

# WEST VERNOR CORRIDOR/ CARRETERA DE WEST VERNOR

## Neighborhood Framework

Planning and Development Department  
City of Detroit May 2018

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

VERSION EN ESPAÑOL DISPONIBLE EN  
[WWW.DETROITMI.GOV/WEST-VERNOR](http://WWW.DETROITMI.GOV/WEST-VERNOR)





Neighborhood Framework  
**WEST VERNOR CORRIDOR**

**CITY OF DETROIT**  
MAYOR MICHAEL DUGGAN

**PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
MAURICE COX, DIRECTOR

MAY 2018



The West Vernor Corridor Neighborhood Framework explores a dynamic commercial corridor adjacent to densely populated, vibrant, multicultural neighborhoods with attractive physical assets and predominantly Latin American cultural traditions. These characteristics contribute to the 20-minute neighborhood model in which all goods and services are easily accessible on foot, bike, or public transit. Building on previous planning efforts, this study set out to gather consensus around solutions that could be implemented now. It responds to dedicated community input and a mayoral declaration to reward long-term residents of Detroit with a vision that aligns community priorities with strategic investments to amplify and enhance existing identity and values. Specifically, this plan lays out a series of recommendations that facilitate new housing options, public space and streetscape improvements, small business development, and above all a walkability that brings investment, beauty and activity to the area.

Our goals are to implement near-term improvements detailed in this framework within three years and to set the stage for larger improvements over time. The city will use the plan as a roadmap to organize resources, reinforce existing assets, and support new sustainable growth. As this West Vernor Corridor Neighborhood Framework comes to fruition, I want to acknowledge all those community members, stakeholders, and departmental agencies for their committed involvement in conceiving, formulating, and producing the vision and recommendations presented here.

**MAURICE D. COX**  
DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
CITY OF DETROIT

# Acknowledgements

## **The City of Detroit West Vernor Corridor Framework Team**

Planning & Development Department (PDD)  
Buildings, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED)  
City Planning Commission Staff (CPC)  
Department of Neighborhoods (DON)  
Department of Public Works (DPW)  
Detroit Building Authority (DBA)  
Detroit City Council At-Large, Office of Council Member Brenda Jones  
Detroit City Council At-Large, Office of Council Member Janeé L. Ayers  
Detroit City Council District 6, Council Member Castañeda-López  
Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT)  
Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC)  
Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC)  
Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA)  
Detroit Parks & Recreation Department (DPRD)  
Detroit Public Schools (DPS)  
Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD)  
General Services Department (GSD)  
Housing & Revitalization Department (HRD)  
Mayor's Office of Planning, Housing and Development (PHD)  
Public Lighting Authority (PLA)

## **West Vernor Corridor Framework Advisory Partners**

Bridging Neighborhoods  
Clark Park Association  
Congress of Communities  
Cristo Rey  
Gloria Rocha  
Hubbard Farms Neighborhood Association  
Invest Detroit  
Mexicantown-Hubbard Communities Main Street Program  
LA SED | Latin Americans for Social and Economic Development  
Southwest Detroit Business Association  
Southwest Detroit Community Benefits Coalition  
Southwest Solutions  
St. Gabriel Church  
Urban Neighborhood Initiatives  
The many community residents and neighborhood groups who provided their thoughts and feedback throughout this process

## **West Vernor Corridor Framework Consulting Partners**

Goody Clancy  
Giffles Webster Engineering  
Living Lab  
W-ZHA  
Zimmerman/Volk

# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	Executive Summary	2
<b>2</b>	Vision & Mission	16
<b>3</b>	Plan Goals	18
<b>4</b>	Community Engagement	20
<b>5</b>	Existing Conditions	24
<b>6</b>	Near-term Action & Implementation	40
<b>7</b>	Long-term Recommendations	82
<b>8</b>	Conclusion	112

# 1

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Growing a Vibrant Community



**T**he neighborhoods of the West Vernor Corridor in Southwest Detroit are remarkably resilient. While population loss has severely challenged neighborhoods across Detroit, West Vernor Corridor neighborhoods have managed to retain and attract more residents. Between 2010 and 2015, West Vernor Corridor study area population reversed its previous decline and grew 8%, even as the city lost 3% of its overall population. The study area's many inherent assets, as well as its traditional role as a destination for Latino immigrants, all contribute to this population gain. As a result, the study area has a relatively high density of residents—about 10,000 people per square mile on average,

or more than twice the citywide average of 4,700. The investment and growth of West Vernor corridor residents have helped maintain and expand community life, availability of neighborhood services, and street and park infrastructure. Moving forward, population growth justifies targeted public and private investments that will help West Vernor Corridor neighborhoods achieve a higher and more sustainable quality of life. This includes support for current homeowners and continued presence and increase of affordable housing, acknowledging resident concern about potential housing cost increases that may displace residents.

The West Vernor Corridor Neighborhood Framework initiative helps community members attain new opportunities by building on overlapping areas of strength:

- **Social strength**—residents of the study area have strong social networks, cultural traditions, and local organizations that build community
- **Physical strength**—in most of the study area, streets, blocks, buildings, and parks provide a great foundation for walkable neighborhood life
- **Economic strength**—the appeal of living and operating businesses in the study area is raising real estate potential and attracting reinvestment

The combination of social, physical, and economic strengths in West Vernor corridor neighborhoods creates opportunities for improved quality of life. Plan goals come from a series of thoughtful, community-based vision plans produced over the past 10 to 15 years by community organizations rooted in the West Vernor Corridor. This plan document identifies the most important steps that the City of Detroit, in cooperation with community members, can take to turn those opportunities into real results that benefit residents and business owners. The near-term projects detailed in this plan will generate improvements within a three-year term, and set the stage for larger improvements that benefit residents and stakeholders throughout the study area.

#### PLAN STUDY AREA AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERN



*The neighborhoods of the West Vernor Corridor have a dense street and block pattern, while retaining most of the original building stock. Neighborhood block patterns stop abruptly at the large industrial sites and major rail and highway corridors that have traditionally supported many jobs.*

## ***“What I love about my neighborhood”***

Community members consistently cite qualities appreciated in their neighborhoods. These comments by community members exemplify what many people value.

“Patton Park recreation center is great! Swim classes for kids, activities for senior citizens, community meetings held there”

*“The feeling of community in the neighborhood, it feels like a large family at times”*

“Diversity, culture, immigrants (which can stabilize population)”

“Employment opportunities in our neighborhood where we live”

“Rich culture, affordability, language diversity”

***“The cultural ties in the community especially the Spanish culture”***

*“Involvement of churches and schools along W. Vernor, especially those already involved in community activities”*

“It’s contained: you don’t have to leave the neighborhood for anything”

***“People, vendors, kids, murals/color, fresh food”***

“Locally-owned businesses”

“Beautiful streets to walk around, shops to visit, happy to come home everyday”

***“Collaboration/partnership among agencies, housing being bought and fixed up”***

*“Murals and art, but add more”*

“Bikeability: we can bike, walk, scooter many places within a mile of our home/work and even bike to other neighborhoods”

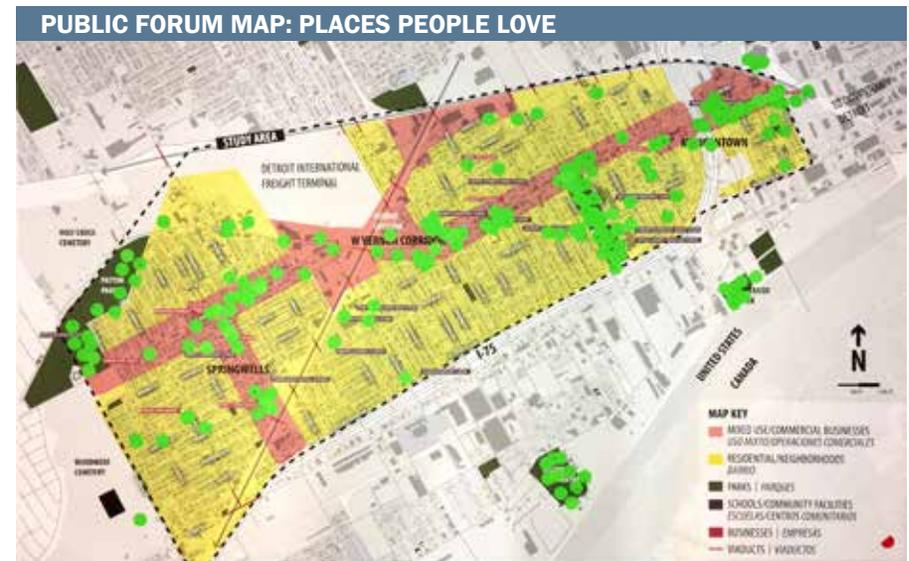
“Neighbors working together to make things better”

## Strengths that support quality of life

Within the overall study area, community members and analysis of data highlight the Mexicantown-Hubbard and Vernor-Springwells areas as places of particular overall strength (see diagram on facing page). Key reasons for this distinction include:

- Relatively higher density of residents, and larger rate of population growth, than other portions of the study area
- Concentrations of neighborhood retail and services, within a five- to ten-minute walk of most homes
- Household income and property values that tend to be higher in these areas, especially in Mexicantown-Hubbard
- Proximity to Patton Park and Clark Park as places people love
- Presence of community organizations that actively promote neighborhood stewardship and organize community-based planning for improvements

Other parts of the study demonstrate some of these characteristics as well. Many residential blocks elsewhere are also within convenient walking distance of neighborhood retail and services. In addition, people all over the study area identified Patton Park, Clark Park and nearby riverfront parks, including Riverside Park and Fort Wayne, as important amenities.

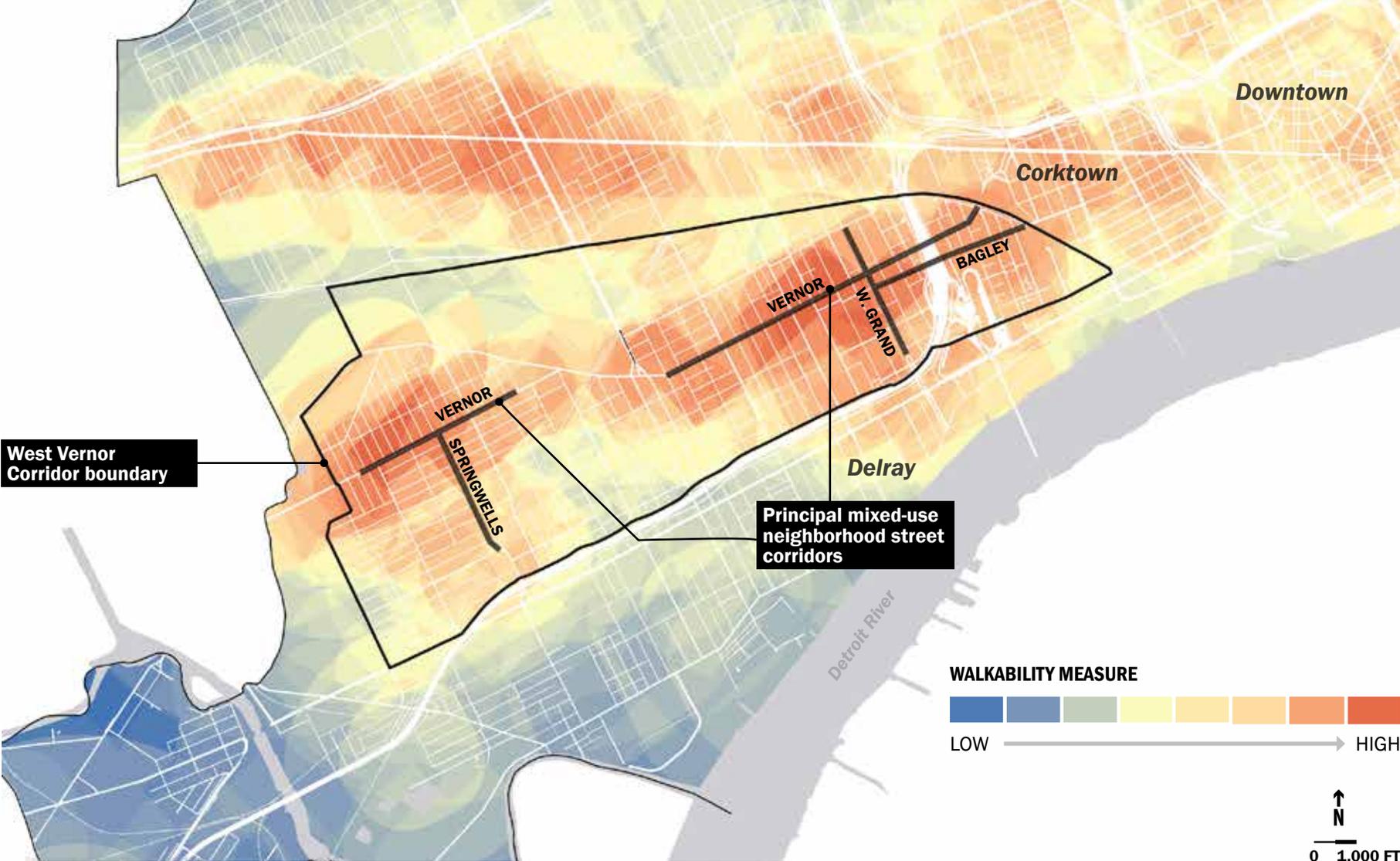


**Community members' favorite places tend to cluster along the major commercial street corridors—Vernor Highway, Springwells Street and Bagley Avenue—and in its parks.**



**Homes on most neighborhood blocks are occupied and maintained.**

COMPOSITE DATA MAP: COMMERCIAL, RECREATION, TRANSPORTATION AND EDUCATION ASSETS



This overlay of key neighborhood assets reveals two prominent concentrations: the T-shaped Vernor Highway-Springwells Street area to the west, and the Mexicantown-Hubbard area to the east, which includes Clark Park and extends across I-75.

## Barriers that erode quality of life

While the study area offers many strengths, many substantial challenges hinder efforts by individuals and organizations to achieve their goals. Prominent challenges include:

- Presence of Detroit's highway and rail that links the United States and Canada, passing through the study area. Heavy freight movements bring important jobs, but also have negative impacts on adjoining residential areas and streets in the form of disrupted connectivity, noise, and air pollution that may be linked to health challenges such as documented elevated asthma and cancer rates.
- Elevated rail embankments that divide neighborhood areas and leave the streets below them with dark, flood-prone viaducts
- Numerous conflicts between industrial sites (some currently active, others requiring alternative land uses) and adjacent housing
- Vacant single- and multi-family residential buildings that detract from blocks that are otherwise well-populated
- Concern that growing demand for housing in the neighborhood might increase rents and increase tax burdens on homeowners, making it harder for current residents to afford to remain



**The places community members most want to see change are: the western and eastern ends of Vernor Highway where property vacancy is most prevalent, the Detroit International Freight Terminal and truck-filled streets at the center of the study area, and parks where existing assets can be improved.**



**Heavy truck traffic at the Detroit International Freight Terminal entrance from Vernor Highway and Dix Street**

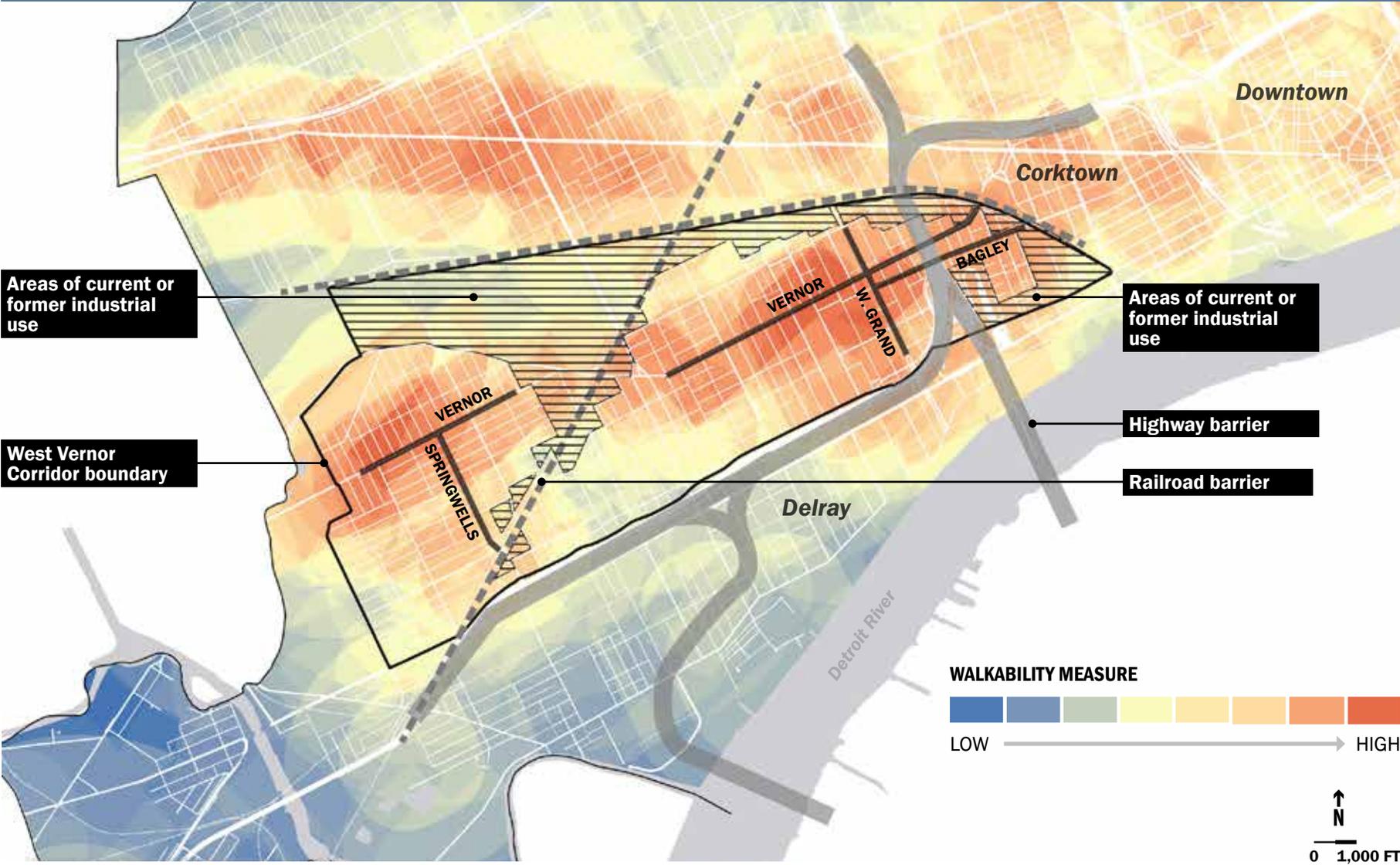


**Chronic flooding at the Vernor Highway rail viaduct**



**Vacant apartment buildings**

COMPOSITE DATA MAP: COMMERCIAL, RECREATION, TRANSPORTATION AND EDUCATION ASSETS



Several types of physical and land use barriers isolate West Vernor neighborhoods from each other and from nearby Detroit neighborhoods.

## Targeting investment: Building out from places of strength

To achieve the most sustainable and effective results, near-term plan initiatives should be clustered in areas where they reinforce each other AND where there are established overlaps of:

- Community strength, including active organizations, established visions or plans for community betterment
- Physical strength, including strong street/block network, few barriers to access or neighborhood land use
- Economic strength, including stable or growing property values, household incomes, and businesses

Why should near-term investments be clustered in the strongest portions of the study area? Clustering multiplies the beneficial effects of each individual investment because the improvements mutually reinforce each other, are prominent enough to change perceptions positively, and attract additional spontaneous investment around them. By contrast, when investments are dispersed more widely across a neighborhood, their benefits may be eroded by continued areas of distress around



*In the eastern portion of the study area, Vernor Highway at Clark Park and Bagley Avenue in Mexicantown.*

them. Clusters of investment have the potential to attract additional outside investment and they raise the overall amount of resources coming to the study area. Moreover, their success enhances the qualities of areas that surround them, expanding areas of strength and drawing new investment to more of the study area. Targeting near-term investments in clusters therefore expands the ultimate geography and magnitude of neighborhood improvement over time, and maximizes the effectiveness of scarce resources.

Targeting improvements establishes priorities among the many good ideas for neighborhood betterment that have been developed through community-based planning in the West Vernor Corridor neighborhoods. It starts with the projects that will do the most to make further community and economic development possible.

The two strongest areas within the study area are Mexicantown-Hubbard toward the east, and West Vernor-Springwells toward the west. These areas deserve emphasis in near-term investment, to most effectively cat-



alyze improvements that spread to other areas. Several previous community-based planning efforts highlighted a third part of the study area as a priority location for investment: the center of the study area around the intersection of Vernor Highway and Livernois Avenue, with emphasis on the large (approximately 6.7-acre) site owned by the City and formerly used by the Department of Public Works (DPW). A successful cluster of neighborhood retail is present near the DPW site across Livernois Avenue, and the 200-acre Detroit International Freight Terminal lies to the west of the DPW site, across a railroad embankment. The prominence of the DPW site at a major neighborhood crossroads, and its capacity for a substantial amount of commercial, housing and/or public space development, have made it a natural place to envision large-scale, transformational change. For near-term investment, however, it lacks the overlaps of community, physical, and economic strengths needed to most effectively leverage investment. It is physically separated from nearby retail and residential blocks by busy streets that experience heavy truck use. It also currently lacks sufficient economic value to justify enough redevelopment to fully take advantage of its size. All these characteristics can improve over time, and ultimately the DPW site will indeed present a major opportunity for neighborhood reinvestment. To achieve this



***The large, city-owned DPW site at the center of the study area will offer a transformative redevelopment opportunity over time, but is not the most cost-effective place to focus near-term investments.***

opportunity, investment should begin at a smaller scale in clusters to the west and east, setting in motion rippling improvements that will eventually reach the DPW site area and seed its wholesale transformation. At the same time, the City should continue to work with community representatives to envision a future with this site for an eventual sale of this property for new development.



***Vernor Highway (top) and Springwells Street (above) in the western portion of the study area.***

## Summary: community priorities, research findings, plan strategies, and action steps

The table below and on the following pages organizes **community priorities, research findings, plan strategies** and **action steps** according to six strategies that structure plan implementation by the City and supporting stakeholders. Each strategy relates to a critical system of infrastructure, development, or policy in the study area, and the City agencies and professional disciplines geared to address that system. Where issues

touch on multiple strategies—for instance, mixed-use development that includes both multi-family housing and retail, or sidewalk improvements that benefit both mobility and public spaces—the overlap is indicated. Community goals, research findings and plan strategies are described in more detail in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5. Action Steps are described in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

<b>Community priorities</b> identified through past planning and recent outreach	<b>Research findings</b> from this planning process	<b>Plan strategies</b> offering practical, impactful ways to address community priorities	<b>Action steps</b> that will make a visible difference in near-term and longer-term timeframes
<b>Neighborhood-wide Policy Initiatives, including Safety, Public Services, Zoning, and Event Permitting</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trucks create street safety and air quality problems—<i>separate them from residential streets!</i></li> <li>Industrially-zoned sites that are vacant and lack viable industrial uses compatible with the neighborhood should transition to appropriate, compatible uses—<i>make them neighborhood-friendly economic development opportunities!</i></li> <li>Permit fees for vending in public places are cost-prohibitive for small and emerging businesses—<i>reduce or eliminate them to enable residents' businesses and culture to thrive!</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enforcing and changing truck routes is possible but will take time to coordinate city, county, state and industry policies.</li> <li>Investment in new truck roadways is needed for the most effective solutions.</li> <li>A number of large former industrial sites surrounded by single-family homes. They should be rezoned to accommodate a mix of residential and commercial uses that complement the neighborhood, as site conditions allow.</li> <li>Detroit fees for temporary vendors, such as the temporary food permit fee, appear to be higher than in other large cities. They are a particular hindrance to West Vernor's informal economy, which is driven in part by immigrants' traditions and can offer valuable opportunities for small business growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a practical city truck policy, coordinated with stakeholder agencies and industry.</li> <li>Update zoning in a way that maintains or increases site value to property owners.</li> <li>Reduce vendor permit fees and/or allow permits and fees to cover multiple vendors at a single event. Reduce regulatory requirements and expedite permitting for smaller events.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Near-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issue request for proposals (RFP) for study to determine methods to designate appropriate city truck routes, and restrict truck use on other streets.</li> <li>Rezone selected areas from M4 industrial to zones for mixed-use development.</li> <li>Revise special event permit approval structure.</li> </ul> <p><i>Longer-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designate and enforce truck routes.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Community priorities</b> identified through past planning and recent outreach</p>	<p><b>Research findings</b> from this planning process</p>	<p><b>Plan strategies</b> offering practical, impactful ways to address community priorities</p>	<p><b>Action steps</b> that will make a visible difference in near-term and longer-term timeframes</p>
<p><b>Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill vacant buildings—<i>remove the dangers of vacant properties and accommodate need for more housing, especially apartment units!</i></li> <li>• We are concerned that new housing will increase attraction of households to our neighborhood, driving up housing costs—<i>protect current residents from displacement!</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is steady demand for more multi-family housing.</li> <li>• We need to build more housing to keep housing affordable; if we do nothing, housing costs will increase.</li> <li>• New housing needs to incorporate mixed-income households to accommodate current residents and to be economically feasible.</li> <li>• Rehabilitation and new housing development is starting to be possible with less subsidy, in the Mexicantown-Hubbard portion of the study area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue City code enforcement sweeps targeting abandoned buildings in the community to motivate owners to renovate or sell properties.</li> <li>• Rehabilitate existing vacant apartment housing over stores and in mid-sized apartment buildings close to neighborhood retail nodes, in both the Vernor-Springwells and Mexicantown-Hubbard areas.</li> <li>• Build new multi-family housing in the Mexicantown-Hubbard area.</li> <li>• Utilize Bridging Neighborhoods program to reoccupy vacant homes.</li> <li>• Require at least 20% of housing units to be affordable to households at or below 80% Area Median Income in developments involving City support with funding or land.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Near-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Murray</li> <li>• Hubbard &amp; Vernor</li> <li>• 16th &amp; Bagley</li> <li>• Burnside Apartments</li> <li>• Monrossa Apartments</li> </ul> <p><i>Longer-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW site RFP and site streetscape improvements</li> <li>• Toledo &amp; Grand</li> <li>• Grand &amp; Porter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Single-Family Residential Stabilization</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacant buildings are a serious problem—<i>put them into use again or demolish!</i></li> <li>• Vacant residential lots are valued as side yards—<i>continue the opportunities to acquire them from DLBA!</i></li> <li>• <i>Retain families within the community.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reserve DLBA housing inventory within this area for the Bridging Neighborhoods Program, and demolish houses in poor condition.</li> <li>• Need to focus more on small vacant multi-family buildings, which remain a problem on a number of blocks.</li> <li>• Vacant single-family homes frequently detract from neighborhoods by presenting an unmaintained appearance, attracting squatters, and posing hazard of accidental or intentional fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reserve DLBA housing inventory within this area for the Bridging Neighborhoods Program, and remove houses in poor condition.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for households relocating from Delray.</li> <li>• Transfer ownership of vacant city-controlled lots to adjoining property owners, or engage community organizations to maintain vacant lots as public open space.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Near-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridging Neighborhoods Program for rehab of two or more model homes. Continue to support transfer ownership of vacant city-controlled lots to adjoining property owners, or engage community organizations to maintain vacant lots as public open space.</li> </ul>

## Community priorities

identified through past planning and recent outreach

## Research findings

from this planning process

## Plan strategies

offering practical, impactful ways to address community priorities

## Action steps

that will make a visible difference in near-term and longer-term timeframes

### Small Business and Retail Development

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We value our neighborhood retail—<i>fill our empty storefronts!</i></li> <li>• We also heard about owners that are sitting on vacant buildings—<i>encourage or motivate building owners to renovate or sell!</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to add and expand retail are best focused in the West Vernor-Springwells and Mexicantown-Hubbard areas, where there is a combination of untapped market potential and storefront vacancy.</li> <li>• The West Vernor-Springwells area could potentially capture another \$357,000 of neighborhood goods and services spending and \$29,000 food and beverage spending that residents now spend out of the area.</li> <li>• The Mexicantown-Hubbard area could potentially capture another \$87,000 of neighborhood goods and services spending that residents now spend out of the area.</li> <li>• Parking supply is an emerging challenge as retail and housing return to Vernor Highway, Springwells Street and Bagley Avenue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide renderings and sample budgets to prospective business owners and retail space owners to demonstrate opportunities.</li> <li>• Provide marketing sheets to brokers to publicize retail market and space opportunities. Align resources to encourage building owners to renovate or sell.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Near-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support the retail corridor offering programs such as Motor City Match and Restore</li> <li>• 2024 Springwells Street</li> <li>• MCM cash awardees</li> <li>• 16th &amp; Bagley</li> <li>• Market the district to prospective entrepreneurs and business owners</li> <li>• Hubbard &amp; Vernor</li> </ul>
--	---	---	--

### Streetscapes and Mobility

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic, darkness and puddles isolate us—<i>make our streets walkable!</i></li> <li>• We need better bus and bike facilities—<i>safe and convenient!</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viaduct improvements require careful coordination among multiple agencies, but are achievable and affordable.</li> <li>• Vernor Highway viaduct flooding is primarily caused by DIFT soil runoff and groundwater seepage. Flooding at other viaducts can be substantially prevented through more regular clean-outs of stormwater catch basins.</li> <li>• Lighting has already been installed at most sidewalks under viaducts. In some cases, it needs greater maintenance.</li> <li>• Streets widths are limited—we need to decide which transportation modes fit best on which streets.</li> <li>• Better crosswalks—with bump-outs, raised structures, and/or signals—can make a big difference in safety and appeal of walking.</li> <li>• Interest and resources are available to support more viaduct murals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend existing Vernor Highway Streetscape Improvements</li> <li>• Repair and maintain installed Vernor Highway Streetscape Improvements</li> <li>• Prioritize park, trail, and greenway improvements that are near development project initiatives</li> <li>• Prioritize viaduct improvements at seven key connections, to realize the many benefits of safe, inviting connections between neighborhood areas</li> <li>• Prioritize pedestrian facilities improvements around schools and parks</li> <li>• Prioritize new bike facilities that connect existing facilities into a more extensive network</li> <li>• Prioritize viaduct murals on those viaducts providing the most important neighborhood connections.</li> <li>• Complement recent bus service expansion with enhanced bus shelters.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Near-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vernor Highway Streetscape Improvements from Clark Park to viaduct</li> <li>• West Grand Boulevard restriping for protected bike lanes and safe crossings</li> <li>• DDOT bus shelter installation</li> <li>• Engage Wayne County to enforce prevention of DIFT soil runoff</li> <li>• Study groundwater seepage at Springwells and Vernor viaduct to determine solution.</li> <li>• Pedestrian crossing improvements around Clark Park and adjacent schools</li> <li>• West Grand Boulevard bump-outs</li> </ul> <p><i>Longer-term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bagley Avenue Pedestrian Streetscape Improvements</li> <li>• Bagley Pedestrian Bridge Ramp Improvements</li> <li>• Springwells Street streetscape improvements</li> </ul>
--	---	--	---

**Community priorities**

identified through past planning and recent outreach

**Research findings**

from this planning process

**Plan strategies**

offering practical, impactful ways to address community priorities

**Action steps**

that will make a visible difference in near-term and longer-term timeframes

**Parks and Open Space**

- We have strong cultural and community life—*create places to celebrate it!*
- We value our parks and paths—*make them even better!*

- Existing parks and streets offer more opportunities for cultural activity and identity.
- West Vernor Corridor Study Area is a vital part of Detroit's emerging trail network: the planned Iron Belle Trail, Inner Circle Greenway, and Gordie Howe International Bridge (GHIB) Connections project, and the proposed May Creek Greenway, all pass through the area, and West Grand Boulevard is an important connector between Riverside Park (undergoing improvements) and multiple neighborhoods.

- Make more intensive use of existing public spaces—parks as well as sidewalks and occasional street closures—for cultural events and everyday community activity. This will also benefit nearby businesses, schools and residences.
- Integrate trail improvements and expansions, and a greenway buffer, as part of the ongoing Gordie Howe International Bridge project design and implementation
- Prioritize park, trail, and greenway improvements that are near development project initiatives

**Near-term:**

- Bagley shared street
- Clark Park lighting
- Clark Park Zocalo

**Longer-term:**

- West Grand Boulevard landscape enhancements
- West Grand Boulevard greenway expansion at Toledo & Grand redevelopment
- GHIB Connections project

# 2

## VISION & MISSION

# Community Vision for Neighborhoods of the West Vernor Corridor



Align community priorities, neighborhood strengths, and strategic investments to support a vibrant community of cultural and economic diversity.

# 3

## PLAN GOALS

# Plan Goals



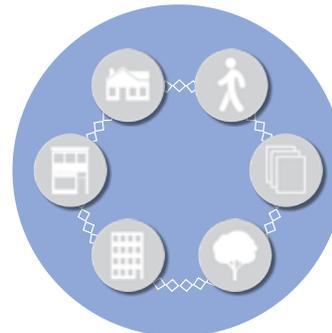
**Increase residential density along commercial corridors and promote neighborhood stabilization**, through new residential investment and innovative housing policies in order to add new residents, retain families, and preserve economic and cultural diversity.



**Leverage established cultural life, parks, and public spaces** with improved pedestrian and trail connections, improved parks, and expanded opportunities for cultural activities.



**Support new and existing businesses** to expand areas of economic strength and improve community access to goods, jobs, and services.



**Align City of Detroit interdepartmental resources** to support plan outcomes.



**Reinforce densely populated residential communities near industrial corridors** by controlling truck traffic, revising land use, and establishing buffers where appropriate to promote healthy residential communities.

# 4

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community residents, business and property owners, organizations and other stakeholders were invited to participate in three types of gatherings as part of this effort.

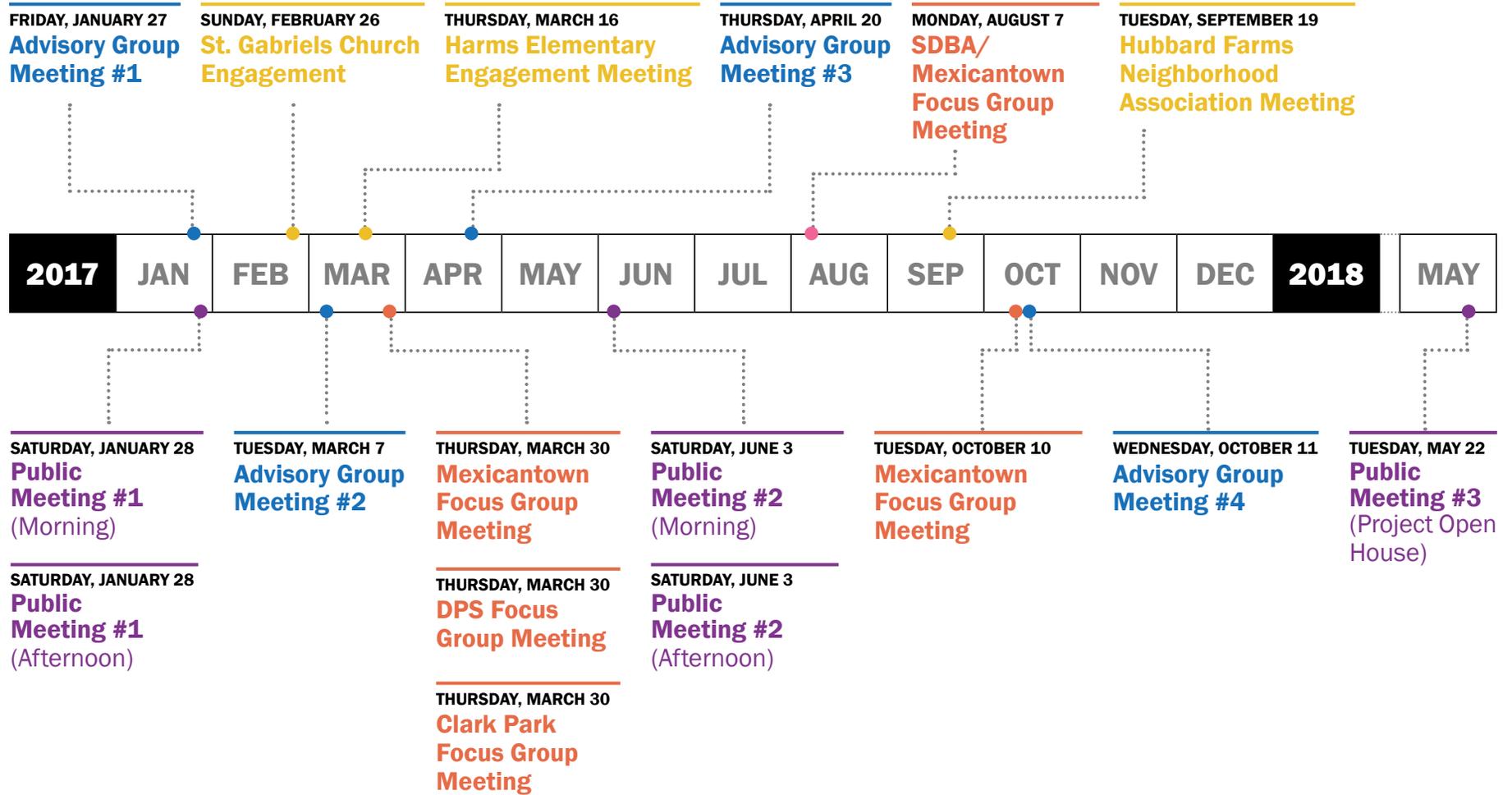
- Community forums at the start, midpoint and conclusion of the effort, held at multiple locations and times for convenient access, verified community priorities and explained the actions resulting from the process.
- A series of meetings with an Advisory Group engaged organizations active in the study area who have been instrumental in improving quality of life and economic opportunity, and planning for additional improvements.
- Additional meetings with individual stakeholder groups enabled further discussions about specific portions of the study area.



**At Community Forum events on January 28, 2017, residents and other stakeholders identified issues deserving priority attention in this effort.**



**At the Community Forum events, participants identified places they especially like (green dots) and places where change is most needed to solve problems or seize opportunities (red dots).**





# 5

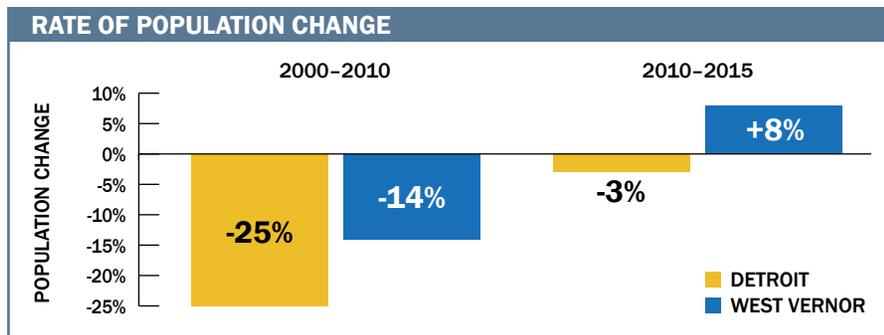
## EXISTING CONDITIONS



## Distinguishing features of the West Vernor neighborhood corridor

As mentioned above, in Chapter 1, the neighborhoods of the West Vernor Corridor Study Area possess unique demographic, physical and economic conditions that must shape strategies for enhancing quality of life and economic opportunity. These include:

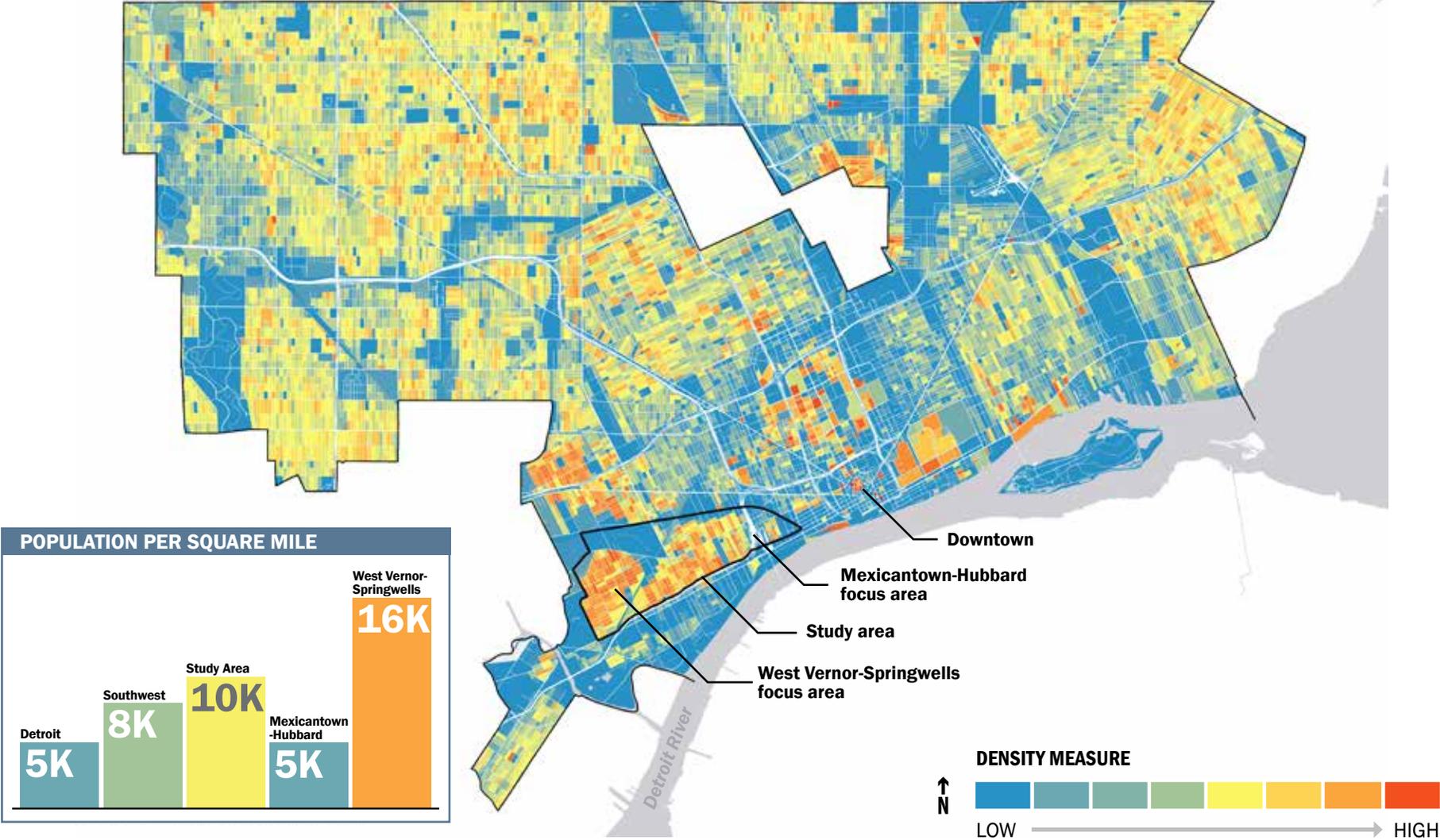
- A **growing and highly diverse** population. According to 2015 American Community Survey data, the population of about 35,500 people in census tracts that compose the study area grew 8% between 2010 and 2015, reversing a decline of 14% between 2000 and 2010. In contrast, the overall City of Detroit lost 3% of its population in 2010-2015 after losing 25% between 2000 and 2010. The study area's population diversity index—the likelihood that two people living in the same area will come from different racial or ethnic groups—is 85%, more than twice the City's 42% average.



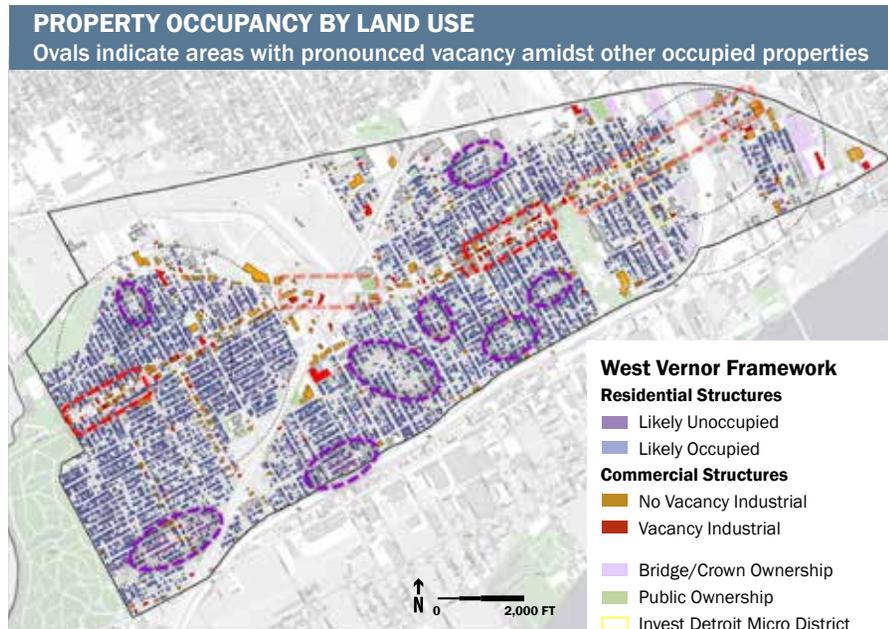
- A substantial **Latino population**, including many immigrants from Mexico. The study area contains Detroit's largest concentration of Latino residents. This heritage is reflected in community cultural traditions, businesses, language, and other aspects. The study area's traditional role as a gateway to the United States is reflected by its relatively high (20%) share of residents who are not US citizens.

- A large proportion of **family households**. In the study area, 40% of households have children, compared to 26% of households citywide. Correspondingly, the study area households have a higher average number of residents (3.18) than the City overall (2.65), and the median age is lower: 29 in the study area, versus 36.1 citywide.
- **Income levels** are relatively low compared to area median income according to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey. Households have low rates of car ownership. Bus service along major streets (recently expanded), walkable access to services, and recent installation of bike lanes on West Vernor and other selected streets offer important transportation options.
- Relatively strong **job growth** compared with many other Detroit neighborhoods. According to Invest Detroit, job count in Detroit's Southwest area as a whole grew nearly 66% between 2003 and 2013, while remaining virtually unchanged in the city as a whole. 76% of workforce members are employed, compared to 72% in the City as a whole. The study area contains many employers, including small locally-based businesses and organizations, as well as larger commercial and light industrial entities.
- Relatively modest levels of **property vacancy**—23%—compared with many other Detroit neighborhoods—which reflect a 30% vacancy rate for the city as a whole. While vacant lots and buildings are a major concern in the study area, and a key focus of this planning effort, most parcels and buildings are occupied with active uses. Concentrations of significant vacancy along neighborhood commercial corridors and on residential blocks are shown in the diagram on page 28.
- One of Detroit's strongest concentrations of restaurants. The area is a **dining and tourism destination** for people from outside the study area, with potential to become more so.
- A significant amount of **community-serving retail and services**—including multiple grocery stores and pharmacies—primarily concentrated along West Vernor Highway, Springwells Avenue and Bagley Avenue. Blocks of residential development, consisting primarily of single-fam-

EXPANDING UPON EXISTING COMMUNITY STRENGTHS | COMPARATIVE POPULATION DENSITIES



*On average, the study area has twice the residential density of the city as a whole.*



ily house lots but including a number of multi-family buildings, flank these commercial corridors. Most housing units are within reasonable walking distance of these corridors. However, certain retail products desired by community members, such as clothing, have little or no availability among current retail selections.

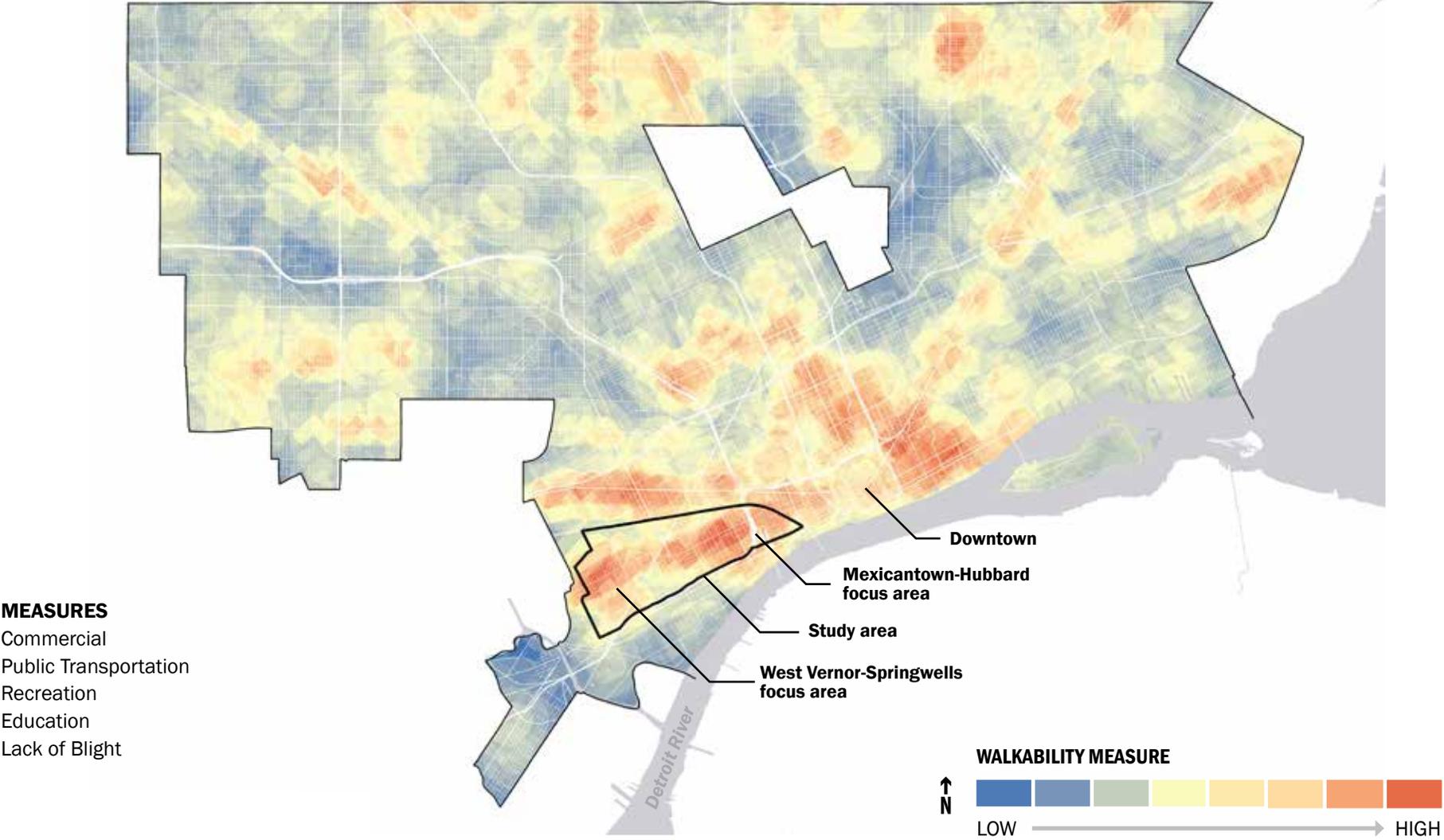
- A significant number of **schools**, both public and private. Many students come to these schools from other parts of Detroit.
- Several **parks**, varying from small to large, are located at various points in and around the study area. These are important and well-used resources, but some parts of the study area are much closer to parks than others. Several proposed greenway initiatives in Detroit pass through portions of the study area, with potential connections to other neighborhoods and the Detroit Riverfront.
- Major pieces of **transportation infrastructure** surrounding and bisecting the study area. The Fisher Freeway is both a major barrier from adjoining neighborhoods, and valuable access resource, to the south

and east. Two major railroad embankments crossing through the study area and running along its northern edge limit street access and community connectivity, but are also vital to the jobs and other economic productivity of the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal (DIFT) on the north side of the study area. A significant amount of truck traffic passes through the study area, especially between the DIFT, various commercial and industrial businesses, and regional roadways, including the Fisher Freeway, Interstate 94, and the Ambassador Bridge to Canada. The planned Gordie Howe bridge to Canada will add another major transportation route. Community members have cited heavy truck traffic on neighborhood streets as one of their greatest concerns, as a detriment to safety, property value and livability.

- A number of highly active **community-based organizations**, with missions to enhance quality of life, business activity and community vitality.
- Much of the study area's industrial activity, clustered around major rail and highway corridors, also adjoins its more densely occupied residential blocks. In some cases, vacant industrial land with limited marketability for future industrial use could be rezoned for more marketable and context-sensitive use.

These characteristics reveal a number of important assets as well as challenges. The many assets make the study area an opportune place to create improvements that will generate lasting, growing benefits. The composite map of walkability indicators on page 29 illustrates the combined benefits of having concentrations of neighborhood retail, parks, schools and transportation resources in the study area, within a neighborhood street network that places these critical services within a reasonable walk, bike, or bus ride of all of its households. Yet while the study area has important assets relative to the overall City, it also contains daily challenges to residents and business owners. This plan's initiatives will not only **address these urgent problems**, but also help the West Vernor corridor become a **stronger engine of economic and community development for Detroit**. The next pages assess existing conditions and identify the priority planning strategies that lie behind the plan's initiatives.

EXPANDING UPON EXISTING COMMUNITY STRENGTHS | PEDESTRIAN WALKABILITY



*The study area rates well on this composite map of several measures that contribute to walkability—availability of retail, transit, parks, and schools, as well as relative lack of blight. The largely continuous network of residential blocks in much of the study area helps connect residents to these important neighborhood amenities.*

## Overview of Conclusions

This section summarizes conclusions as to how the Framework Plan should direct its attention within the strategy categories. For each strategy, the summary addresses key findings from recent or earlier analysis, recommended projects or strategies from previous plans, and recommended strategy guiding the action steps of this plan framework. Most near-term project initiatives are strategically grouped within the West Vernor-Springwells and Mexicantown-Hubbard focus areas.

### Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Residential Development

There is demonstrated market potential for additional households in the study area. There is potential for at least 500 new households over five years, at a rate of 100 to 140 per year. Potential households are primarily interested in apartment units in multi-family buildings, and show more limited interest in detached and attached single-family homes.

Households interested in living or locating to the study area represent a wide range of income levels, with more than half of these households earning less than 80% of Area Median Income. Diagrams on page 32 further illustrate the preferences and characteristics of target market households with comparison to existing community characteristics.

Housing development in new or rehabilitated structures continues to face major financial feasibility challenges, requiring multiple financial sources and strategies for gap financing as in the rest of the Detroit market today. See text and chart on pages 32-33 for study findings on optimizing feasibility. To address these opportunities and challenges, the plan's efforts and initiatives should focus primarily on catalyzing housing investment in places where it is currently most financially feasible—that is, on sites where housing can command relatively strong rents or sales prices, and where the number of new housing units that can be practically developed is in line with near-term market demand. In addition, new or rehab housing development should be prioritized along or near

principal neighborhood retail and transit corridors. This will promote household access to convenient walking, transit, and bike route options, reduce development and occupancy costs related to vehicle parking and ownership, and help support local businesses.

New and rehabilitated housing units should be offered at a range of price points—both to respond equitably to the needs and means of as many households as possible, and to maximize capture of housing market potential. This will increase the rate at which vacant lots, buildings, and units are occupied, bringing immediate community benefits while creating an environment that attracts further reinvestment. At a minimum, new multi-family housing development should apply current Citywide policies on affordable housing production—for instance by providing at least 20% of units at a price point affordable to households at 80% of area median income (AMI) on those projects involving City support. Equally important, proactive steps should be taken to maintain the supply of existing multi-family housing units available to households at and under 80% AMI. This is often a more cost-effective approach than building new affordable housing units. One proven strategy is for community-based organizations to acquire and manage multi-family housing, as Detroit's Cass Corridor Neighborhood Development Corporation has done. This approach commonly requires external financial support, at least for initial capital costs.

### Neighborhood Retail

There is some market potential for additional retail uses, as well as for housing on upper floors according to the 2017 Detroit Retail Opportunity Study. This new occupancy should be targeted toward the West Vernor-Springwells and Mexicantown-Hubbard focus areas, to best respond to near-term demand and to create mature, sustainable retail and residential districts that can spur future demand and reinvestment in adjoining areas. The plan's efforts and initiatives should focus on a combination of strategically tenanting vacant retail space in existing buildings and catalyzing development on several prominent larger parcels along West

Vernor Highway, Springwells Street and Bagley Avenue. Development of larger vacant land sites should occur on a longer-term timeframe that leverages market positioning and urban design benefits generated by near-term actions. Projects such as the Hubbard Vernor development will bring the incremental increase of density and market value that will foster/encourage the development of larger new construction investments in the future, such as the DPW and Toledo & Grand sites.

Economic feasibility, parking constraints, code upgrades, absentee ownership, and other physical improvements needed by buildings all present hurdles to redevelopment. Plan efforts should focus on strategies to resolve these issues. The City should continue to deploy tactics to motivate property owners to renovate or sell vacant and underutilized properties, offering incentives such as the Restore Detroit and Motor City Match programs while issuing fines to owners who are out of compliance with City building codes and safety regulations. Bringing vacant buildings back to life will help reinforce the many successful properties and businesses along West Vernor, enhance the street as a public space, generate economic returns for property owners and new workers, and offer attractive opportunities for new housing, retail and community facilities. Redeveloping vacant parcels while adding more households can help reposition the area for different types and larger scales of retail and/or housing development desired by the community. These parcels occur in some prominent gateway locations near established neighborhood retail services, such as at West Vernor and Livernois, and near Mexicantown, offering opportunity for highly visible impacts that benefit properties and businesses in a wider area.

### **Single-Family Residential Stabilization**

Vacant single-family homes and residential lots are present on many streets in the study area, in different concentrations. Depending on location, concentration, and condition, these properties present different levels of challenge, and merit different types of response. As a result, a multifaceted approach to single-family stabilization is necessary. Priority actions include maintaining vacant lots, renovating homes in good

### **PLANNING FOUNDATIONS**

#### **Woodmere/Springdale Neighborhood Improvement Strategy—**

Potential for new apartments district, and redevelopment of an abandoned school site within the Springdale/Woodmere neighborhood.

#### **Invest Detroit's Strategic Neighborhood Fund program document—**

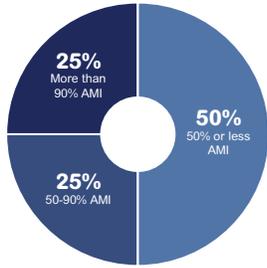
Southwest Microdistrict analysis includes a prototype mixed-use development on a block-long vacant parcel between Palms and Hubbard, including program, economics pro forma and concept illustrations

**CNU 24 Congress Legacy Charrette—**Imagines a variety of housing typologies on city-owned land at and near the DPW site, and activating existing upper floors of historic buildings for residential use; Reconfigure streets at Vernor Crossing to create a central square; vacant sites into parks, and range of civic spaces; potential for neighborhood landmark, DPW building renovation into a community center and maker space.

**Michigan Municipal League PlacePlan—**Long term (full build out) sees higher density residential opportunities around Vernor Crossing (DPW site) and along Vernor Highway; traffic calming and flow measures at Vernor Highway/Dix Highway intersection; railway overpass enhancement; develop a new public square by DPW building at Vernor Crossing; adapt DPW into community-oriented environment; and to prioritize entrepreneurial activity within the potential growing development.

**ULI—**Retail, Dining/food retailers, incubator spaces, businesses and related enterprises, and food production facilities at Vernor Crossing site; new bus transit at Vernor crossing retail hub/development; designate a central area at Vernor Crossing as public space, envisioned as a town plaza

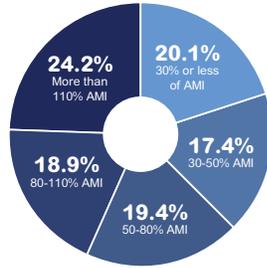
EXISTING HOUSEHOLD INCOMES



\* **Figures are approximate, and summarize ranges in separate analyses for the West Vernor-Springwells (2010) and Mexicantown-Hubbard (2013) areas.**

Sources: Springwells Village Quality of Life Plan (2012; data from 2010), Reconnecting Detroit's Cultural Crossroads (2016, using ACS 2009-2013 5-year estimates)

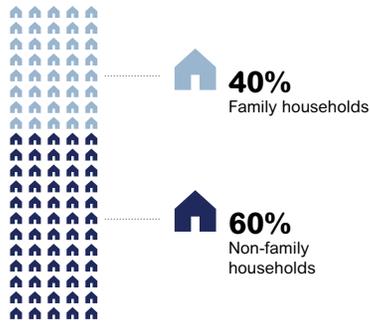
TARGET HOUSEHOLD INCOMES



**Housing market potential comes from across the spectrum of household income levels. Annual housing unit absorption would range between 100 and 140 units.**

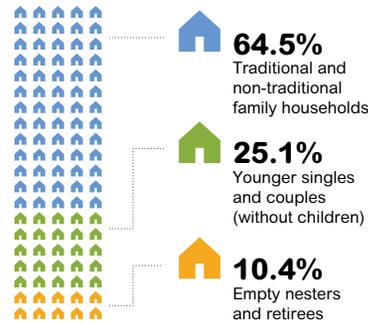
Source: Analysis of Residential Market Potential, Vernor Crossing Study Area, by Zimmerman/Volk Associates (2016)

EXISTING HOUSEHOLD TYPES



Source: Community Assessment, Vista Partnership (2014)

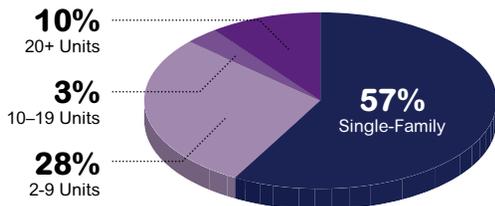
TARGET MARKETS



**Family households represent nearly two thirds of market potential. Younger singles and couples, who represent emerging workforce and future families, represent a quarter of market potential.**

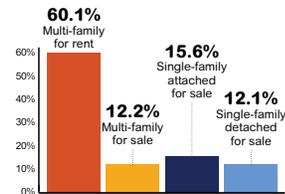
Source: Analysis of Residential Market Potential, Vernor Crossing Study Area, by Zimmerman/Volk Associates (2016)

EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS BY TYPE



Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

UNIT TYPES MOST SOUGHT BY NEW HOUSEHOLDS IN W. VERNOR STUDY AREA



Source: Analysis of Residential Market Potential, Vernor Crossing Study Area, by Zimmerman/Volk Associates (2016)

**Multi-family rental units are in greatest demand. They are also relatively less available in the study area than single-family homes.**

# Economic Feasibility Analysis

Market interest in renting or buying housing units in an area does not necessarily make it economically feasible for a developer or property owner to produce new or rehabilitated housing units. The cost of rehabilitating an existing building or constructing a new one, combined with property acquisition, financing, and other development costs, may be more than a property owner can afford while maintaining rent or sales costs at the levels the market is willing to pay. In this case, a “gap” exists between the project cost and anticipated project revenue, meaning the owner would receive too little return on investment to make the project worth pursuing. Sometimes, such a gap can be filled by utilizing tax credits, grants or other funding specifically intended to help make real estate development happen in places like neighborhoods of the West Vernor corridor.

This study tested the economic feasibility of a variety of potential development projects in the study area. These potential development projects were generally located on land owned by the City or another entity intending to encourage property rehabilitation or new development. Multiple scenarios were tested for each site, with variations in program (greater or lesser amounts of housing, retail or other uses) and financing approach (potential use of tax credits and/or other sources of subsidy in some cases). Scenarios were refined and

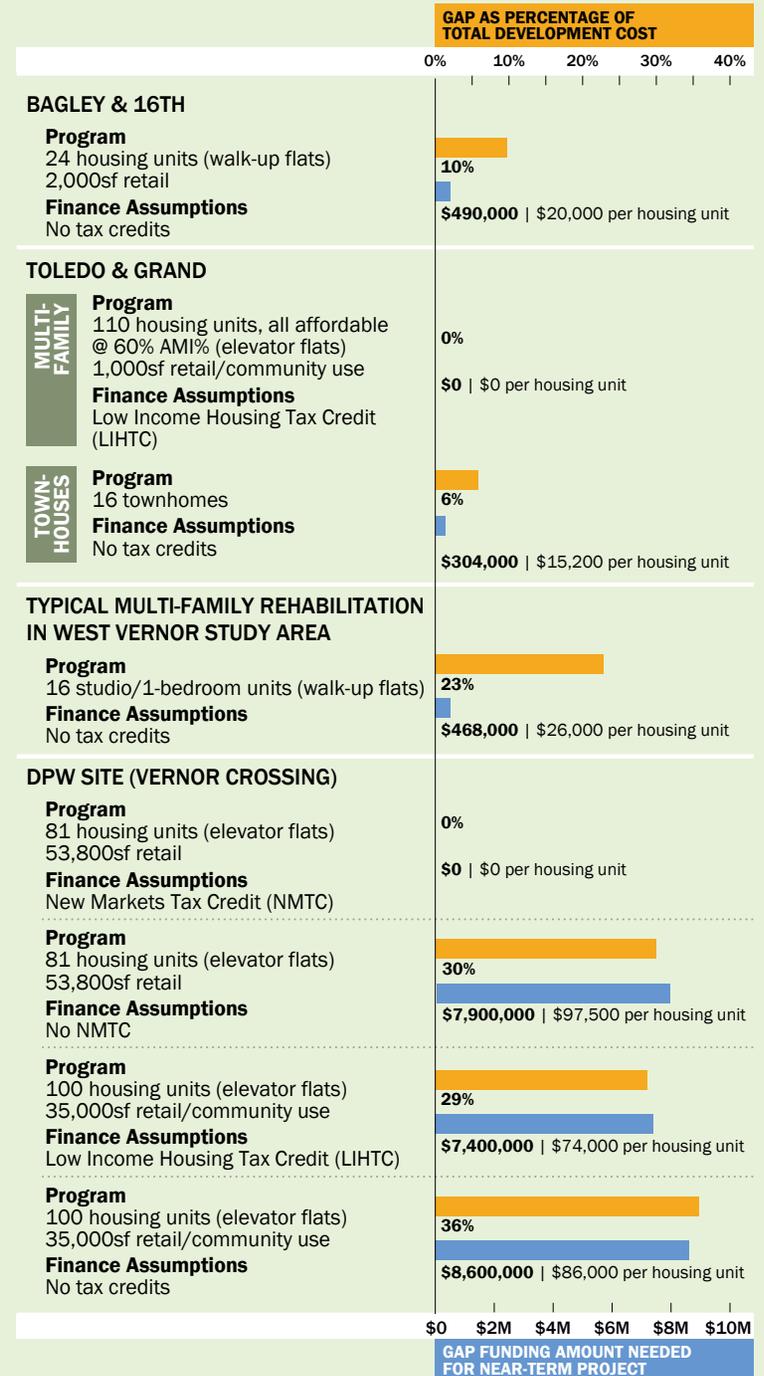
tested again to identify program and design scenarios for each parcel that best met goals of both economic feasibility, and catalytic impact on the study area through design and program. The accompanying diagram describes findings of the most feasible scenarios for each site. Several measures of feasibility are highlighted:

- Finance gap as percentage of total development cost. Some development projects require relatively less of their total cost subsidized than do others.
- Finance gap in absolute dollars. Projects with smaller actual subsidy amounts that also can have a strong positive impact on their context deserve strong consideration as near-term, cost-effective revitalization initiatives.
- Finance gap per unit. This indicates how the cost-efficiency of housing production compares across scenarios.

Project program magnitude also bears consideration. With total housing absorption potential across all unit types and income levels totaling 100 to 140 units per year, larger development projects with 80 or more housing units may be best delayed until smaller near-term projects help further establish market position and increase demand.

Key assumptions in the economics feasibility analysis include:

- Any project involving City support would include at least 20% of its units affordable to households earning 80% or less of area median income (AMI).
- Projects on city land must pay the city for property acquisition.
- Abatement of city property taxes is assumed.
- Other gap funding sources considered among different alternatives include
  - Capital grants
  - Soft second loans
  - Community Revitalization loan
  - Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
  - New Markets Tax Credits (for projects with significant commercial land use component)
- Retail rent assumed at \$1.17/sf
- Residential rent assumed at \$1.11-\$1.68/sf for market rate, and \$0.67-\$1.61/sf for 80% AMI, depending on location and unit size.



condition to be suitable for re-occupancy, and demolishing those homes that cannot be renovated.

Development of new housing on the many vacant single-family residential parcels that are not occupied by buildings should not be a priority unless it directly supports rehabilitation of nearby homes. This is because residents usually value vacant parcels that are clean and landscaped; many homeowners have taken the opportunity to purchase adjoining vacant lots to gain additional yard space through the side lot sale program of the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA). However, plan initiatives should bring other appropriate uses to vacant parcels to add amenities for individual homeowners and the broader community and to ensure their ongoing stewardship. The ongoing partnership of Urban Neighborhood Initiatives with the City to maintain vacant residential lots as small parks and community gardens is a good precedent to continue. The study area does include several large, multi-acre vacant parcels amidst residential blocks. Redevelopment of these with housing and/or other uses is appropriate, owing to the unique opportunities larger-scale development could offer. However, investment in these sites should be located and timed so that it leverages planned near-term development projects in the West Vernor-Springwells and Mexicantown-Hubbard target areas.

Vacant single-family homes, in contrast, do present serious and immediate risks to surrounding properties from squatting, fire, and diminished value. Vacant buildings deserve urgent attention, such as through the

### PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

**Springwells Village QoL Plan**—Targeting two key locations for demolition to promote safety and appearance, and opens up the opportunity for potential redevelopment.

**CNU 24 Congress Legacy Charrette**—Imagines a variety of housing typologies on city-owned residential parcels, and activating existing upper floors of historic buildings for residential use.

DLBA's efforts to either demolish or, when feasible, rehabilitate and re-tenant vacant single-family homes. Detroit's new Bridging Neighborhoods initiative will provide valuable additional resources for vacant home rehabilitation; see Chapter 6, page 44.

Another challenge for single-family residential stabilization, present throughout Detroit, is the difficulty many households face in obtaining mortgages. This can be due to relatively low property values, which may be unattractive to lenders; to difficulties households may have demonstrating a credit history; and/or other factors. Efforts to reduce these difficulties—such as proactive recruitment of mortgage lenders, and homeownership counseling or other assistance to prospective household purchasers—must be expanded to fully take advantage of the market potential for purchase of single-family properties. Programs that already help households overcome these challenges include the Detroit Home Mortgage Program and Detroit 0% Home Loans. More information on these and other resources can be found at [http://www.detroitmi.gov/Government/Departments-and-Agencies/Housing-and-Revitalization/For-Residents#hrd\\_homeownership](http://www.detroitmi.gov/Government/Departments-and-Agencies/Housing-and-Revitalization/For-Residents#hrd_homeownership).

### Streetscapes and Mobility

Consistent with resident feedback, a variety of streetscape improvements are warranted along the study area's major streets to serve multiple goals. These include improving transportation choices, with safer, more welcoming settings to walk, use transit, and bike; improving street appearance, to support real estate and business appeal; creating places along sidewalks for community activity and identity; and enabling low-impact stormwater management. Improvements also can help address the truck traffic issues described further under Policy Initiatives through traffic-calming measures. Most vehicle crashes with pedestrians or bicyclists have occurred on the study area's major streets conducting 5,000 to 10,000 or more vehicle trips per day (see map on page 35). Pedestrian and bicycle improvements along these corridors can significantly enhance safety at relatively little cost, while also improving access to adjoining retail, schools, and other neighborhood destinations.



The study area contains a number of busy streets, but traffic levels along most segments are in a range where simple, proven elements like crosswalk bump-outs, protected bike lanes, and street trees can significantly improve the safety and appeal of walking and biking.

## PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

**2017 Parks and Recreation Improvement Plan**—Two-year engagement process to provide a city-wide plan to strengthen all neighborhoods through specific programs and opportunities.

**Reconnecting Detroit’s Cultural Crossroads: A Quality of Life Plan for Sustainable Community**

**Invest Detroit’s Strategic Neighborhood Fund program document**—Improvements on Bagley Avenue and West Grand Boulevard to solidify surrounding development.

**Power of Ten**—a specific list of ideas for improving the quality of the street along business and problem areas on Springwells Street.

**Green Infrastructure Project**—streetscape improvements network along: West Grand, Dagoon, Springwells, West Vernor Highway, West Fort; thus connecting parks (Patton, Clark, and River), Detroit River waterfront, and places of interest (Historic Fort Wayne).

**Springwells Village QoL Plan**—West Vernor between Waterman and Woodmere streetscape improvement, improvement of historic Woodmere Street (greenway), signage and wayfinding throughout neighborhood.

**Woodmere/Springdale Neighborhood Improvement Strategy**—Woodmere Street improvement/ Greenway; traffic control along Lawndale, Chamberlain, and Woodmere; Green Alleys improvements.

**ThinkBike**—working with a big list of municipalities and organizations to study biking options along Bagley, Michigan/Livernois, and other non-specified areas in Southwest.

**ULI**—new bus transit at Vernor crossing retail hub/development.

**Michigan Municipal League PlacePlan**—traffic calming and flow measures at Vernor Highway/Dix Highway intersection; railway overpass enhancement.

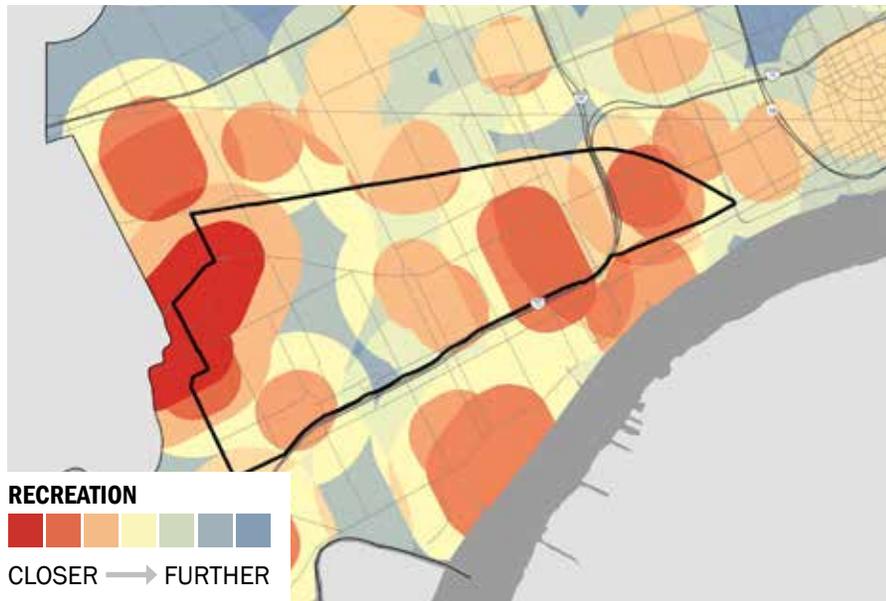
Near-term investments should be targeted to reinforce near-term real estate development projects, increase pedestrian safety, and support a long-term mobility vision of this community and the city’s larger network. In the Mexicantown-Hubbard focus area, improvements to West Vernor east from Clark Park, Bagley Avenue, and West Grand Boulevard would best support companion efforts in property development, retail attraction, and public open space improvement, while also providing immediate safety and convenience benefits for area residents, businesses and schools. Streetscape improvement priorities here include improved pedestrian crossings, historic and pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, and bike facilities where missing.

In the West Vernor-Springwells focus area, Springwells Street deserves priority attention, as it has not received the improvements to pedestrian and bike facilities, lighting, street trees and low-impact stormwater management already implemented along Vernor. All such improvements are merited along Springwells, where they would benefit residents, businesses, and students at nearby schools. Along Vernor, the addition of ornamental lighting to the existing gateways structures that span the street would dramatically distinguish the area as a destination business and cultural district.

The long-term mobility vision for bike routes, walking trails and multi-use trails includes a combination of bike facilities and sidewalks within traditional street rights-of-way, and new dedicated off-street greenways. The combined network is intended to improve mobility choices, safety, and recreation options both locally within the study area, and at a city-wide level through making key connections among other neighborhoods, Downtown, the Detroit riverfront, and the planned Gordie Howe International Bridge crossing to Canada.

## Parks and Open Space

The West Vernor neighborhood corridor is relatively well-served by parks, compared to other Detroit neighborhoods. Patton and Clark Parks, toward the western and eastern ends of the study area, are among



**Most residential blocks in the study area are within a convenient walk of a park or recreation center.**

residents' favorite places. Several smaller parks are also well-used and appreciated; these include Boyer Playfield, Military-Regular Park, Springdale Green, and the Mexicantown Mercado, all of which were recently built or renovated with significant community input. At the same time, the neighborhood commercial street corridors that are the center of much community activity and ethnic dining generally lack adjacent park or plaza space. Open space priorities for the study area thus fall into two categories: improving facilities and walking and biking access serving the dedicated parks; and making greater use of street spaces themselves as public spaces in commercial areas. The corridor contains well-used parks and street spaces that merit some specific facilities improvements. In addition, several opportunities exist to expand parks and recreation access for under-served areas and different types of activities. Prominent, attractive sustainable stormwater facilities should be included as part of these parks, and potentially on vacant sites, where merited by existing poor drainage conditions.

## PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

### Clark Park Master Plan

### Reconnecting Detroit's Cultural Crossroads: A Quality of Life Plan for Sustainable Community

**Power of Ten**—key open spaces, and greening of parking lot edge studies along Springwells Street.

**Green Infrastructure Project**—neighborhood connections to existing green spaces via safe and improved streetscape.

**Springwells Village QoL Plan**—railroad edge beautification; 4+ neighborhood open space initiatives, demolitions of existing abandoned buildings with possibilities of maintaining them as neighborhood open spaces.

**Woodmere/Springdale Neighborhood Improvement Strategy**—community gardens at apartment districts, Beard Park, St Stephen playground, Cahalan plaza pocket park.

**Neighborhood centers**—4 open spaces (3 at schools) that double their service for students, and the community during off school hours.

**CNU 24 Congress Legacy Charrette**—Reconfigure streets at Vernor Crossing to create a central square; vacant sites into parks, and range of civic spaces.

**ULI**—to designate a central area at Vernor Crossing as public space, envisioned as a town plaza.

**Michigan Municipal League PlacePlan**—develop a new public square by DPW building at Vernor Crossing.

Priority park enhancement opportunities advocated by community members for Clark Park include lighting upgrades, a new gathering space along Vernor Highway, rehabilitation of historic park buildings, a splash pad, and improved pedestrian access from nearby schools and residential blocks. Patton Park would benefit from multi-use path and sidewalk improvements that enable more of the study area and surrounding neighborhoods to access its extensive recreation facilities on foot or bike. New park or plaza space should be included in redevelopment concepts for the DPW and Toledo/Grand redevelopment opportunity sites. Prime greenway opportunities include a buffer along the Fisher Freeway that also connects parks, and the May Creek connection to the Detroit riverfront.

## Neighborhood-wide Policy Initiatives

### **Truck Traffic**

Truck traffic is a recognized area of concern in Southwest Detroit. There is currently no effective designation or enforcement of appropriate truck routes in the study area. Default truck routing appears to take place on the primary streets in the study area, including, Livernois, Dagoon, West Vernor Highway, Dix, Lonyo, Central, Springwells, Clark Street, John Kronk and many of the local roads parallel to the railroad corridors. Resulting from these routings are impacts to the residents from increases in noise pollution, idling and vibration (trucks shake homes and are loud when going over bumps or railroad tracks), traffic congestion, and air pollution (specifically particulate matter) and damage to city infrastructure, and flooding from dirt covered sidewalks that eventually clog the drains. Two previous studies—a 2009 MDOT study related to the DIFT, and a 2016 legislative memo to the City Council on city truck route designations—recommended solutions to address these challenges; neither has been implemented. Next steps in this planning process should inform a scope of work addressing creation of truck routes that support area economic activity without compromising neighborhood quality of life. Important considerations for this scope include truck route design-

ation, enforcement, street design and signage features encouraging compliance, and communication with community members.

### **Viaducts**

Improving the condition of the viaducts should be prioritized according to those structures having the greatest impact to resident and school-aged children and best able to be improved with existing and available resources. These include city resources like staffing and equipment, and capital resources related to nearby development opportunities. For instance, relatively “quick” improvements could be made with city resources to address flooding and stormwater control (DWSD cleaning of catch basins), debris on roadways and sidewalks (DPW removal of debris and street sweeping), and lighting improvements. More involved projects (e.g., adding extensive murals, artwork, enhanced lighting, etc.) may raise the challenges of environmental issues (e.g. lead paint), increased permitting from the railroads, and identifying who provides for the maintenance and city indemnification of the enhanced work.

### **Zoning**

Several zone types and their locations in the study area deserve reconsideration to accommodate a greater mix of residential and commercial uses, and in some cases transition away from obsolete industrial uses:

- Although much industrial M-4 zone land in the study area remains active with industry, or has significant potential for future industrial use, other parcels in this zone, particularly around the rail corridor, are vacant and are surrounded by residential uses. These areas should transition to residential or mixed-use zoning that enhances property positioning to capture future market potential, and better supports the character and value of adjoining residential development.
- Most parcels along the main Vernor Highway, Springwells Street and Bagley Avenue corridors are zoned for business use. To accommodate a greater mix of housing along these corridors, zoning should change

to allow housing on upper floors (and, on certain appropriate blocks, lower floors) as of right, with low, market-driven parking requirements.

- Certain residential zones along the west side of Clark Park and in Mexicantown preclude neighborhood retail use in areas where it may be appropriate. Here, zoning should change to welcome retail uses that fit well with adjoining housing.
- Areas where multi-family residential and mixed-use development are recommended should accommodate relatively dense development, to capitalize on and support nearby parks, neighborhood retail, and transit.

### PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

**Vista Plan**—supporting a vision to create a destination between vibrant surrounding communities.

**Power of Ten**—Highlights traffic problem at the intersection of Vernon Highway and Springwells Street.

**Woodmere/Springdale Neighborhood Improvement Strategy**—Woodmere Street improvement/ Greenway; traffic control along Lawndale, Chamberlain, and Woodmere; Green Alleys improvements.

**CNU 24 Congress Legacy Charrette**—eliminate truck traffic through the neighborhood.

**Michigan Municipal League PlacePlan**—relocate existing railyard truck entry to point immediately west of Vernor and Dix to facilitate redevelopment of open space.

**MDOT DIFT Study**—Plan to consolidate intermodal rail-truck freight transfers to the Livernois Junction Rail Yard in partnership with four Class I railroads, with related street access improvements.

**City of Detroit/Railroad Legal Agreements**—Determine maintenance responsibilities for viaduct substructure and superstructure.

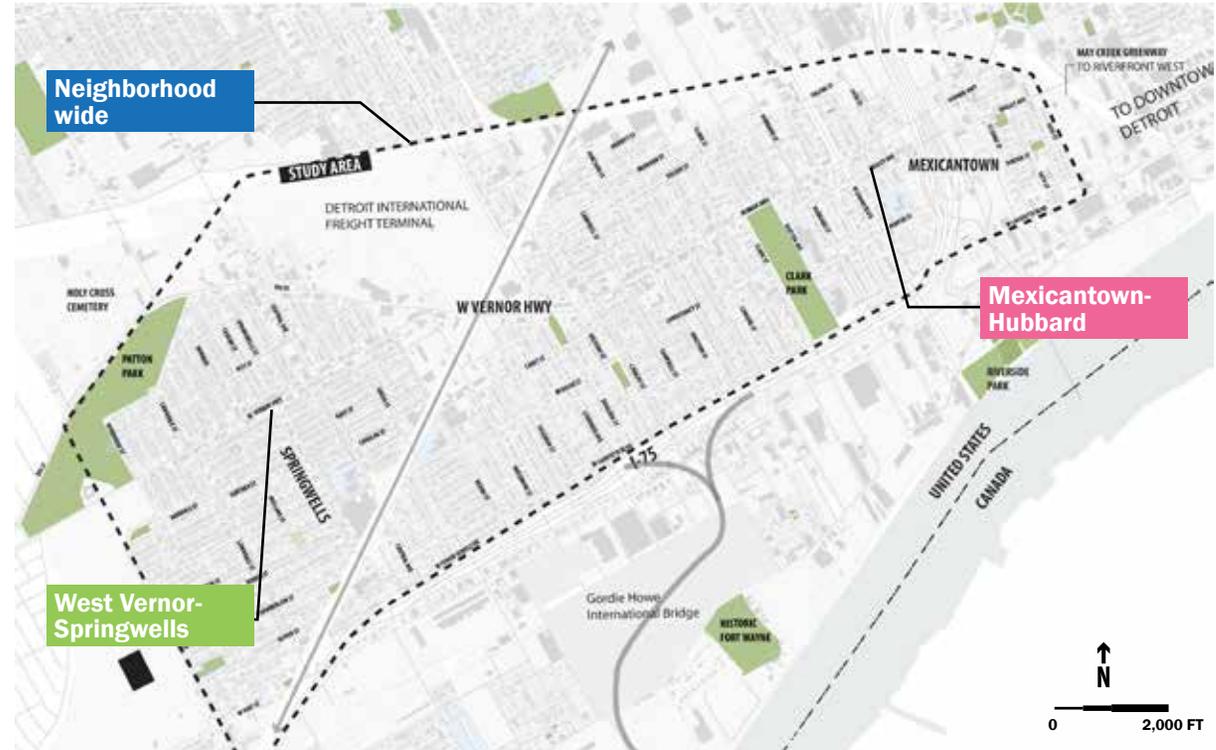
**City Council Legislative Policy Division Memo dated 08-08-2016**—Report on best practices and case studies for designating acceptable truck routes on city streets.

# 6

## NEAR-TERM ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

# Near-term Action & Implementation

Some actions are targeted to the entire study area, while others are focused in two smaller target areas: the *West Vernor Highway-Springwells Street* area in the western portion of the study area, and *Mexicantown-Hubbard* in the eastern portion of the study area. Actions are organized according to different *Strategies* associated with distinct topics, City agencies, and other implementing agents. The table below indicates where to find further description of near-term actions related to each target area and strategy.



TARGET AREA	STRATEGIES					
	Policy Initiatives	Streetscapes + Mobility	Parks + Open Space	Mixed-Use + Multi-Family Residential Development	Small Business and Retail Development	Single-Family Residential Stabilization
<b>Neighborhood wide</b>	Pages 42-45				Pages 78-79	Pages 44-45
<b>Mexicantown-Hubbard</b>		Page 57-71	Pages 58-61, 64-67	Pages 48-55	Pages 48-55, 81	
<b>West Vernor-Springwells</b>				Pages 72-77	Pages 72-77, 80	

## Policy Initiatives

### Mixed-Use Zoning

Proposed mixed-use zoning will be applied in the locations shown in the map on the facing page. The coloring of the map indicates its current zoning classification and land use, describe as follows:

- **Residentially-zoned land (yellow)**—These parcels are appropriate for housing, but also well-suited to retail or other commercial uses that would expand opportunities for investment. They are primarily located in Mexicantown east of I-75, amidst a variety of business-zoned parcels also recommended for mixed-use, and also include land facing Clark Park near Vernor Highway (including site of former YMCA). A transition to mixed-use zoning would enable retail frontage on some streets like Vernor Highway and Bagley Avenue where it would be appropriate, and offer greater flexibility for site program to respond to market opportunities. In addition, mixed-use zoning in this area will allow for greater building heights and building densities than currently permitted.
- **Business-zoned land (red)**—These parcels are appropriate for upper floor housing over ground floor retail or other active use. While this development pattern has been historically present on many blocks already, mixed-use zoning will enable greater amounts of housing and easier permitting. In some cases, outside of retail districts, ground floor housing may be appropriate, such as where this pattern successfully exists on Vernor Highway near 24th and 25th Streets.
- **Transitioning industrial land (blue)**—These parcels are vacant or occupied by light industrial use today. Their location amidst residential blocks makes them relatively hard to access with industrial vehicles, and in some cases quite small in size, limiting their marketability for future industrial use. Industrial activities on these parcels can also pose compatibility challenges with adjoining residential areas, arising from truck traffic, noise, proper-

ty scale and appearance, or other factors. Re-zoning these parcels to mixed-use will alleviate these challenges, open them to a new series of uses that may increase their marketability and value, and enhance the value of nearby residential properties.

Key characteristics of the mixed-use zoning include:

- **By-right mixed-use development.** This will cut “red tape” challenges in the permitting process.
- **Reduced need for on-site parking.** Mixed residential and commercial uses can use parking efficiently because they can use some of the same parking spaces at different times of the day and week. In addition, housing and commercial uses in corridor areas have convenient transit, walking, and biking options to many destinations, as well as potential car-share, minimizing need for automobile trips and parking.
- **Increased residential density allowance,** to enhance neighborhood vibrancy and development feasibility
- **Elimination of future strip-mall style development,** by specifying pedestrian-friendly design approaches emphasizing alignment of buildings to the street edge.
- **Encouragement of pedestrian-oriented uses,** such as housing and retail uses that are more marketable in a pedestrian-friendly setting.
- **Discouragement of auto-related uses** (such as drive-through uses and auto repair) in these areas that have pedestrian-oriented development.

**MIXED-USE ZONING PROPOSAL**

**WEST VERNOR-SPRINGWELLS**

EXISTING ZONING



ZONING CHANGES

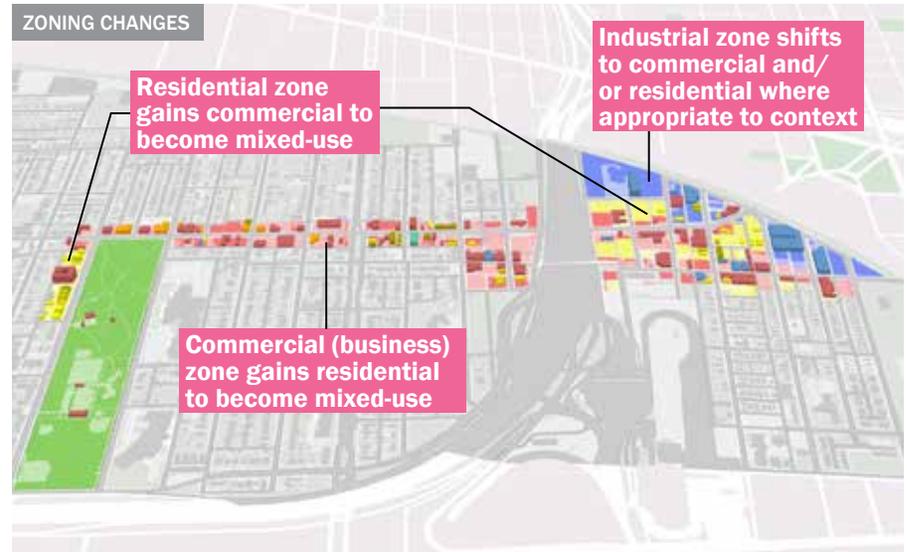


**MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD**

EXISTING ZONING



ZONING CHANGES



**RESIDENTIAL**  
ADD COMMERCIAL

**COMMERCIAL**  
ADD RESIDENTIAL

**INDUSTRIAL**  
SHIFTS TO COMMERCIAL AND/OR RESIDENTIAL WHERE APPROPRIATE TO CONTEXT

## Enhanced City service delivery initiatives

### ***Bridging Neighborhoods Program***

The Detroit Land Bank Authority has made steady progress transferring vacant housing in good condition to new resident owners, and demolishing housing in poor condition. The Bridging Neighborhoods program will build upon this foundation with additional resources for rehabilitating and re-tenanting vacant homes. Current residents of the Delray neighborhood and parts of Southwest Detroit who are impacted by Gordie Howe International Bridge construction will have priority opportunity to occupy these homes. Potential properties available to these residents are shown in the diagram on the facing page. Properties that are not eligible for the program will be sold through the DLBA's typical marketing strategies.

### ***Fugitive Dust Reduction***

Currently, acres of unpaved ground in the DIFT contribute to airborne dust. Under breezy conditions, this dust impacts neighborhoods in the study area. This dust also is tracked into city streets, causing flooding at low points such as viaducts, as the dirt collects within catch basins and clogs the drainage system. The City of Detroit will continue to work with the State of Michigan to identify funding for the DIFT plan, that includes paving the site and relocating the entryway from Dix to Lonyo. The City will continue to meet with other enforcement agencies to monitor the issue and enforcement plan.



***Vacant and damaged buildings often pose safety hazards.***

### ***GSD and BSEED Property Cleanup***

Under this initiative, teams of City staff from the General Services Department (GSD) and the Buildings, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Division (BSEED) will work jointly to clean up overgrown properties and conduct building safety inspections together. These periodic site visits will focus on multi-block neighborhood areas. As appropriate, fines will be imposed on property owners cited for safety or maintenance violations.

### ***Streamlined Events Permitting***

To make community events easier to organize, permit policies will be improved to include:

- Expedited permitting process for smaller events
- Decreased costs for permits
- Reduced regulatory requirements

### ***Viaduct Lighting and Cleanup***

This initiative intensifies and sustains efforts to enhance street safety and appearance at the study area's 19 rail viaducts. Typical improvements include:

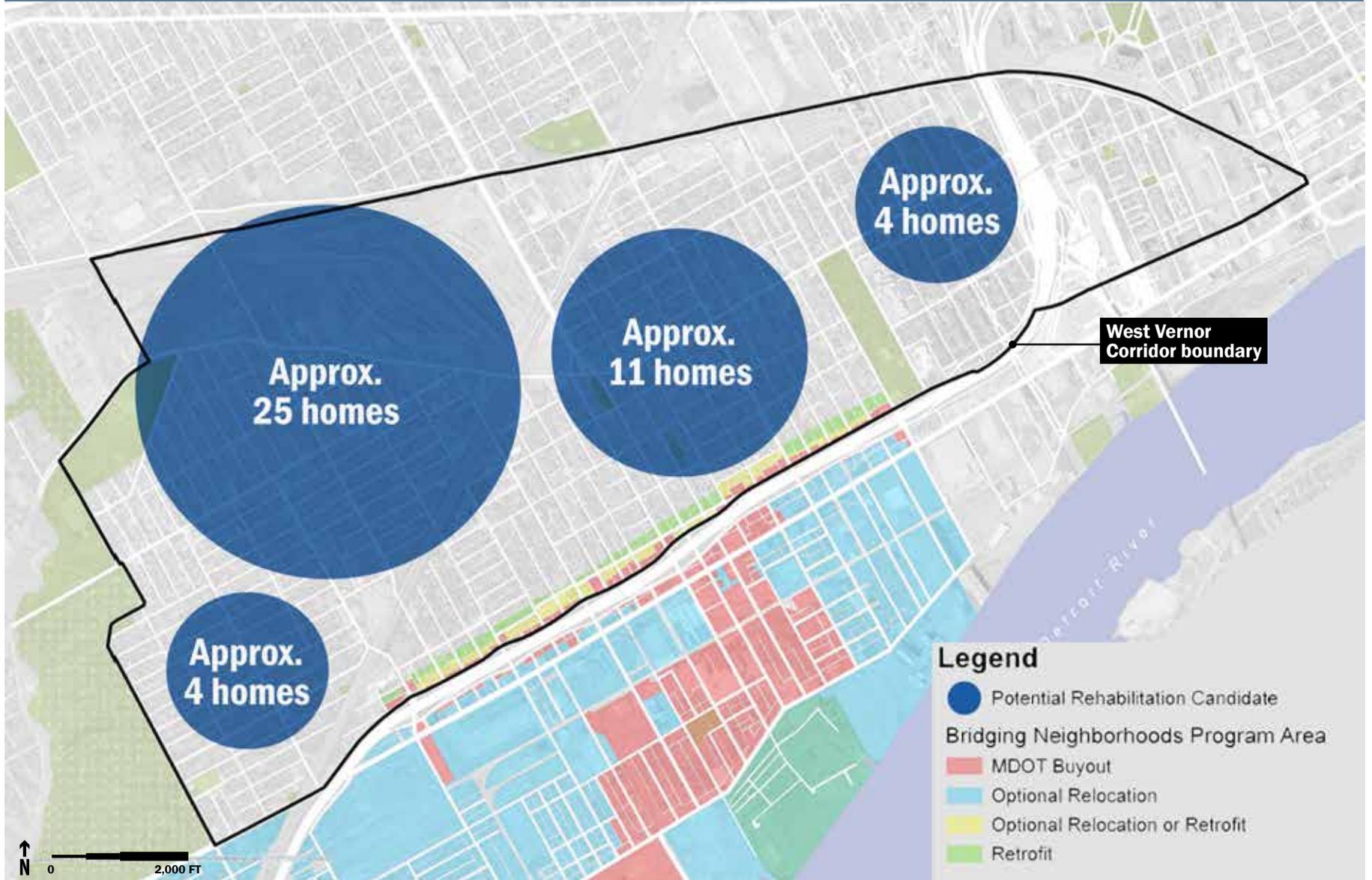
- Regular street sweeping and catch-basin clean-outs to maintain effective stormwater drainage
- Installation and maintenance of additional lighting over roadways and/or sidewalks where missing
- Regular clean-up of trash, graffiti, plant overgrowth
- Stabilize substructure surfaces to allow mural painting
- Repair curbing, roadway surfaces as needed
- Secure viaducts that are closed to traffic

The viaducts are ranked by near-, mid- and longer-term priority, and specific improvement needs at each viaduct have been verified. Detroit DPW, DWSC and GSD are responsible for different types of improvements. See page 84 for more information.

### ***City Walls***

This city-wide mural program will fund installations at seven viaducts in Southwest Detroit, starting with the prominent viaducts over Springwells Street, West Vernor Highway and Livernois Avenue. It utilizes local artists, and invites community input on mural content.

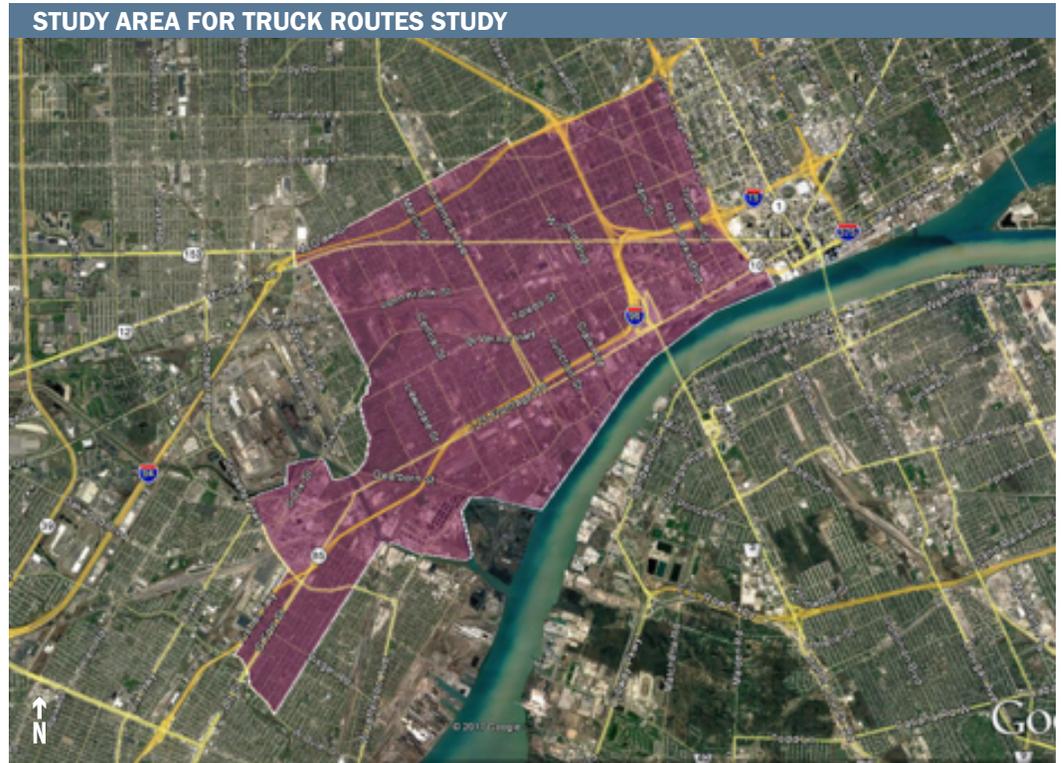
CITY- AND PARTNER-OWNED SINGLE-FAMILY REHABILITATION OPPORTUNITIES



## Truck Routes

A truck routes study will be commissioned by the City to provide specific recommendations to resolve significant challenges posed by routine truck traffic in and around the study area today. The study will address the area identified in the map on right.

The truck routes study will identify policy solutions to resolve community and City concerns regarding truck traffic growth associated with the Gordie Howe International Bridge, wear and tear on City street infrastructure, safety, quality of life, economic development, health, and neighborhood character. The study will include research into current truck traffic patterns, anticipated future patterns and volumes, street infrastructure conditions, and environmental impact studies. The study will recommend policy approaches to define and enforce appropriate truck routes, and to educate stakeholders and community to help apply new truck route policies effectively.



**Truck drivers often disregard posted truck route restrictions**



## Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development/ Small Business and Retail Development

### Overview

Growing market interest in living in this portion of the study area has caused a corresponding increase in the amount some households are willing and able to pay to buy or rent housing. This means that both new development and rehabilitation projects are at or approaching economic feasibility without subsidy on some sites. The City and partners may be able to offer land or other re-

sources to assist feasibility of priority projects that respond to the community vision. The projects proposed below are those that can do the most in the near future to respond to increased housing demand, create opportunity for more neighborhood stability and reinvestment, and build a more sustainable real estate economy.

### Summary of Proposed Development Projects

#### NEAR-TERM

	7 The Murray Townhome Rehab	8 Vernor-Hubbard New Construction	9 Bagley & 16th New Construction
			
HOUSING UNITS	7-14	48	34
SF OR RETAIL	0	8K	2K
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COST	\$2.5M	\$11.3M	\$5.2M
AFFORDABLE UNITS	20%	20%	20%
	2018	2018	2019



**COMPLETED**

- 1 Honey Bee Market Expansion**  
2443 Bagley Ave  
(Bagley & 17th St.)
- 2 Our Detroit**  
2545 Bagley Ave  
(Bagley & 18th St.)
- 3 Huron Room**  
2547 Bagley Ave  
(Bagley & 18th St.)
- 4 MoGo Bike Share Station**  
Total of 3 stations
- 5 El Club**  
4114 Vernor Hwy  
(W. Vernor & Palms St.)
- 6 W. Vernor Streetscape**  
Clark St. to Woodmere

**NEAR-TERM**

- 7 The Murray**  
4004 Porter St.  
(Porter St. & Hubbard St.)  
Units: 7  
Start Yr: 2018
- 8 Vernor-Hubbard**  
4060 - 4000 W. Vernor Hwy.  
Units: 44 Units  
Start Yr: 2018  
Retail: 9,000 sf
- 9 Bagley & 16th**  
2436 Bagley St.  
Units: 20+ Units  
Start Yr: 2019  
Retail: 2,000 sf

- 10 Clark Park Lighting**

**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SITES**

- 11 Apartment Rehab**  
347 W. Grand Blvd  
(W. Grand & Porter St.)  
Units: N/A  
Start Yr: N/A
- 12 Toledo & Grand**  
3600 Toledo St.  
Units: 110  
Start Yr: 2020  
Other: Park
- 13 Vinewood & Bagley**  
1580 Vinewood St.  
Units: 9  
Start Yr: 2020
- 14 Grand & Porter**  
346-362 Grand  
Units: 11  
Start Yr: 2020

**LEGEND**

- Invest Detroit Strategic Neighborhood Fund Micro District
- Schools



## Residential Rehabilitation

**What this site can do for the Mexicantown-Hubbard focus area.** This building is a prominent vacancy amidst a neighborhood area that is otherwise stable and seeing reinvestment. Near-by school, park and neighborhood retail amenities make this site an attractive location for new housing units. Rehabilitation will transform neighborhood liabilities into major assets, leverage available market potential, and demonstrate how to bring the study area's other vacant multi-family buildings back to life.

### Recommended Action Steps

Invest Detroit is partnering with Emery Matthews to develop this property.

#### THE MURRAY



- **Site and Context:** These seven rowhouses are prominently visible on Porter Street, on a block that connects Mexicantown-Hubbard to Clark Park and its adjoining schools. The existing site configuration can and should be retained, with residential front doors along Porter Street, and parking accommodated on-street.
- **Development Program:** Rehabilitate seven existing townhouses, each approximately 1,800 sf, based on existing floorplan, or convert into flats (two per townhouse). 20% available to households at or below 80% AMI. A mix of on-site and on-street parking is anticipated.
- **Urban Design Considerations:** Restore front yard landscaping along sidewalk. Plant new street trees spaced along the length of the block.

## Residential New Construction

**What this site can do for the Mexicantown-Hubbard focus area.** Redevelopment here will further invigorate this retail corridor with the addition of residents and retail at a critical strategic location—both a principal gateway to the entire West Vernor study area from the east, and a block that will connect stable areas of residential, retail, and public space on nearby blocks into a more cohesive center of strength. It will build synergy between Clark Park (and nearby reinvestment in retail and entertainment destinations), West Grand Boulevard, and Mexicantown. Along with the Bagley & 16th, this development will demonstrate the possibility and benefits of new development in the West Vernor corridor.

### Recommended Action Steps

Select a qualified developer for new construction.

### VERNOR-HUBBARD



*The site can support a three-story, mixed-use building, comprised of street level retail and two stories of residential apartments above, along with shared off-street parking behind. Independent shops and a pocket park will activate the north side of W. Vernor, strengthening the vibrancy of Southwest's local commercial corridor. The building will reinforce the mixed-use character and amenities at the gateway to Clark Park.*

- **Site and Context:** This currently vacant site, composed of several parcels owned by private and public entities, causes a prominent gap in development and activity along Vernor Highway. Together with nearby vacant sites along Vernor, it conveys the incorrect impression of an empty neighborhood at an important gateway, and detracts from walkability. Yet the site sits in an area with demonstrated residential market potential, close to many amenities including Clark Park, West Grand Boulevard, multiple schools, and neighborhood retail. It is one of the largest available development sites along Vernor, enhancing development feasibility. Nearby buildings along Vernor demonstrate a variety of successful retail, institutional, and residential use at ground level.

- **Development Program:** Approximately 8,000sf of storefront retail at ground level. Approximately 48 housing units on three or four stories above, with 20% available to households at or below 80% AMI. Shared parking serving retail and residential program behind building, accessible via alley.
- **Urban Design Considerations:** Incorporate retail storefront along the majority of Vernor Highway frontage to reinforce the larger community retail district between Clark Park and Mexicantown, and to enhance walkability. Façade design should fit well with the scale and material context of existing mixed-use development along Vernor, while considering opportunities for contemporary design expression.

## Bagley & 16th

**What this site can do for the Mexicantown-Hubbard focus area.** On this prominent site, where the east end of Mexicantown and the West Vernor study area transitions to Corktown, the project will demonstrate that new housing and retail development is feasible and marketable in the focus area. Its 20+ housing units and 2,000 square feet of retail space will leverage the amenity and stability created by decades of previous reinvestment in Mexicantown, and add residents who will contribute further to the Mexicantown community and economy.

**Site and context.** This city-owned site at the northwest corner of Bagley Avenue and 16th Street is highly visible from the adjacent bridge that carries Bagley Avenue over railroad tracks from Corktown. Thus, devel-

opment here can serve as a gateway landmark to Mexicantown and the entire West Vernor study area. The site is across Bagley Avenue from the Honey Bee Market/La Colmena—a well-established neighborhood market and esteemed Mexicantown anchor—and a bookend to a series of restaurants and shops extending five blocks west to the Mercado. The site adjoins an occupied commercial building, across a platted alley. Along 16th Street, it faces the proposed May Creek Greenway extending to the Detroit River, and could complement a greenway access point from 16th Street. As 16th Street descends in elevation to the north, a retaining wall lines the site to the east and north (facing Newark Street). The Inner Circle/Iron Belle Greenway is planned to run past the site along Bagley Avenue.



MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT | SMALL BUSINESS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

CONCEPT:  
BAGLEY & 16TH

New retail facing  
Honey Bee Market

New mixed-income  
apartments

Street/path improvements  
accessing proposed  
May Creek Greenway



**DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

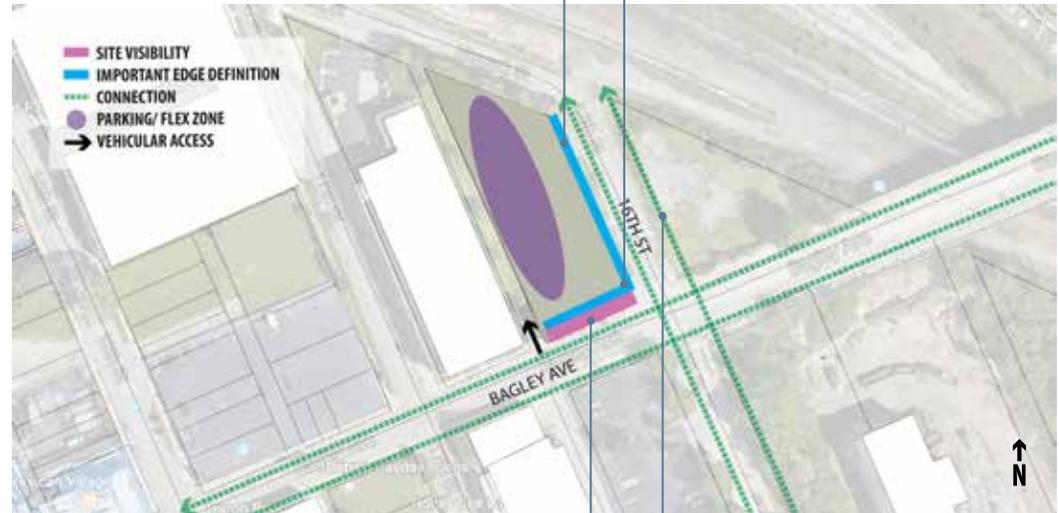
Figures are approximate, based on a recommended scenario optimized for economic feasibility and urban design benefit

<b>Retail</b>	2,000 gross sf of storefront retail facing Bagley Avenue
<b>Housing</b>	20+ units, assuming a mixture of studio and 1-bedroom units. 26,450 gross sf overall.
<b>Building types</b>	10 walk-up housing units located on two floors above a retail ground floor facing Bagley Avenue.  Remaining units configured as stacked flats in 3-story walkup configuration, 4 groups of 6 units each facing 16th Street. Stick construction.
<b>Parking assumptions</b>	1 off-street parking space per unit. 24 units park on surface spaces on-site, accessed from platted alley. 10 units park in leased spaces one block away, or in other nearby leased space. On-street parking available for retail and supplementary residential use.
<b>Landscaped area</b>	Shared and/or private courtyard/patio space for residents can be located in the core of the site, between ground floor units and parking.

**URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Residential front doors facing 16th Street.  
Compact front yards and/or stoops transitioning from sidewalk to housing units.  
Entrances toward north end of 16th Street accessed via path along retaining wall.

Corner should present a distinctive appearance to Bagley Avenue approach from east.



**Site layout and design considerations**

Storefront-style ground floor with active, publicly-accessible program facing Bagley Avenue, to reinforce Bagley as an established neighborhood retail corridor.

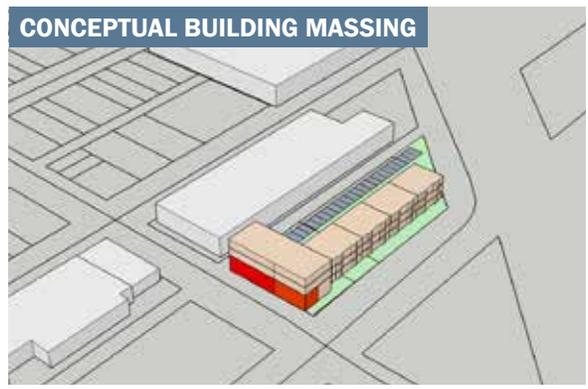
Improve 16th Street with rebuilt sidewalks and pedestrian-scaled street lighting, to serve as an attractive residential address. Consider further enhancement of 16th Street with an adjoining multi-use path, or as a shared street, to clearly connect the May Creek Greenway to Bagley Avenue and its trail routes.

**MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD** MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT | SMALL BUSINESS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

**CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN**



**CONCEPTUAL BUILDING MASSING**



**Recommended Action Steps**

City issue RFP for site redevelopment, in next 6-12 months. Coordinate development with emerging plans for the Inner Circle/Iron Belle and May Creek Greenways, so it may enhance and connect these path networks.



MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD

# Streetscapes and Mobility

## Overview

A series of enhancements to the major streets in the Mexicantown-Hubbard focus area will reinforce existing areas of community strength and complement a cluster of nearby development projects. The street enhancements will improve the safety and convenience of everyday walking and biking connections, provide improved spaces and facilities for cultural events, and introduce new recreational trails that serve local residents and the larger city. The following pages describe these projects in greater detail.



	BAGLEY SHARED STREET	W. VERNOR HIGHWAY	W. GRAND BOULEVARD
EXTENT	Fisher Service Dr to 24th	Clark Ave to Newark St	Vernor to Riverside Park
TYPE	Bike access improvements & Fiesta shared street	Streetscape improvements	Bike infrastructure restriping & crosswalk improvements
LENGTH	0.10 miles	0.64 miles	0.80 miles
START DATE	2019	2019	2018

## Bagley Shared Street



This shared street design expands the street's value to the community and adjacent businesses through the development of a completely flush street surface supporting periodic celebrations, festivals, markets, non-motorized connectivity and programming—as well as routine vehicular access at most times. The shared street would extend along a two-block section of Mexicantown from 24th Street to the existing Bagley Pedestrian Bridge over the Fisher Freeway.

The street design relocates stormwater drainage to its centerline, so that existing sidewalk and roadway surfaces can form a continuous surface. In lieu of a curb, a combination of flagpoles, decorative light poles, and trees near the existing curbs would delineate the space for vehicles. Overhead artistic catenary lighting and pole-mounted flags shape the street space as an outdoor public room, while plantings and movable furniture bring life to the street by supporting daily activity. Special events are facilitated through the installation of removable bollards at the side streets and service drive, allowing for pedestrian-only activity. Culturally significant art in the form of murals, customized bollards, and sculpture highlight the history and significance of the neighborhood.

Green infrastructure would be incorporated through the use of bioretention planting areas, permeable pavement, and any other opportunities deemed feasible during design development to support neighborhood businesses in offsetting their stormwater charges.



**Existing Bagley Avenue during normal access conditions**



**Existing Bagley Avenue during event**

MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD STREETSAPES AND MOBILITY | PARKS AND OPEN SPACE | MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT | SMALL BUSINESS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

CONCEPT:  
DURING SHARED EVENT  
Bagley Avenue—Shared Street



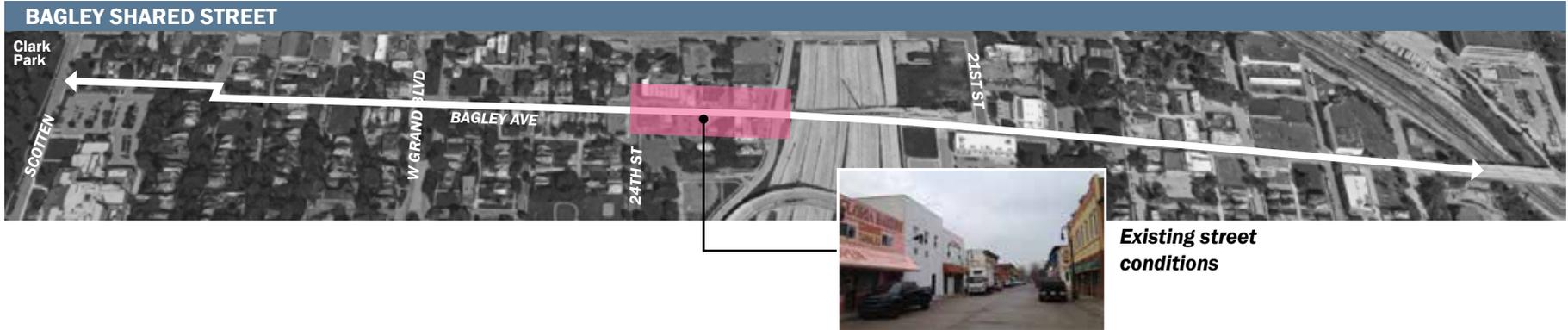
Overhead lighting

Artwork

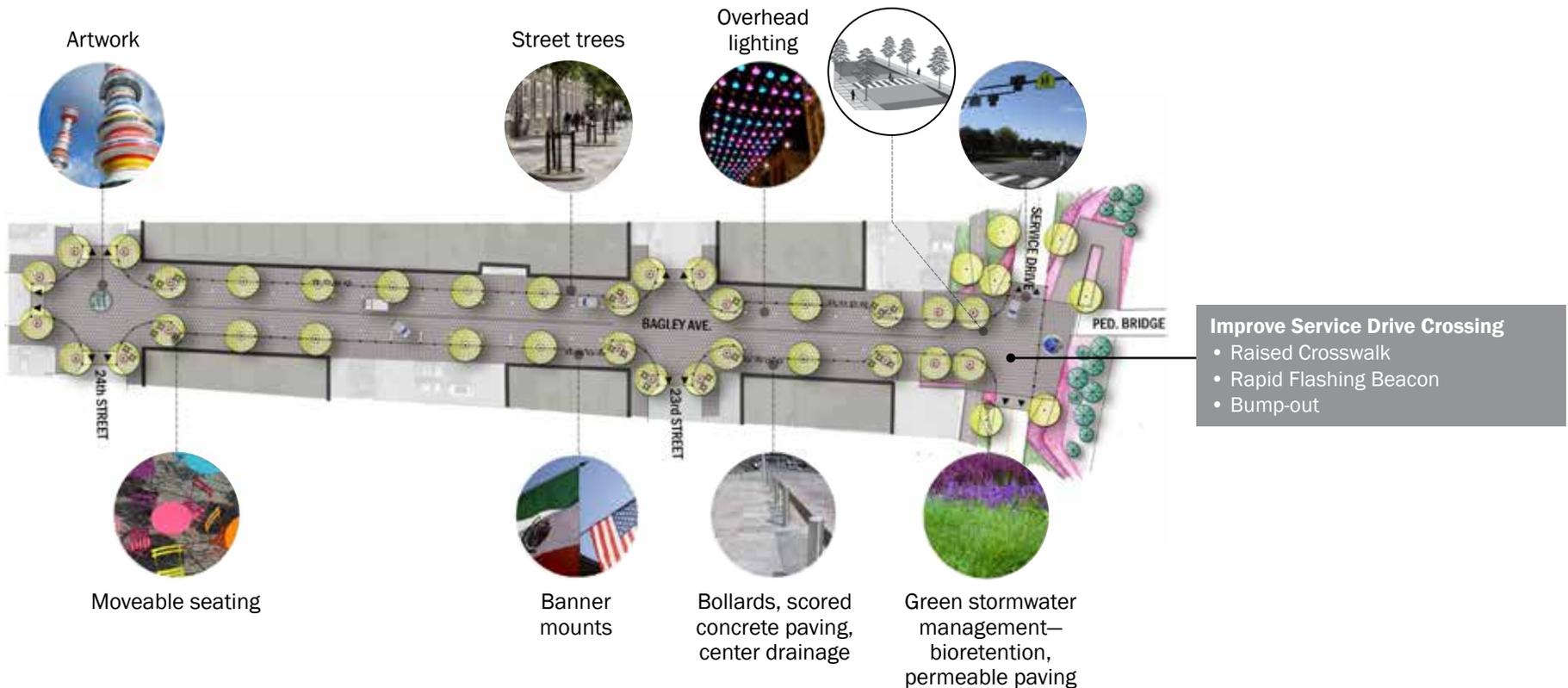
Moveable seating

Permanent plantings and seating

New paving & drainage



**BAGLEY SHARED STREET IMPROVEMENTS**



MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD STREETSAPES AND MOBILITY | PARKS AND OPEN SPACE | MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT | SMALL BUSINESS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

CONCEPT:  
NORMAL ACCESS CONDITIONS  
Bagley Avenue—Shared Street



Serves traffic and deliveries at most times

Concept: normal access conditions

## Vernor Highway

### Pedestrian Streetscape Improvements

The recent Vernor Highway streetscape improvements will be extended east from Scotten Avenue to the Fisher Freeway with new pavement, lighting, bump-outs, green infrastructure and additional street tree plantings. This will improve the street experience and safety for all users, and complement recent, planned, and potential reinvestment in adjoining real estate.

### Vernor Highway at Clark Park

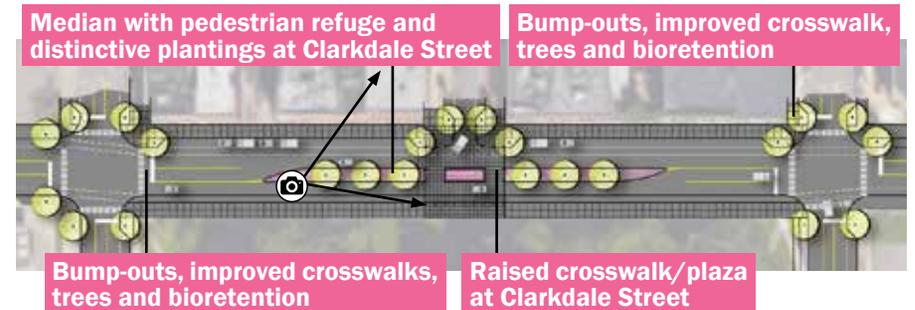
Clark Park is the heart of the neighborhood. Vernor Highway is the spine. Allowing the two to function together by directly connecting the park to the adjoining retail corridor will multiply their benefits to the community.



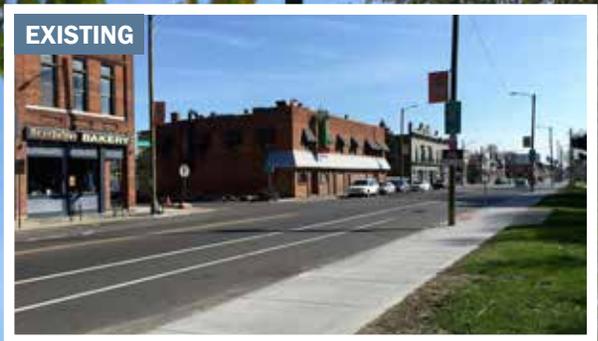
The conceptual design brings a raised crosswalk/plaza space across the Highway at Clarkdale Street, to the center of the park. A beautifully planted median, with pedestrian refuge, calms traffic while providing a safe, visually connected crossing marking the entry to this important park. The median provides opportunity for culturally appropriate art, flags and/or plantings. Intersections at Clark and Scotten are improved with bump-outs and high-visibility crosswalks. The eastbound bike lane along Vernor is buffered from traffic on a raised curb, adjacent to a widened sidewalk/promenade lit with decorative street lights connecting with the Clark Park sidewalk network and future Zocalo (see page 64). Green infrastructure will be incorporated as feasible, such as with bioretention or permeable pavement.



**Vernor Highway's recent street lighting and tree improvements stop at Clark Park. Historic streetlights, visible in the distance beyond Clark Street, are not present at the park or along blocks to the east. Existing pedestrian crossing improvements between Clark Park and the Fisher Freeway include no bump-outs, and few crosswalks. The plan below and rendering opposite show planned improvements.**



**CONCEPT:  
PROPOSED STREETSAPES  
IMPROVEMENTS**  
West Vernor Highway and  
Clarkdale Street



New street trees

New lighting

New pedestrian crossing and refuge to be installed between Clark and Scotten Street only

Protected bike lane

## Parks and Open Space

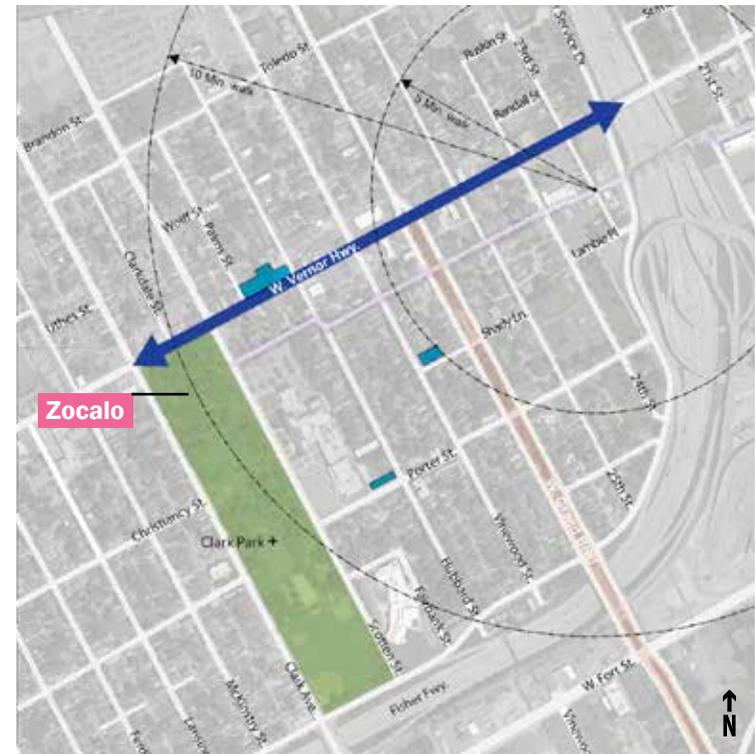
### Zocalo at Clark Park

In response to the neighborhood desire to support local small business and start-ups, in addition to hosting gatherings along Vernor, a “Zocalo” space with fountain, recalling traditional public spaces in Mexico, is planned for the north edge of Clark Park at Vernor Highway. The zocalo is an open, paved space directly connected to the crosswalk/plaza along Vernor. The space accommodates a variety of programming, including a market space with 10’x10’ vendor tents along with music and activity. GFI outlets should be provided at light poles and other locations for vendors. A splash pad fountain is incorporated into the plaza for children and families. The fountain should be flush with the pavement, and incorporate LED lighting and music. The Zocalo will be integrated into the existing tree canopy as much as possible and incorporate permeable pavement to the greatest extent feasible.

CLARK PARK—EXISTING



**Clark Park is one of the West Vernor community's most treasured places. While green space, play areas and sports facilities further south in the park are well used, the edge along Vernor Highway lacks facilities to support informal gatherings, markets, performances or other destination activities that would complement nearby retail.**



CONCEPT:  
CLARK PARK

Prominent, safe  
pedestrian crossing  
at W. Vernor

Splash Park

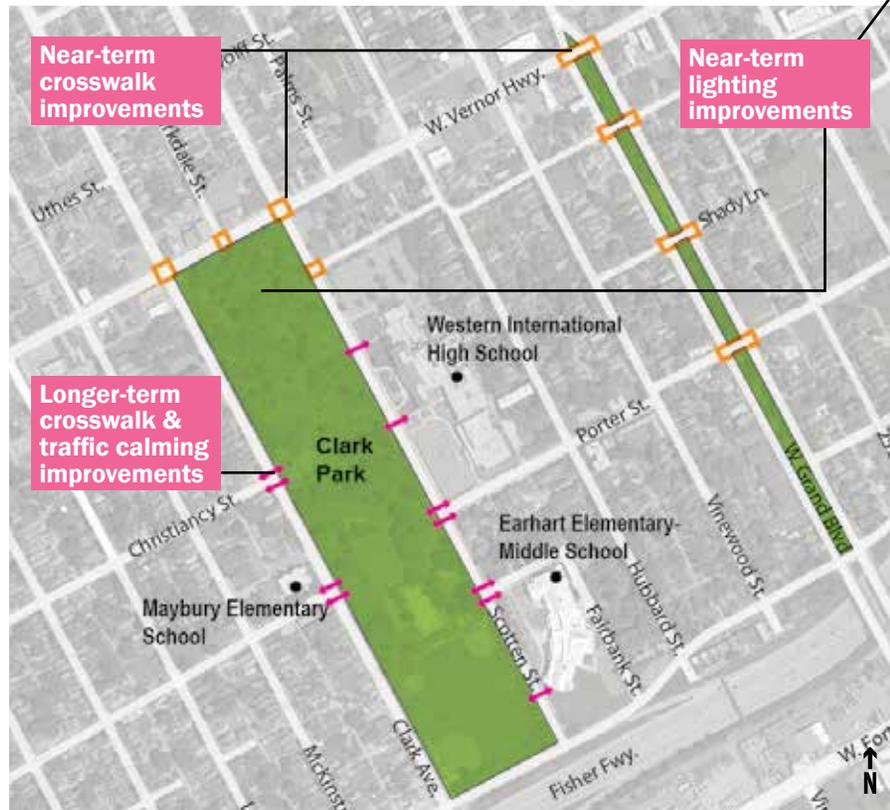
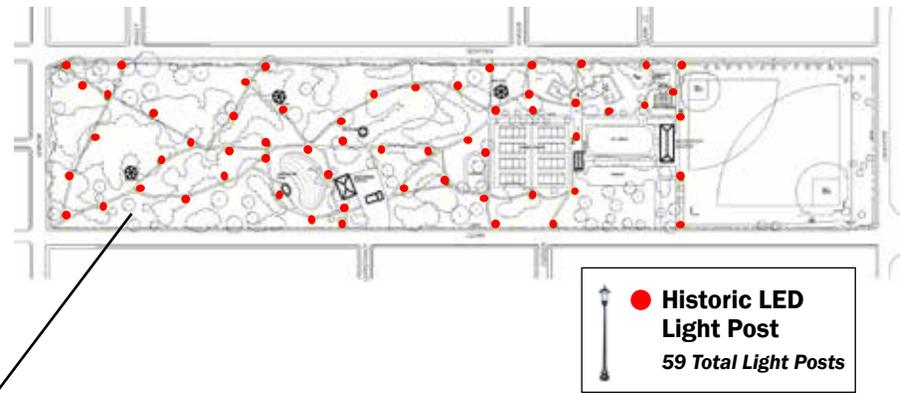
Flexible event options:  
markets, performing  
arts, festivals, etc.



### Clark Park Connectivity

Along Scotten and Clark Avenues, at street intersections and/or midblock crossings to adjoining schools, raised crosswalks with bump-outs and road narrowing will be installed. These crosswalks serve as traffic calming measures in an area filled with children, and facilitate easy, well-designed gateways to this neighborhood gem. The crosswalks will be designed to feel like plaza entry points, with at-grade entry for pedestrians and cyclists. Bollard treatments separating vehicles and pedestrians can be customized to reflect neighborhood character. Crosswalks at schools, when not located at four-way stops, should include solar-powered rapid flashing beacons to support safe crossing.

### PLANNED NEW CLARK PARK LIGHT FIXTURES



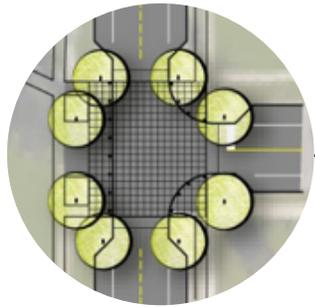
### PLANNED LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS



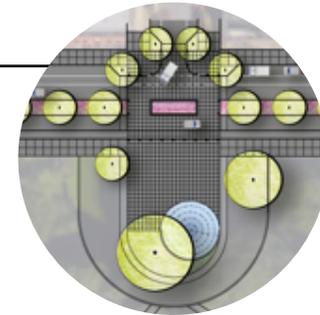
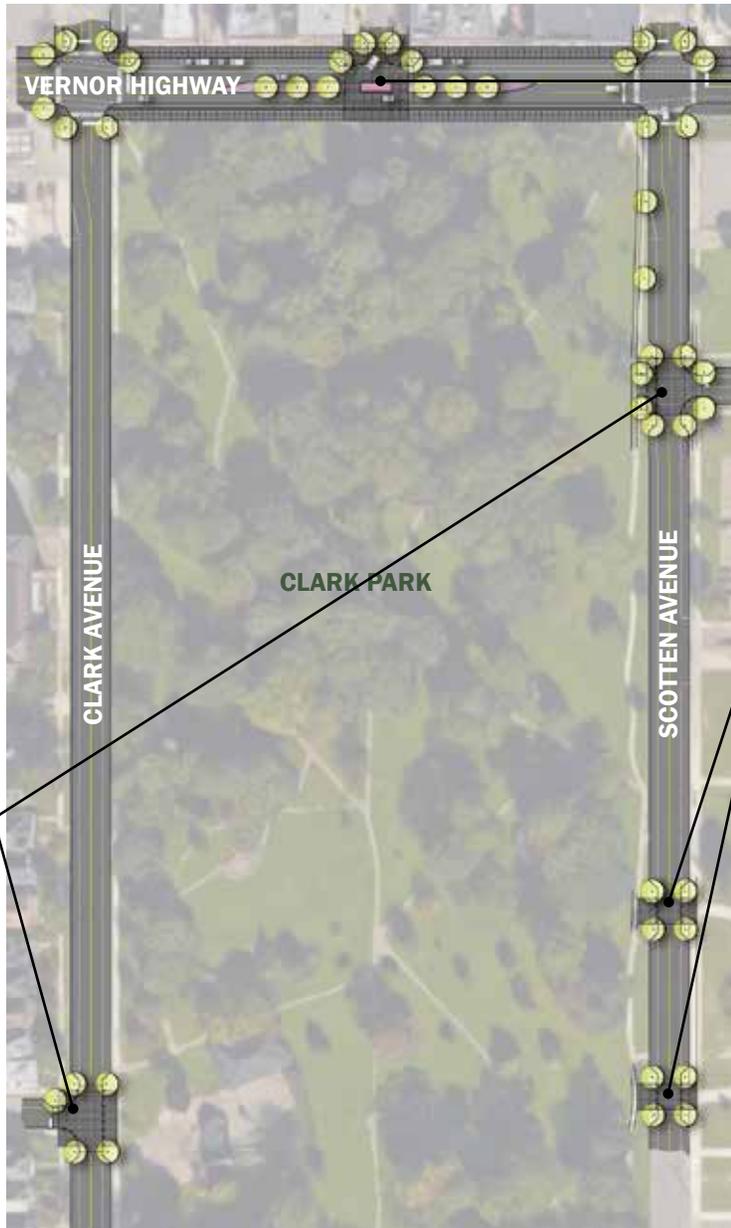
CONNECTIONS BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOOD & CLARK PARK



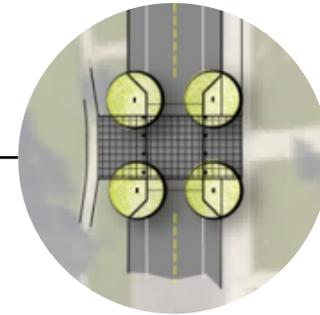
High Visibility Crosswalks



Raised Intersections at Street Terminus



Boulevard and Raised Intersection at Street Terminus Connecting to Zocalo



Raised Crosswalks at School Crossings



*Three schools and multiple neighborhood streets come to the edge of Clark Park, but Clark and Scotten Avenues need improved pedestrian infrastructure to more safely and conveniently connect residents and students to the park.*

## West Grand Boulevard

A variety of park and pathway improvements to West Grand Boulevard can take greater advantage of this prime city resource as a community amenity and corridor for recreation and everyday multi-modal transportation. Understanding that funding may not be available immediately for the full range of desired improvements, several cost-effective near-term improvements are recommended, scaled to currently available resources. These include restriping to the boulevard to include parking-protected bike lanes, installation of painted bump-outs with flexible bollards, and signal timing improvements at Vernor Highway. These initiatives will drastically improve safety and convenience of movement along and across this important connector.



**Existing view of West Grand Boulevard at Bagley Avenue**

**CONCEPT:  
PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE  
FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

West Grand Boulevard at  
Bagley Avenue



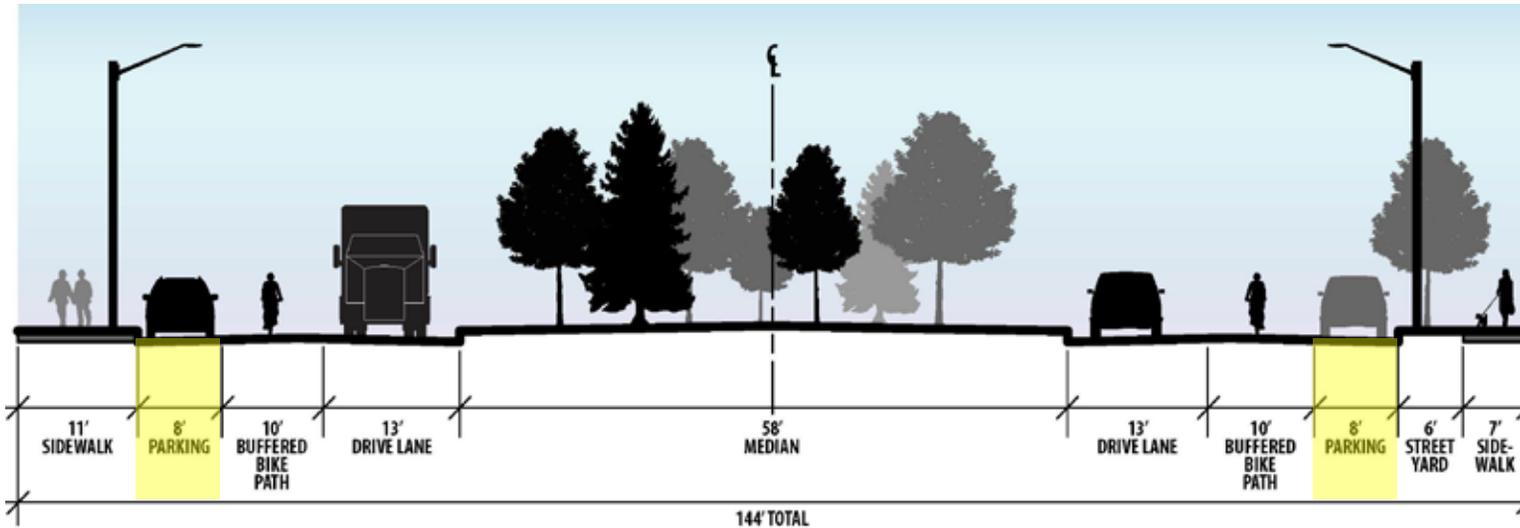
New  
protected  
bike lane

New  
crosswalk  
and sidewalk

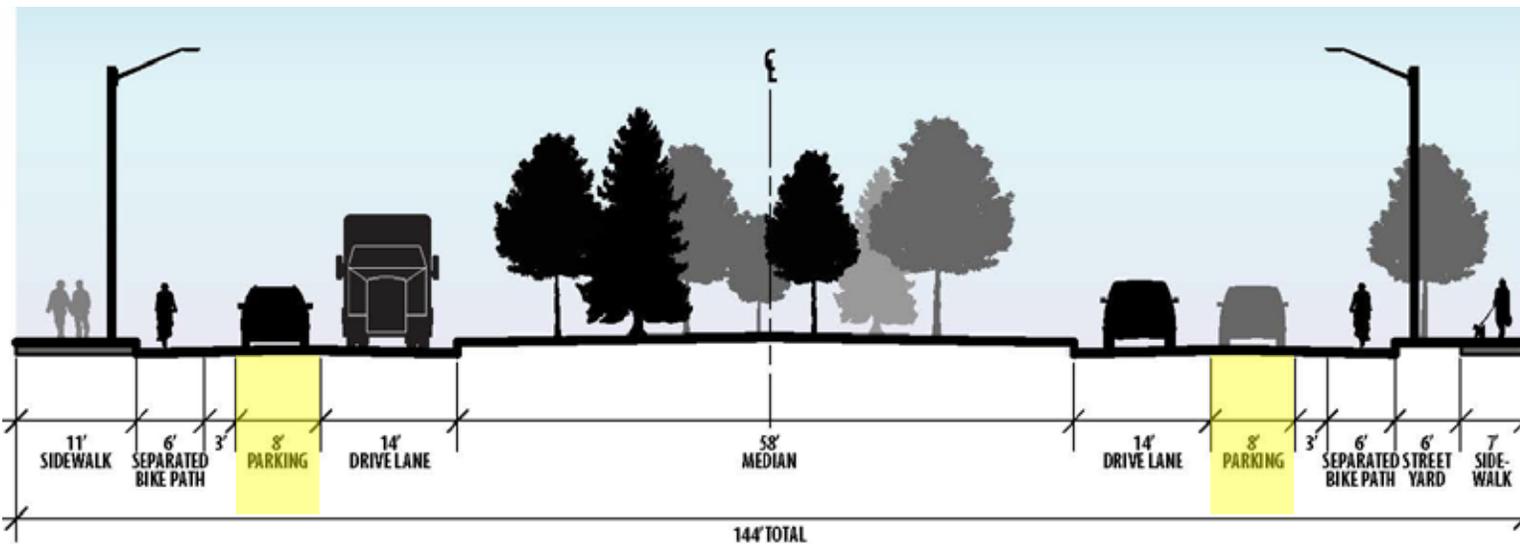
Median extended  
to accommodate  
sidewalk

*See existing conditions photo on previous page.*

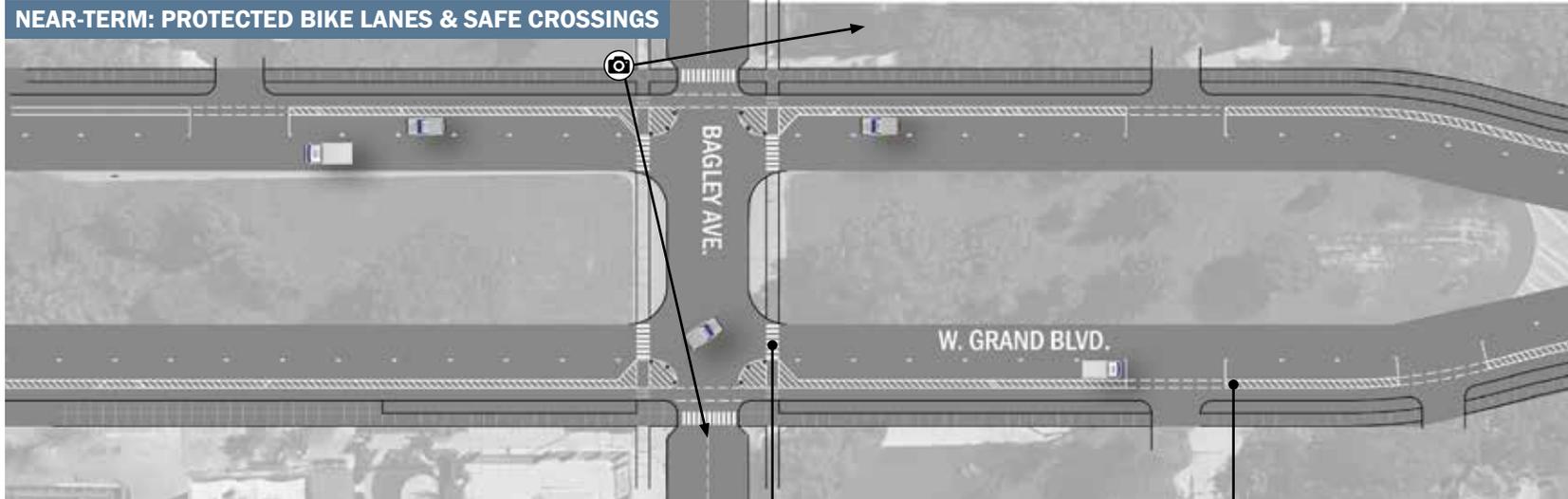
W GRAND BLVD.—RE-STRIPE & CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS



Existing configuration



Restripe as parking-protected bike lane



Safe Crosswalks



Protected Bike Lane



Approx.  
4,400 ft

## Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development/ Small Business and Retail Development

### Overview

This neighborhood has long been known for its access to parks, schools, jobs, and retail amenities. The appeal of this neighborhood combined with the market stability of the region has spurred a number of rehabilitation projects in the area. These fall into two main categories: rehabilitation of housing over retail space along Vernor Highway and Springwells Street, and rehabilitation of larger multi-family apartment buildings, usually without ground-floor retail. Opportunities and site considerations specific to each category are described on pages 74–75. A program summa-

ry, urban design considerations and parking strategies applying to both categories are described on pages 76–77. City agencies and partners may be able to offer land or other resources to assist feasibility of priority projects that respond to the community vision. The projects proposed below are those that can do the most in the near future to respond to increased housing and retail demand, create opportunity for more neighborhood stability and reinvestment, and build a more sustainable real estate economy.

### NEAR-TERM

**14** **Burnside Apartments**  
Multi-Family Rehab



**15** **Monrossa Apartments**  
Multi-Family Rehab



HOUSING UNITS	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>
SF OR RETAIL	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	2019	2019



**COMPLETED**

<b>1</b> Marisco el Salpicon 8600 Vernor Hwy	<b>2</b> Aztec Supermarket 2411 Central Avenue
---	---

**DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE** \* overlapping initiatives  
DEGC Retail Attraction Program

<b>3</b> 7900 W Vernor Hwy (Springwells & Vernor)	<b>4</b> 2044-2046 Springwells St. (Senator & Springwells)
--	---

**Motor City Match**

<b>5</b> Mama Rita Foods 1226 Lawndale St.	<b>6</b> DMEX 7226 W. Vernor Hwy.	<b>7</b> Guadalajara 1630-36 Lawndale St.
<b>8</b> Vernor MC 7649 W Vernor Hwy	<b>9</b> Arroz Con Pollo 2024 Springwells St.	<b>10</b> Baskin Tax Services 8748 W Vernor Hwy

**Upper Floor Residential Rehab**

<b>4</b> 2044 Springwells St. (Senator & Springwells) Units: 4 out of 6	<b>11</b> 7842 W Vernor Hwy (Springwells & Vernor) Units: 3 out of 6	<b>12</b> 7944 W Vernor Hwy (Carson & Vernor) Units: 1
<b>13</b> 7631 W Vernor Hwy (Central & Vernor) Units: 2		

<b>PROPOSED - Phase One</b>	<b>FUTURE DEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>14</b> Burnside Apartments 8132 Whittaker St. Type: Private Rehab Units: 16	<b>15</b> Monrossa Apartments 8400 W Vernor Hwy Type: Private Rehab Units: 24
	<b>16</b> Alice Apartments 8941 W Vernor Hwy Type: Private Rehab Units: 21

**LEGEND**

Schools	Springwells Gateway Markers
DEGC Retail Study Area	Parks
GSD Viaduct Murals	

+ Patton Park

Woodmere Cemetery +



## Rehabilitation of Housing Over Retail

### What these sites can do for the West Vernor + Springwells focus area.

Rehabilitation of residential space above retail along Springwells Street and West Vernor Highway will:

- Leverage the presence of existing retail choices, streetscape improvements, and community organization stewardship along these corridors
- Add apartment unit options, which are in demand and relatively uncommon in the area
- Add customers for retail, and add pedestrian activity, helping keep these principal neighborhood streets vibrant and safe
- Improve economic returns of mixed-use buildings, enabling reinvestment to enhance facades and overall building integrity
- Enhance gateways to the study area and City from the Southwest, via West Vernor Highway and Springwells Street

**Sites and context.** Rehabilitation of residential space above retail is occurring at several properties along Springwells Street and West Vernor Highway near the intersection of these streets. Grant funding secured by the Southwest Detroit Business Association helped make these projects feasible. In each case, this rehabilitation is taking place in buildings that have active, occupied retail at ground level, and vacant upper floors traditionally configured as apartments. Future projects of this type could address other buildings with empty space over occupied retail, as well as fully vacant mixed-use buildings, along these corridors. To the extent possible, the City of Detroit and local non-profit partners should duplicate or expand SDBA's program to encourage existing building owners to rehabilitate residential space above retail along these corridors. See Chapter 7 for other opportunities to expand this approach.

These project sites typically have little, if any, off-street parking capacity. See page 77 for strategies to help address parking needs in order to enable continued reinvestment.



*Rehabilitation in progress at 7842 West Vernor Highway*



*Rehabilitation in progress at 2044 Springwells Street*



## Rehabilitation of Multi-Family Housing

### What these sites can do for the West Vernor + Springwells focus area.

Rehabilitation of traditional multi-family apartment buildings on or near West Vernor Highway west of Springwells Street will:

- Leverage the presence of Patton Park, existing retail choices, streetscape improvements, and community organization stewardship in this area
- Add apartment unit options, which are in demand and relatively uncommon in the area
- Add customers for retail, and add pedestrian activity, helping keep the West Vernor corridor vibrant and safe
- Transform long-empty buildings, and their potential dangers to the neighborhood, into economically viable real estate—improving neighborhood safety, appearance, and marketability.
- Enhance the gateway to the study area and City from the Southwest, via West Vernor Highway

**Sites and context.** Rehabilitation of vacant multi-family apartment buildings is underway at two properties near each other, under common ownership. These three-story buildings are located along West Vernor Highway at Pearl Street (The Monrossa Building), and at the corner of Whittaker and Mullane Streets (the Burnside Building), just half a block from Vernor, and from the Bennett Elementary School. Rehabilitation of a third building, the Alice at Vernor Highway and Sharon Street, is proposed. All three buildings are highly visible, and their restoration into occupied buildings will have profound benefits for neighborhood safety, activity and appearance.

These project sites typically have little, if any, off-street parking capacity. See page 77 for strategies to help address parking needs in order to enable continued reinvestment.



*Rehabilitation in progress at the Burnside Apartments*



*Rehabilitation in progress at the Monrossa Building*

## Potential Rehabilitation Opportunities Across Study Area

### OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Figures are approximate, based on a recommended scenario optimized for economic feasibility and urban design benefit

<b>Housing over retail</b>	Approximately 12 housing units underway or near-term
<b>Retail and/or community services</b>	Approximately 9,000 gross sf of storefront retail underway or near-term
<b>Housing in multi-family apartment buildings</b>	Approximately 43 units near-term, in two buildings of 21-24 units each. Mix of studio and 1BR units assumed, as most appropriate to market demand as well as the relatively narrow floorplates of these buildings. 20,000 gross sf overall. Longer-term opportunity for renovation of third building could add another 18-21 units and 10,000 gross sf
<b>Building types</b>	Two-story mixed-use buildings, with walk-up housing on second floor, over ground floor retail  Three-story multi-family apartment buildings, walk-up
<b>Parking assumptions</b>	½ off-street parking space per unit, in owned or leased spaces on same or nearby property, potentially shared with daytime retail use. Supplementary on-street parking
<b>Landscaped area</b>	Typically no landscaped site area available. Roof decks, balconies, and shared patios encouraged where possible

## Urban Design Considerations

- For mixed-use buildings, redevelopment should include façade improvements for the upper and/or ground floors as needed.
- For multi-family apartment buildings, redevelopment should include landscaping at building perimeter where possible in order to enhance ground floor unit privacy and the site appearance.
- Restore traditional architectural features of buildings wherever possible.
- Any on-site parking areas should be screened from streets and adjoining properties by plantings and/or fencing, located away from street corners, and incorporate low-impact stormwater management techniques.

### Recommended Action Steps

City encourage shared-use parking policy in area; improve multi-modal transportation infrastructure. Monitor progress of privately-led rehabilitation to verify successful economic and urban design outcomes. Community organizations continue to seek grant funding for rehabilitation.



**Site configuration of typical multi-family apartment building rehabilitation project.**

## Parking Considerations

Mixed-use buildings sometimes have parking behind them, or on an adjacent lot, that may be shared between residential and retail uses. In at least one case, recent acquisition of an adjoining parking lot was a key step to making residential rehabilitation possible. Existing apartment buildings almost entirely fill their parcels, with no space for on-site parking unless an adjoining vacant lot can be acquired.

To support these and future residential and retail rehabilitation projects, a multi-pronged approach should be taken to offer residents a variety of good transportation options:

- Continue bus service enhancements along West Vernor Highway and Springwells Street.
- Encourage provision of more shared-use off-street parking spaces that can serve retail customers during daytime, and residents during evenings and weekends. Current parking ownership along these commercial corridors tends to be associated with adjoining businesses, and sometimes involves multiple owners and leases. Consolidated ownership and/or management of more parking resources, by community business organization(s) and/or the City, could help make more efficient use of existing parking, minimizing need for more parking.
- Encourage presence of car-share services such as Zipcar. These not only enable fewer parking spaces to serve more households, but also reduce household costs for car transportation.
- Continue to improve walking and biking infrastructure on adjoining streets, per the concepts and priorities described elsewhere in this plan.

See Chapter 7 for additional strategies to enhance parking efficiency and access.



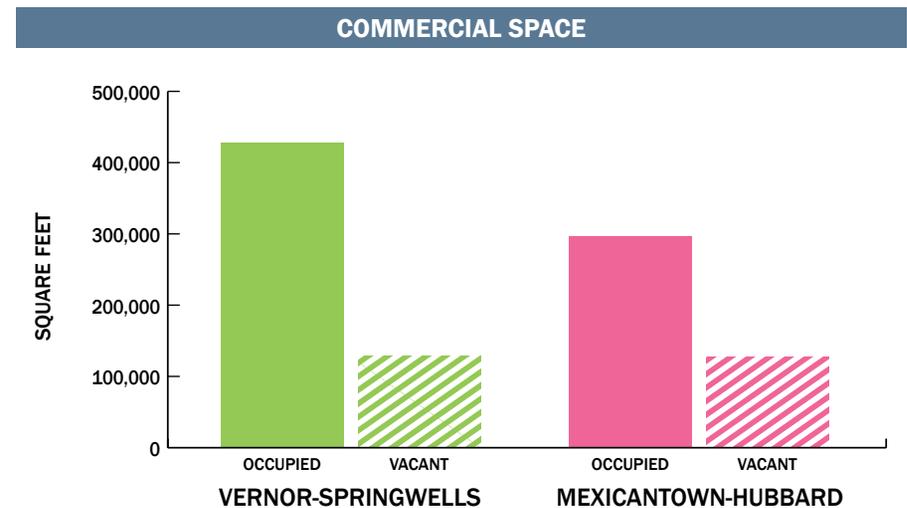
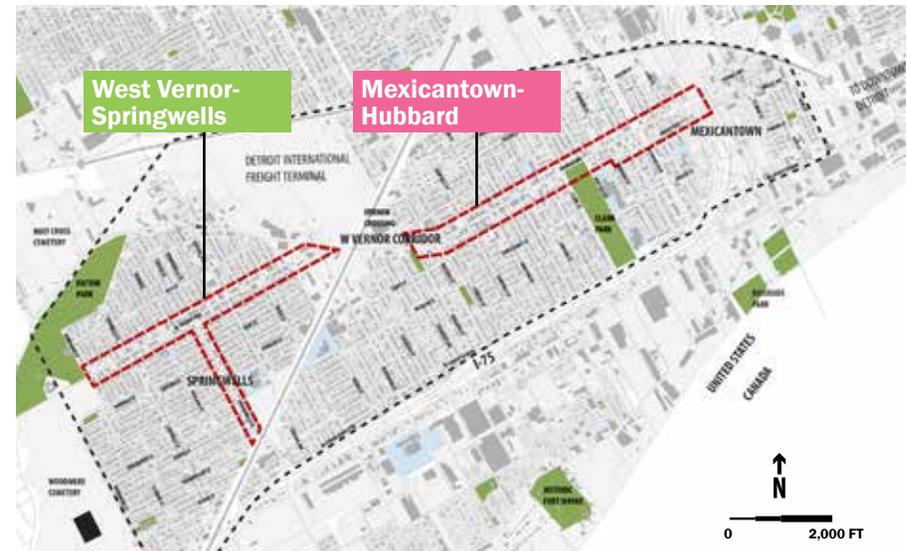
***The foreground parking lot along West Vernor Highway was purchased to provide parking for the apartment building beyond, helping make its rehabilitation and re-occupancy feasible. Potential shared use of some parking for residential use overnight and commercial use by day on sites like this one could help intensify both commercial and residential land use along major corridors.***

## Small Business and Retail Development

Southwest Detroit is known for its tortilla manufacturers, specialty food, ornamental ironworks, industrial glassworks, specialty apparel, low-rider modification shops and other specialized manufacturing. According to surveys conducted as part of the “Southwest: Revitalizing the Corridor” study, customers in these commercial areas are less likely to drive than walk to shop. A vast majority of the customers to these areas indicated that they visited the area over three times per month.

Two commercial districts were studied in the West Vernor Area: the West Vernor-Springwells Area and the Mexicantown-Hubbard Area. The Detroit Retail Opportunity Study, a parallel planning effort led by Streetsense, recently completed market assessments for these areas. The effort will provide these products to help DEGC enhance retail options and small business opportunity over the next one to three years:

- Market analysis (current inventory and unmet demand)
- Renderings and budget information for business façade and interior improvements
- Broker marketing sheets

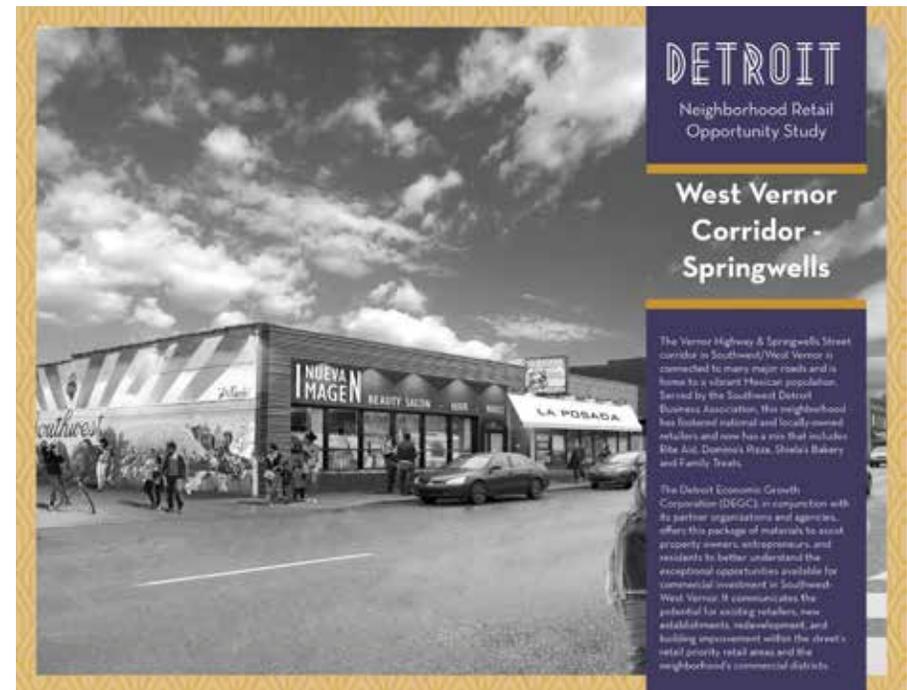


Source: “Detroit Retail Opportunity Study”, Streetsense (2017)

Important recommendations applying to both study areas are as follows. See market-specific recommendations for each study area on the subsequent pages.

- Reinforce clustering of retail in compact nodes of “Retail Priority Blocks” where possible. Retail Priority Blocks should include nearly continuous retail frontage, from block to block, and should preferably be contained within about 2,000 feet of each other.
- Creating, locating and expanding retail businesses benefits significantly from presence of programs assisting with business education, financing, marketing and other support services. Both study areas currently have access to support from business associations, particularly the Southwest Detroit Business Association and Mexicantown Community Development Corporation, as well as from DEGC and related agencies. Continue this support, with refinements as necessary to respond to emerging needs and opportunities.
- As a large proportion of customers in the study areas access retail by walking, the safety and appeal of sidewalks is vital. Much of the retail frontage in the study areas received sidewalk upgrades as part of recent West Vernor Streetscape improvements, but additional opportunities for improvement remain, as described in other sections of this plan.
- Encourage outdoor café seating where possible. Although much sidewalk frontage is not wide enough to accommodate outdoor dining, restaurants in both study areas have successfully placed outdoor dining on their own property along the sidewalk, a model that could be expanded further.
- Reduce parking requirements, particularly for businesses that most customers reach by walking. Clearly identify locations where parking is provided. Seek opportunity to create parking areas serving multiple businesses, to increase parking efficiency.

- Require that new retail spaces be designed with flexibility to accommodate a variety of future tenants. In-line retail bays should be constructed 15 to 25 feet wide, and 60 to 90 feet deep.
- Limit auto-oriented retail, particularly within Retail Priority Blocks.



**The Detroit Neighborhood Retail Opportunity Study produced information and marketing materials for specific study areas, like this document for West Vernor-Springwells.**

WEST VERNOR-SPRINGWELLS

**Existing conditions**

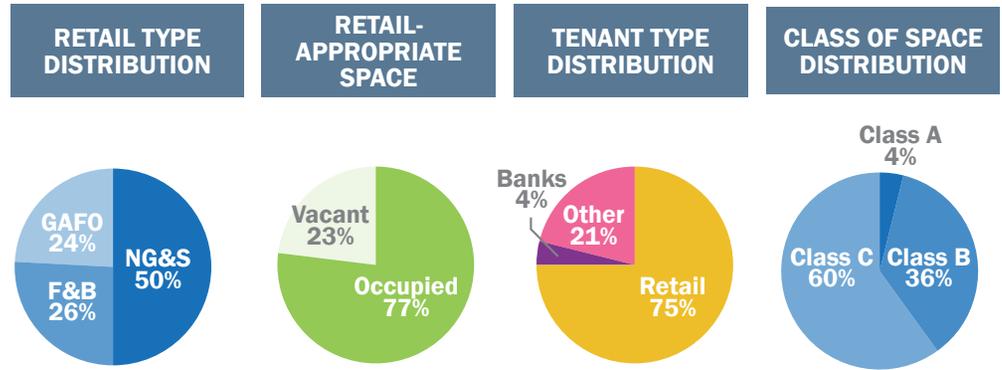
There are 556,400 square feet of the retail-appropriate space in Vernor-Springwells. 23% of this space is vacant.

The commercial space is predominantly occupied by retail and food and beverage stores targeted to the Hispanic customer.

The retail space is mostly occupied by neighborhood goods and services stores. Over one-quarter of the retail space is occupied by food and beverage stores.

**Recommendations**

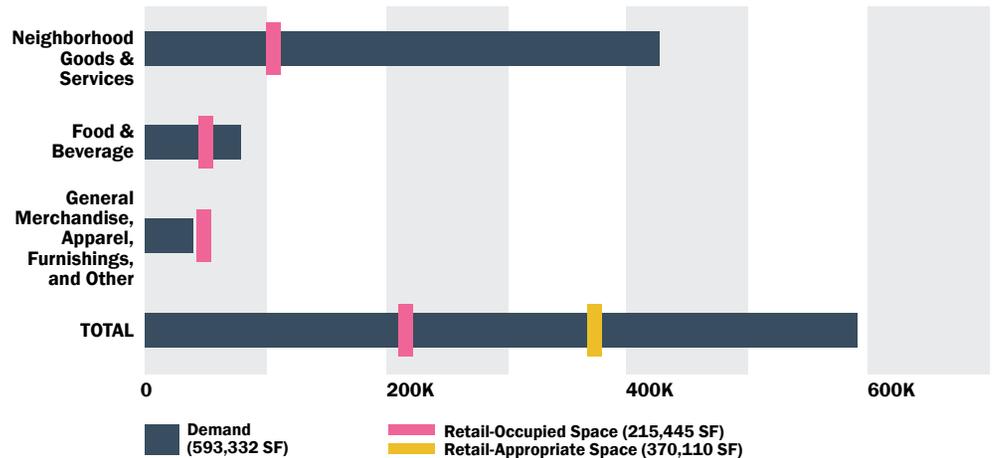
- Reinforce Retail Priority Blocks near West Vernor/Springwells.
- Emphasize grocery and drug stores/pharmacies in future tenanting strategies. Conduct a Grocery Enhancement Audit.
- Diversify Food & Beverage outlets with alternatives to sit-down dining, like bakeries, coffee shops, and take-out restaurants, as supply is currently over-represented by sit-down restaurants.
- The general, apparel, furniture and other store category is over-represented in West Vernor-Springwells given the market. Among these store-types emphasize retention, rather than attraction.
- Encourage bi-lingual business signage/information.
- Utilize local artisans for distinctive placemaking.



Source: "Detroit Retail Opportunity Study," Streetsense (2017)

Principal industry-standard retail types referenced:

- **Neighborhood Goods & Services (NG&S)** – includes grocery, pharmacy
- **Food & Beverage (F&B)** – includes restaurants
- **General Apparel, Furniture and Other (GAFO)** – includes other consumer products



Source: "Detroit Retail Opportunity Study," Streetsense (2017)

**Existing conditions**

This study examined all of the commercial space available in Hubbard, not just the retail-appropriate space.

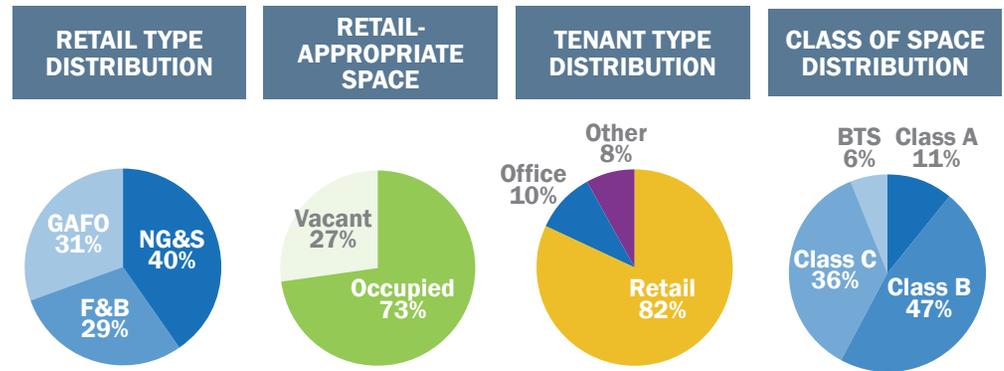
According to this study 24% of the commercial spaces in the Hubbard Area were vacant.

About 30% of all businesses in the Hubbard Area were food and beverage establishments.

Compared to West Vernor-Springwells, many more of the customers surveyed in this study originated from outside the Southwest neighborhood. Mexicantown draws from throughout the City and region.

**Recommendations**

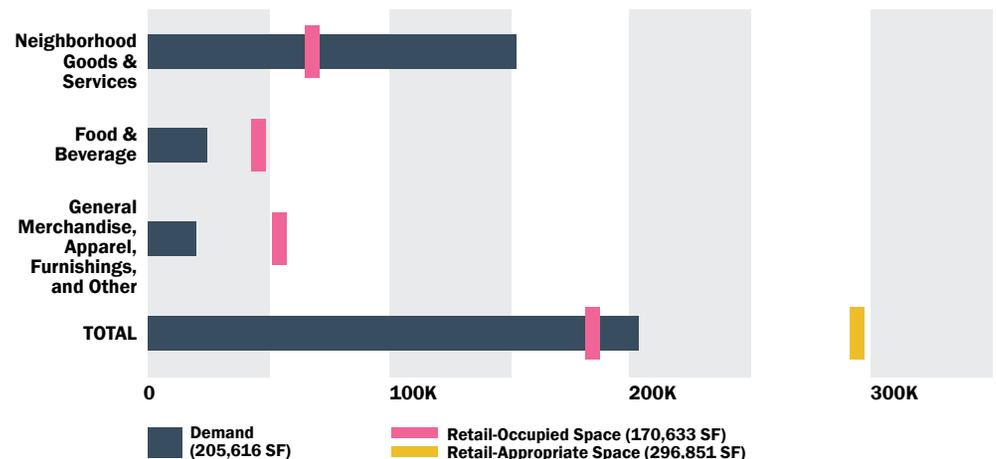
- Mexicantown-Hubbard’s retail expression is disjointed by vacant lots, strip center retail, manufacturers, and single-sided retail blocks. To create more cohesive retail nodes, reinforce Retail Priority Blocks between Military and Morrell Streets, and on Bagley near 23rd.
- Add prominent mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development linking Bagley and West Vernor.
- Emphasize barbershops, salons, and personal and household supplies retailers among other Neighborhood Goods & Services opportunities.
- Reduce truck traffic.



Source: “Detroit Retail Opportunity Study,” Streetsense (2017)

Principal industry-standard retail types referenced:

- **Neighborhood Goods & Services (NG&S)** – includes grocery, pharmacy
- **Food & Beverage (F&B)** – includes restaurants
- **General Apparel, Furniture and Other (GAFO)** – includes other consumer products



Source: “Detroit Retail Opportunity Study,” Streetsense (2017)

# 7

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

# Long-term Recommendations

Long-term recommendations focus on initiatives that build directly off the foundation of near-term actions and recommendations. Some may be feasible to advance in as few as two or three years, once related near-term efforts are complete. Others may require more time to launch,

in response to real estate market conditions or other factors. Long-term recommendations continue the targeting strategy seen in near-term initiatives, but start to broaden the boundaries of target areas as revitalization makes them stronger.

TARGET AREA	STRATEGIES					
	Policy Initiatives	Streetscapes + Mobility	Parks + Open Space	Mixed-Use + Multi-Family Residential Development	Small Business and Retail Development	Single-Family Residential Stabilization
Neighborhood wide	Pages 84-92			Pages 98-101	Pages 98-101	Pages 110-111
Mexicantown-Hubbard		Pages 104-109	Pages 104-105	Pages 94-97	Pages 94-97	
West Vernor-Springwells		Pages 102-103		Page 93	Page 93	

## Policy Initiatives

### Safe, Walkable Viaducts

Improvements to lighting, wall surfaces, drainage and other elements will significantly improve the safety and appeal of walking connections among neighborhood areas, at modest cost. Of the 19 viaducts in the study area, seven deserve priority attention owing to their locations at important connection points. These viaducts and the nature of typical improvements are addressed below under Phase 1 improvements. A second group of three viaducts deserves next priority as Phase 2. The remaining 9 viaducts may receive longer-term improvements under Phase 3.

#### Phase 1 improvements

##### Locations:

- Springwells Street
- Central Avenue
- Green Street
- Waterman Street
- Vernor Highway
- Livernois Avenue
- Junction Street

At these viaducts, relatively “quick” improvements—potentially in 3 to 12 months – could be made with city resources to address flooding and storm water control (DWSD cleaning of catch basins), debris on roadways and sidewalks (DPW removal of debris and street sweeping), lighting improvements, and cleanliness/integrity/appearance of viaduct substructure walls. These improvements will address critical safety and convenience concerns for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles on some of the most-used neighborhood



***This viaduct, one of several crossing Junction Street, is a good model for improvements to other viaducts: well-lit sidewalk and roadway area, stable and clean foundation walls, functioning drainage. Most other viaducts have multiple support piers between their abutments, requiring additional light fixtures to achieve consistent lighting levels.***

street connections. Most can be accomplished at modest cost and by utilizing city property in the street right of way, avoiding the complications of direct impacts on viaduct structures controlled by railroads.

The most common recommended improvements noted for individual viaducts include:

- Regular street sweeping (by DPW), and debris removal from sidewalks or other surfaces
- Regular catch basin cleaning (by DWSD)
- Coordination with other agencies (e.g. Wayne County) for enforcement of soil erosion ordinances (construction and post-construction), particularly at the West Vernor Highway viaduct. (Analysis and solutions for groundwater seepage that also affects this viaduct may take longer)

**VIADUCT IMPROVEMENTS**





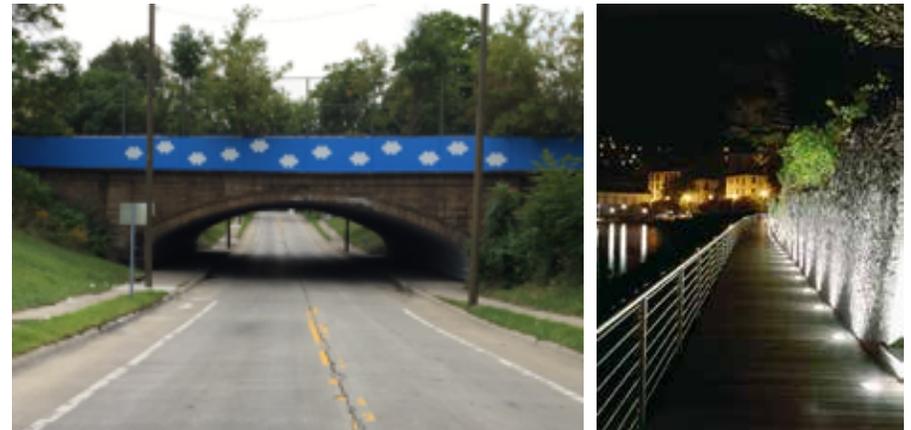
- Adding lighting over roadways. While poor lighting at viaducts is a frequent community concern, the viaducts inventories typically do have LED lighting recently installed over sidewalks. Lack of lighting over the central roadway areas, however, contributes to the perception of viaducts as dark and potentially unsafe. Lighting the roadway area—and potentially the viaduct superstructure underside as recommended for the West Grand Boulevard viaduct—would diminish this concern.
- Graffiti removal (by GSD and/or community organizations)
- Surface treatment of viaduct substructure. This includes power washing of viaducts, removal of graffiti, minor surface repairs (non-structural), and placement of concrete coatings (e.g. paint and graffiti sealant). Purpose is to lighten surface and provide a base for potential mural and/or art installations. Not proposed for closed viaducts (24th Street, Military Street) and viaducts under state jurisdiction (Fort Street, Fisher Freeway).

### Phase 2 improvements

#### Locations:

- West Grand Boulevard
- 24th Street
- Military Street

Three additional viaducts have problem conditions that are less urgent than for the seven priority viaducts, but that should be addressed as soon thereafter as resources can be available. West Grand Boulevard's distinctive arched viaduct lacks lighting, impeding walking connections along this important corridor that has seen reinvestment and is a focus for future reinvestment. The roadways at two other viaducts have been closed to vehicular traffic (Military and 24th Streets). Barriers at these viaducts need repair or replacement—the fencing and/or barricading in place has been damaged and compromised over time—and accumulated debris needs to be removed.



**The West Grand Boulevard viaduct lacks any lighting below it. New uplights mounted on bollards or at ground level, like those in the image at right, would reflect off the underside of the arch, providing safe passage and highlighting this landmark structure.**

Typical recommendations at closed viaducts include:

- Debris removal
- Re-secure underpasses with fencing
- Replace and update road closure barricading

### **Phase 3 improvements**

#### **Locations:**

- Vinewood Street
- Scotten Avenue
- Clark Avenue
- Lawndale Street
- Fort Street
- Fisher Freeway
- Military & John Kronk Streets
- Livernois Avenue & John Kronk Street
- Central & John Kronk Streets

The viaducts noted above are generally in areas that are more industrial in character and less used by pedestrians, and thus lower priorities for improvement. However, certain viaducts like Vinewood and Livernois/John Kronk are near residential areas and may merit attention relatively sooner to help attract or complement reinvestment, or enhance safety for growing numbers of pedestrians and cyclists.

Mural and artwork projects are also considered longer-term priorities for the purpose of this assessment, as the basic lighting, drainage and safety improvements emphasized in near-term projects are considered higher priority, and easier for the City to implement on its own property.

Projects that directly contact viaduct structure (e.g., adding murals, artwork, artistic lighting, etc.) are considered longer-term because they may raise added challenges that make near-term implementation difficult:

- Environmental issues (e.g. lead paint)
- Increased permitting from the railroads
- Confirming who provides for the maintenance and city indemnification of the enhanced work.

That said, the several mural projects that are planned for the near-term priority viaducts should proceed unless they delay priority safety and drainage improvements.

### Enhanced Viaduct Artwork

More intensive installations of artwork on or around viaducts would help express community identity further. West Vernor corridor community members expressed strong interest in artwork concepts such as the one illustrated on the facing page. Such extensive application of artwork may entail greater effort and expense to safely prepare viaduct surfaces for installation, as described on the previous page. Convening community members to prioritize where more intensive installations may be desired, and what type of art expression may be preferred, can help focus efforts to secure resources and skilled artists.



***Viaducts in the New Center district have received highly creative art installations that make them memorable landmarks.***

CONCEPT:  
GREEN STREET VIADUCT



## Shared-Use Parking

Future reinvestment in housing and commercial real estate in the study area will depend in part upon availability of convenient parking. As many priority development sites for housing, retail, and/or mixed uses are on or near the West Vernor Highway, Springwells Street, and Bagley Avenue corridors, increased parking demands will particularly impact blocks along these corridors.

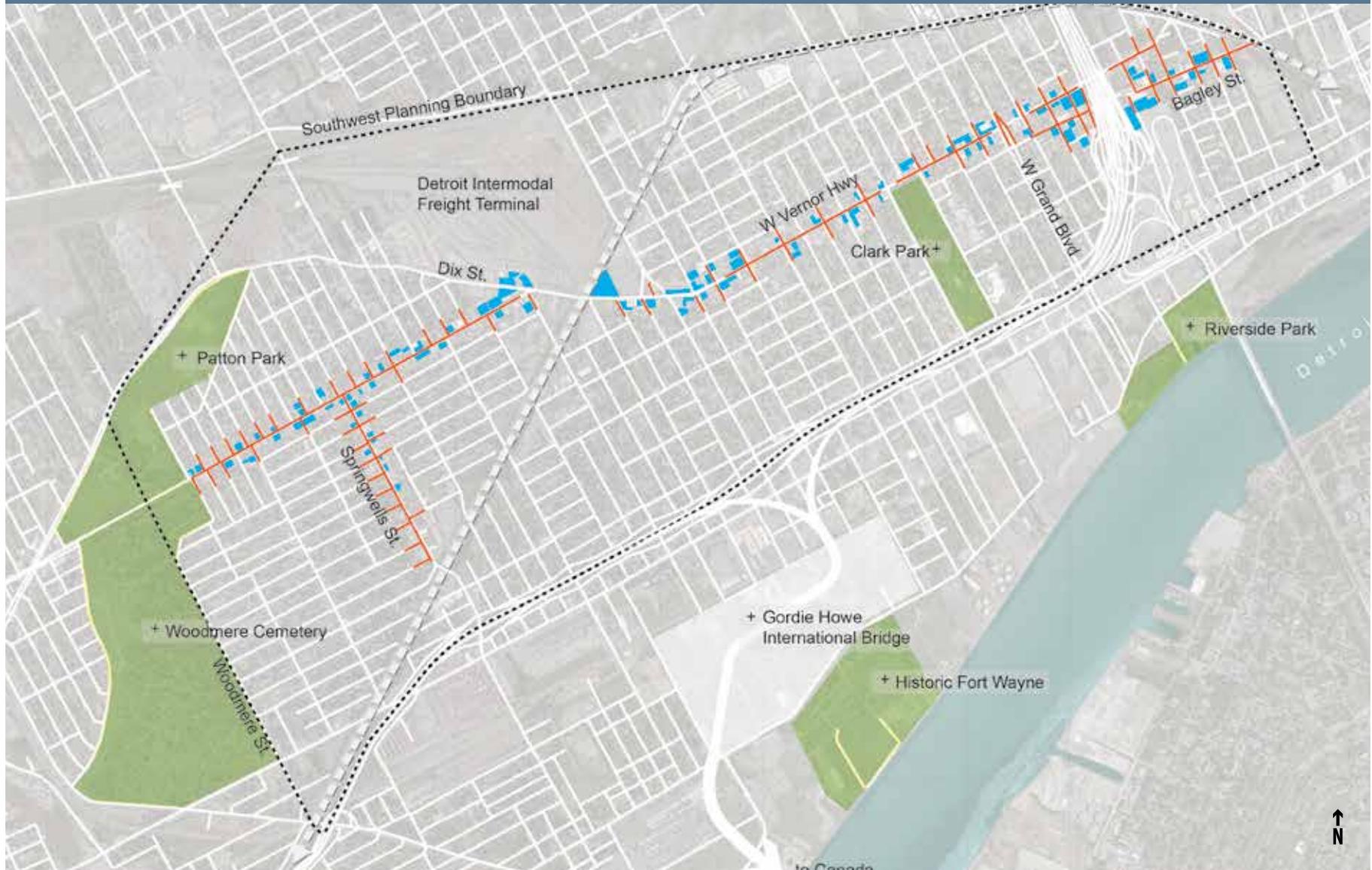
Historically, these corridors have managed with a modest supply of parking, as many travel needs were accommodated by transit (initially street-car, then bus), and by the convenient walking access between much of the corridors and adjoining neighborhood blocks. In recent decades, parking needs have generally been met adequately by a combination of on-street parking along the corridors, and privately-owned parking lots associated with specific commercial properties, interspersed with buildings or accessed via parallel alleys (see accompanying diagram with general locations of on-street parking and off-street parking lots). This is likely to change, however, with increases in retail occupancy and other commercial activity, and in the number of housing units on and near the corridors. Already, the return of several restaurant and entertainment uses on blocks of West Vernor near Clark Park has created parking challenges during evening periods.

Land for additional parking is scarce, and where vacant lots do exist, redevelopment with occupied buildings is often a higher priority than parking, for the economic and community benefits that pedestrian-oriented buildings can bring. Space-efficient structured parking is not economically justifiable in most cases. However, these challenges can be minimized by leveraging the inherent ability of the study area corridors to use parking efficiently.

First, minimize need for additional parking, in view of the space and cost challenges of adding parking.

- Many study area residents and potential visitors do not own or often drive cars to begin with, due to financial challenges or preference. The existing networks of sidewalks, transit services and bike lanes already accommodate many travel needs, and recent improvements make it easier and safer to utilize all three transportation modes. Further improvements to these modes should continue, according to this plan's project priorities. Car-share services, such as Zipcar or a locally-based version), should also be introduced, to enable households occasional access to cars when necessary, without the ongoing cost or parking challenges of car ownership. The advent of autonomous vehicles may also reduce parking demand by making more efficient use of vehicles and parking.
- Much of the existing privately-owned parking capacity along the corridors is devoted to a single business, institution or other land use. When these businesses or institutions are not active, many of these spaces are unused even while there is high demand for parking by housing other land uses in the area. Greater sharing of this parking across multiple uses that have different demand peaks would make better use of existing capacity, and provide additional revenue opportunities for owners of parking. This approach can be implemented at two scales:
  - Individual owners of residential properties can contract with commercial parking owners for access to a certain number of spaces when available, particularly for peak overnight and weekend demand times. Property owners who are introducing housing above retail space are already making dual use of their own parking spaces in this way.
  - Private parking lots could be made available for more general public use, by customers of retail or other area destinations, through actions of business associations and/or the city. Business associations or the city can contract and/or purchase off-street parking and provide signage that makes it clear when it is available for public use.

EXISTING PARKING



*Approximate areas of existing parking in the study area are shown by red lines (on-street) and blue areas (private lots). These parking lots typically serve a single use, such as a restaurant or retail store. Shared-use parking, accommodating a mix of commercial (mostly during daytime) and residential (mostly evenings and weekends) parking, would make more efficient use of existing spaces and expand opportunity for housing along principal corridors.*

Second, to the extent there is strong demand for additional parking above and beyond the capacity of efficiently-used existing parking, that new parking should also be limited in quantity through the means described above.

Examples of opportunities to benefit from efficient parking include:

- Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized lots along West Vernor Highway between Scotten Avenue and Michigan Central station. If housing is a significant component of this development, a modest amount of new parking can be provided to both serve new residents, and also expand parking capacity for established and new businesses, such as those along adjoining blocks of Bagley Avenue in Mexican-town.
- Proposed redevelopment of the city-owned site at Bagley Avenue and 16th Street. The recommended development scenario for this site would lease approximately 10 of the many parking spaces for residential use, to supplement approximately 24 additional on-site spaces.
- Rehabilitation of the cluster of vacant multi-family apartment buildings on or near West Vernor Highway west of Springwells Street. Lacking site area for parking, these properties would significantly benefit from arrangements to lease parking in one or more nearby commercial lots, for overnight and weekend use. Inclusion of parking for car-share services would further improve transportation convenience for residents, while minimizing parking needs.

It is important to both make more intensive use of available parking, and encourage transportation choices other than driving, to maintain convenient access throughout the corridors and minimize the perception of property owners that they need their own dedicated parking. Making a variety of safe, convenient, affordable transportation options available on an ongoing basis will do the most to enhance opportunities for existing residents, businesses and institutions, and encourage the coming of new ones.

# Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development/ Small Business and Retail Development

## Overview

As the development project initiatives described in Chapter 6 proceed and reach completion, new and larger development opportunities will become possible. In areas of re-emerging housing market interest like the West Vernor study area, new housing development actually expands market potential further, rather than consuming it, as it makes a significantly larger number of households aware of its presence as an attractive living opportunity. Two of the development sites highlighted in this chapter—Toledo & Grand and the DPW site—are among the largest ones in the study area, with capacity to accommodate at least twice the current absorption potential for multi-family rental apartments. They thus

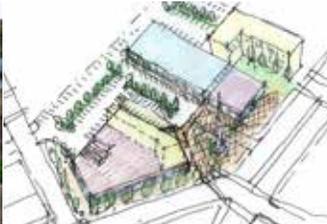
require stronger market position to justify large-scale development and fully realize their development opportunity. These sites also may require time to confirm funding and procedure for cleanup of possible contamination from previous industrial activity. See the map on page 49 for location of the Toledo & Grand project.

### LONGER-TERM

**15** Toledo & Grand  
New Construction



DPW Site  
New Construction



<b>HOUSING UNITS</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>81</b> (at least 200 more possible in later phases)
<b>SF OF RETAIL</b>	<b>1K</b>	<b>50K-55K</b>
<b>AFFORDABLE UNITS</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>20%</b>

## Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development/ Small Business and Retail Development

### Toledo & Grand

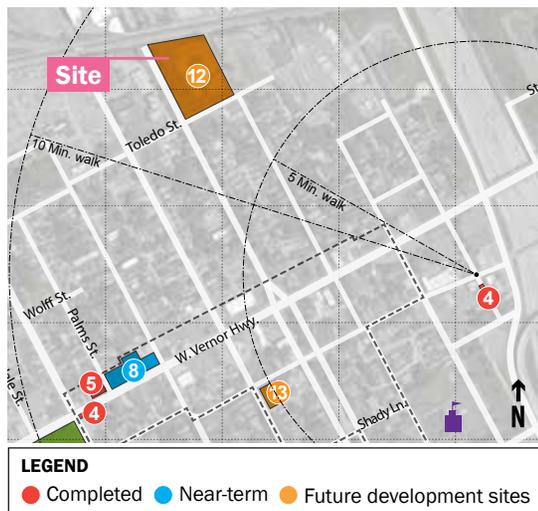
#### What this site can do for the greater Mexicantown focus area:

- Leverage West Grand Boulevard as an attractive residential address. Leverage access to retail/dining choices and Clark Park within a reasonable walk, bike, and/or bus ride.
- Reinforce market position of nearby Grand Lofts apartments, establishing a larger district of contemporary apartment living choices. This could in turn stimulate adaptive reuse of industrial buildings across West Grand Boulevard for housing and/or other use.
- Demonstrate attractive reinvestment at gateway to the study area from the north.
- Create mini neighborhood center node at Grand/Toledo, adding small-scale neighborhood retail and/or community services to the established church across West Grand Boulevard, benefiting both

the West Grand Boulevard and Toledo Street corridors as attractive places to live.

- Be a model for other industrial site redevelopment in the study area. With adjacency to traditional neighborhood development patterns on just one side, the site allows more freedom to create more non-traditional unit types and/or architectural styles.

**Site and context.** This city-owned site at the northeast corner of West Grand Boulevard and Toledo Street is highly visible at a neighborhood gateway that connects to additional established residential blocks to the north through a distinctive stone arch viaduct. West Grand Boulevard provides an impressive green setting, with extra wide tree lawns along the site, mature trees, and opportunities to be a stronger recreational connection to and from Riverside Park. The 3.2 acre site is relatively large and flexible in its layout. Its west side faces West Grand, its south side faces a



MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT | SMALL BUSINESS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

CONCEPT:  
TOLEDO & GRAND

New mixed-income loft apartments

Toledo Street

Proposed multi-use recreation path along Grand Boulevard

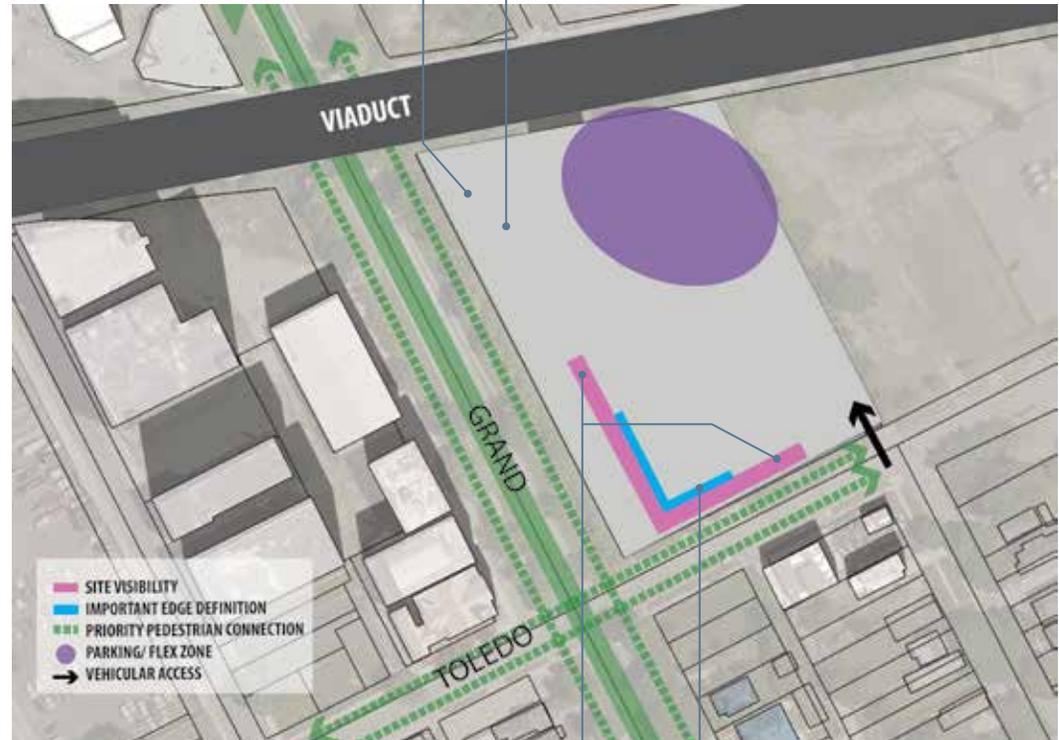


traditional pattern of single-family house lots across Toledo Street, its north side faces active railroad tracks and its east side faces other vacant former industrial property. Both West Grand Boulevard and Toledo Street maintain residential character with high levels of property occupancy, and serve as important residential spines in the study area.

### URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Opportunity to expand West Grand Boulevard greenway onto the site, with public park space

Architectural style may be contemporary, especially toward the north end of the site away from Toledo Street.



**Site layout and design considerations**

Different scales at different frontages: four to five stories along West Grand Boulevard, and two to three stories along Toledo Street.

Storefront-style ground floor at West Grand/Toledo corner, with active, publicly-accessible program such as café or child care.

## MEXICANTOWN-HUBBARD

MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT | SMALL BUSINESS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT



### Recommended Action Steps

City issues RFP for site redevelopment after near-term residential development projects are well underway, and demonstrate continued residential development interest by developers and the housing market. Coordinate design and development of a public park at this site with the General Services Department and the selected development team. Coordinate brownfields remediation as part of site sale. Phase construction to accommodate gradual absorption. Coordinate planned boulevard improvements, including near-term bike lane improvements, mid-term viaduct lighting improvements, and longer-term boulevard programming for expanded public use.

## DPW (Vernor Crossing) Site

**What this site can do for the study area.** One of the largest and most prominent sites in the study area, and under city control, the former Department of Public Works facility site can ultimately offer one of the most transformative redevelopment opportunities in the study area. Its 6.7 acres offer substantial capacity for a mix of commercial, residential and/or community-serving uses, that can complement established retail and residential areas that are nearby but across busy streets. For these reasons, the site has been the subject of several detailed studies—including real estate market analysis and development/urban design concepts—over the past five years, by the Urban Land Institute, Congress for the New Urbanism, and Michigan Municipal League, with participation by local partners. While the site has compelling potential, the inability of current real estate market demand levels to support the large scale of development possible here, and the time and cost premiums of potential brownfields contamination, make it impractical for major near-term initiatives. Near-term real estate development in different target areas to the west and east will help expand market potential and economic feasibility on the DPW site, so that its opportunity may be fully leveraged in several years. The City of Detroit should continue to work with community leaders to develop a community driven concept for this site that meets the following general design criteria.

**Site and context.** This city-owned site is highly visible and accessible at the study area’s central crossroads – the northwest corner of Vernor Highway and Livernois Avenue. It contains a disused equipment garage and office building, which may offer some reuse potential, as well as an antenna tower, amidst paved lots to either side. The site adjoins a flea market to the west, and an embankment carrying busy rail traffic to the northwest, with the DIFT beyond. While vehicular access and visibility are good, walking and biking access are poor, due to the heavy vehicle traffic and limited pedestrian facilities on adjoining streets, as well as to the few nearby walking destinations to the west and north. The Inner Circle/Iron Belle Greenway is planned to run past the site along Livernois Avenue.

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Figures are approximate, based on a recommended scenario optimized for economic feasibility and urban design benefit

<b>Retail</b>	65,000 to 75,000 gross sf of destination shopping
<b>Community use</b>	Gathering and/or small nonprofit business: 10,000 gross sf. Outdoor park or plaza space. Sports fields or facilities also possible
<b>Housing</b>	200 to 300 units, 200,000 to 300,000 gross sf overall.
<b>Building types</b>	Retail and community use in mixed-use and/or dedicated buildings, possibly including a renovated portion of the existing building.  Housing in three- to five-story buildings.
<b>Parking assumptions</b>	1 off-street parking space per unit, 1 space per 1,000sf commercial space. On-street parking available for retail and supplementary residential use.
<b>Landscaped area</b>	Public space is a priority, located for easy connections to nearby residential blocks. Variety of public and semi-private space layout possibilities.

**Urban design considerations:**

- A wide variety of land use and building type configurations are possible. Ultimate program and plan will be highly dependent on profile and extent of real estate market potential.
- Storefront-style ground floor with active, publicly-accessible program toward the corner Vernor Highway and Livernois Avenue, to reinforce both as an established neighborhood retail corridor.
- Creating a comfortable and marketable residential environment may be challenging given the site's separation from other residential development, and its busy road and rail adjacencies. A large critical mass of housing, thoughtfully designed to exclude challenging views and noise, would be necessary.

- Corner should present a distinctive appearance to Bagley Avenue approach from east.
- Improve adjoining sidewalks and crosswalks.

**EXISTING****CONCEPT:  
LIVERNOIS  
AVENUE EDGE  
IMPROVEMENTS**

***Making the site more attractive and conducive to pedestrians with plantings and distance separating people from traffic, quality fencing, public art, and street trees as well as lower plantings.***

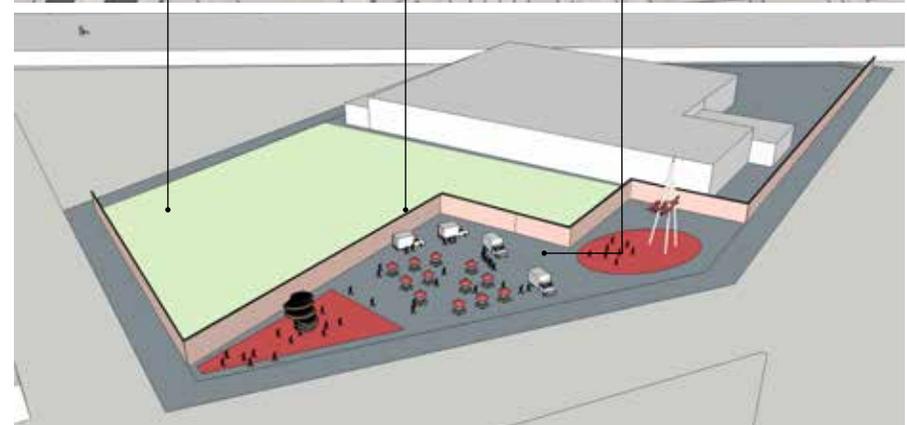
URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

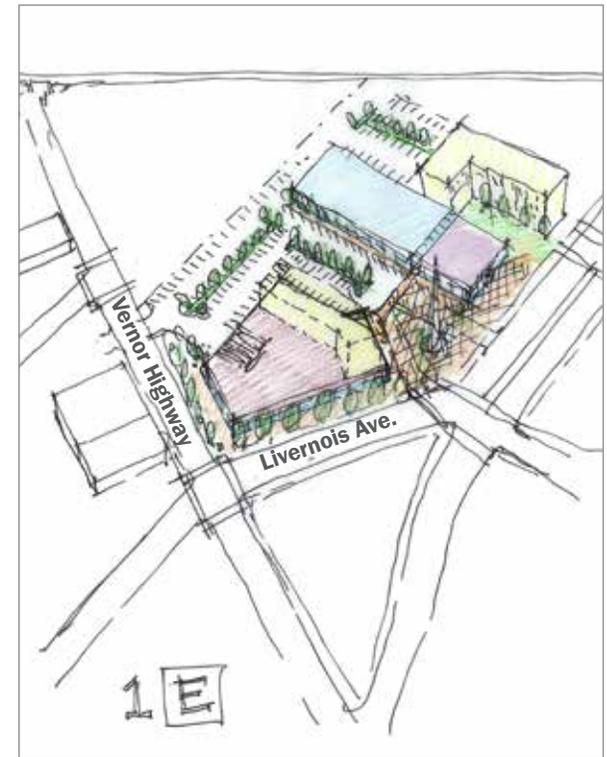
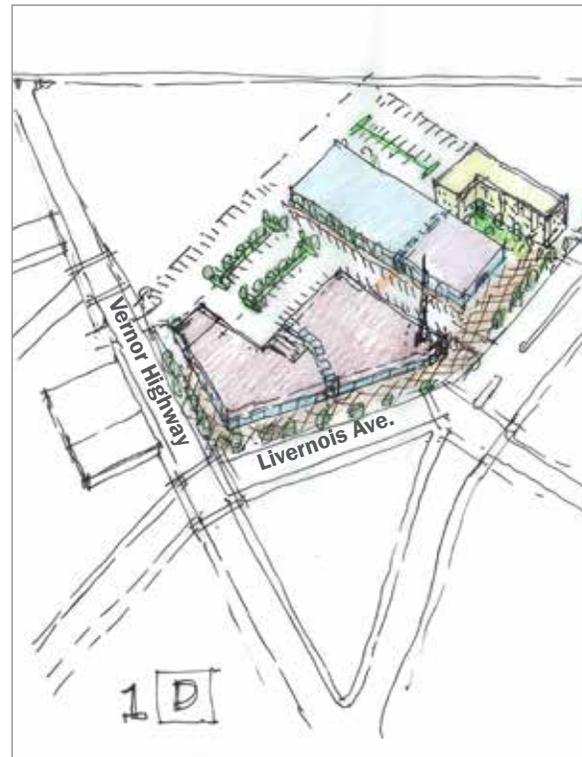
Consider potential adaptive reuse of at least part of existing building.



Prioritize improvements to appearance and walkability at this prominent corner.

POTENTIAL INTERIM DEVELOPMENT STAGE





**Conceptual alternatives for longer-term, larger-scale development with commercial and possibly housing use.**

### Recommended Action Steps

City explore funding sources and developer partnerships that could help move forward brownfields remediation. Once real estate market opportunity has been confirmed, review economic feasibility, then identify an appropriate developer partnership approach. In the near term, continue to work with community leaders on the design and use of this site.

## Streetscapes and Mobility

### West Vernor-Springwells Gateways

Two space-frame structures span Vernor Highway, within several blocks west and east of Springwells Street. The structures help provide definition to the area's retail storefront district, as well as an important gateway for drivers entering the area from the west. As prominent as the structures are, they offer opportunity for a much bolder presence, through installation of lighting and/or other distinctive art elements. Community members responded positively to the example concept illustrated on the facing page. A community-based process of defining goals for expression and selecting artists, could help secure funding and installation for these gateway enhancements. Power supply is already present at the base of each structure, limiting the additional cost of adding lighting.



CONCEPT:  
WEST VERNOR-SPRINGWELLS GATEWAY



## West Grand Boulevard

Envision the Boulevard as a beautiful street with safe pedestrian east and west crossings. The boulevard areas are to be extended to allow for sidewalks and the boulevards will be enhanced with landscaping. The parking-protected bike lanes and improved crossings at each side street now leads Detroiters all the way down the Boulevard to Riverside Park and its planned improvements. Along the way, neighborhood-envisioned

amenities such as play areas, gardens, plazas, art, and green infrastructure amenities create spaces and places of respite and activity along the way. To facilitate safe, comfortable, non-motorized movement all the way to the riverfront, the railway crossing at Jefferson is also reconstructed.

### CONCEPT: WEST GRAND BOULEVARD AT BAGLEY AVENUE



Protected  
bike facilities

Safer  
crosswalks

Community  
space

New paths  
and parkway

Rain garden/stormwater  
management

See existing conditions photo on page 68.

LONGER-TERM LINEAR PARK

Parkway



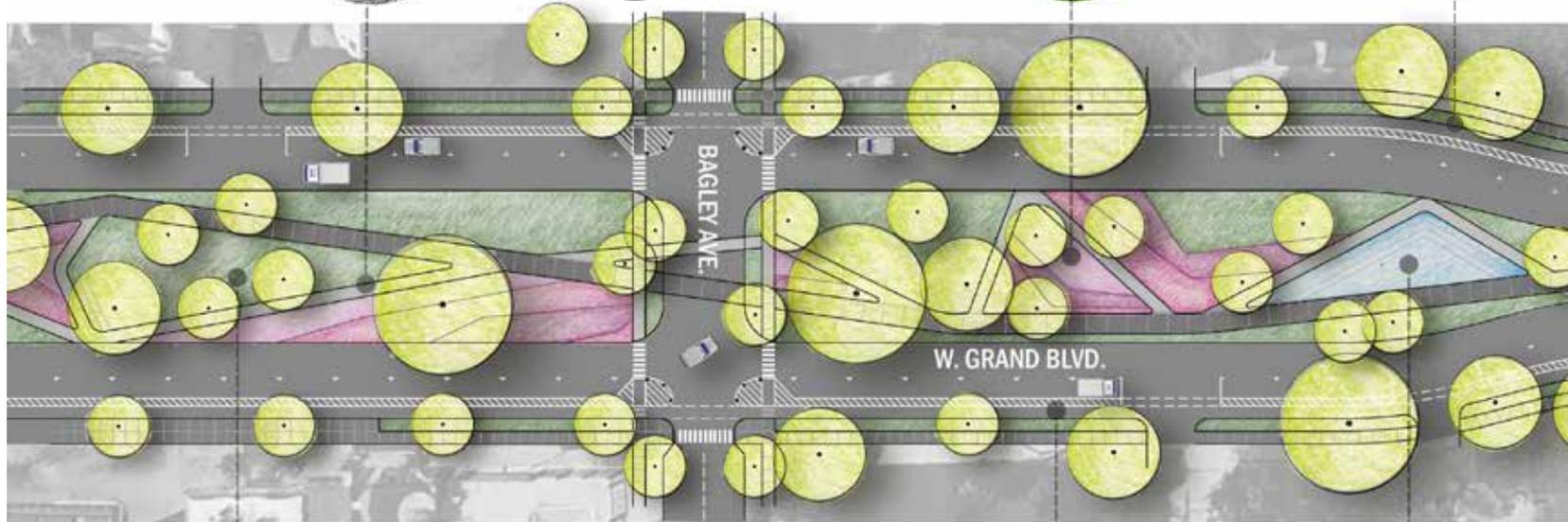
Safe Crosswalks



Habitat Creation



Protected Bike Lane



Community Uses



Protected Facilities



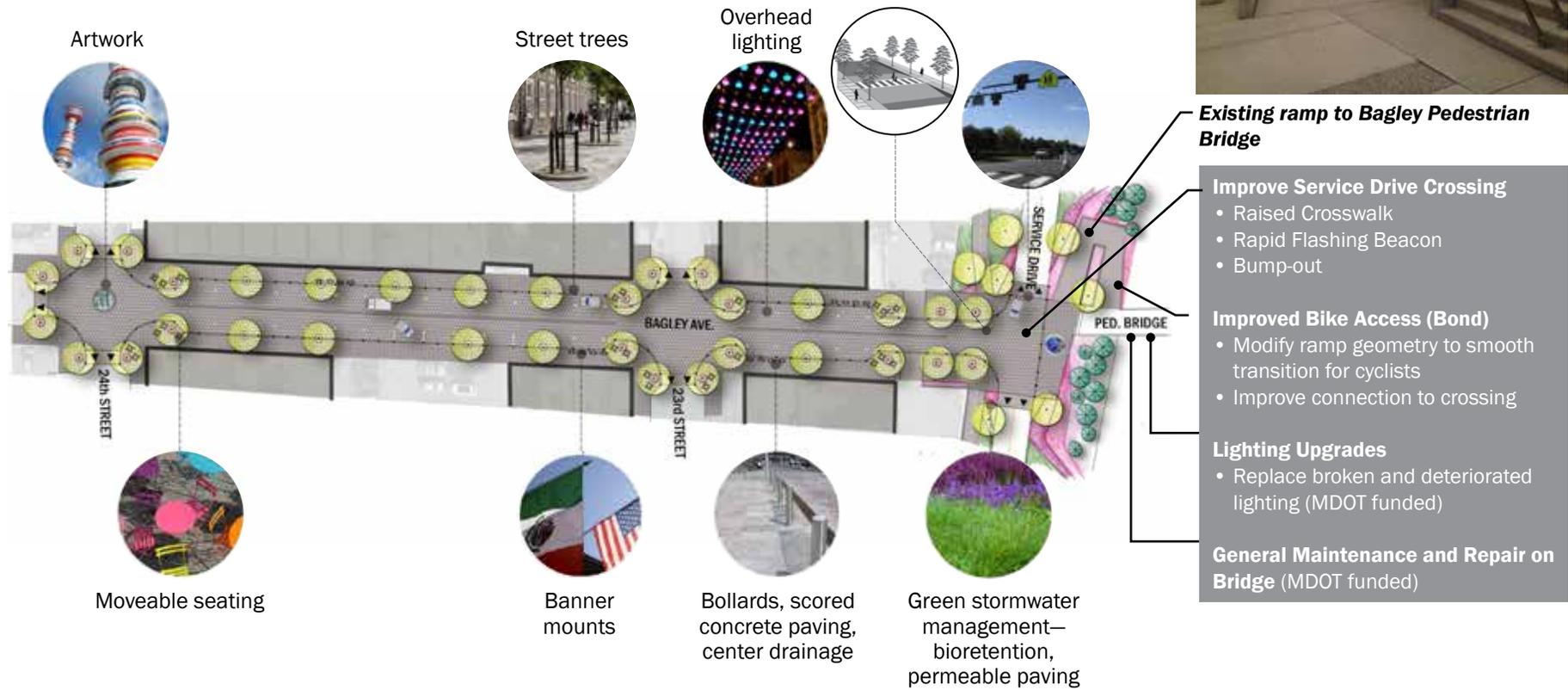
Stormwater Management



Approx. 4,400 ft

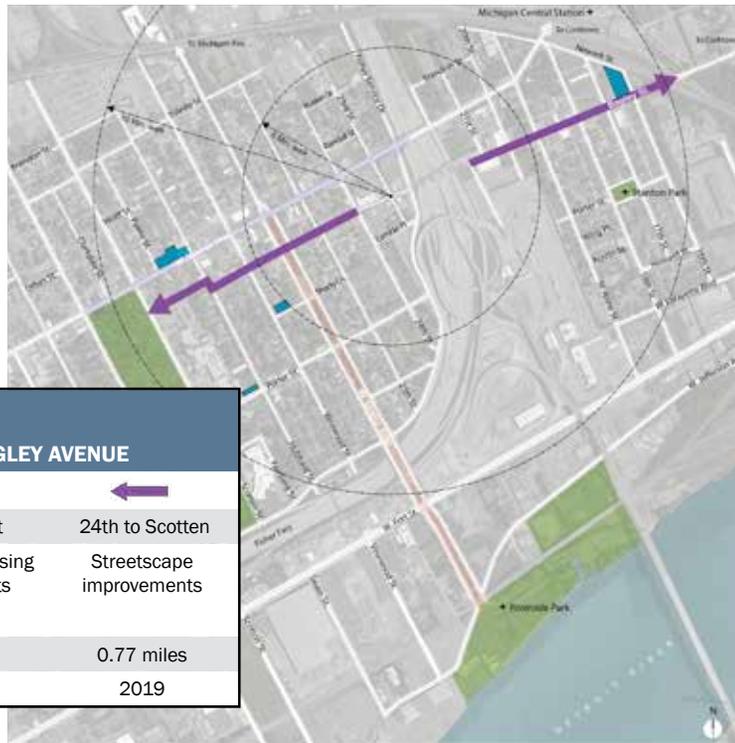


**BAGLEY SHARED STREET INITIATIVE | SEE PAGE 58**



### Bagley Avenue Standard Pedestrian Streetscape Improvements

To the east and west of the shared street and pedestrian bridge, Bagley will be enhanced through basic capital improvements, providing benefits to safety, environmental quality, community connectivity, and appearance. Practical green infrastructure solutions will be installed, either in crosswalk bump-outs as bioretention, or through the use of streetside raingardens. Crosswalks will be enhanced with bump-outs and high-visibility markings. Sharrow markings will be applied for cyclist safety and wayfinding. New trees and low plantings placed at enhanced intersections will provide a sense of enclosure and help calm traffic. Where Bagley terminates at Clark Park, a raised intersection will be installed to calm traffic on Scotten Avenue and create a smooth cycling and pedestrian entry into the park. Where Bagley crosses West Grand Boulevard, in addition to bump-outs, high visibility crosswalks will be added.



BAGLEY AVENUE		
	←	→
EXTENT	16th to 21st	24th to Scotten
TYPE	Pedestrian crossing improvements	Streetscape improvements
LENGTH	0.33 miles	0.77 miles
START DATE	2018	2019

#### BAGLEY—EAST OF I-75 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

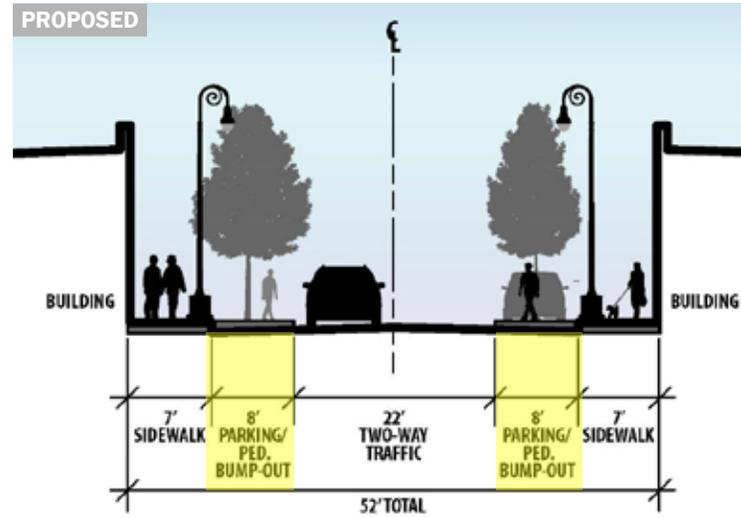
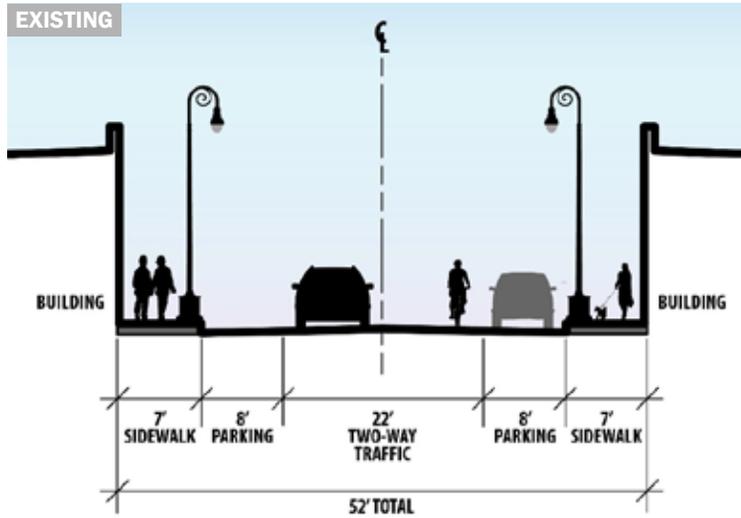


*East of the I-75 Pedestrian Bridge, Bagley Avenue has been improved with traditional street lights. Bagley Street from Scotten to 24th will be enhanced with additional lighting and improved crosswalk markings. Bagley Street from the Bagley Street Pedestrian Bridge to 16th Street will be re-stripped, providing refreshed and vibrant pedestrian crossing at block ends and intersections.*

#### BAGLEY—BETWEEN 24TH AND CLARK PARK



*Between Clark Park and 24th Street, Bagley Avenue lacks traditional street lights and high visibility crosswalks. These missing elements should be added to these residential blocks to enhance neighborhood walking connections to Clark Park, retail, and other destinations.*



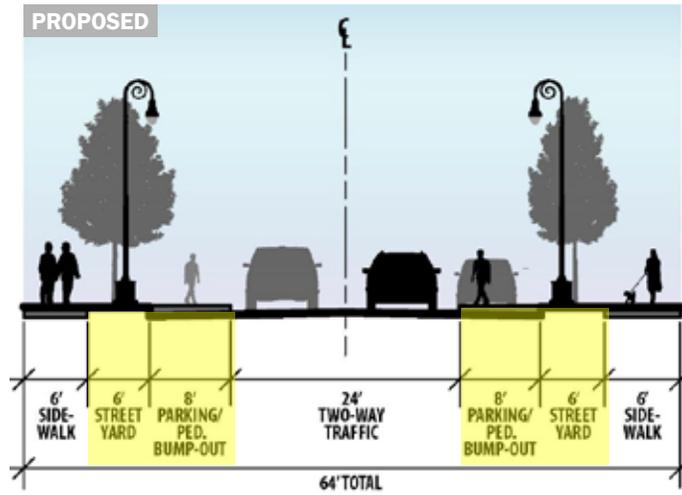
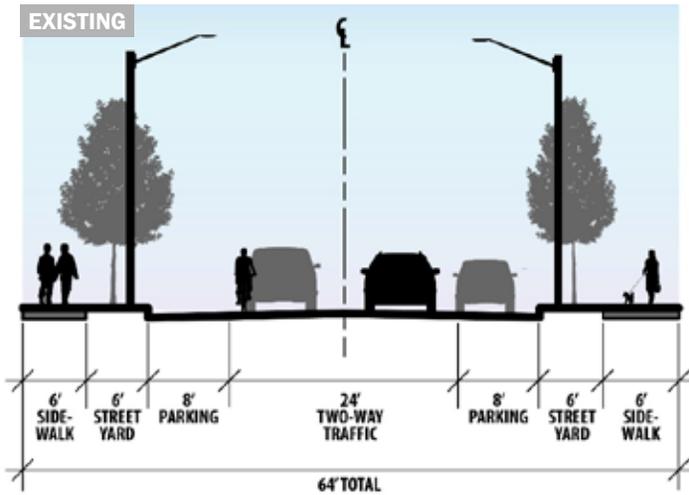
Safe crosswalks



Street trees



Street lights



## Residential Infill Development

As the highly visible near-term development projects are completed and occupied, market interest and economic feasibility of developing new single-family homes to six-family flat development on infill lots will increase. Vacant lots in the DLBA inventory provide some good opportunities for such infill development. Other privately-owned parcels may also attract interest. To most effectively make this type of small-scale infill residential development economically feasible, and deliver the strongest and most enduring benefits to neighborhoods, these guidelines should be followed:

- Prioritize infill development located within or close to the West Vernor-Springwells or Mexicantown-Hubbard focus areas. This will best leverage benefit of near-term reinvestment in those areas. As these focus areas become stronger, infill development can be located in expanding rings around them.
- Prioritize infill development where two or more vacant lots may be aggregated together. This increases flexibility of building type, and project impact. Many existing residential lots are too narrow to easily accommodate desirable amenities like yards and driveways.
- Prioritize infill development where multiple vacant lots within one or more blocks can be developed as a single coordinated project. This approach not only can improve development feasibility by providing the developer economies of scale, it also will have greater positive neighborhood impact by more comprehensively transforming vacant, blighted parcels into occupied homes.
- Parking should be accessed off of alleys where available. In other cases, locate parking on-street or to the side of the building, not between the façade line and the street, to minimize its presence along the street.



**Typical existing conditions – vacant lots between occupied homes**

- Consider duplex townhomes or stacked apartment flats to help accommodate unmet demand for multi-family apartment units
- Utilize low-impact stormwater management techniques in site design.
- Consider building design that introduces new architectural style choices, while utilizing scale, materials or other elements that fit well with traditional single-family residential context.
- New buildings composed with bay and height dimensions in scale with traditional neighboring houses

CONCEPT:  
TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT

New buildings composed with bay and height dimensions in scale with traditional neighboring houses



8

**CONCLUSION**



# Conclusion

The strategies and projects detailed in this plan outline the next chapter in a well-established tradition of community-based planning and action in the West Vernor Corridor neighborhoods. Project goals come from the hard work of thousands of residents, business owners, and other stakeholders, gathered through a number of planning efforts led by community-based organizations and their partners. The strategies and projects build on this strong and essential foundation, adding new elements that promise larger and faster results:

- The City of Detroit’s renewed commitment to neighborhood planning and reinvestment
- Growing attraction of residents and businesses to the study area, evident through increased levels of occupancy and investment
- Prioritization of project initiatives, with conscious targeting of investments in clusters to produce self-sustaining, expanding centers of community strength.

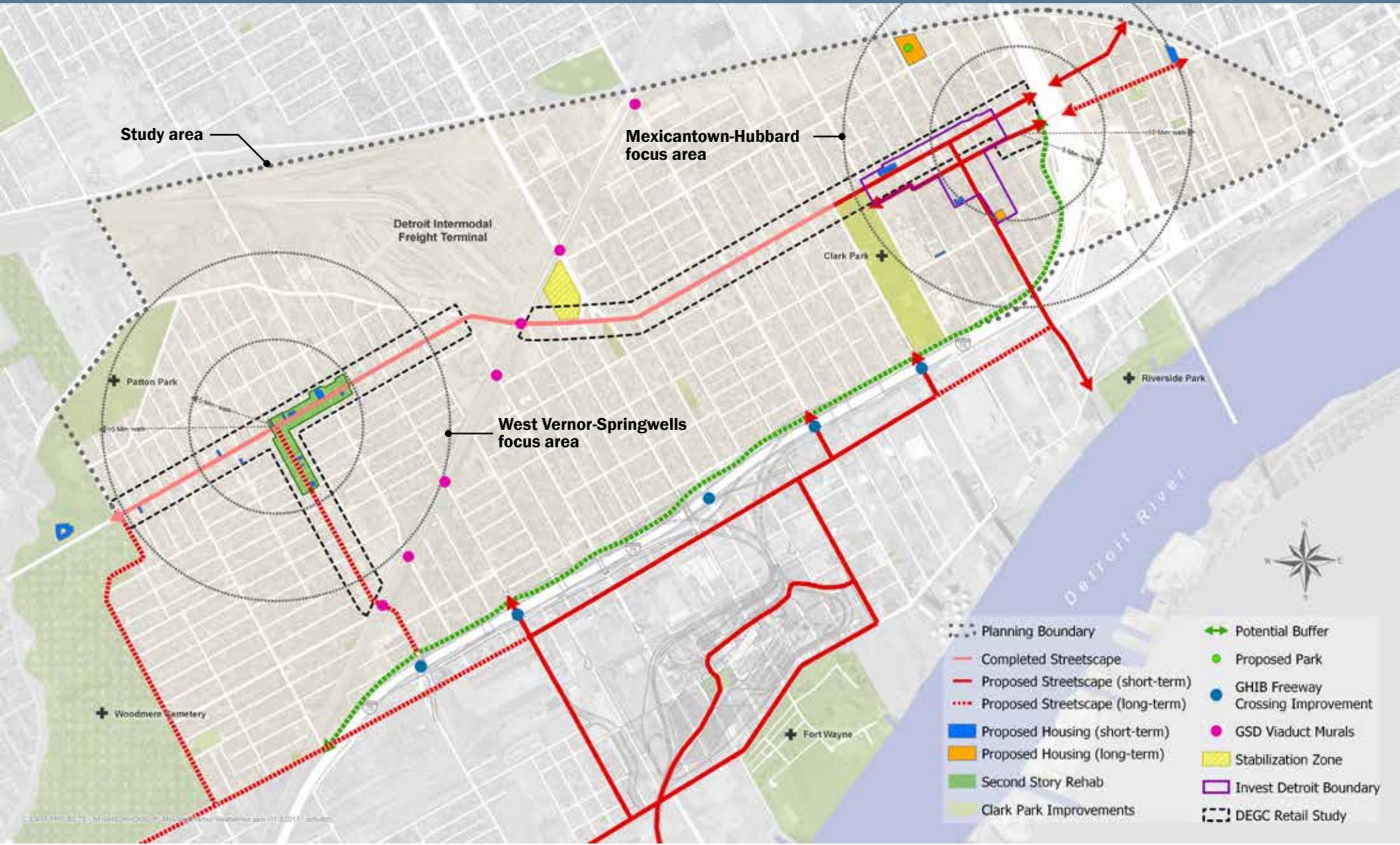
The diagram on the facing page indicates the locations of principal initiatives. Many are intentionally clustered in the Springwells-Vernor area to the west, and the Mexicantown-Hubbard area to the east, to achieve synergies that multiply the benefits of individual initiatives. See the table starting on page 114 for a summary of near-term project initiatives indicating initial steps, outcomes, and responsible parties for each.

Besides the near-term and longer-term projects detailed here, this plan aims to help establish a new culture of city-community partnership that improves quality of life and economic opportunity on a daily basis, and sets the stage for larger community development opportunities. The community outreach conducted as part of this planning process, and that will continue during project implementation, is vital to building trust, understanding, and accountability among members of the community

and members of City government. These connections between people will do the most to unlock new possibilities that go beyond the extents of this plan. Asked what they love about the study area, one community meeting participant highlighted “so many organizations doing GREAT things!” This plan should help these organizations, city agencies, and individuals channel their efforts and resources in ways that produce bigger results than any one entity can accomplish alone.

While this plan is foremost a plan for the people of the West Vernor Corridor neighborhoods, it will also deliver tangible benefits to people throughout Detroit. Trail and park improvements in the study area will connect other neighborhoods to new recreation opportunities. New and diverse housing options, expanded business activity, and more accessible schools will expand choices for living, working, and learning for residents from all over. Reinvestment in businesses and real estate, and strong working partnerships between neighborhood organizations and city agencies, will provide precedents that can help other Detroit neighborhoods rebound. More intensive cultural life will demonstrate the power people have to create vibrant and supportive communities around them. While these results will bring more people to the West Vernor Corridor, they will also draw people to other thriving Detroit neighborhoods—giving space for West Vernor’s own unique people and qualities to endure.

SUMMARY DIAGRAM OF PRINCIPAL INITIATIVES



INITIATIVE	INITIAL ACTION	END GOAL	BSEED	CPC	DDOT	DEGC	DLBA	DON	DPRD	DPW	DWSD	GSD	HRD	Invest Detroit	PHD	PDD	PLA
<b>Neighborhood-wide Policy Initiatives</b>																	
<b>Overall strategy</b>																✓	
Mixed-Use Zoning Update	Begin process for rezoning	Rezoning package approved														✓	
Truck Route Policy	Issue RFP to research and develop recommended ordinance	Truck route ordinance drafted and adopted								✓							
Ongoing stakeholder outreach	Publicize framework plan and its initiatives	Monitor and respond to community priorities														✓	
<b>Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development</b>																	
<b>Overall strategy</b>													✓				
Bagley & 16th	Issue RFP for development	Build and tenant											✓				
The Murray	Confirm financing and developer partnership agreement; begin renovations	Renovate and re-tenant												✓			
Hubbard Vernor	Acquire property; lead developer chosen and partnership formed; begin construction	Selected developer to build and tenant											✓	✓			
<b>Single-Family Residential Stabilization</b>																	
<b>Overall strategy</b>													✓				
Bridging Neighborhoods Program vacant house rehabilitation and household relocation	Identify 5 model homes in West Vernor for immediate rehab	Move family into each house					✓						✓				
Vacant lot stewardship	Sell lots through side-lot program; engage community organizations for open space stewardship	Achieve productive use and responsible maintenance					✓						✓				

INITIATIVE	INITIAL ACTION	END GOAL	BSEED	CPC	DDOT	DEGC	DLBA	DON	DPRD	DPW	DWSD	GSD	HRD	Invest Detroit	PHD	PDD	PLA
			<b>Small Business and Retail Development</b>														
<b>Overall strategy</b>						✓											
Mexicantown area retail program	Apply retail plan and resources; leverage City interest in Plaza del Norte	Increase retail occupancy and responsiveness to community/market interest				✓											✓
Apply MCM program (multiple properties/ businesses)	Targeted assistance to tenants and property owners	Open businesses in improved spaces				✓											
Build and tenant new retail space at Bagley and 16th, Hubbard-Vernor sites	Issue RFP for development, recruit tenants	Build and tenant				✓							✓				
<b>Streetscapes and Mobility</b>																	
<b>Overall strategy</b>																	✓
W. Vernor Streetscape	Confirm concept design and cost, funding	Fully operational lighting								✓							✓
W. Grand Boulevard Protected Bike Lane	Confirm preferred project option, installation timing	Striped protected bike lanes								✓							✓
Murals at 7 priority viaducts	Select artist concepts, begin installation	Signature installations at prominent viaducts										✓					
Vernor Highway viaduct drainage/fugitive dust enforcement	Coordinate approach with Wayne County, Law Department, MDEQ	Eliminate significant drainage and air quality problems								✓							✓
Viaduct drainage, lighting, and appearance improvements	Varies by viaduct; install lighting, stabilize surfaces, remove debris, add artwork, secure closed areas, etc.	Achieve safe, attractive walking conditions								✓		✓					✓
Install bus shelters at priority stops	Confirm shelter designs, locations	Install bus shelters			✓												

INITIATIVE	INITIAL ACTION	END GOAL	BSEED	CPC	DDOT	DEGC	DLBA	DON	DPRD	DPW	DWSD	GSD	HRD	Invest Detroit	PHD	PDD	PLA
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>																	
<b>Overall strategy</b>																	✓
Bagley Shared Street	Confirm concept design and cost, funding	Shared street facilities installed			✓						✓	✓					✓
Clark Park Splash Pad, Zocalo	Confirm concept design and cost, funding	Splash pad and zocalo facilities installed							✓	✓		✓					✓
Clark Park Lighting	Confirm installation schedule	Additional and improved lighting							✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
West Grand Boulevard Beautification Project	Confirm concept design and cost, funding	Additional and more useable public park facilities			✓				✓			✓					✓



## Abbreviations and terms used in this document

<b>BSEED</b>	Buildings, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department	<b>GHIB</b>	Gordie Howe International Bridge planned to connect Detroit with Windsor, Ontario
<b>CPC</b>	City of Detroit City Planning Commission	<b>GSD</b>	City of Detroit General Services Department (with responsibility for parks facilities)
<b>DBA</b>	Detroit Building Authority	<b>HRD</b>	City of Detroit Housing & Revitalization Department
<b>DDOT</b>	City of Detroit Department of Transportation	<b>MCM</b>	City of Detroit Motor City Match program
<b>DEGC</b>	Detroit Economic Growth Corporation	<b>MDOT</b>	Michigan Department of Transportation
<b>DESC</b>	Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation	<b>PDD</b>	City of Detroit Planning & Development Department
<b>DIFT</b>	Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal	<b>PHD</b>	Mayor’s Office of Planning, Housing and Development
<b>DLBA</b>	Detroit Land Bank Authority	<b>PLA</b>	Detroit Public Lighting Authority
<b>DON</b>	City of Detroit Department of Neighborhoods	<b>RFP</b>	Request for Proposals
<b>DPRD</b>	City of Detroit Parks & Recreation Department	<b>ROR</b>	Right of Refusal
<b>DPS</b>	Detroit Public Schools	<b>SDBA</b>	Southwest Detroit Business Association (community organization)
<b>DPW</b>	City of Detroit Department of Public Works	<b>UNI</b>	Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (community organization)
<b>DPW site</b>	City-owned, former Department of Public Works facility site at Vernor Highway and Livernois Avenue; also referred to as Vernor Crossing	<b>Vernor Crossing</b>	See DPW site
<b>DWSD</b>	City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department		



A healthy and beautiful Detroit,  
built on inclusionary growth,  
economic opportunity, and an  
atmosphere of trust

**CITY OF DETROIT**  
MAYOR MICHAEL DUGGAN  
**PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
MAURICE COX, DIRECTOR

