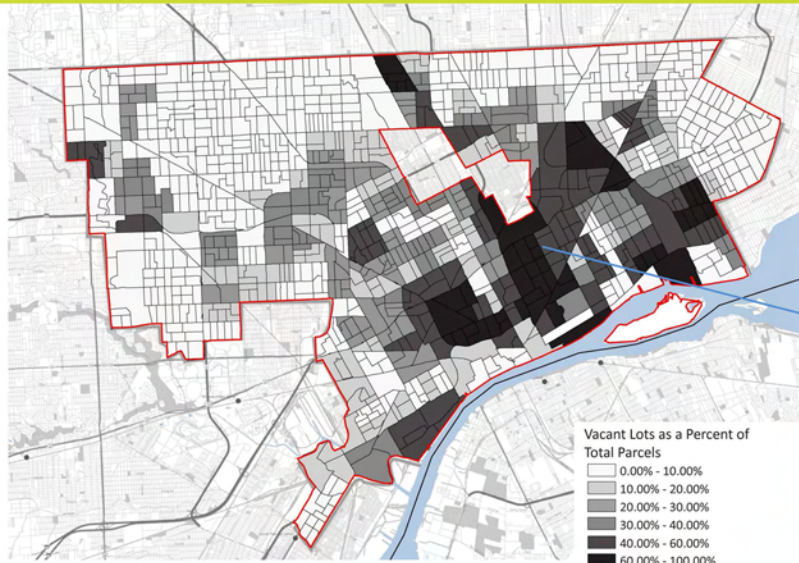
THE CITY OF DETROIT IS FACING A LONG TERM DEINDUSTRIALIZATION PROCESS. BOUND TO THE WEAKENING OF THE AUTOMOTIVE SYSTEM, THIS SIGNIFICANT CONDITION OF URBAN SHRINKAGE AND DECLINE IS NOT ONLY THE RESULT OF THE PULLING BACK OF THE AUTOMOTIVE SYSTEM.

THIS SITUATION OF DEEP CRISIS HAS ITS CLEAR SPATIAL EVIDENCE IN THE ALTERATION OF THE URBAN LANDS. IT IS THE STORY OF ALMOST 100 SQUARE KILOMETERS OF "NON-VIRGIN" TERRITORY, OF UNUSED, DESERTED, ABANDONED, UNPURPOSED "CITY-NOT-CITY", CHANGING AFTER A PAST SEASON OF URBANIZATION, MODIFICATION AND LAYERING OF MEANINGS, USES, VALUES, IDENTITIES.

THE MANAGEMENT, TREATMENT AND USE OF VACANT LANDS IN DETROIT IS PLAYING A PROACTIVE ROLE IN THE GENERATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS. THE SPATIAL PERSPECTIVE SEEMS TO INTERTWINE TO NEW CONCEPTS FOR BUILT ENVIRONMENT, THE STRUCTURING OF INNOVATIVE FORMS OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN LOCAL ACTORS, THE APPEARING OF NEW SPACES FOR CITIZENSHIP.

THIS IS THE CASE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE: ROOTING ITS ORIGINS AS AN INFORMAL DYNAMIC, IT IS MORE AND MORE A MEAN TO INVENT NEW USES, TO FOSTER PLACE-MAKING, TO GENERATE NEW URBAN IDENTITIES AS FAR AS TO ENCOURAGE INNOVATIVE WAYS TO ENGAGE LOCAL SOCIETY FRAMING UNPRECEDENTED PARTNERSHIPS.

THE JUXTAPOSITION OF PRACTICES, PROJECTS AND EXPERIENCES RELATED TO URBAN AGRICULTURE AS A MORE OR LESS DELIBERATE STRATEGY TO FACE THE NEGLIGENCE AND ABANDONMENT OF URBAN SEGMENTS, OPENS THE REFLECTION TO THE MANIFOLD REALITY OF THOSE CITIES OF THE WORLD FACING THE CONSEQUENCES OF SHRINKAGE AND DEINDUSTRIALIZATION.



Diagrams 1, 2, 4 - Vacancy in Detroit, Poverty in Detroit and Scale of Urban Agriculture efforts - belong to 'The Detroit Works Project' Policy audits reports, 2010. Diagram 3 belongs to the National Geographic Project 'Taking back Detroit' (mapping Detroit, 2014). Pictures 1, 3, 4 are by Alexis Mac Lean and belong to the series 'Exposures. Detroit by air' (2014). Picture number 2 is by Federico Scoppa and belongs to the series 'Detroit Blues' (2012).

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