

DANIEL BANUELOS  
PROFESSOR P.  
CSUF; CPSC 311  
FINAL PRESENTATION

# Detroit: Park vs. Company

# Overview

- ▶ First we gain a broad understanding of the following three topics
  - ▶ Detroit
    - ▶ Economic Standing
    - ▶ Social Standing
  - ▶ Park
    - ▶ Pros
    - ▶ Cons
  - ▶ Tech. Company
    - ▶ Pros
    - ▶ Cons
- ▶ Apply our new knowledge to what Detroit needs.
- ▶ Declare why the park is the desired option.

# Detroit- Economic Standing

- ▶ Detroit, the metropolitan city, suffered bankruptcy in 2013.
- ▶ Declining fortunes in their primary source of income – Automobile manufacturing.
- ▶ Experienced loss in population and tax base.
- ▶ Bureau of Census reports that the full-time employment declined from 18,800 in 1999 to 13,700 in 2009. A decline of 24.3% which is in line to the decrease of 24.9% of population.
- ▶ Property taxes declined to 74% of its 2007 level in 2012.

# Detroit- Social Standing

- ▶ Black population increased from ~740k to ~1000k and the majority occurred in the central city. Only a slight increase of black population in suburbs.
- ▶ Detroit became racially divided between the central city and the suburbs.
- ▶ The poverty rate in the city was 14.7% but shot up to 32.6% in 1990.
- ▶ Murders per 100,000 population increased from an already high 33 to 57.
- ▶ The city has approximately 60,000 vacant parcels of land and about 78,000 vacant structures.
- ▶ Unreliable services: bus transportation, Fire Department, Public Lighting Department (many of the street-lights do not work).

# Park- Pros

## ▶ Public Health Benefits

- ▶ Physical Activity reduces risk of premature death.
- ▶ Evidence shows that parks = more exercise (25.6% increase of people exercising 3+ days a week & 48.4% increase in frequency)
- ▶ Exposure to nature makes people healthier psychologically.

## ▶ Economic Benefits

- ▶ Real estate market indicates that people are willing to pay more for a property located close to parks.
- ▶ Attracting and retaining businesses and residents
- ▶ Boeing: Dallas vs Chicago
- ▶ Tourism Benefits

# Park- Pros

## ▶ Social Benefits

- ▶ Parks make inner-city neighborhoods more livable
- ▶ Offer recreational opportunities
- ▶ In Fort Myers, Florida, police documented a 28% drop in juvenile arrests after the city implemented STARS (a recreational program).
- ▶ Research shows that neighborhoods with green space are more likely to enjoy stronger social ties.

## ▶ Environmental Benefits

- ▶ Pollution abatement and cooling: trees act as natural filters for water pollution, trees also act as natural air conditioners.
- ▶ Controlling stormwater runoff: American Forests estimates that trees in the nation's metropolitan areas save the cities \$400 billion in the cost of building stormwater retention facilities.

# Park- Cons

- ▶ Increase of retail market value means that the owners pay higher property taxes.
- ▶ Need to maintain the parks, otherwise they could become a hub for crime.
- ▶ Compared to the large Tech. Company, a park will lack in economic growth.

# Tech. Company- Pros

- ▶ Economic Growth.
- ▶ The city of Detroit has suffered loss on employment and population because of the declining business that it automobile manufacturing.
- ▶ The one economic standpoint that has worked for Detroit is employment at the professional level, which the Tech. Company fulfills.



# Tech. Company- Cons

- ▶ The share of GDP generated by America's 100 biggest companies rose from about 33% in 1994 to 46% in 2013.
  - ▶ The number of startups is lower than it has been at any time.
- ▶ Paying taxes seems to be unavoidable for individuals but optional for firms.
- ▶ Profits do not translate into jobs as they once did.
  - ▶ Top 3 carmakers in Detroit had a market capitalization of \$36 billion and 1.2 million employees.
  - ▶ Top 3 firms in Silicon Valley has a market capitalization of over \$1 trillion and only 137k employees.

# Decision

- ▶ The implementation of a city park or multiple parks scattered throughout the city would be more beneficial to the city of Detroit.
- ▶ With the current circumstances of Detroit, I believe the Park could uplift the perception and social issues within the city.
  - ▶ Parks which attract tourism and can revitalize neighborhoods will be beneficial in changing the current perception of Detroit.
- ▶ Detroit is not suitable (as it now stands) for a Tech. Company to settle in.
  - ▶ Poor infrastructure, and the Quality of Life is not suitable to sustain the needs of employees. (the city is not attractive)
- ▶ First, we need to raise the city in numerous ways, which the Park could do.

# Summary

- ▶ We covered the current circumstances of the city of Detroit.
- ▶ We investigated the problems the city is facing.
- ▶ Then from a broad point of view, we used examples and research to find the pros and cons of park implementations in cities around America.
- ▶ Similarly we did the same for big businesses.
- ▶ Then, with the understanding of Detroit and finding what it needs most; the park seemed to be the most effective change the city needs now.
- ▶ Detroit is not ready for a Tech. Company just yet!

# Finale- Q&A

- ▶ Thank you for your consideration.

# References

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- ▶ McDonald, John F. “What Happened to and in Detroit?” Vol. 51, 2014.
- ▶ Sherer, Paul M. “The Benefits of Parks: Why American Needs More City Parks and Open Space.” 2006.