

2008 STATE OF THE CITY REPORT

*Issued by the
Clean Pittsburgh Commission*

March 19, 2009

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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. Last year's report covered 2006 and 2007, established benchmarks in three primary areas and initiated a process for us to follow for this 2008 report and future reports.

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 become one of the cleanest cities in America by 2010. We see Pittsburgh as a place where images of a dirty steel town are those of our past. Our City's government as well as its citizens are dedicated to making Pittsburgh a cleaner and greener place.

Highlights from this report include:

- A 30% increase in schools participating in litter prevention programs;
- \$296,315 savings in land fill costs due to recycling;
- 6,399 tons of debris removed from lots through the Redd Up program;
- 9,437 square feet of graffiti removed.

This is the State of Our City, category by category as 2008 came to a close.

LITTER

In 2007, the CPC worked with clean-up and volunteer leaders in all 90 neighborhoods in the City of Pittsburgh to create the Clean Pittsburgh Stewards. In 2008, the Clean Pittsburgh Stewards were a point of contact for the CPC to all City neighborhoods regarding beautification and recycling issues. This has been an effective way for the CPC to assemble leaders, recruit volunteers, pin-point clean-up areas, establish on-going communication, provide clean-up supplies, and coordinate trash pickups with neighborhoods citywide.

The CPC, along with Citizens Against Litter, are the driving forces behind the citywide spring and fall Redd Ups, which are weekend long community cleanups. Here is the data from the 2008 events:

2008 Events	Participating Neighborhoods	Volunteers	Trash and Recyclables Collected
April 18-20th	80	12,000	100 tons
Oct. 10-12th	80	12,000	80 tons

LITTER EDUCATION (SCHOOLS)

Local non-profit environmental organizations, the Pennsylvania Resources Council and Lake Erie/Allegheny Earth Force, are the main supporters of litter education in Pittsburgh's public, private, and parochial schools.

CPC representatives once again collaborated with the Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) on the Stash the Trash program in 2008. This program engages students to do litter pickups around their schools at least twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. The following information indicates the number of schools participating in Stash the Trash for the past two years:

Event Years	Schools Participating	Students Participating	Trash bags collected	Bags of Recyclables Collected
2008 (spring and fall event)	49	7,482	1,157	138
2007 (fall event)	35	2,534	318	4

ILLEGAL DUMPING

Pittsburgh has a legacy of illegal dumping left over from days when waste disposal was non-existent 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 2002, Allegheny CleanWays conducted and published a survey of illegal dump sites in the City of Pittsburgh, identifying 138 illegal dump sites. An updated citywide survey of illegal dump sites was started in 2008 through the state CleanWays office. It is currently about half-way done and is projected to be completed by June of 2009.

Since being formed in 2000, Allegheny CleanWays has conducted illegal dump clean-ups in and around Pittsburgh removing 224.5 tons and 2,435 tires prior to 2007.

Year	Tons of Debris	# of Tires
2007	13.75	517
2008	10.75	360

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 for the number of tires & tons of yard debris recycled at City Drop-offs during the past two years:

Year	Tons of Tires Recycled	Tons of Yard Debris Recycled
2007	14.11	3,203.4
2008	64.1	3,552.48

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. In addition to bottles, cans and newspapers, the City now collects magazines, catalogs, paperboard, junk mail, mixed paper, phonebooks, office paper and corrugated cardboard at the curb. Since the start of the new program, curbside recycling tonnages have increased by 29% from 2007.

Year	Tons of Material Recycled	Landfill Cost Savings	Income to City
2007	9,562.65	\$184,367.89	\$489,241.29
2008	11,852.61	\$296,315.25	\$510,349.79

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 \$4.23 million, increasing the number of buildings razed by 52%.

Year	Budget	Demolished
2007	\$2 million	348
2008	\$4.23 million	529

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.

Year	Properties boarded up	Total Lots Cleaned	Tons of Debris
2007	1,410	194	3,955
2008	1,617	349	6,399

ABANDONED CARS

Abandoned vehicles were always a persistent problem in the City of Pittsburgh. 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, but has also increased public awareness of the problem. In 2008, the 311 Response Line received 1654 calls regarding abandoned vehicles.

Year	Street Tows	Private Property Tows	City Property Tows	Towed from Tow Pound	Total Tows
2007	1,308	196	41	798	2,343
2008	1,033	128	30	574	1,765

GRAFFITI

The graffiti program, developed under the Department of Public Works has worked diligently in its efforts to rid the City of Pittsburgh of unsightly graffiti vandalism. In 2008 the Graffiti program expanded from including one graffiti truck and three Public Works employees to working, whenever possible, with two trucks and six Public Works employees. Public Works

has also purchased additional graffiti removal equipment in a further attempt to conquer the unsightly social problem of graffiti vandalism.

The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Graffiti Squad reports that there have been 19 arrests of graffiti vandals in 2008. Another 8 cases are pending until investigations are complete and warrants are issued, and are expected to be worth in excess of \$50,000 in damages. In 2008, an adult graffiti vandal was sentenced to state prison for two and a half to five years, 10 years probation, and ordered to pay restitution of \$242,000, which is the largest graffiti prosecution in the United States to date.

Year	# Graffiti Incidents* Cleaned	Obscenities / Possibly Gang Related	Cost
2007	6,879	648/477	\$69,790
2008	9,437	694/567	\$94,370

* 1 incident = 1 sq foot

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BID) AND 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
2007	24,582
2008	25,000

Trash Collected by Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership

Year	Pieces of Trash Collected
2008	51,152

There is one Public Space Improvement NID on Western Avenue (Allegheny West). This particular NID will only be in place for a limited time, designated to make physical improvements in the neighborhood, including sidewalks and street lighting.

RESOURCES

GREEN UP PITTSBURGH PROGRAM

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, works to reduce blight, inspire community pride, and promote environmental values by stabilizing vacant lots. Since the program was introduced in 2007, more than 65 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 storm water 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, reducing future maintenance costs, blight and liabilities, and increasing public safety, neighborhood involvement, and the potential for traditional development.

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 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 these properties has allowed property owners with adjacent publicly-owned vacant 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. This increase in the budget 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 2008 expanded Green Up Pittsburgh Program, the City now offers to physically prepare the post-demo vacant lots for the new owners to encourage sideyards by removing blight within the City.

In 2008, Mayor Ravenstahl led an aggressive marketing campaign mailing out letters alerting homeowners in targeted neighborhoods who reside next to vacant, city-owned lots that they may be able to purchase the lot at a fraction of its market value. Through this campaign, the amount of sideyard sales has increased by 60% in 2008 of all City real estate transactions and has led to more than 130 Sideyard sales completed or in the pipeline to be completed in 2009.

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 the neighborhood lifelines.

During 2008, Mayor Ravenstahl led 15 business district sweeps and designated five Public Works employees, "hokey 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. These 15 business district sweeps have resulted in more than 1,000 code enforcement citations. Mayor Ravenstahl will continue business district sweeps and will begin infrastructure improvements in the spring.

311 RESPONSE LINE

In 2008, Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Line processed 46,590 service requests; up from 41,212 processed in 2007. The 311 Response Line took a total of 49,415 calls and processed 174 requests for litter removal; 170 of those have been completed.

The highest number of requests in 2008 was regarding potholes, at 5340. 940 requests for dumping were processed in 2008, as were 125 requests for litter cans

CLEAN PITTSBURGH STEWARDS

Stewards as of January 2009

<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Name</u>
Allegheny West	Gloria Rayman
Allentown	Ken Wolfe
Arlington	Teri Cataldo and Michelle Balcer
Arlington Heights	n/a
Banksville	Kim Detrick and Gregg Johnson
Bedford Dwellings	Gail Felton
Beechview	Phyllis DiDiano, Sue Pfeuffer and Max Hurwitz
Belmar Gardens	Debra Moss
Beltzhoover	Lorraine Bradford, Angie Bradford and Walitta Abdullah
Bloomfield	Karla Owens
Bluff	Luci Jo DiMaggio
Bon Air	Tony Mosesso
Brighton Heights	Pete Bellisario
Brightwood	Ed Brandt and Ken Hale
Brookline	Keith Knecht

Neighborhood

California-Kirkbride
Carrick
CBD-Downtown
Central Northside
Chartiers
Crafton Heights
Crawford Square
Duquesne Heights
East Allegheny
East Carnegie
East Hills
East Liberty
Elliott
Esplen
Fairywood
Fineview
Friendship
Garfield
Greenfield
Hays
Hazelwood (Glen Hazel)
Highland Park
Homewood North
Homewood South
Homewood West
Knoxville
Larimer
Lawrenceville
Lincoln
Lincoln-Lemington
Lincoln Place
Lower Hill District
Manchester
Mexican War Streets
Morningside
Mount Oliver City
Mount Washington
New Homestead
North Point Breeze
Northview Heights
Oak Hill (formerly Terrace Village)
Oakland (central, north, south, west)
Oakwood
Overbrook

Name

Debbie Reed
Dawn Harder
Paul Hochendoner
John Canning and John Engle
Sharif Zyhier and Samantha Barber
Theresa Smith and Carl Suter
Shelia Petite
Frank Valenta
Lynn Glorieux
Lois Kercher
Claudia Wells and Monique Shorter
Mikhail Pappas and Emily Nordquist
Matt Hogue, Gena Turner and Kelly Frey
Kathy Kinneman
Carmen Hatchin
Donna Allison and Bill Weis
Irene Biler
Aggie Brose and Grady Roberts, Jr.
Pat Hasset
Phil Jamison
Jim Richter
Bob Staresinic
Dawn Webb-Turner
Kiva A. Fisher-Green
Kiva A. Fisher-Green
Sharlee Ellison
Ora Lee Carroll
Tony Ceoffe and Cleo Zell
Denise Johnson
Ebony Scott
Phil Jamison and Neil Schaming
Marlene Jackson
Jerome Jackson
John Engle
Amy Ervin
Suzanne N. Photos
Greg Panza and Stacey Magda
Phil Jamison
Cheryl Hall
Keith Murphy
Eloise McDonald
Kelly Wawrzeniak
Bill Greer
Carol Anthony

<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Name</u>
Fairhaven Greenway (Overbrook)	Sue Baumgart
Perry North	Walt Nalducci and Mike Everhart
Perry South	Janet Gunter
Polish Hill	Stephanie Tecza and Terry Doloughty
Point Breeze	Hope Feldman
Regent Square	Jared Delaney
Ridgemont	Nick Martini and Beth Hanis
Schenley Heights	Gerri Pitts
Saint Clair	Keith Murphy
Shadyside	Boris Weinstein, Jake Krohn and Katy Caliguiri
Sheraden	Craig Garay, Sam Palombini and Debbie Whitfield
Southside Flats	Sarah Alessio
Southside Slopes	Paul Lorincy
Spring Hill	Ben Soltesz
Spring Garden	Ruth Ann Dailey and Walter Flanagan
Squirrel Hill North	Bicky Goldzser
Squirrel Hill South	Barbara Grover
Stanton Heights	Dave Janco and Jim Heinrich
Strip District	Becky Rodgers
Summer Hill	Georgiann Lucas, Heather Samuel, and Dave Schuilenburg
Swisshelm Park	Jon Shields
Troy Hill	Jean McBeth
Uptown	Luci-Jo DiMaggio
West End	Lou Bucci and Eric Worthing
Westwood	Theresa Smith
Windgap	Samantha Barber and Sharif Zyhier

CLOSING

In 2009, CPC will continue to focus on monitoring/prevention/awareness, clean-ups and enforcement about litter, blight, illegal dumping, graffiti, abandoned cars, and vacant lots and homes through 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.

2009 IMPORTANT DATES

April 24th – Stash the Trash

April 25th & 26th – Spring Redd Up Weekend

April 25th – May - Great PA Clean-up

May 8th – Stash the Trash Recognition Ceremony

May 16th – Hard to Recycle Collection

October 16th – Fall Stash the Trash

October 16th & 17th – Fall Redd Up Weekend

Contact the Clean Pittsburgh Commission for more information.

