



2009 State of the City

City of Pittsburgh



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[Foreword]

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission (CPC) was established in August 2005 through legislation introduced to City Council by Councilman Doug Shields and co-sponsored by Council members Dan Deasy, Bill Peduto and then-Council member Luke Ravenstahl. The CPC's mission is: *to work to improve the environmental quality of life of Pittsburgh residents through litter and illegal dumping prevention, clean-up and enforcement.*

The CPC is comprised of 15 representatives from various City departments, local non-profits, individuals and community groups. The activities of the CPC are focused in three primary areas: 1) monitoring/awareness/prevention; 2) clean-up; and 3) enforcement. The primary function of the CPC is to provide oversight, direction, leadership, resources and assistance to community groups and individuals while serving as the liaison between these groups and the appropriate City departments.

The CPC is expected to issue an annual report on its activities to the Mayor and City Council. In 2008, the first report was compiled establishing benchmarks in three primary areas thus initiating a process for us to follow henceforth.

[Introduction]

This report contains an overview of waste management and blight and property issues, including litter, illegal dumping, vacant lots and buildings, abandoned cars, graffiti, and recycling in the City of Pittsburgh.

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission's vision is for Pittsburgh to be recognized as one of America's cleanest cities. We see Pittsburgh as a place where images of a dirty steel town are those of our past. Our City's government and its citizens are dedicated to making Pittsburgh a cleaner and greener place.

Highlights from this report include:

- 20,000 volunteers participated in spring and fall Redd Ups. Half of them were elementary school to college students;
- Several hundred tons of litter from streets, lots and illegal dumps were removed by Public Works and special Redd Up crews;
- Recycling programs saved the city \$300,000 in landfill costs;
- More than 2,000 abandoned cars were removed from streets and lots;
- More green programs to reduce blight, revitalize vacant lots, involve neighborhood residents and return property to the tax rolls were initiated.

This is the State of Our City, category by category for 2009.

[Litter]

For the third consecutive year, Citywide Redd Ups were held in the spring and fall of 2009 and attracted 20,000 volunteers in more than 80 City neighborhoods. Students in public schools and colleges accounted for half the volunteers. Additionally, a smaller Redd Up was held in many high-profile neighborhoods and places prior to the G-20 Summit in September. The backbone of the Redd Ups is the network of Clean Pittsburgh Stewards who organize, recruit, designate clean up areas, manage, distribute supplies and coordinate trash pickups.

The CPC, along with Citizens Against Litter, is the driving force behind the Redd Ups. Allegheny CleanWays, PA Resources Council, Public Works and PennDOT provide clean up supplies. Communities in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington and Westmoreland counties hold their litter cleanups at the same time and add another 20,000 volunteers.

| 2009 Events | Participating Neighborhoods | Volunteers | Trash/ Recyclables Collected |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| April 17-19 | 80 | 10,000 | 100 tons |
| October 16-18 | 80 | 10,000 | 100 tons |

[Litter Education in Pittsburgh Schools]

2009 marked the summation of the seventeenth year of the Stash the Trash Program. For the past 17 years schools throughout the City of Pittsburgh have participated in Stash the Trash Day, a clean-up event held twice a year where students pick up litter around their schools. The CPC collaborates with Pittsburgh Public Schools as well as a number of private and parochial schools throughout the City to host this event and to show students how they can make a difference in their community. The City of Pittsburgh supplies all schools with bags and gloves as well as help in picking up their recyclables.

The following information indicates the number of schools participating in Stash the Trash for 2009:

- Schools Participating: 48
- Students Participating: 5,631
- Trash Bags Collected: 746
- Bags of Recyclables Collected: 198

[Illegal Dumping]

Pittsburgh still has a legacy of illegal dumping left over from days when waste disposal was nonexistent or limited. Expanded recycling services, drop-off center operations, and special trash collections by the City have helped to reduce the volume of illegal dumping. However, regionally limited options or fees for disposal of tires, lawn debris and remodeling and construction debris continue to contribute to illegal dumping of these items.

In 2009, Allegheny CleanWays conducted and published a survey of illegal dumpsites in the City of Pittsburgh, identifying 280 illegal dump sites. While this is an increase from the 138 illegal dump sites identified in our 2002 survey, our identification methods have improved greatly and many were missed in 2002. Of the 138 dumpsites identified in 2002, only 49 still existed in 2009.

Since being formed in 2000, Allegheny CleanWays has conducted illegal dump clean-ups in and around Pittsburgh removing 335.6 tons and 5,173 tires.

| Year | Tons of Debris | # of Tires |
|------|----------------|------------|
| 2008 | 10.75 | 360 |
| 2009 | 19.80 | 327 |

[Vacant Buildings]

There are approximately 1,400 vacant buildings in the City of Pittsburgh. In 2008, Mayor Ravenstahl doubled the City's demolition budget to \$4 million and it has continued to increase.

| Year | Budget | Demolished |
|------|---------------|------------|
| 2008 | \$4 million | 451 |
| 2009 | \$4.8 million | 377 |

[Vacant Lots]

The City of Pittsburgh currently owns 2,500 vacant lots. The City's Redd Up crew works to maintain the lots, along with other abandoned lots within the City.

| | Properties boarded up | Total Lots Cleaned | Tons of Debris |
|------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 2008 | 1,588 | 312 | 5,965 |
| 2009 | 1,038 | 839 | 7,626 |

[Recycling]

Recycling is mandatory for every resident, business, office and institution in the City of Pittsburgh (City Code 619). The City's Bureau of Environmental Services provides curbside recycling collection for residences, multi-family units and non-profit institutions that complete a service agreement form with the City. The City also provides a recycling drop-off service for residences and small businesses. See below the number of tires & tons of yard debris recycled at City Drop-off centers during the past two years:

| Year | Tons of Tires Recycled | Tons of Yard Debris Recycled |
|------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2008 | 64.1 | 3,552.48 |
| 2009 | 9.88 | 3,041.77 |

In January 2008, Environmental Services began single stream recycling collection in half of the City. On November 1, 2008, the City of Pittsburgh expanded the Together Green program to include all residents of the City. The new program allowed residents to recycle magazines, catalogs, paperboard, junk mail, mixed paper, phonebooks, office paper and corrugated cardboard at the curb, in addition to the bottles, cans and newspapers that they have always recycled. Participation in the program and tonnage collected continues to grow. In 2009, the City recycled over 13,000 tons of curbside material, the most tonnage collected in the history of the recycling program.

| Year | Tons of Material Recycled | Landfill Cost Savings | Income to City |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 2008 | 11,852.61 | \$296,315.25 | \$510,349.79 |
| 2009 | 13,615.53 | \$313,701.81 | \$630,657.00 |

[Graffiti]

The following is a chart showing graffiti incidents in the City of Pittsburgh over the past two years and the costs associated with graffiti removal.

| Year | # of Graffiti Incidents | Cleaned Obscenities/ Possibly Gang Related | Costs |
|------|-------------------------|---|----------|
| 2008 | 7,597 | 624/243 | \$71,639 |
| 2009 | 7,976 | 517/291 | \$75,213 |

[Abandoned Cars]

Abandoned vehicles are a persistent problem in the City of Pittsburgh. Due to a lack of resources or a means of properly disposing of an unwanted vehicle, some vehicle owners elect to abandon them on City streets or dump them in other off-road venues. Doing so is against the law. Under the law, police are required to investigate complaints within five days and remove cars within 10 days. If registration and inspection stickers have been expired longer than 90 days, the car must be towed.

Since 2005, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police has had an officer from each of the six zones assigned to deal with abandoned vehicles. This increased enforcement effort has not only led to a decline in the number of abandoned vehicles towed since 2005, but has also increased public awareness of the problem. In 2009, the 311 Response Line received 1,557 calls regarding abandoned vehicles.

| Year | Street Tows | Private Property Tows | City Property Tows | Towed from Tow Pound | Total Tows |
|------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 2008 | 1,033 | 128 | 30 | 574 | 1,765 |
| 2009 | 1,206 | 135 | 16 | 653 | 2,013 |

[Business Improvement Districts (BID)]

[Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NID)]

Business Improvement Districts (BID) and Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NID) are funded by property owners in specific neighborhoods. In some cases BIDs and NIDs help a neighborhood's Main Street compete with other shopping districts, specifically malls outside of the city. Often a neighborhood with BID status hires private security, clean-up crews, improves facades and infrastructure and marketing. In Pittsburgh, there are two BIDs - Downtown and Oakland.

Trash Collected by Oakland Business Improvement District

| Year | Pounds of Trash Collected |
|------|---------------------------|
| 2008 | 25,000 |
| 2009 | 24,300 |

Trash Collected by Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership

| Year | Pounds of Trash Collected |
|------|---------------------------|
| 2009 | 1,512,525 |

There is only one Public Space Improvement NID on Western Avenue (Allegheny West). This NID was designated to make physical improvements in the neighborhood, including sidewalks, street trees, flower planting beds, and street lighting.

[G-20 Summit]

Pittsburgh was host to the world in September for the G-20 Summit. City, county and state agencies and volunteers reded up and beautified 20 high visibility places, including many most-likely-to-be-visited neighborhoods, airport access roads, other roads and bridges. More than 1,000 volunteers participated. Diplomats, their staffs and journalists were here for one week. For eight weeks before and during the Summit City Public Works, County Public Works, PennDOT and Western PA. Conservancy worked to get Pittsburgh ready for the "Ultimate Company's Coming" event.

[Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Line]

In 2009, Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Line processed 44,329 service requests. The 311 Response Line took a total of 34,033 calls, and 7,943 emails and web requests.

[Sideyard Sale]

In 1994, the City created the Sideyard Sale Program, which allows residents to purchase publicly-owned vacant lots that are adjacent to their house for a nominal fee of \$200.

Under Mayor Ravenstahl's leadership, the City bought back the Capital Asset Research Corporation (CARC) tax-liens on 11,000 parcels of properties as part of the plan to encourage economic development and to remove vacant blighted properties in the City's neighborhoods. Freeing those properties has allowed the property owners with adjacent publicly-owned lots that are tax delinquent to secure the properties through the Treasurer's Sale and purchase the lot through the Sideyard Sale Program.

Mayor Ravenstahl also doubled the City's demolition budget for 2008 and has continued to increase it in 2009. This increase has allowed for targeted demolitions within our neighborhoods to tackle blight and public safety hazards. These demolitions have provided an opportunity for homeowners to purchase sideyards and in return, increase their property value, restore safety and improve the quality of life in their neighborhood.

As part of the Mayor's expanded Green Up Pittsburgh Program, the City now offers to physically prepare the post-demo vacant lots for the new owners to encourage sideyard sales by removing blight within the City.

The program allows residents to not only increase the size of their property and the value of their home, but also enhances the appearance of the entire neighborhood. In 2009, more than 71 sideyard sales were initiated for the two-year process. In total, more than 500 sideyards have been sold.

[Mayor Ravenstahl's Green Up Pittsburgh Program]

In partnership with the City of Pittsburgh's Department of Public Works Green Team, the Penn State Cooperative Extension and various community groups, Mayor Ravenstahl's Green Up Pittsburgh Program has worked to reduce blight, inspire community pride, and promote environmental values by stabilizing vacant lots. Since the program was introduced in 2007, more than 120 City-owned vacant lots have been transformed into community green spaces, memorial gardens, urban farms and green palettes.

In 2008, the program was expanded to have a greater impact Citywide. The expanded program physically prepares vacant lots for reuse, including future development, greenways, parks, and stormwater management. Through the program, healthy greenspace is now replacing demolition sites, where a once blighted and condemned structure stood. In addition to post-demolition greening, the City continues to create community-stewarded gardens, and is providing resources to large-scale community-wide greening strategies and plans. Green Up Pittsburgh provides responsible stewardship, reduces future maintenance costs, blight and liabilities, and increases public safety, neighborhood involvement, and the potential for traditional development.

[Mayor Ravenstahl's Taking Care of Business Districts Program]

In 2008, Mayor Ravenstahl kicked off his Taking Care of Business Districts Program (TCOB). The Program is part of the Mayor's plan to clean and revitalize our City's 50 major neighborhood business districts through clean sweeps, streetscape improvements and long-term strategies to renew neighborhood lifelines.

Since the programs commencement, Mayor Ravenstahl has led 24 business district sweeps and designated five Public Works employees, "hoky patrols," to cleaning up the main corridors. During these sweeps, City public works and safety crews 'swept' the area to clean up storefronts. Working from a list of action items delivered by 311 callers and businesses, the TCOB crews work to cite properties, remove graffiti, paint road lines and respond to on-the-spot concerns from citizens.

Through the program, the City has been able to offer streetscape items to neighborhood business districts, based on their priorities. The following items have been installed in business districts to date: trash receptacles, street trees, street banners, bike racks, increased streetlight wattage, and way-finding signs.

[2009 Clean Pittsburgh Stewards]

A network of Clean Pittsburgh Stewards in all of Pittsburgh's 90 neighborhoods organize, plan, recruit and help execute Redd Ups and other litter prevention efforts. Stewards are the backbone of the Redd Up program - the link between City Departments, the Commission and citizens.

| <u>Neighborhood</u> | <u>Name</u> |
|----------------------------|---|
| Allegheny West | Mike Coleman and Gloria Rayman |
| Allentown | Judy Hackel and Ken Wolfe |
| Arlington | Michelle Balcer and Teri Cataldo |
| Arlington Heights | Dan Sommers |
| Banksville | Kim Detrick |
| Bedford Dwellings | Gail Felton |
| Beechview | Phyllis DiDiano , Max Hurwitz, and Sue Pfeuffer |
| Belmar Gardens | Debra Moss |
| Beltzhoover | Angie Bradford, Lorraine Bradford, and Walitta Abdullah |
| Bloomfield | Karla Owens |
| Bluff | Luci Jo DiMaggio |
| Bon Air | Jan Koczerat and Tony Mosesso |
| Brighton Heights | Pete Bellisario |
| Brightwood | Ed Brandt and Ken Hale |
| Brookline | Keith Knecht |
| California-Kirkbride | Debbie Reed |
| Carrick | Dawn Harder |
| Central Business District | Paul Hochendoner |
| Central Northside | John Canning and John Engle |
| Chartiers | Samantha Barber and Sharif Zyhier |
| Crafton Heights | Theresa Smith and Carl Suter |
| Crawford Square | Shelia Petite |
| Duquesne Heights | Frank Valenta |
| East Allegheny | Lynn Glorieux |
| East Carnegie | Lois Kercher |
| East Hills | Monique Shorter and Claudia Wells |
| East Liberty | Tiffany Clark and Mikhail Pappas |
| Elliott | Kelly Frey, Matt Hogue, and Gena Turner |
| Esplen | Karen Kirchner |
| Fineview | Donna Allison and Bill Weis |
| Friendship | Irene Biler |
| Garfield | Aggie Brose |
| Greenfield | Pat Hassett |
| Hays | Phil Jamison |
| Hazelwood (Glen Hazel) | Jim Richter |
| Highland Park | Bob Staresinic |
| Homewood North | Dawn Webb-Turner |
| Homewood South, West | Kiva A. Fisher-Green |
| Knoxville | Sharlee Ellison |

Neighborhood

Larimer
Lawrenceville
Lincoln
Lincoln-Larimer
Lincoln Place
Lower Hill District
Manchester
Mexican War Streets
Middle Hill
Morningside
Mount Oliver City
Mount Washington
New Homestead
North Point Breeze
Northview Heights
Oak Hill (Terrace Village)
Oakland
Oakwood
Overbrook
Fairhaven Greenway(Overbrook)
Perry North
Perry South
Polish Hill
South Point Breeze
Regent Square
Ridgemont
Schenley Heights
St Clair
Shadyside
Sheraden
Southside Flats
Southside Slopes
Spring Hill
Spring Garden
Squirrel Hill North
Squirrel Hill South
Stanton Heights
Strip District
Summer Hill
Swisshelm Park
Troy Hill
Uptown
West End Village
Westwood
Windgap

Name

Ora Lee Carroll
Lauren Byrne and Sarah Ralich
Denise Johnson
Ebony Scott
Phil Jamison and Neil Schaming
Marlene Jackson
Jerome Jackson and Virginia Barnes
John Engle
Michele Cooper
Amy Ervin
Suzanne N. Photos
Rebekah Keating and Stacey Magda
Phil Jamison
Meghan Shaver
Keith Murphy
Eloise McDonald
Kelly Wawrzeniak
Paula Heinzman
Carol Anthony
Sue Baumgart
Mike Everhart and Walt Nalducci
Janet Gunter
Terry Doloughty and Stephanie Tecza
Judy Griffiths
Jared Delaney
Beth Hanis and Nick Martini
Gerrie Bolton Pitts and Phyllis Jackson
Keith Murphy
Boris Weinstein, Jake Krohn, and Katy Caliguiri
Craig Garay, Sam Palombini, and Debbie Whitfield
Sarah Alessio and Terra McBride
Paul Lorincy
Ben Soltesz
Ruth Ann Dailey and Walter Flanagan
Bicky Goldzser
Barbara Grover
Jim Heinrich and Dave Janco
Becky Rodgers
Georgiann Lucas, Heather Samuel and Dave Shuilenburg
John Shields
Nicole Moga
Luci Jo DiMaggio
Mandie Stehle
Theresa Smith
Samantha Barber and Sharif Zyher

[Closing]

In 2010, the Clean Pittsburgh Commission will continue to focus on the monitoring, prevention, enforcement and awareness of litter, blight and illegal dumping. CPC will continue to work on its five year strategic plan to:

- Provide a forum for information-sharing;
- Serve as a central resource for neighborhood representatives;
- Compile statistics and track cleaner City programs;
- Develop alternative litter enforcement policies;
- Sponsor volunteer and stakeholder recognition events;
- Generate funding for specific programs;
- Disseminate public information and engage in outreach.

For more information on the Clean Pittsburgh Commission, please visit:
www.cleanpittsburgh.org.

[2010 Important Dates]

April 23rd – Stash the Trash

April 24th & 25th – Spring Redd Up Weekend

May 5th – Community Conversation, 6:00 PM, CCI Center

May 12th – Stash the Trash Recognition Day at PNC Park

October 15th, 16th & 17th – Fall Redd Up

Printing courtesy of the Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl