

Urban Farm Planned for New Fernwood Green District, Toledo, Ohio

The City of Toledo and its partners are using urban agriculture as one of the major redevelopment strategies for a newly designated future green district containing multiple brownfield properties. The city plans to reuse a two-acre, former spark plug manufacturing site as the location of the Fernwood Growing Center. The site is within a Brownfields Impact Area along the Detroit-Smead Corridor, which contains 19 brownfields and nearly 200 vacant lots. This corridor runs through one of Toledo's housing priority districts, where there is a high rate of poverty. Residents report that the closest source of fresh produce is over two miles away.

With the help of EPA funding and technical assistance from EPA Region 5, the green district pilot project will be completed in two phases. Phase one focused on the development of a business planning tool that can be used as a framework by all communities interested in urban agriculture projects. This tool will help assess the infrastructure, tasks, relationships, and costs required to create a sustainable urban agriculture project. Phase two will evaluate opportunities for urban agriculture and other sustainable development projects that will form the foundation of a "green district." Reuse of the sites within the Detroit-Smead Corridor will spur an overall revitalization of the area, improve environmental quality, provide career opportunities for local residents, improve access to nutritious food, and provide the neighborhood with a new optimism.



Potential layout of the Fernwood Growing Center