



# Press Release

City of Detroit • Mike Duggan, Mayor

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 16, 2016**

**CONTACT:** Linda Clark, 313-236-0282 or [clarkli@detroitmi.gov](mailto:clarkli@detroitmi.gov)  
Bryan Peckinpaugh, 313-410-2954 or [peckinpaughb@detroitmi.gov](mailto:peckinpaughb@detroitmi.gov)

## **Detroit Water and Sewerage Department and the University of Michigan Water Center to Celebrate New Bioretention Gardens on City's Westside**

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is leading a celebration of four "Bioretention Gardens" utilizing vacant land following demolition of houses in Detroit's Cody Rouge neighborhood by the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA). The "Bioretention Gardens" are designed to capture and soak up stormwater while beautifying the neighborhood. A brief ceremony led by Detroit Councilman Gabe Leland will occur this Wednesday, May 18 at 10 a.m. at 8287 Evergreen Road.

University of Michigan (U of M) faculty, supported by an Erb Family Foundation grant to the U of M Water Center, conceptualized the project and worked with DLBA, the Cody Rouge Community Action Alliance, and Warrendale Community Organization to survey residents about the garden concepts. DWSD led the project implementation, funding the costs of design and construction. As DWSD's Green Infrastructure Program consultant, Tetra Tech oversaw the technical design and implementation of the Bioretention Gardens. Detroit-based Toolles Contracting Group, LLC spearheaded the garden construction.

Each garden is expected to achieve an average annual stormwater volume reduction of 300,000 gallons and should help reduce street flooding during big storms. The pilot project shows how vacant properties can become green infrastructure that enhances neighborhood quality of life while improving water quality in the Rouge River and the Great Lakes.

"DWSD is committed to reducing the flow of stormwater in our combined sewer system and decreasing the volume of untreated combined sewage discharged into the Rouge River," said **Palencia Mobley**, DWSD deputy director and chief engineer. "The four Bioretention Gardens on Detroit Land Bank Authority property provide this impact while adding value to the neighborhood. We are grateful to our partners for their involvement in this collaborative process. We look forward to creating additional green infrastructure projects in our city with community partners."

U of M developed school curriculum that helps to explain DWSD's engineering of the Bioretention Gardens to students. Teachers and students at Dixon Educational Learning Academy, mere blocks from the Bioretention Gardens, are the first to utilize the new curriculum. Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, Dixon students will complete a hands-on activity at the gardens.

Confirmed speakers include:

- **Gabe Leland**, councilman, Detroit City Council;
- **Palencia Mobley**, deputy director and chief engineer, Detroit Water and Sewerage Department; and
- **Joan Nassauer**, professor of landscape architecture, School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan.

Other participating project partners include:

- **Kenyetta Campbell**, executive director, Cody Rouge Community Action Alliance;
- **Barb Matney**, president, Warrendale Community Organization;

-more-



# Press Release

City of Detroit • Mike Duggan, Mayor

- **Jodee Raines**, vice president of programs, Erb Family Foundation;
- **Kellie DuBay and Carol Hufnagel**, DWSD Green Infrastructure Program consultants, Tetra Tech; and
- **Detroit Land Bank Authority.**

The Bioretention Gardens celebration will take place at 8287 Evergreen Road on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at 10 - 11 a.m. Attendees should park on Constance Street. The event will occur even in light rain.

### **About the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department**

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) serves more than 200,000 Detroit residential and commercial customers. DWSD's water network consists of more than 2,700 miles of transmission and distribution mains and nearly 3,000 miles of sewer collection piping.

To learn more about the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department or to request water services, make payments, or report water problems, call Customer Care at 313-267-8000 or contact us at: [www.detroitmi.gov/dwsd](http://www.detroitmi.gov/dwsd).

###