



# RUSSELL WOODS- NARDIN PARK

— *A TACTICAL PRESERVATION PLAN* —

HSPV 701 | PRESERVATION STUDIO | FALL 2018

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Figure 1.2: A culture of homeownership has kept Russell Woods a vibrant residential neighborhood.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 1.1: The former Masonic Temple on Dexter Avenue presents both opportunities for and challenges to tactical preservation.

**PREFACE**

The Fall 2018 Historic Preservation Studios tested the idea of tactical preservation by applying it to urban neighborhoods in Philadelphia and Detroit.

Tactical preservation refers to strategies using partial, incremental adaptive reuse of civic and commercial buildings to spark redevelopment in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Used in situations where fully elaborated rehabilitation projects are presently infeasible, tactical preservation has been embraced by the City of Detroit and being applied there to change the narrative of decline in marginal neighborhoods.

Two teams of PennDesign graduate students were challenged to carefully study a particular neighborhood with rich historic built environments and complex histories of disadvantage and discrimination. The overriding goal in each is proposing projects that take advantage of the neighborhoods' valuable heritage assets to plant seeds of equitable redevelopment/revitalization. The groups worked to discern the mix of cultural and economic values and social issues demanding attention, and employ tactical preservation principles to advance equitable redevelopment. Each team of 11 students was tasked with understanding a whole neighborhood, then devising specific interventions in civic, institutional and commercial buildings (that is, not housing).

One team worked on Strawberry Mansion in Philadelphia; the other on Russell Woods/Nardin Park in Detroit. Over the 15-week semester, each team worked downward in scale – from the neighborhood, to areas of opportunity within the neighborhood, to single buildings or sites. And the end-point of their work (in pairs) is three-part proposals for their sites. All proposals had to outline an implementation strategy unfolding over time, focusing on 2-month, 2-year, and 10-year solutions

The aim was to be holistic, balancing different factors – taking in account cultural and historical significance, urban dynamics, demographic processes, architectural and design moves, policy structures, and financing/feasibility – not drilling down exhaustively on any one factor. Gaining access to the interior of all buildings to assess conditions was difficult; therefore, design work could only proceed so far, and each project needs further “proofing.”

The 2018 Studios are the first of a three-year

project to explore and experiment with the roles of preservation in the equitable redevelopment of Philadelphia and Detroit neighborhoods. Additional research and implementation of test projects will be pursued between Studios. A number of stakeholder groups and institutions in each city will be involved as partners and clients.

In the report that follows, the 11-student group for Russell Woods-Nardin Park summarizes the histories and current conditions of their target neighborhood, and presents the main points of analysis to identify priority values, narratives, community needs and specific sites of intervention. Implementation projects on these specific sites, authored by groups or two or three students, make up the bulk of the report. These results will hopefully inspire future work in both cities – and conversation between professionals, leaders and citizens of both – to connect community affiliations with the past to materially better futures.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report builds on the practice of preservation planning, however it is not intended to be read as a literal plan to guide discrete future actions. Instead, it articulates five visions for five different sites in the study area of Russell Woods-Nardin Park. These visions represent deeply researched and thoughtful concepts for how to apply a tactical preservation methodology to the adaptive reuse of built fabric in historic communities that have experienced systemic disinvestment. They illustrate that a careful understanding of a community's heritage is a key component of equitable revitalization because it acknowledges histories of discrimination as well as legacies of empowerment. The five sites presented in this report were selected based on their ability to serve as a catalyst for the rehabilitation, not only of buildings, but also of communities. Taken individually as well as together, they heed Detroit's call to build strength on strength.

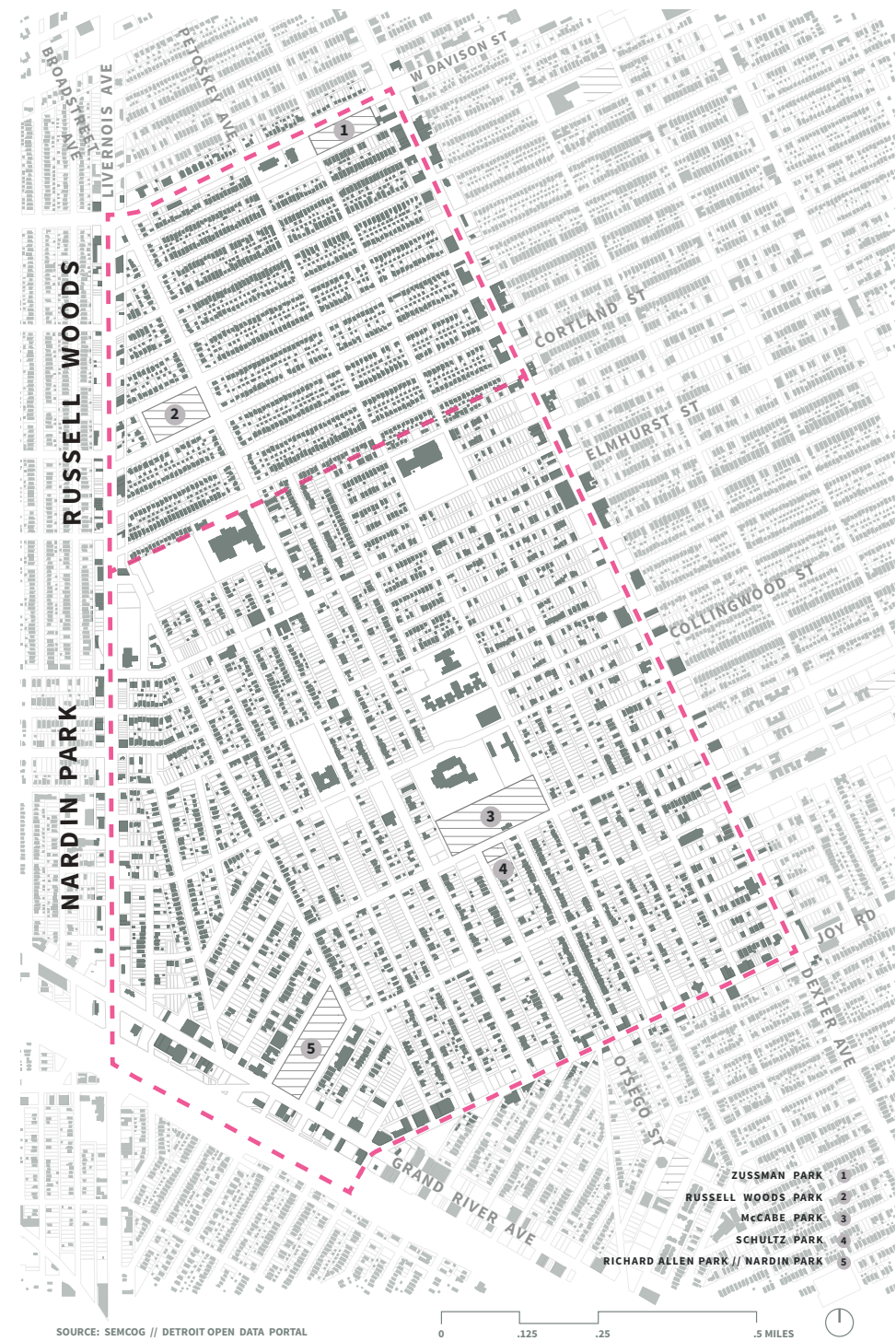


Figure 1.3: The study area includes the two neighborhoods of Russell Woods and Nardin Park, though the boundaries are fluid.

- Figure 0.1-0.5: Candela, Lillian. November 08, 2018. Detroit.
- Figure 1.1: Stevens, Amanda. September 16, 2018. Detroit.
- Figure 1.2: Maloney, Mia. September 16, 2018. Detroit.
- Figure 1.3: SEMCOG, Open Data Portal, 2010.

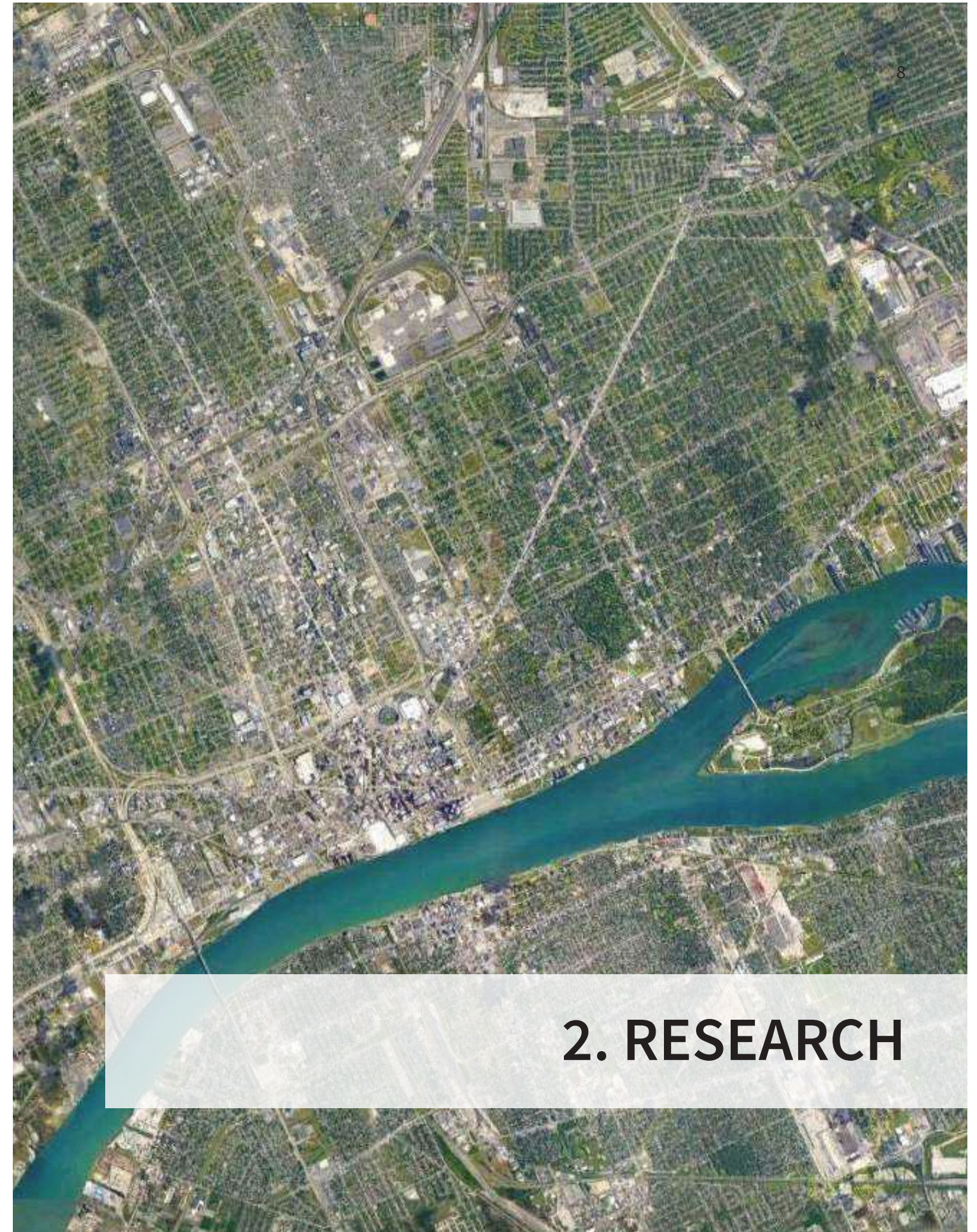
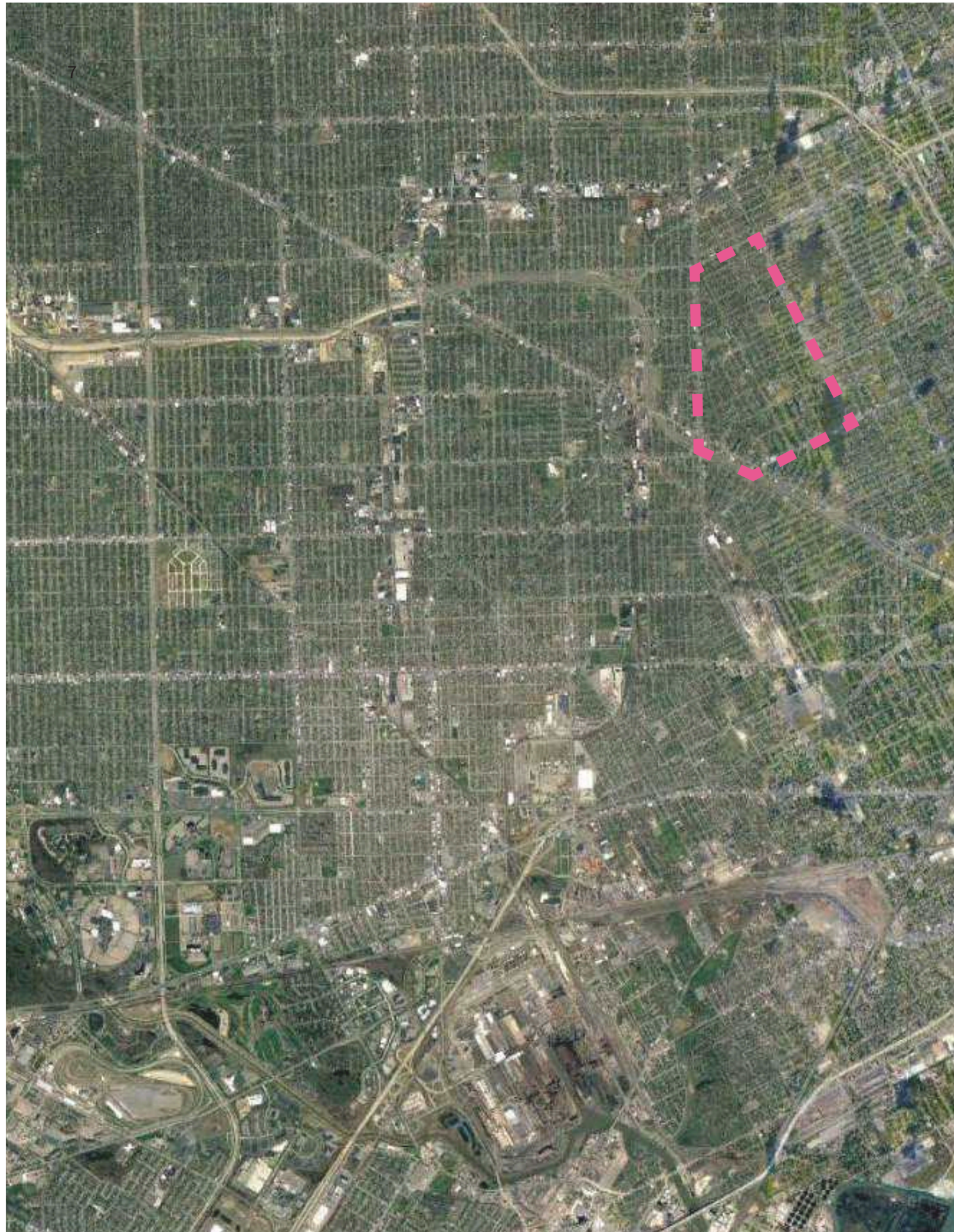


Figure 2.0. Aerial view of Detroit with study area outlined.

## 2. RESEARCH

## RESEARCH



Figure 2.1. Map of our study area in the context of Detroit.

## INTRODUCTION

Detroit represents an urban vision of the American Dream, a place that made room for people of a variety of racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds. The built environment of Russell Woods and Nardin Park reflects the realization then the undoing of this dream. Once picturesque streetscapes of single-family houses are now largely vacant; vast tracts of empty land separate once tightly gridded houses. Similar to other legacy cities, the current landscape is representative of a century of institutional racism, government corruption, and the decline of the American auto industry. Our challenge is to acknowledge this layered heritage while supporting the revitalization of these communities using tactical preservation.

In the following sections, we will analyze the studio area, explaining the history, current conditions, and spatial trends of our study area. In the Analysis section, we will show the area's character-defining features, our analysis of its values, and our statement of significance. In section 4, we addressed community needs by creating a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis and by creating a community needs assessment.

We created a tactical preservation methodology where we identified areas of interest, assessed site conditions, identified quantifiable

variables and created a scoring system for each variable, subsequently scored buildings by variable (based on research and fieldwork), honed our areas of interest by refining our site selection based on non-quantifiable factors, and selected our final sites for our tactical preservation interventions. We more thoroughly explain this selection framework and our preservation approach in the "tactical preservation methodology" section, which resulted in our much more in-depth proposed interventions. These five site interventions are: the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor, the Dexter Hub, Vaughn's Bookstore, the Elmhurst Corridor, and the McKerrow School. Each contains an overview, the site history, the site's condition, our teams' interventions, and the long-term vision. Finally, we conclude with a set of key takeaways and directions for future research and work. A helpful appendix at the end of the book contains several maps that our team created to analyze the study area, and demonstrate and understand the area's conditions. In addition our appendix contains a index of historic photos which additionally helps place the entire study area in context for greater understanding.



Figure 2.2. A few blocks on Dexter Avenue south of Davison Street are home to some of the last remaining intact commercial corridors in Russell Woods and Nardin Park.

## RESEARCH

Our site is located about five miles from downtown in the near northwest area of Detroit, along Grand River Avenue. It includes the neighborhoods of Russell Woods and Nardin Park, two somewhat-distinct, predominantly residential, largely black communities with shared histories that are delimited by an outer boundary of commercial land uses. While Russell Woods and Nardin Park share some common values and significance, they are also characterized by dramatic differences. Generally, Nardin Park has more modest building stock and greater vacancy. Russell Woods is a local historic district, and largely intact. As a result, within this one study area are a variety of conditions. This studio has explored the history, site conditions, and community needs, and analyzed them in the context of community and stakeholder input to create five tactical preservation interventions. These interventions are the culmination of our analysis, and represent an optimistic vision of what Detroit and its resilient communities can achieve by harnessing the power of history and preservation to revitalize their sites and prevent their displacement.

As a caveat, it is important to note that our group struggled with the appropriate terminology to use to describe this study area. Are Russell Woods and Nardin Park separate neighborhoods or is it more

appropriate to refer to them as communities? Should our areas of intervention be confined to individual buildings, should it utilize the immense amount of vacant land, or should it take on clusters of properties and land? We acknowledge that the name 'Nardin Park' is a modern creation, and that residents of this southern section of our study area never said they lived in 'Nardin Park;' instead these residents differentiate where they live based upon the streets they live in. In the historiography, less information was available on Nardin Park compared to Russell Woods-Sullivan, which reflects significant development patterns and issues with sense of community, as we shall see in greater detail in the history section. Despite these difficulties regarding the communities' names, which we acknowledge, we will continue to refer to the southern section as Nardin Park, because it allows us to easily refer to our general study areas and intervention sites.



Figure 2.3. View southward on Dexter from Waverly shows the wide commercial avenues that surround our study area.

## SITE CONTEXT

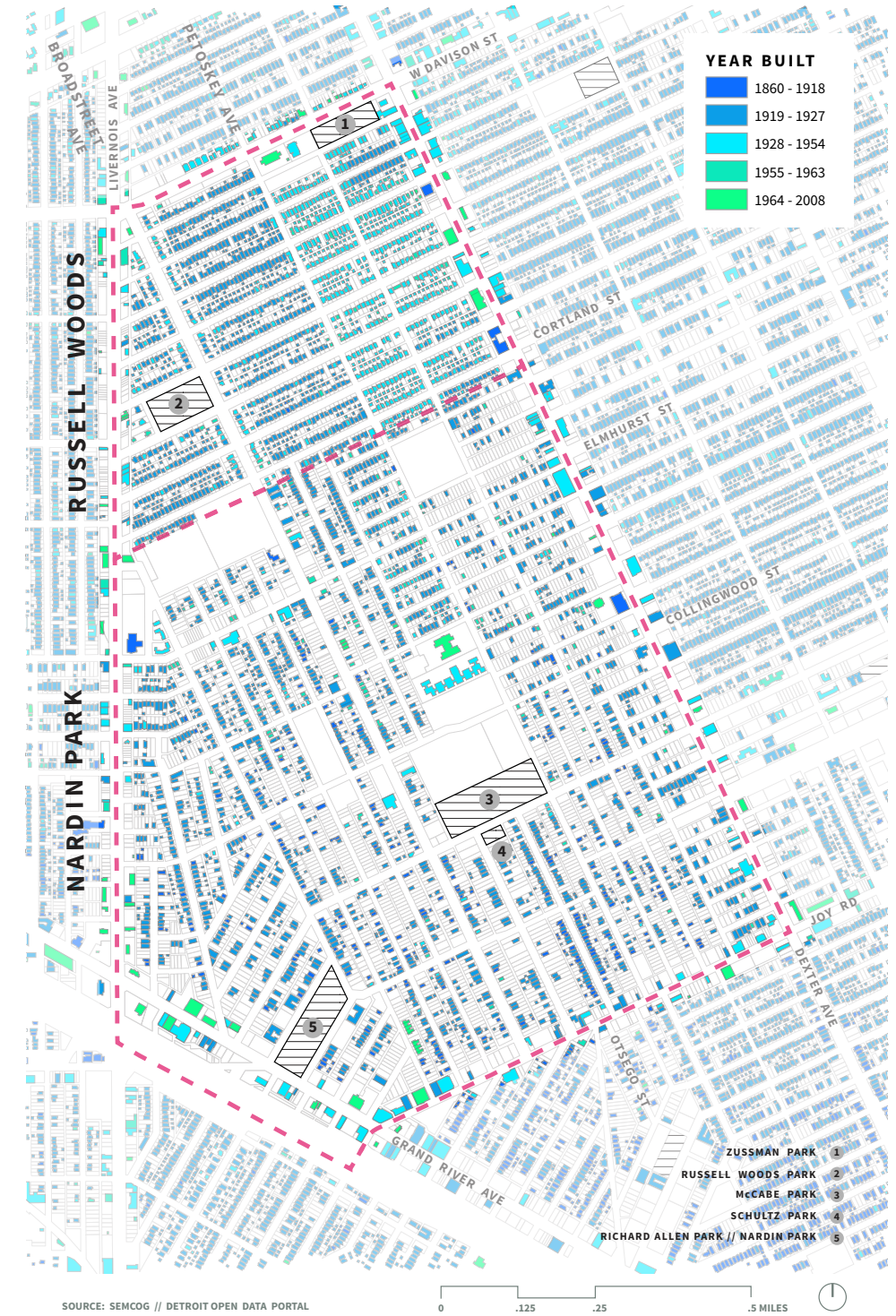


Figure 2.4. Date of construction for buildings in our study area. 64% of extant buildings in Russell Woods and Nardin Park were constructed in the 1920s.



Figure 2.5. Abandoned apartment buildings next to New Light Baptist Church, on Nardin Park.

The area of Russell Woods and Nardin Park is unique in its sharp demarcation which separates it from its surroundings. The sharpness is caused by the wide and straight avenues that enclose it; Dexter Avenue to the east, Joy Road and Grand River Avenue to the south, Livernois Avenue to the west, and Davison Street to the north. The base structure is composed of continuous residential blocks on the interior, which were developed in stages after the 1920s, surrounded or wrapped with commercial streets where civic, commercial, and recreational uses exist, serving the 'interior's' residents.

These long and wide thoroughfares are marked by architectural similarities in uses and types of buildings; most are single-story commercial buildings, although there are also apartment buildings and civic spaces such as churches and schools. There is great vacancy in terms of land and building use, and vehicles generally do not stop but speed through these avenues on their way to downtown Detroit from the



Figure 2.6. Lee Beauty Shop, on Joy and Grand River. This building is a former bank that served the community.

suburbs, and vice versa. These images and graphics demonstrate the general type of building and use that occurs along these border streets. There appears to be very little interaction between Russell Woods and its adjacent neighboring communities, including Nardin Park itself, and Russell Woods residents were encouraged not to cross over into the other communities.<sup>1</sup>

On the interior of the neighborhoods, there are almost entirely non-commercial uses such as residential and civic (mostly churches and a few schools), in addition to a few parks. Russell Woods has been able to conserve more of its housing stock and middle-class black population, perhaps due to its being a historic district since 1998, whereas there is substantially greater vacancy of buildings and land in Nardin Park.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 2.7. One of many religious buildings in the study area, this one on Davison.

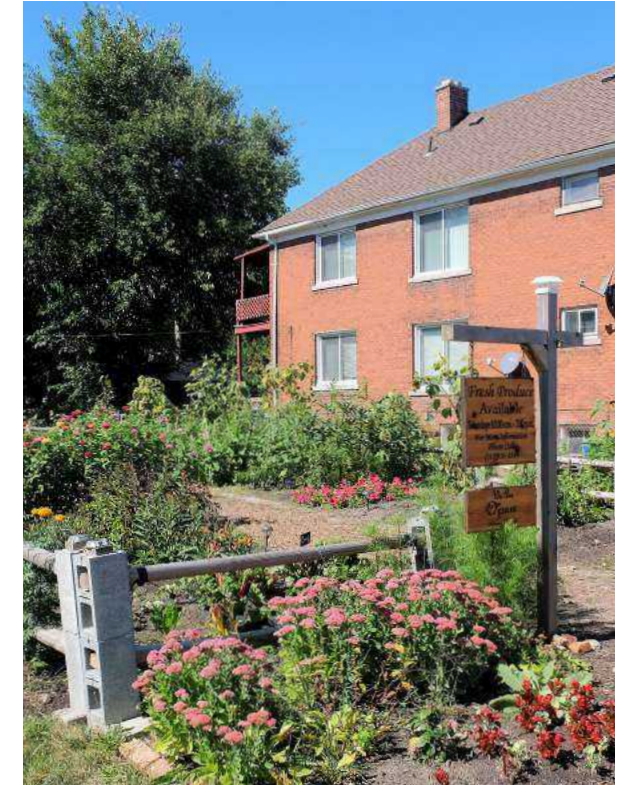


Figure 2.8. A community garden in a vacant lot, formerly residential.



Figure 2.9. Houses predominately represent a suburban typology.



Figure 2.10 Eleos Coffee House is a recently-opened café that quickly became popular among residents.





Figure 2.11. By 1925, much of the western half of Russell Woods was fully built-out.

The communities of Russell Woods and Nardin Park were simultaneously platted in the 1910s and 1920s as suburbs of the expanding city of Detroit. Detroit's urban growth really exploded in the first half of the twentieth century with the rise of its industrial might and population explosion, including the Great Migration of millions of black families after the 1920s. This aerial photo from 1925 shows the rapid growth that had occurred radially outwards from the historic center of Detroit. The neighborhoods, while being adjacent, developed in different patterns. Fewer historical sources are available on Nardin Park, while there is a good deal to be found on Russell Woods.

Russell Woods was platted in two phases starting in 1916, and named for corporate attorney Henry Russel, who owned the Russell Woods Company together with Charles H. L'Hommedieu. The housing stock was designed to be mainly Tudor- and Georgian-Revival, some Moderne and Craftsman houses.

The second phase of development occurred in 1925, when the eastern half of Russell Woods, known as the Sullivan Subdivision was developed by Daniel Sullivan. From the start, Russell Woods was an upper-middle-class community with mostly white

Protestant or Catholic businessmen, business owners, and professionals living there.<sup>3</sup> Nardin Park appears to have been reserved for the working-class whites who worked in Detroit's numerous factories. It was built in many, smaller increments. Both communities exhibited great architectural diversity of types and sizes. Just on Nardin Park itself for example, one can see Greek Revival temple-like church on one side and a Gothic Revival church on the other. Dozens of congregations dot the two communities, which reflects the continued strength and community-building potential that these religious institutions exhibit.



Figure 2.12: A vacant and derelict house in Nardin Park, with overgrowth around it.

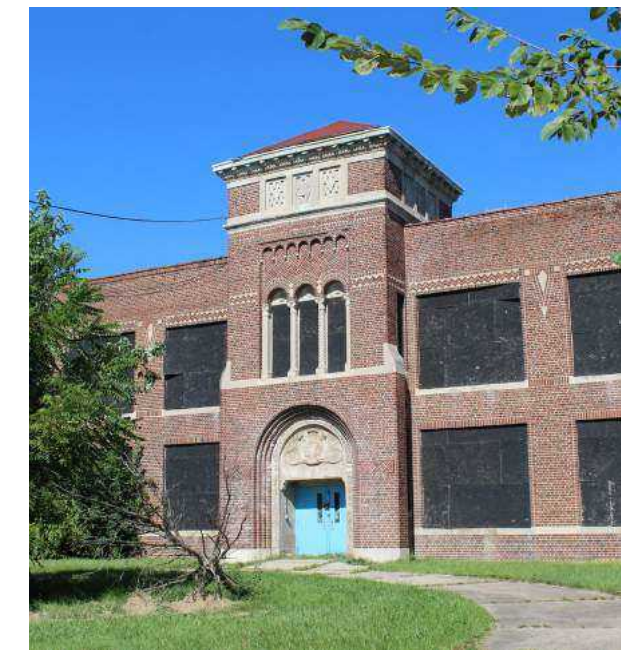


Figure 2.13. The McKerrow school, one of the larger civic buildings within Nardin Park.



Figure 2.14. Nardin Park Methodist Episcopal Church in 1928. Both communities were mainly composed of white Christian families, and the architectural heritage of churches reflects this.

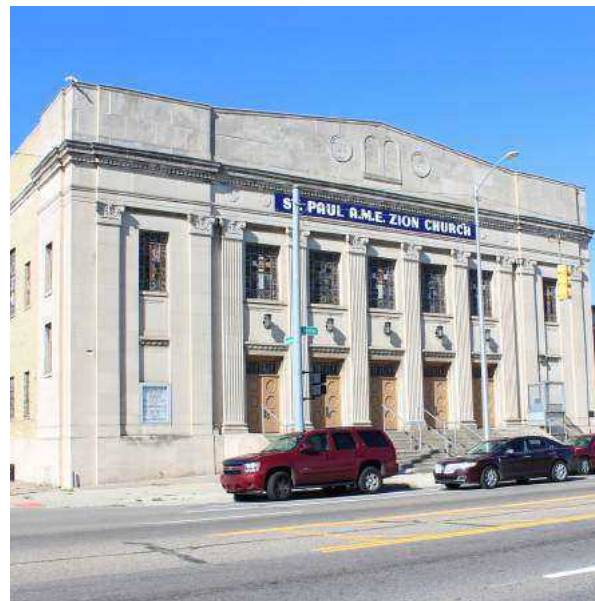
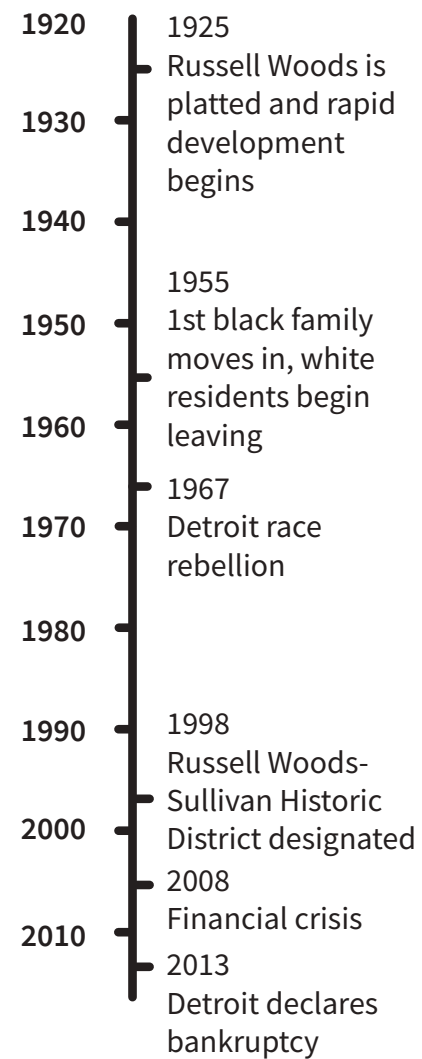
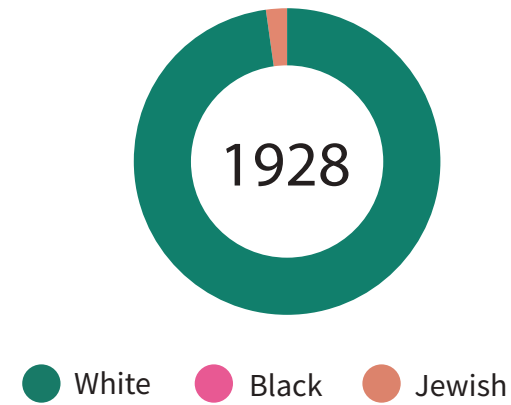


Figure 2.15. St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church, formerly the synagogue, B'Nai Moshe.

## RESEARCH



## SITE HISTORY

The area around the Nardin Park proper was named after James Nardin, who in 1879 bought the land from William and Ann Smith. He died and left the land to his wife, Catherine Nardin and his daughter, Mary C. Nardin. The Nardin Park Subdivision (the small subdivision immediately surrounding the park) was platted by Catherine Nardin and joint owners William S. and Stella A. Thomas in 1910. In 1922 the City of Detroit bought several lots for \$212,940 for a subdivision park named “Nardin Park,” measuring 5.179 acres (today it is officially Richard Allen Park).<sup>4</sup> The 1931 aerial view below of the Nardin Park community shows Livernois Avenue at the bottom horizontally and Grand River Avenue diagonally. By 1931 the southern community had clearly been almost completely built out with homes, churches, parks, and schools.

The pie chart at the top left explains the demographic composition of both communities in visual form. Around the 1920s and 30s, they were composed of approximately 98% Christian whites and 2% Jewish whites. Continuing with the narrative of the early platting of the communities, at right we see a 1915 Sanborn map showing early development in the Nardin Park area, along the main avenue of Grand River. We see the area ready for development with the subdivision of lots for rapid growth within the next decade.



Figure 2.16. 1915 Sanborn Map showing southern portion of Nardin Park, which was a scattered collection of wood-framed houses. We see Grand River and Livernois Avenues, which means Nardin Park is the area above.



Figure 2.17. The boundaries of Nardin Park are defined by wide, straight roads, as shown in this 1931 aerial image. From bottom center diagonally to the top right is Grand River Avenue, and parallel to the bottom of the page, a third of the way up is Livernois Avenue. Nardin Park is the area above these two avenues.

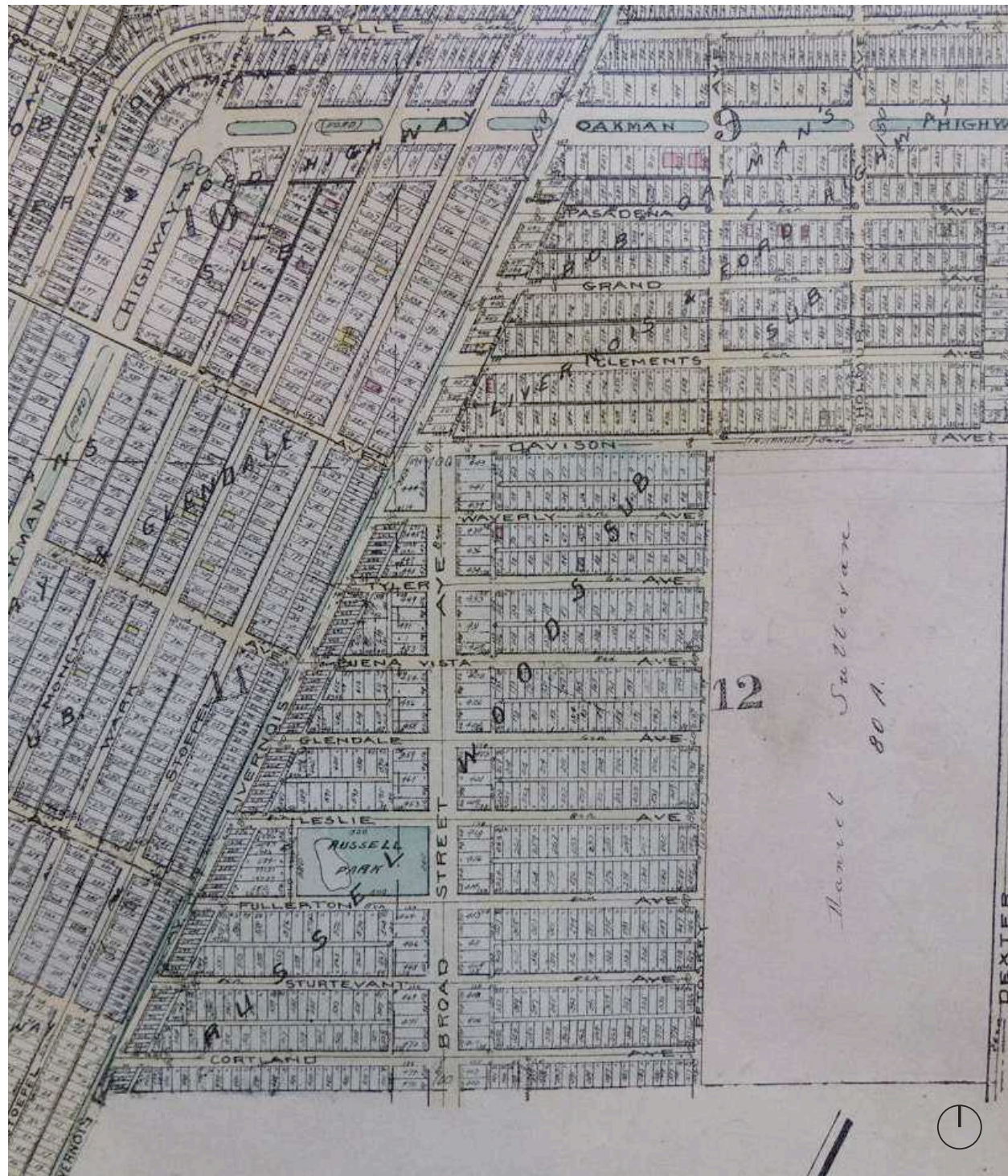


Figure 2.18. 1923 Baist's Real Estate Atlas showing Russell Woods subdivision and the Sullivan Area subdivision to its east. These were two large tracts of land owned and developed by one entity.

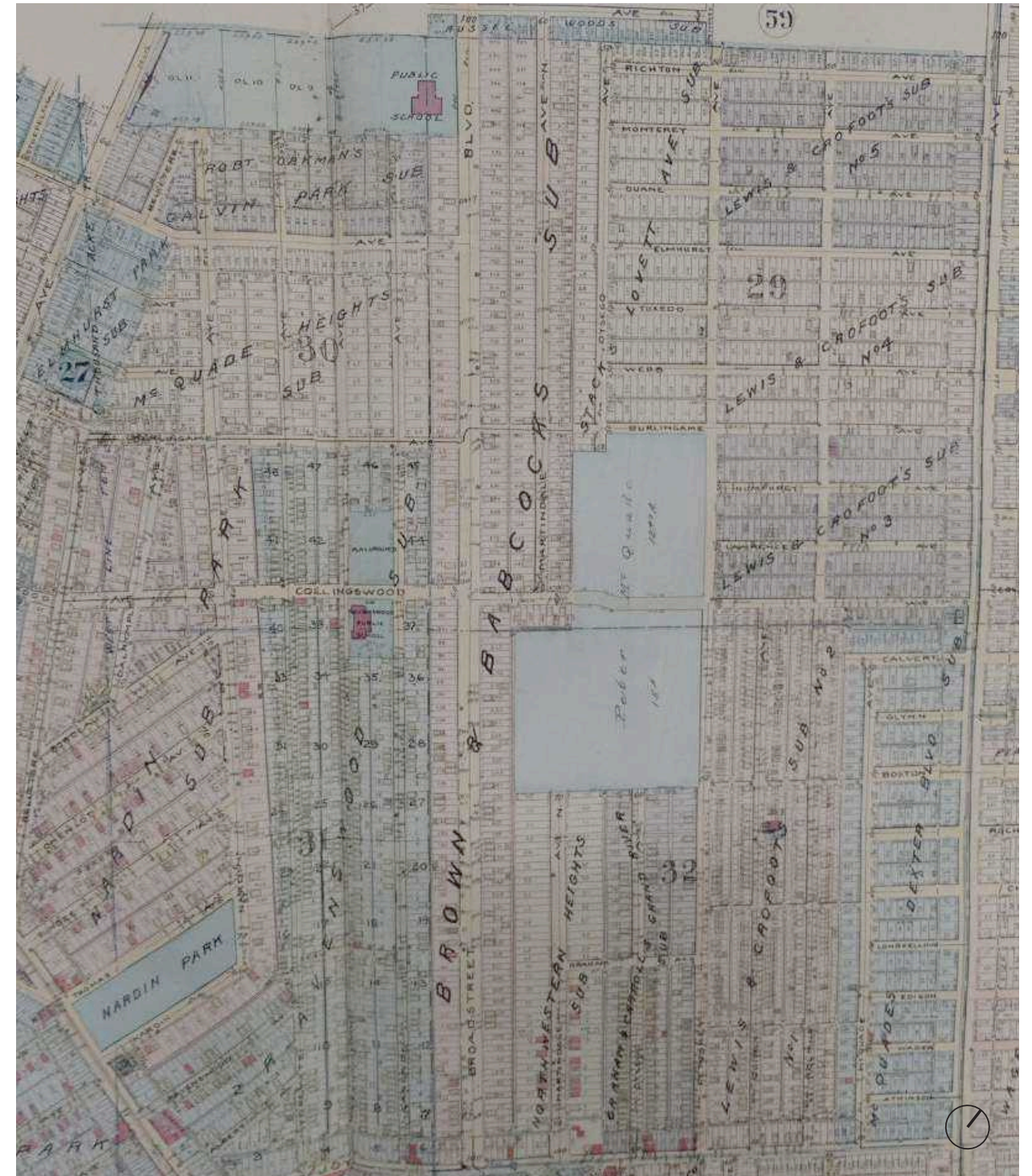


Figure 2.19. 1923 Baist's Real Estate Atlas showing the many small subdivisions below Russell Woods-Sullivan, in today's Nardin Park area. Many of these small subdivisions were owned by different real estate developers, which might account for the housing type and quality disparities, especially when compared to Russell Woods.

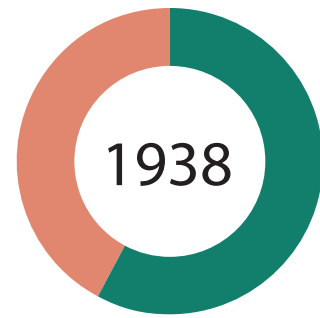
RESEARCH

The Sanborn Maps of Nardin Park and Russell Woods demonstrate how many separate subdivisions were created in the southern portion, whereas the northern side only had the two subdivisions of Russell Woods and Sullivan Area (Figures 2.18 and 2.19). Perhaps this helps to explain the lack of neighborhood identity for the area of 'Nardin Park.' On the right-hand side, we see two extracts from a 1950 Sanborn map of certain areas of Nardin Park, demonstrating that by then the area had been almost completely built up.

The pie chart at the top right demonstrates that by the end of the 1930s, the Jewish population had increased significantly, so that by 1938 the demographic composition was approximately 58% Christian whites and 42% Jewish whites. This demographic change would alter the building types, with several synagogues being constructed during and after this period.

One of these synagogues was B’Nai Moshe, shown in Figure 2.15. It was built in 1929 in the Neoclassical style and designed by the architectural firm of Hector Payne and Kohner, prominent Detroit architects. In 1951 with expanding demographics the congregation built a school on the site. However, the demographics changed so quickly so that by 1959 the entire congregation had moved out to the suburbs in Oak Park. This synagogue was sold in 1957 to a black Christian congregation and renamed the St. Paul AME Zion Church.<sup>5</sup>

These demographic shifts in the 1950s were very rapid. By the 1950s, the neighborhood was majority Jewish, with synagogues dotting the landscape, including B’nai Moshe. By 1955, Russell Woods and Nardin Park were 85% Jewish and 15% Christian white. One of the key causes of demographic change was the redlining of certain parts of most major American cities. Detroit’s 1939 redlining map indicates that the study area was not deemed the worst, or red category, but it was all categorized as “third grade,” which was also known as “declining,” a categorization that would influence the way that banks loaned mortgages, and which would affect the future racial composition of the communities.



● White ● Black ● Jewish

- 1920
- 1925 Russell Woods is platted and rapid development begins
- 1930
- 1940
- 1950 1955 1st black family moves in, white residents begin leaving
- 1960
- 1967 Detroit race rebellion
- 1970
- 1980
- 1990 1998 Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District
- 2000
- 2008
- 2010 2008 Financial crisis
- 2013 Detroit declares bankruptcy

SITE HISTORY

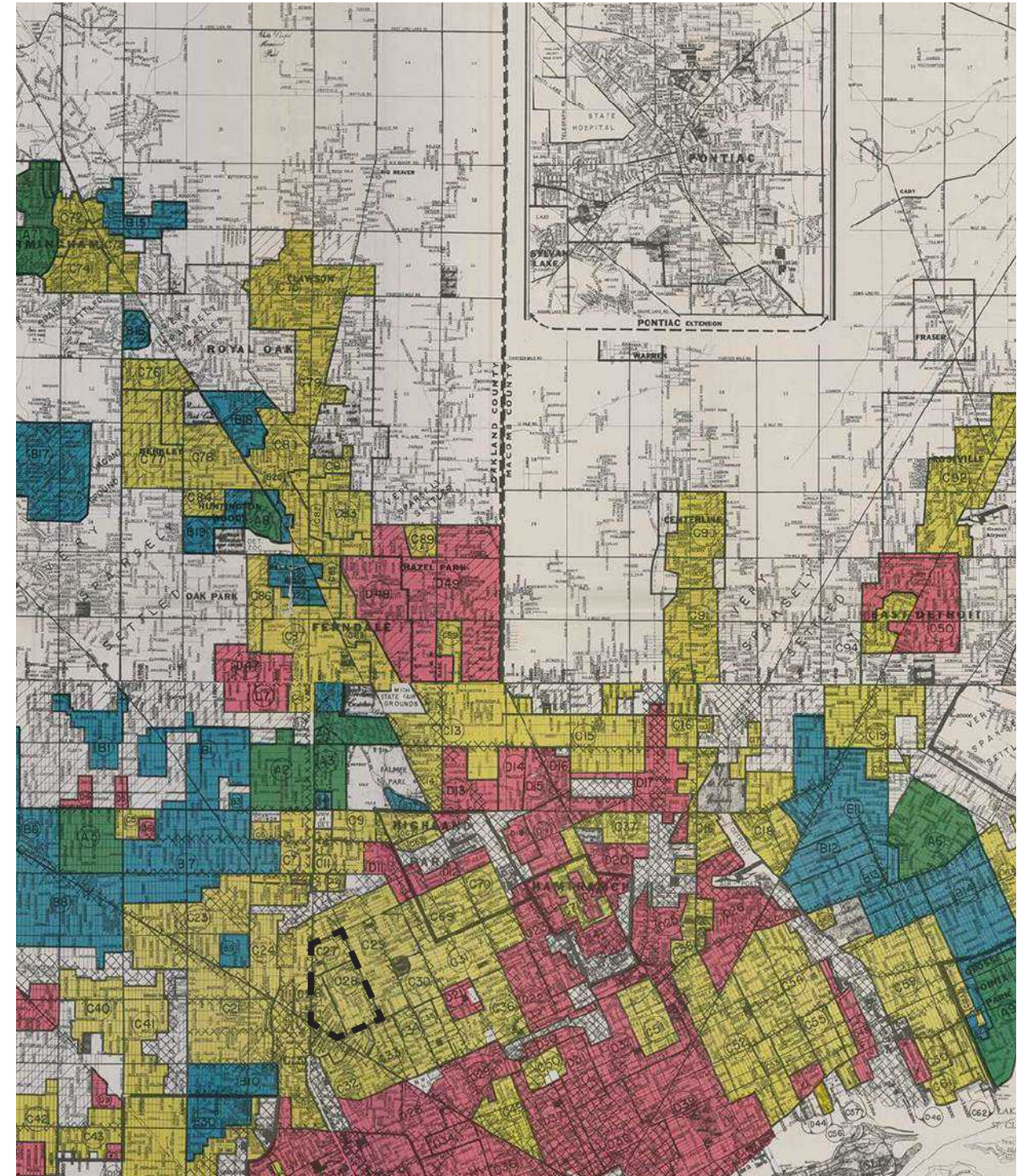


Figure 2.20. Redlining Map of Detroit, 1939. The entire area of Russell Woods and Nardin Park, as well as surrounding communities were designated as ‘declining’ by the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation.

RESEARCH

When discussing the demographic changes that occurred in Detroit after the 1950s, it's important to mention very significant urban renewal policies of the 1950s that displaced thousands of black people by destroying entire communities elsewhere in Detroit. This occurred under the Gratiot Redevelopment Project (begun in 1948), which demolished the vibrant black center of the Black Bottom neighborhood near downtown Detroit to create Lafayette Park under the name of aggressive "slum clearance" (especially federally funded by the 1949 Housing Act).<sup>6</sup>

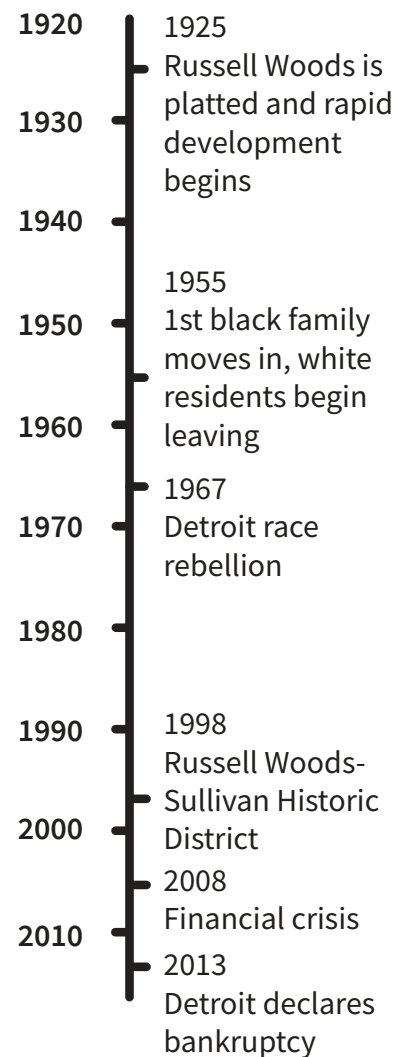
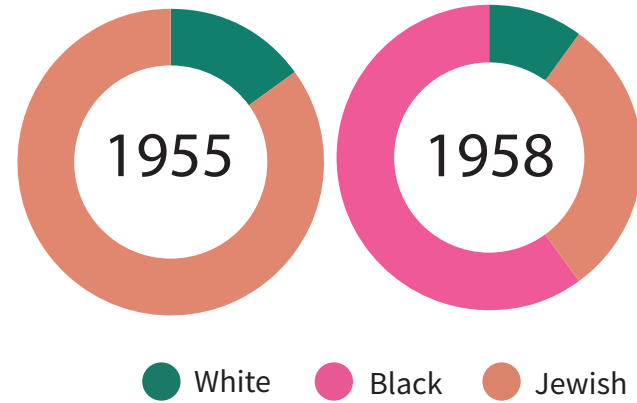
Indeed, by the end of the Gratiot Redevelopment Project, 78 acres had been cleared, resulting in the displacement of thousands of both working- and middle-class black families. Urban renewal and the I-375 Highway Project demolished most of East and North Detroit, where many Detroit African Americans lived.<sup>7</sup> Black families were forced to move to new areas of the city, including Russell Woods and Nardin Park.

Since Russell Woods was a more prominent neighborhood with a better housing stock, upper middle-class black families saw this as an opportunity to live in an area that reflected their status. However, the white population in several communities had pushed back on the movement of blacks to these neighborhoods through restrictive covenants and refusal to sell to black families.

Nevertheless, the first black family moved into Russell Woods in 1955. At the same time, white families began to move out to the growing suburbs and closed them off to blacks with more restrictive covenants and policies such as redlining. White congregations sold their churches to black congregations and followed their congregations to the suburbs, including B'Nai Moshe, who sold their synagogue to St. Paul AME Zion Church in 1957.

As early as 1952, white residents of Russell Woods knew that the arrival of black families was imminent, having seen the rapid racial change in the nearby Oakman Boulevard community, which was similar to Russell Woods. In 1955, an army officer wanted to quickly sell his house, and did so to a middle-class black family. The Civic Association bought back the house to try to stem the tide, but were only 'successful' for 2 weeks, until another black family bought another house in the neighborhood.

By 1956, most people would have defined the



SITE HISTORY



Figure 2.21. The Lafayette Redevelopment Project was one of several urban renewal plans in Detroit during the 1950s.



Figure 2.22. Nardin Park's smaller lot sizes and varied housing stock made it more economically accessible to displaced homeowners than Russell Woods.

community as "mixed," composed of approximately 80% Jewish families. The demographic change was very rapid however, and the Civic Association died out in 1957. By 1958, as the pie chart shows, the demographic composition was 60% black, 25% Jewish, and 15% Christian white. That same year, the significant black population founded the still-existing Russell Woods-Sullivan Area Association. Several residents were optimistic of the continuation of a racially-mixed, middle-class neighborhood during this period of rapid demographic change. Many of the middle-class whites were intellectuals and liberal business people, and among the Jewish community many were business owners as well.<sup>8</sup>

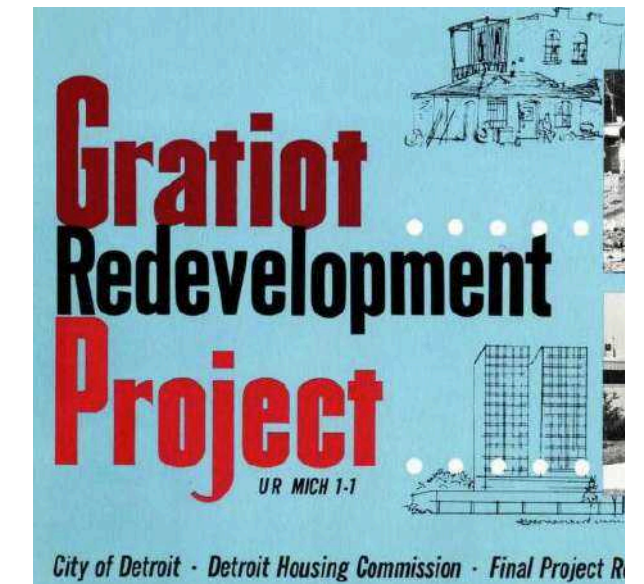


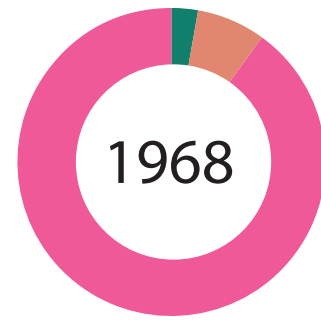
Figure 2.23. Poster for the Gratiot Redevelopment Project, circa 1951.

## RESEARCH

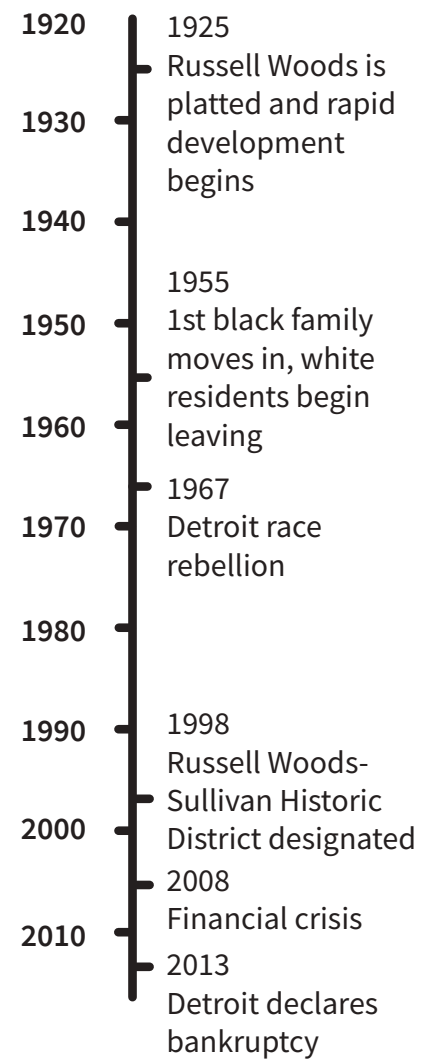
White flight continued, however, and scores of businesses left the area for the suburbs, following their clientele. One of the most significant impacts was caused by the 1967 Rebellion (commonly known as the 1967 Race Riots), which occurred all throughout the city of Detroit, in particular around centers of black population. Dexter Avenue, in our study area, was the scene of substantial destruction. After the rebellion, whites fled more rapidly, and these images show the loss of businesses through looting and arson that occurred during the riots.<sup>9</sup>

By 1968, our study area was 90% black, 8% Jewish white, and 2% Christian white. Black families also began leaving, so that there was a general population decline, which reflects the overall population decline of the entire city as well. In the present day, Russell Woods and Nardin Park are 96% black and 4% Christian white.

Since the 1950s, Russell Woods has been home to stable middle-class black families. Russell Woods in particular was home to prominent Black Detroiters, including Diana Ross and the Supremes (Florence Ballard and Mary Wilson), and Dudley Randall (poet laureate of Detroit). Nardin Park, with a poorer-quality housing stock, housed lower-class black families, and severe poverty created the conditions for neighborhood devastation in the form of vast housing and land vacancies, in addition to arson and severe scrapping.



● White ● Black ● Jewish



## SITE HISTORY



Figure 2.24. A 1967 image of the rebellion's effects on Dexter and Glendale.



Figure 2.25. A 1967 image of a destroyed storefront along Dexter Avenue after the rebellion.



Figure 2.26. A 1967 post rebellion photo of a Dexter Avenue storefront.



Figure 2.27. Another 1967 image of the Dexter and Glendale intersection.

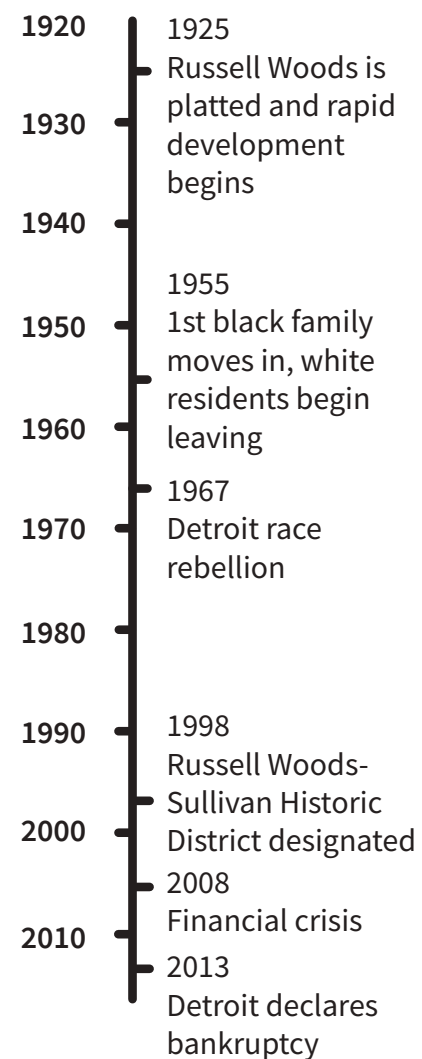
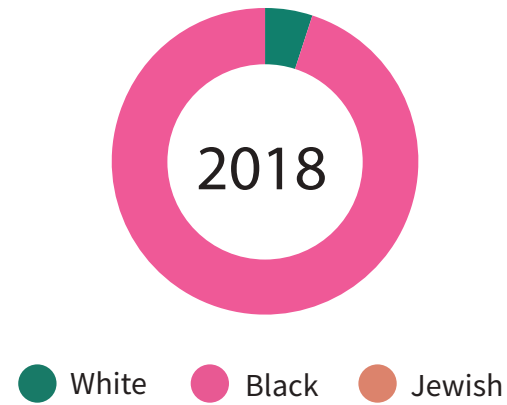
## RESEARCH

The combination of disinvestment and destruction ensured that hundreds of properties in Nardin Park were stripped of any potential value. Compounded by a severe population decline endemic to the entire city of Detroit, Nardin Park was particularly hard hit, as community institutions such as schools, businesses, and churches lost their purpose. Lack of proper loans, poor land contracts, and disinvestment from the city brought on the vacancy and abandonment seen today. With the housing crisis in 2008, more individuals lost their homes and the abandonment grew. In 2013, the city led a campaign to tear down vacant buildings that were a threat to safety, which continues today.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast to Nardin Park's precipitous downfall, Russell Woods has maintained a great deal of its higher-quality housing stock and middle-class black population, partly due to its being a historic district and partly due to their having a strong sense of community, aided by the existence of the Russell Woods Sullivan Area Association.<sup>12</sup> Nardin Park, on the other hand, appears not to have a strong sense of community; indeed, as previously mentioned, most people do not even call the area Nardin Park - instead, residents refer to where they live based on street names. The area is at times also known as Petosky-Otsego, or Winterhalter (because of a local school), demonstrating that there is disagreement over the sense of place in the area.

Both communities have many historic buildings. Russell Woods itself was designated a local historic district in 1998, and there are several National Register eligible properties in Nardin Park, most of them civic or religious buildings.

The listed and eligible buildings and districts in our study area include the Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District, several churches and civic buildings, and a few apartment buildings. All of Russell-Woods is listed on the local register, and we ask ourselves - does this explain disparity between neighborhoods? Does designation offer some protection or is it merely a reflection of existing community resources (e.g. tradition of ownership, family ties, wealth)? There are historic resources in Nardin Park, and the communities' histories and patterns of development are similar, so we argue these resources also have significance.



## SITE HISTORY

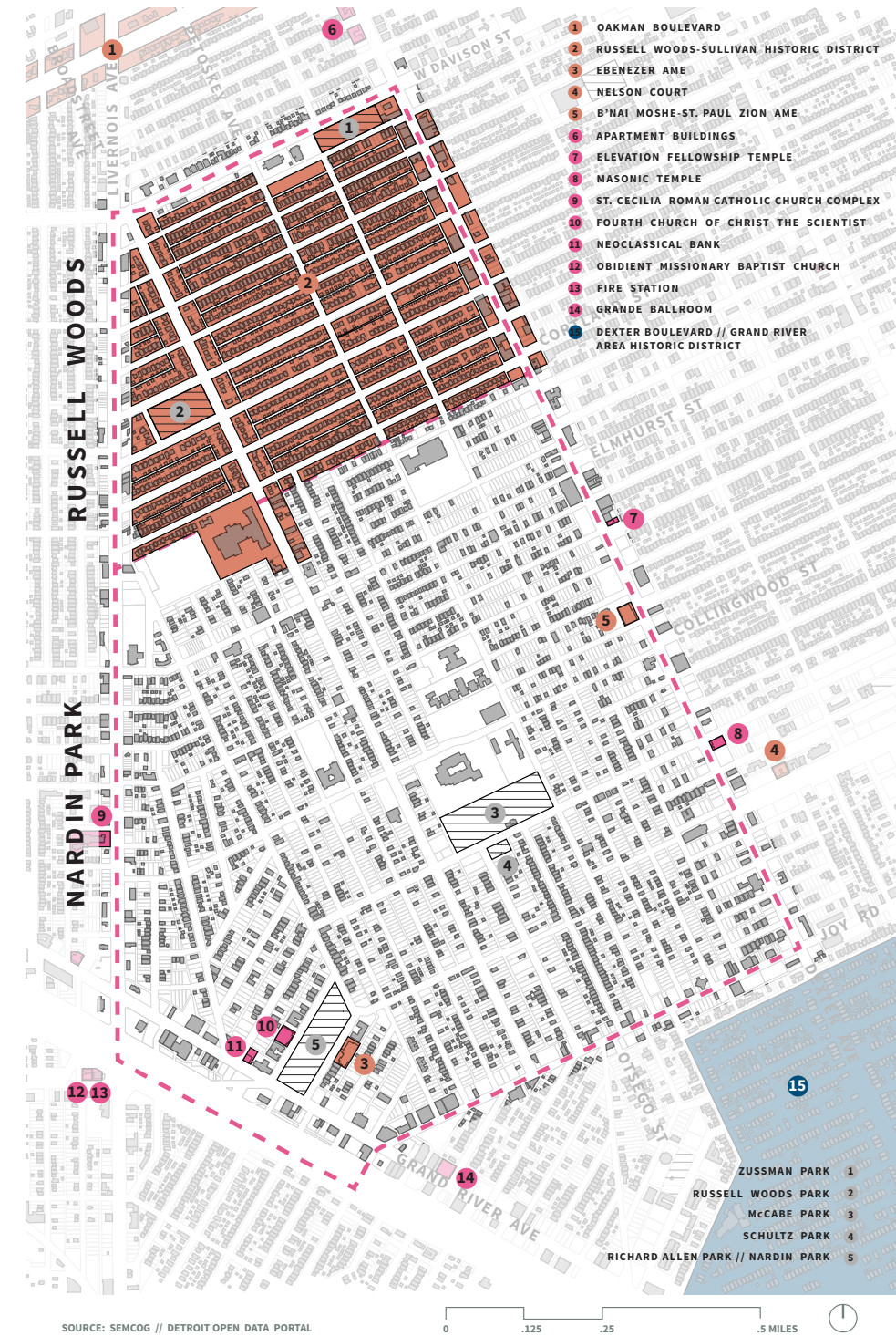


Figure 2.28. Map of listed and eligible buildings and districts in Russell Woods and Nardin Park.



Figure 2.29. A typical street in Russell Woods, showing large setbacks, well-manicured lawns, and well-preserved houses built mainly in the Tudor Revival style.



Figure 2.30. A typical street in Nardin Park, showing vacant land and buildings, more closely placed houses, several being multifamily, and significant overgrowth. Note the collapsed dormer and the surrounding empty lots, which are former house sites.

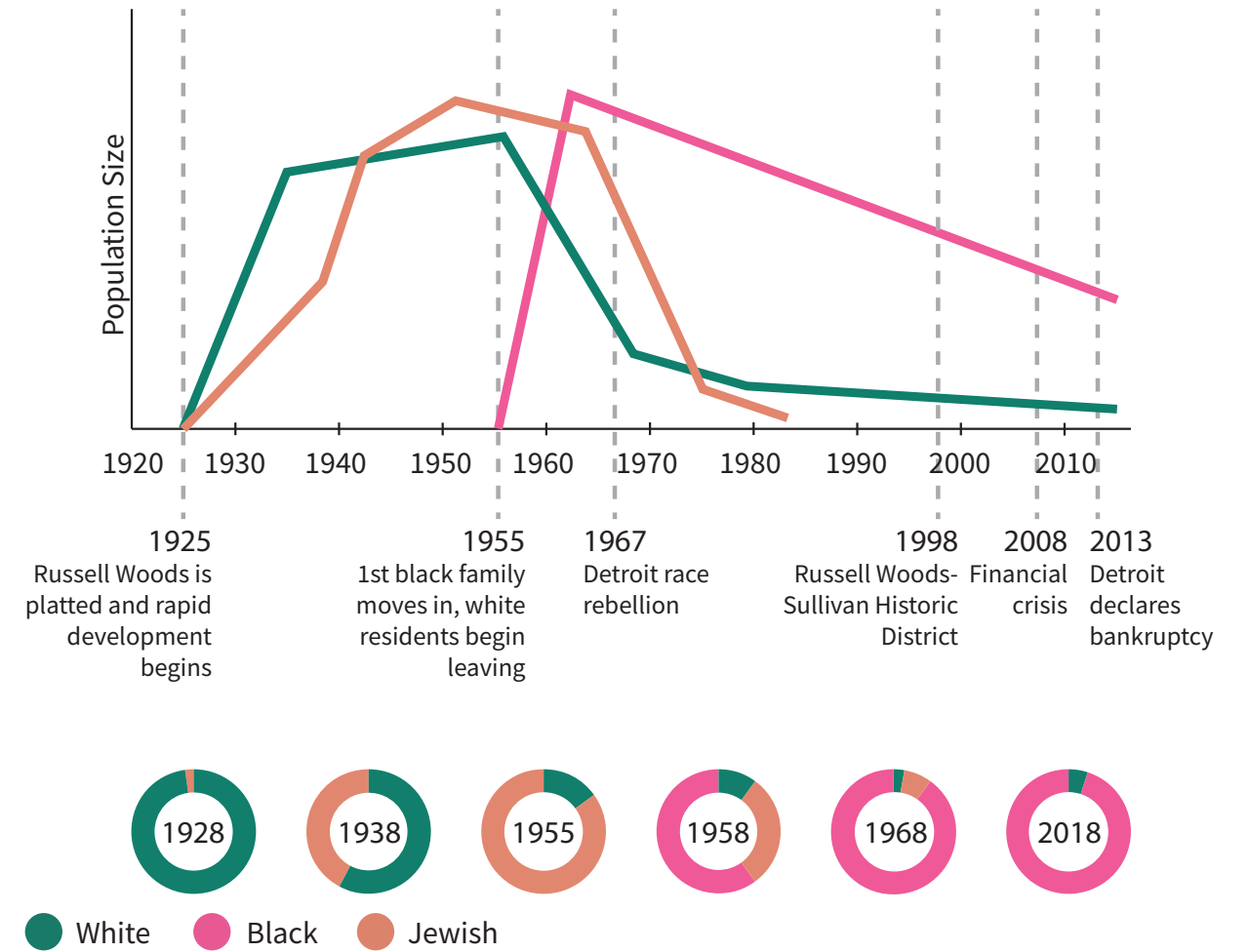


Figure 2.31. Demographic changes within Russell Woods-Nardin Park from 1920 to today.

This graphic summarizes the demographic shifts of the Russell Woods and Nardin Park communities, in particular the tremendous and very rapid changes that occurred from 1955 to 1958 and after the 1968 race rebellion. In the present day, the demographic composition of both communities is 96% black, and the overall population has declined a great deal since the rebellions, reflecting wider trends throughout Detroit.



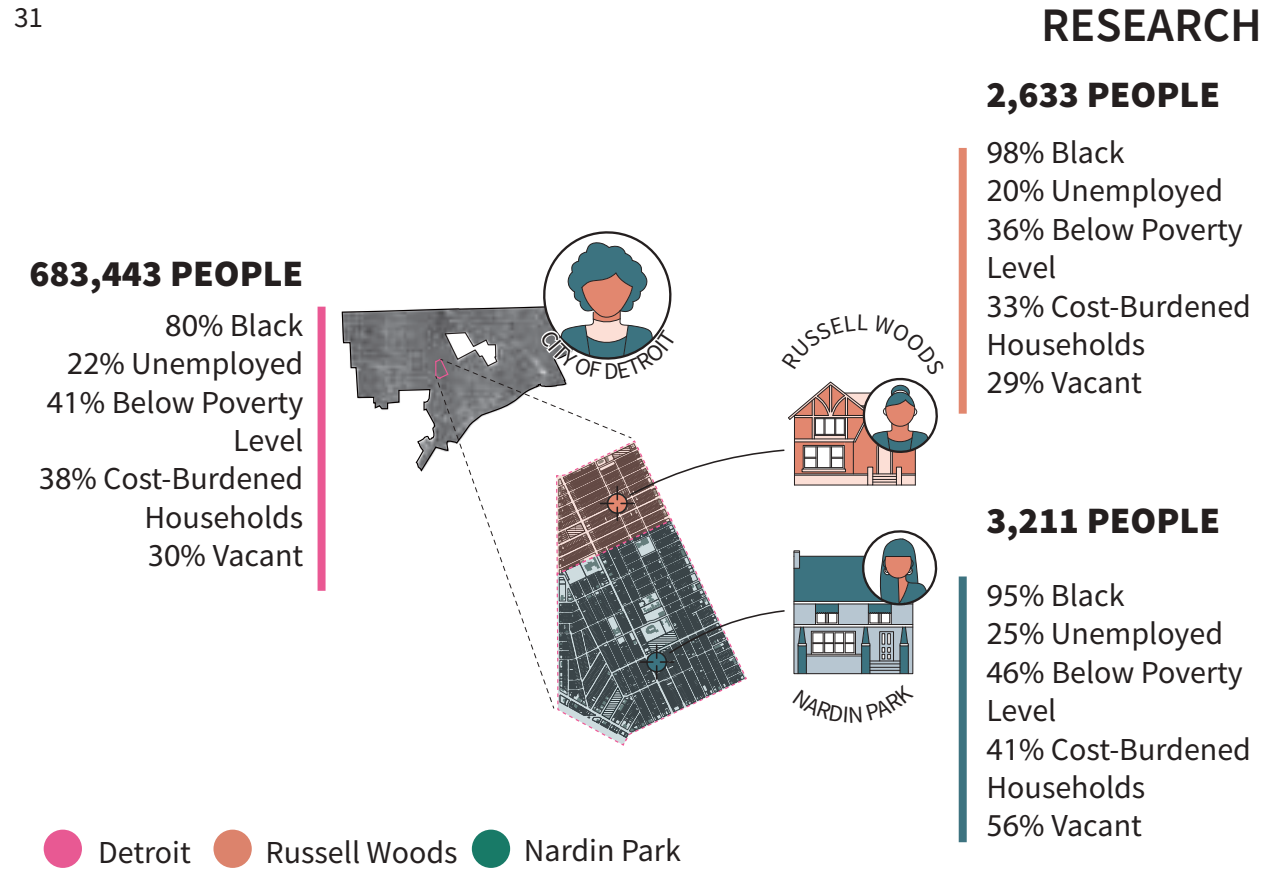


Figure 2.32. Although Russell Woods and Nardin Park are combined to form one study area, they are demographically distinct. Note the differences in poverty level and vacancy.

Detroit is a majority-black city whose history and legacy as a hub for black culture, community, and empowerment is reflected in the built environment. Unfortunately, other legacies are also visible, including systemic, institutionalized racism and targeted disinvestment. Today, Detroit residents experience high poverty and difficulty affording housing. The unemployment rate in the City of Detroit is 22%. In comparison, as of April 2018, the national unemployment rate was 3.9%. In addition, a lack of opportunity and the 2008 housing crisis have led to high rates of vacancy. These trends are reflected in the social and physical landscape of Russell Woods-Nardin Park, where residents experience elevated rates of unemployment, poverty, and housing cost burden. However, the area is more racially homogeneous than the city, with 96% of residents identifying as black, compared to 80% citywide.

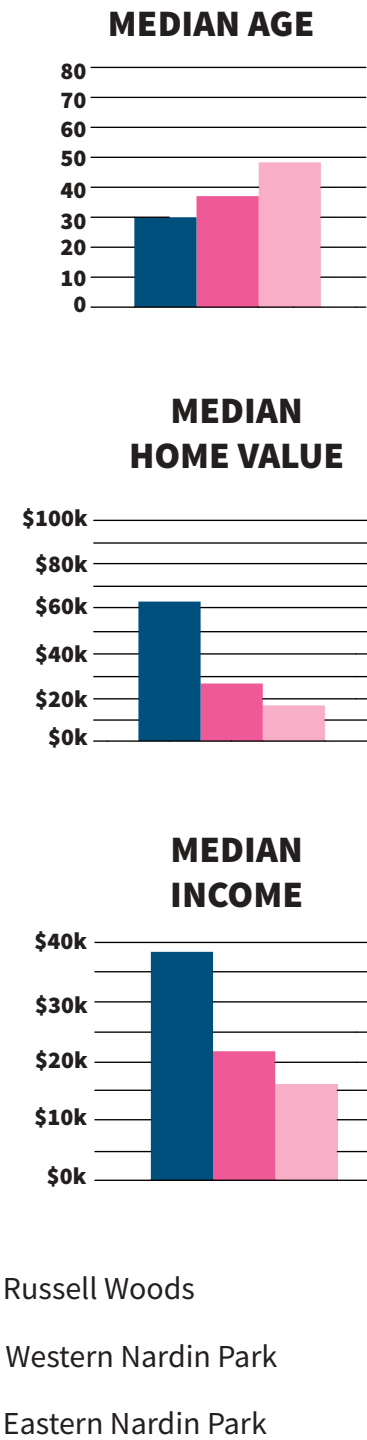
Although the City has combined these communities for its neighborhood planning project,

there are important differences within our study area. Notably, there are higher levels of unemployment, poverty, and cost-burdened households in Nardin Park than in Russell Woods. Even within Nardin Park, the demographics vary. The Census divides Nardin Park into two tracts – an eastern and a western section. Residents in the western half are worse-off based on metrics such as unemployment, poverty, and housing cost burden. Nearly half of all households in western Nardin Park spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Furthermore, residents in Russell Woods are slightly better-off than the city-wide average and tend to have more wealth. Median incomes for specific areas are as follows:

*Russell Woods: \$37,461*  
*West Nardin Park: \$21,161*  
*East Nardin Park: \$15,929*  
*City of Detroit: \$26,249*

## DEMOGRAPHICS



Of note, the median home value in Russell Woods is over \$20,000 more than the city-wide average and nearly two and a half times more than in eastern Nardin Park. Similar patterns are reflected in the home values:

*Russell Woods: \$62,900*  
*West Nardin Park: \$25,800*  
*East Nardin Park: \$16,400*  
*City of Detroit: \$41,000*

The higher home values in Russell Woods represent a strong culture of homeownership that has been maintained throughout the lifetime of the neighborhood. Another distinguishing factor between the different areas is age. The median age of residents in Russell Woods and western Nardin Park are slightly below the city median age; however, the median age in eastern Nardin Park is 15 years above the city median. This data suggests that eastern Nardin Park is a naturally occurring retirement community because it has an older population with a lower median income. Overall, these demographics demonstrate that when planning for these communities, it is important to consider that they have distinct needs stemming from different conditions.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 2.33. Further differences exist between the eastern and western halves of Nardin Park.

NEIGHBORHOOD GRIDS

Aerial photography and maps displaying spatial data further illustrate the conditions that exist within the boundary of our study area (see Figures 2.34 through 2.39 on the following pages). An aerial view of the study area reveals many similarities in the physical fabric of the two neighborhoods. Residential structures have similar lot sizes and setbacks throughout the study area. Likewise, both neighborhoods have streets of comparable widths and utilize alleys in a similar manner. However, like in the demographics, the state of the physical fabrics of the two neighborhoods have diverged over the years. For example, the early-20th century grid is more readable in Russell Woods than in Nardin Park, where many buildings have been demolished.

Overall, nearly a third of parcels in the study area have no buildings on them, which demonstrates the significant loss of fabric (the study was once built out almost entirely). Much of this loss is the result of targeted demolitions in Nardin Park due to building vacancy and condition, worsened by poverty, lack of community civic organizations, and the difficulty of keeping property ownership within families. In contrast, a legacy of wealth and a culture of homeownership in Russell Woods have enabled more residents to stay in their homes, which in turn has led to generally better preservation of historic fabric.

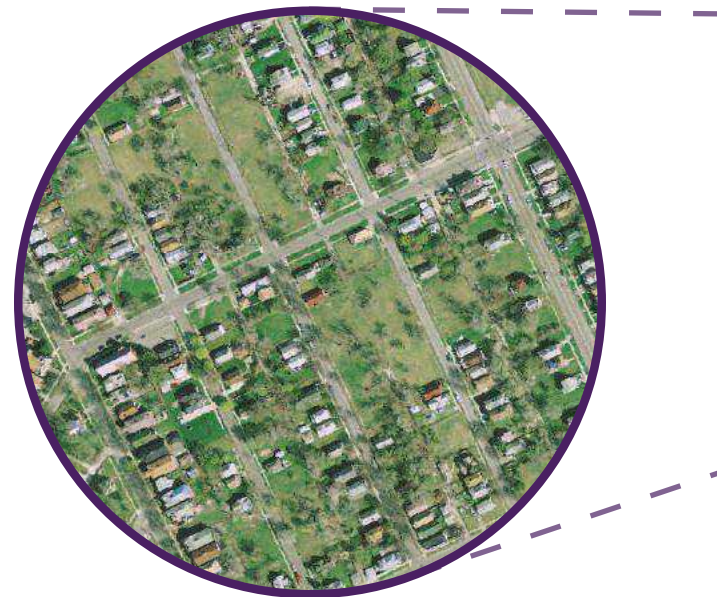


Figure 2.34. Aerial photography shows the patchwork voids in Nardin Park compared to the intact blocks of Russell Woods.

Figure 2.35. Many buildings in Nardin Park have been demolished, and today the neighborhood grid contains many parcels of vacant land.



SOURCE: SEMCOG // DETROIT OPEN DATA PORTAL



Figure 2.36. 2018 aerial view of Russell Woods and Nardin Park displays at a glance the current conditions and vacancies.

**DENSITY + VACANCY**

The demolition that has taken place in the study area is no more apparent than when viewing the map in figure-ground. It becomes clear just how much of the once dense urban grid now is vacant. Approximately 30% of land in the study area has no buildings. Much of this demolition has been concentrated in Nardin Park – especially in the eastern portion. The scale of demolition has left the urban grid nearly unreadable in parts. An unintentional result of the demolitions has been the creation of large portions of green space dispersed amongst the built environment. In tandem with the structures of Russell Woods and Nardin Park, vacant land can be incorporated into strategies for the neighborhoods. Vacant land can be used tactically to support the preservation and future development of blocks, though the scope of our project does not extend to residential blocks or open spaces.

The percent of land without buildings does not fully account for vacancy as it pertains to parcels that contain vacant structures. Taking into account lots with vacant housing- as well as vacant lots- the situation is still worse. City-wide there is an overall vacancy rate of 30%, while housing vacancy in Russell Woods-Nardin Park is closer to 50%. However, there are further differences between the two areas. At 56%, the vacancy in Nardin Park is nearly double that of Russell Woods at 29%. Meanwhile, residents in the eastern half of Nardin Park live amidst even higher rates of vacancy. The vacancy rate in the eastern part of Nardin Park is 60% - a rate 10% higher than its western counterpart.

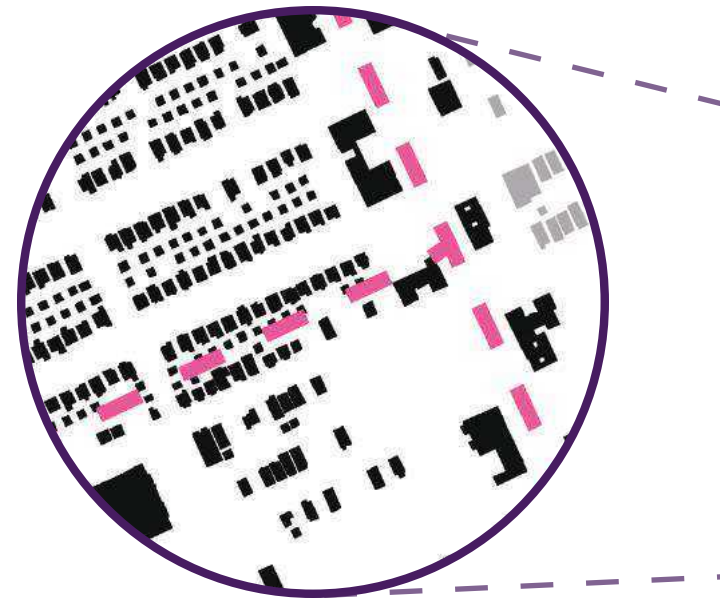


Figure 2.37. There have been significantly fewer demolitions in Russell Woods. Much of the fabric has remained intact.

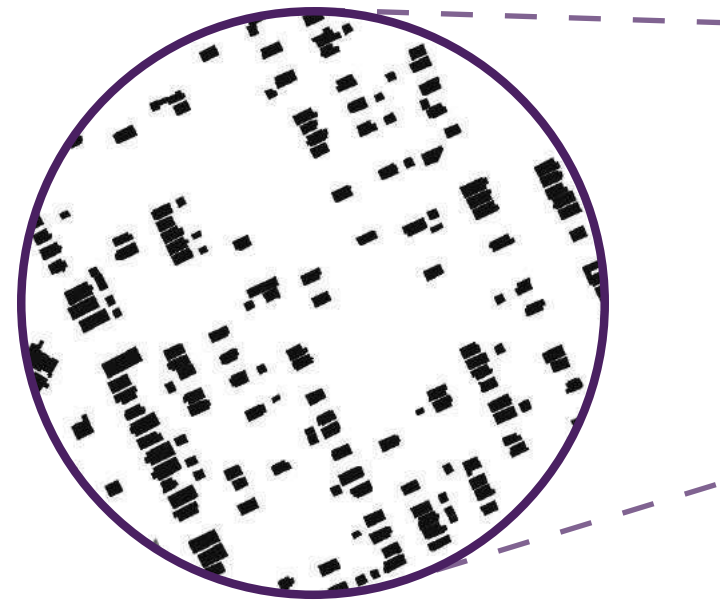


Figure 2.38. The figure-ground emphasizes the fragmented built environment in Nardin Park.

**RESEARCH**

**SPATIAL TRENDS**

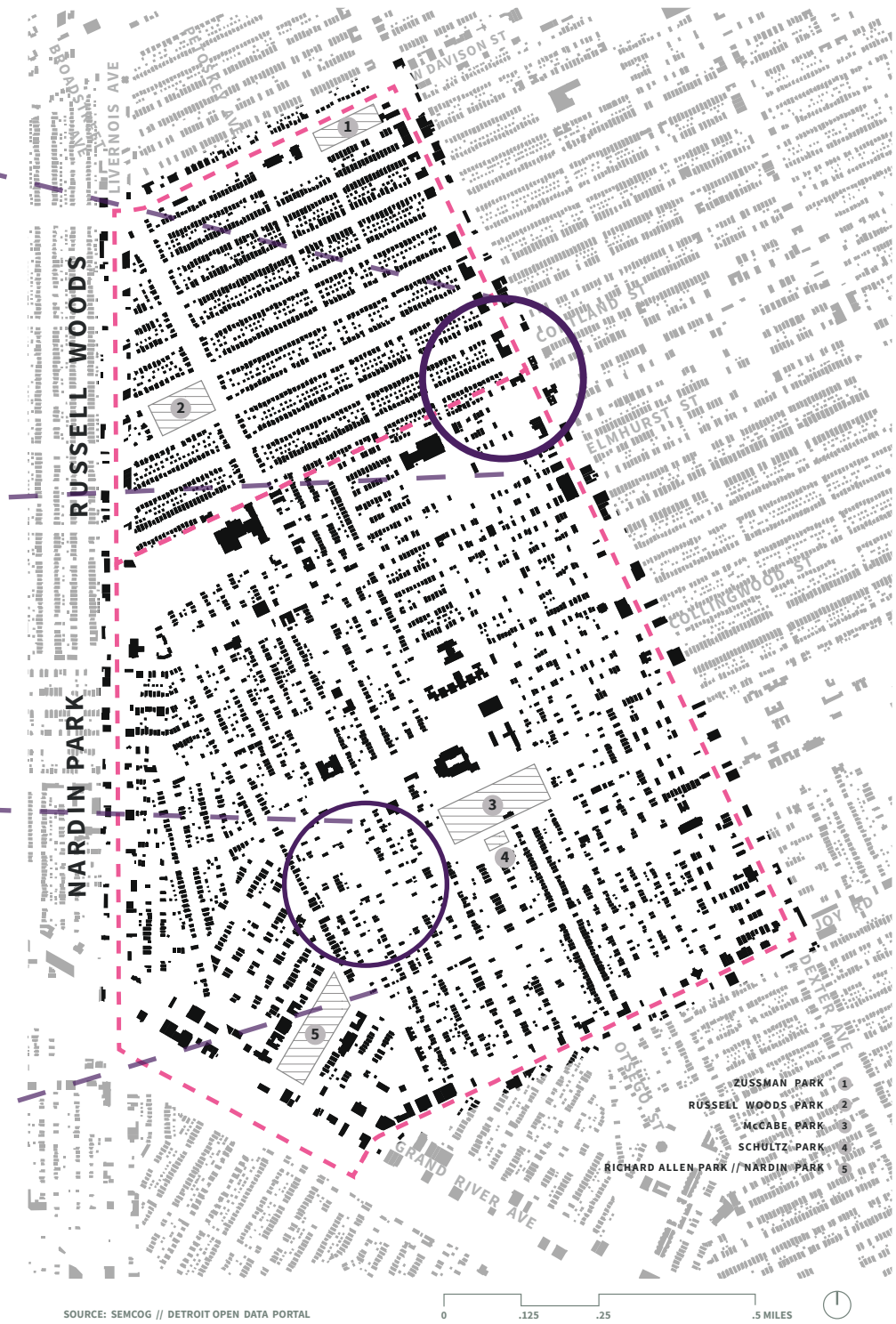


Figure 2.39. A look at the figure ground map of Russell Woods and Nardin Park highlights the differences in density.



Figure 2.40. The Dexter Hardware Store is one of the few active businesses along Dexter Avenue. The building has recently undergone repairs and maintenance.

**CONDITION**

The buildings that remain in Russell Woods and Nardin Park exist in a range of conditions from good to beyond repair. As the map in Figure 2.42 shows, the vast majority of buildings in Russell Woods are in good condition. Of the structures in Russell Woods, 92% are considered to be in good condition. Only two buildings within the neighborhood are currently recommended for demolition. Buildings in Nardin Park represent a greater variety of conditions. Unlike Russell Woods, only 48% of buildings in Nardin Park are in good condition. Of the remaining structures, approximately 100 buildings in Nardin Park are suggested for demolition.

This illustrates that Nardin Park has not only suffered from a substantial loss of its built fabric, but that what remains is at risk of also being lost if disinvestment continues. The designation of Russell Woods as a historic district and the strong presence of a neighborhood association have likely contributed to



Figure 2.41. After damage that occurred during the 1967 rebellion and subsequent years of vacancy, it is not uncommon to find commercial properties with deteriorating storefronts.

the higher percentage of buildings in good condition. While this is true for the residential structures, there is no discernible relationship between condition and neighborhood as it applies to the commercial perimeter of the study area – particularly along Dexter Avenue; however, it is important to note that condition alone does not reflect the use of buildings. Many structures in good and fair condition have sat vacant. As reflected throughout the study area, this represents both the potential for future businesses, institutions, community programs, and other uses and also the risk of continued deterioration as buildings remain vacant.

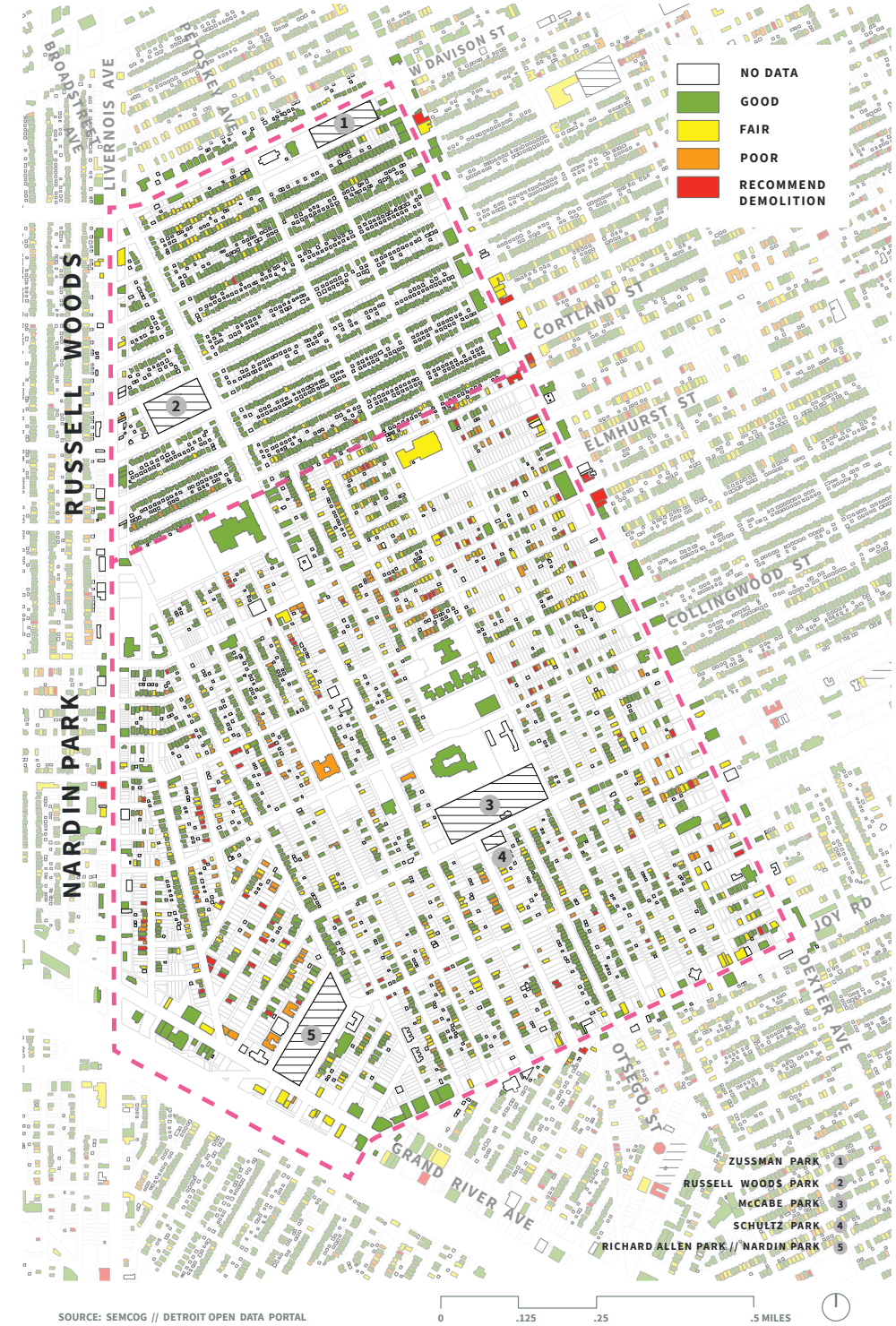


Figure 2.42. While most of the buildings in Russell Woods are in good condition, those in Nardin Park exist in a variety of conditions.



Figure 2.43. Amongst the government-owned properties in the study area are a collection of parcels held by Detroit Public Schools. These include former schools and fields.

**OWNERSHIP**

Another key difference between Russell Woods and Nardin Park is the type of property ownership. Only 55% of parcels in Russell Woods-Nardin Park are privately-owned as compared to 73% of properties city-wide. Most structures in Russell Woods are privately owned. Figure 2.45 illustrates the significant disparity in property ownership between the two neighborhoods, largely due to government ownership of vacant lots in Nardin Park.

The government agency with the largest share of land ownership in our study area is the Detroit Land Bank Authority, which owns over a third of all parcels. This demonstrates that the City has the wherewithal to transform the built environment by making thoughtful decisions about how to use the property that it owns. Much of the land in their ownership is comprised of vacant lots and buildings, making the government agencies – especially the Detroit Land Bank Authority – key in returning parcels to active uses that reflect the



Figure 2.44. Some of the vacant lots have been turned into community gardens by their owners. The garden pictured is owned by Broadstreet Presbyterian Church.

character, history, and people of the neighborhoods. Non-profit institutions are also important actors in the future of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. For example, many of churches in the study area have remained active over the years. Not only do they own the parcels on which their churches are built, but some also own surrounding parcels and have begun to implement community programs, such as gardens.

These actors in tandem with private owners are critical in considerations for tactical preservation efforts. Aside from willingness to invest, ownership is a determinant for other factors that affect the feasibility of projects, such as the availability and type of funding available. Nevertheless, private, government, and non-profit owners are all stakeholders in the future of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. Each has a potential role to play in the application of tactical preservation strategies within the study area.

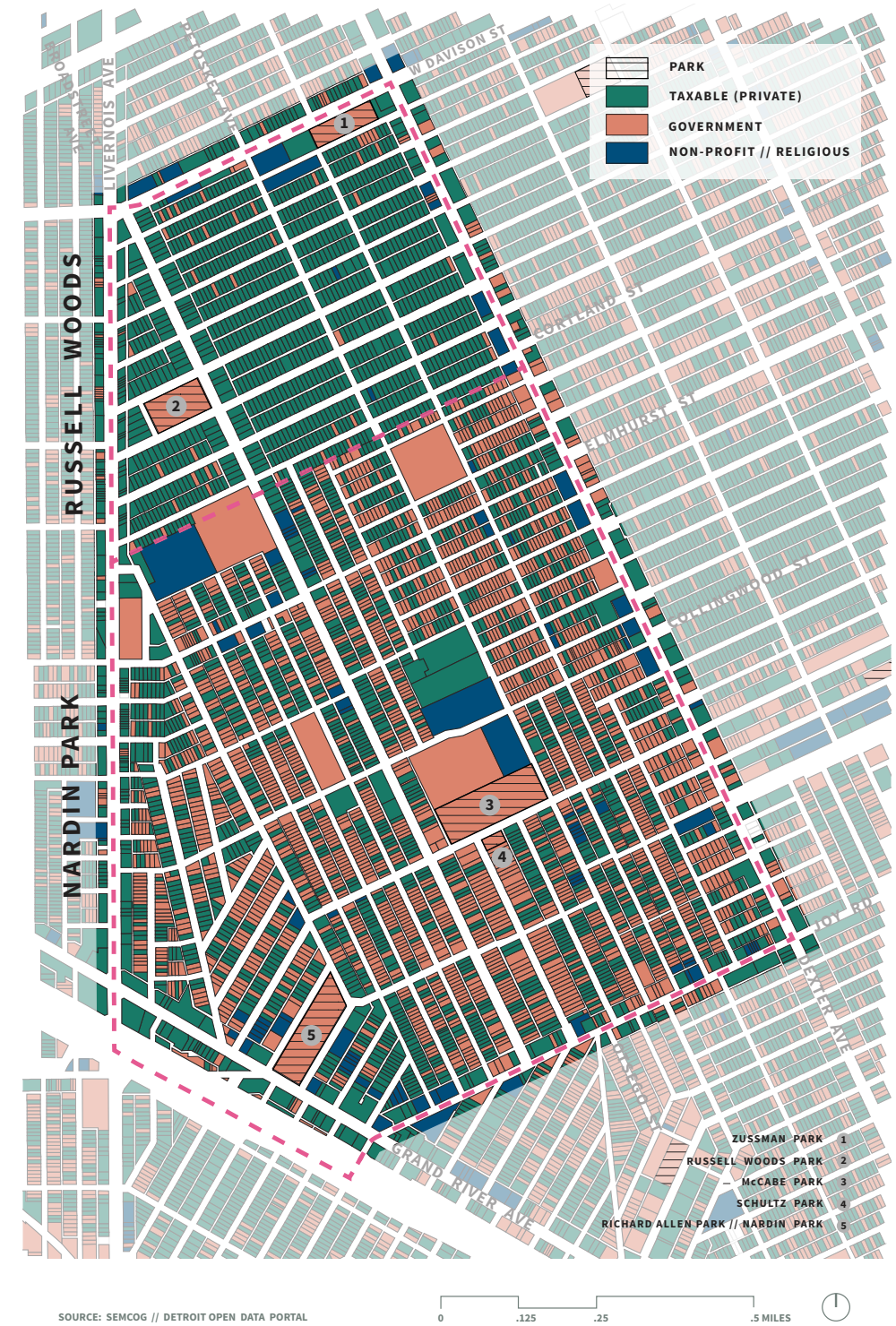


Figure 2.45. Government land ownership is more predominant in Nardin Park than it is in Russell Woods.

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13. U.S. Census Bureau. 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Prepared by Social Explorer. Accessed September 25, 2018.

## FIGURES

- Figure 2.0. Aerial photo of Detroit with the study area outlined.
- Figure 2.1. SEMCOG, Open Data Portal, 2010.
- Figure 2.2. Candela, Lillian. November 8, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 2.3. U.S. Census Bureau. 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Prepared by Social Explorer. Accessed September 25, 2018
- Figure 2.4. SEMCOG, 2010.
- Figure 2.5. Maloney, Mia. September 15, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 2.6. Ibid.
- Figure 2.7. Stevens, Amanda. September 15, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 2.8. Pae, Evelyn. September 15, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 2.9. Ibid.
- Figure 2.10. Stevens, September 15, 2018.
- Figure 2.11. Digital Collection Wayne State University Libraries, Accessed 2018.
- Figure 2.12. Pae, September 15, 2018.
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- Figure 2.14. Digital Collection Wayne State University Libraries.
- Figure 2.15. Stevens, September 15, 2018.
- Figure 2.16. 1915 Sanborn Map, Vol. 10, Page 92, Library of Congress Digital Collections.
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- Figure 2.18. Baist's Real Estate Atlas, 1923, Detroit Historical Society.
- Figure 2.19. Ibid.
- Figure 2.20. "Detroit Redlining Map 1939," from DETROITography, <https://detroitography.com/2014/12/10/detroit-redlining-map-1939/>.
- Figure 2.21. *Urban Renewal*. <http://www.detroits-great-rebellion.com/Urban-Renewal.html>. Accessed 9/19/18.
- Figure 2.22. 1950 Sanborn Map, ProQuest Digital Collections.
- Figure 2.23. "The Effects of Urban Renewal," The Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University, <http://projects.lib.wayne.edu/12thstreetdetroit/exhibits/show/beforeunrest/panel5>.
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- Figure 2.30. Ibid.
- Figure 2.31. Mayer, "Russel Woods: Change Without Conflict: A Case Study of Neighborhood Racial Transition in Detroit."
- Figure 2.32. U.S. Census Bureau. 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- Figure 2.33. Ibid.
- Figure 2.34. SEMCOG, 2010.
- Figure 2.35. Ibid.
- Figure 2.36. Ibid.
- Figure 2.37. Ibid.
- Figure 2.38. Ibid.
- Figure 2.39. Ibid.
- Figure 2.40. Stevens, Amanda. October 5, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 2.41. Ibid.
- Figure 2.42. SEMCOG, 2010.
- Figure 2.43. Stevens, September 15, 2018.
- Figure 2.44. Pae, September 15, 2018.
- Figure 2.45. SEMCOG, 2010.

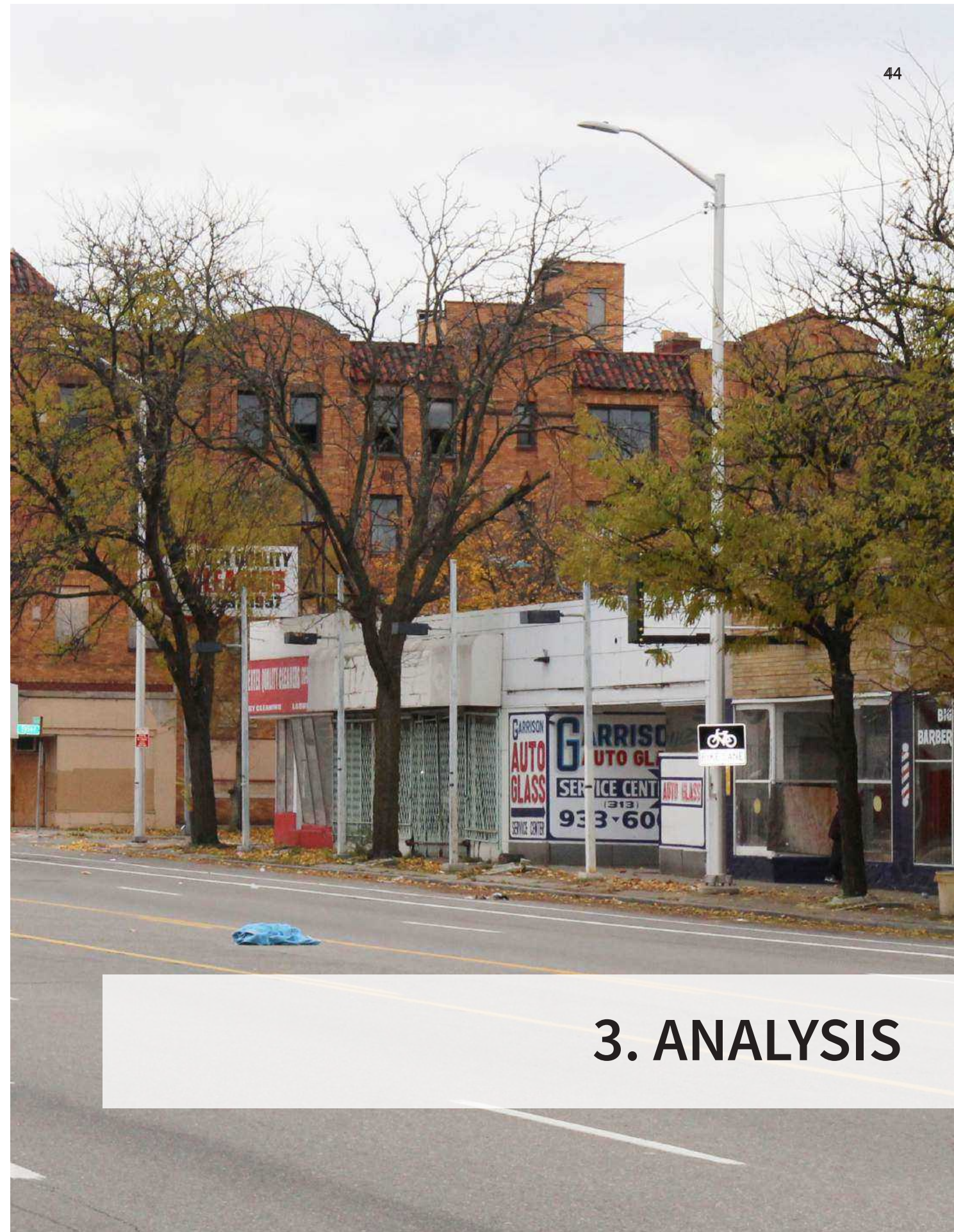


Figure 3.1. The Tyler Apartments and the commercial strip on Dexter Avenue.

### 3. ANALYSIS

### VALUES

Based on our initial research and conversations with community members, we identified five key values Russell Woods and Nardin Park each possess: historical, community, architectural, economic, and environmental. Each neighborhood possesses these five values, listed in roughly priority order, but expresses them differently due to their differences in size, density, and presence of resources. Each value is relevant in the context of the city as a whole. Understanding community values and what is important to the communities helps guide further interactions with community members. Neighborhood values also guide our site selection logic for selecting sites for equitable revitalization within Russell Woods and Nardin Park, along with the types of interventions within those sites.

### HISTORICAL

As stated before, Russell Woods and Nardin Park embody historical values as the first suburbs of Detroit. They reflect the era of growth and development of the city of Detroit and the need for more housing. The large, two-story revival style houses of Russell Woods and Sullivan were built for the upper middle class with access to jobs elsewhere in the city and the large commercial corridors. On the other hand, the small wood frame houses of Nardin Park were built for the working class who were now closer to Detroit factories. The two neighborhoods were home, first, to a strong Jewish community from the 1920s to the 1950s.



Figure 3.2. "1950s Congregation B'Nai Moshe"



Figure 3.3. Nardin Park Methodist Episcopal Church, now Ebenezer AME Church), in November of 1928.

Russell Woods and Nardin Park grew around this community with new synagogues, schools, and new developments with Jewish names. Then starting in the 1950s to today, the two neighborhoods transitioned to a strong black community. Russell Woods was also home to several prominent black Detroit residents, such as all three Supremes and poet laureate Dudley Randall. The 1967 Detroit Race Rebellion also occurred on Dexter Avenue, and the area still bears the marks of the violence. The study area also has historical value due to the several locally designated buildings in the area. The designated buildings include B'Nai Moshe-St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church. First built as a synagogue in 1927 for the Jewish community, B'Nai Moshe was converted to the St. Paul A.M.E. Zion Church when the Jews moved out of Russell Woods and Nardin Park and black families moved in. Ebenezer African Methodist Church is another designated building in Nardin Park. It was built in 1923 by a prominent Detroit architectural firm for a white Methodist congregation. However, with white flight in the 1950s and 1960s, the church was sold to the Ebenezer African Methodist Church in 1964, which was the first church, at its original location, for black residents in Detroit. Lastly, the Russell Woods Sullivan Historic District was established in 1998 to protect its historic fabric. Community members are proud of their rich history and the individuals who have lived there. History remains an important part of their identity.



Figure 3.4. Community gathering for Jazz in the Park located in Russell Woods Park. Jazz in The Park is the largest event in Russell Woods each year. Residents love the event and are proud of their park.

### COMMUNITY

The second most important value within the study area is community value. Each neighborhood has its own sense of community, which they convey in different ways. Community value in Russell Woods is shown through the strong community organizations, such as the Russell Woods Sullivan Area Association which advocates for the community against foreclosures and high mortgage rates. Russell Woods also holds large community-wide events that brings neighbors together, such as Jazz in the Park in Russell Woods Park. Jazz in the Park is a vital part of the Russell Woods community. It was mentioned in every interaction with community members and is part of the city's neighborhood plan. Zussman Playground on Davidson Avenue is also seen as a place for community gatherings. However, current gang activity in the area limits its usage. For Nardin Park, neighbors identify their community by the street they live on, rather than a larger neighborhood identity like Russell Woods. Nardin Park is a new neighborhood name that the residents do not identify with. The area was developed in the 1920s as small developments based around a single road, which is why they identify by their road. The high vacancy and loss of fabric that connects the small subdivisions within Nardin Park also contributes to their community identities. Even though they have several small communities based around individual roads, Nardin Park residents come together in Richard

Allen Park, where there is a playground, horseshoe, and several benches and chairs. While visiting the park, groups were always gathered together talking or playing games. We also saw a large group of small children using the park on one visit. Within the larger study area, there is also a small subset community of churches. The congregations of the churches do not live in the two neighborhoods, so the over 15 churches within the two neighborhoods each have their own communities. Some churches are fenced in and disconnected from Russell Woods and Nardin Park. Other churches have community gardens, schools, or other auxiliary buildings to create their own community.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

Throughout Russell Woods and Nardin Park there are several overgrown vacant lots where houses and other structures use to stand. Rather than looking like a dense suburban development, Nardin Park looks more rural with its large open spaces. Most of the vacant lots are publicly owned while a handful are privately owned. Neighbors and churches have occupied the vacant lots next to their lots for drive ways, larger yards, gardens, or parking lots. Following the neighbors' steps, the vacant lots and open spaces can be used in our site interventions and have potential for equitable revitalization through for new gardens, parks, and art installations. These lots and spaces can create gathering spaces while increasing the quality of the neighborhoods.



Figure 3.5. The Nardin Park residence seen here has been abandoned, but the vacant lot to its right has been repurposed as a garden.



## ECONOMIC

The large commercial corridors of Dexter and Livernois Avenue and the smaller commercial structures interior to the neighborhood represent economic values for Russell Woods and Nardin Park. Within the two neighborhoods, there is a heritage of commerce that used to be a vibrant part every day life. Dexter Avenue in particular was well-known as being a major commercial corridor for the entire city of Detroit. This is expressed through the remaining fabric of once-ubiquitous strips of commercial buildings as well as by the types of land uses still present on Dexter Avenue. Part of the significance of this heritage is that it represents how Russell Woods and Nardin Park used to be more complete neighborhoods where residents could live, work, shop, and worship within their community. Today, many residents are required to go outside of their community to carry out these activities, but there is potential to bring back commercial activity that supports these needs. Each neighborhood has significant potential for future economic development and growth. This growth would occur mostly on the main commercial corridors where there several vacant buildings and lots for new businesses. These commercial corridors also receive heavy traffic throughout the day, which can be utilized for investment. There are also small commercial strips within the residential core of the neighborhood which can contribute to economic and community development. These businesses can meet community needs while bringing revenue and investment back into the area. A strong tradition of homeownership within Russell Woods has also kept economic value in Russell Woods. Long term homeownership prevents economic loss through vacancy and homeowner turn-over. Residents encourage rehabilitation of their homes and vacant homes so they can be owned and lived in.

## ARCHITECTURAL

The current building fabric in Russell Woods and Nardin Park give these two communities architectural value. Even though residential buildings were not the focus of the project, Russell Woods' residential houses show the architectural value within the neighborhood. The houses were built in the 1910s and 1920s in the Tudor and Georgian Revival Styles. They are made of distinguished materials, which is why



Figure 3.6. "Art Moderne Commercial Strip". Example of the commercial buildings located on the main commercial corridors.



Figure 3.7. "Tudor Revival, Russell Woods". Example of the Tudor Revival Style in Russell Woods.



Figure 3.8. "Nathan Johnson House". Located next to Russell Woods park in the heart of the neighborhood. Built by the prominent black architect, Nathan Johnson.

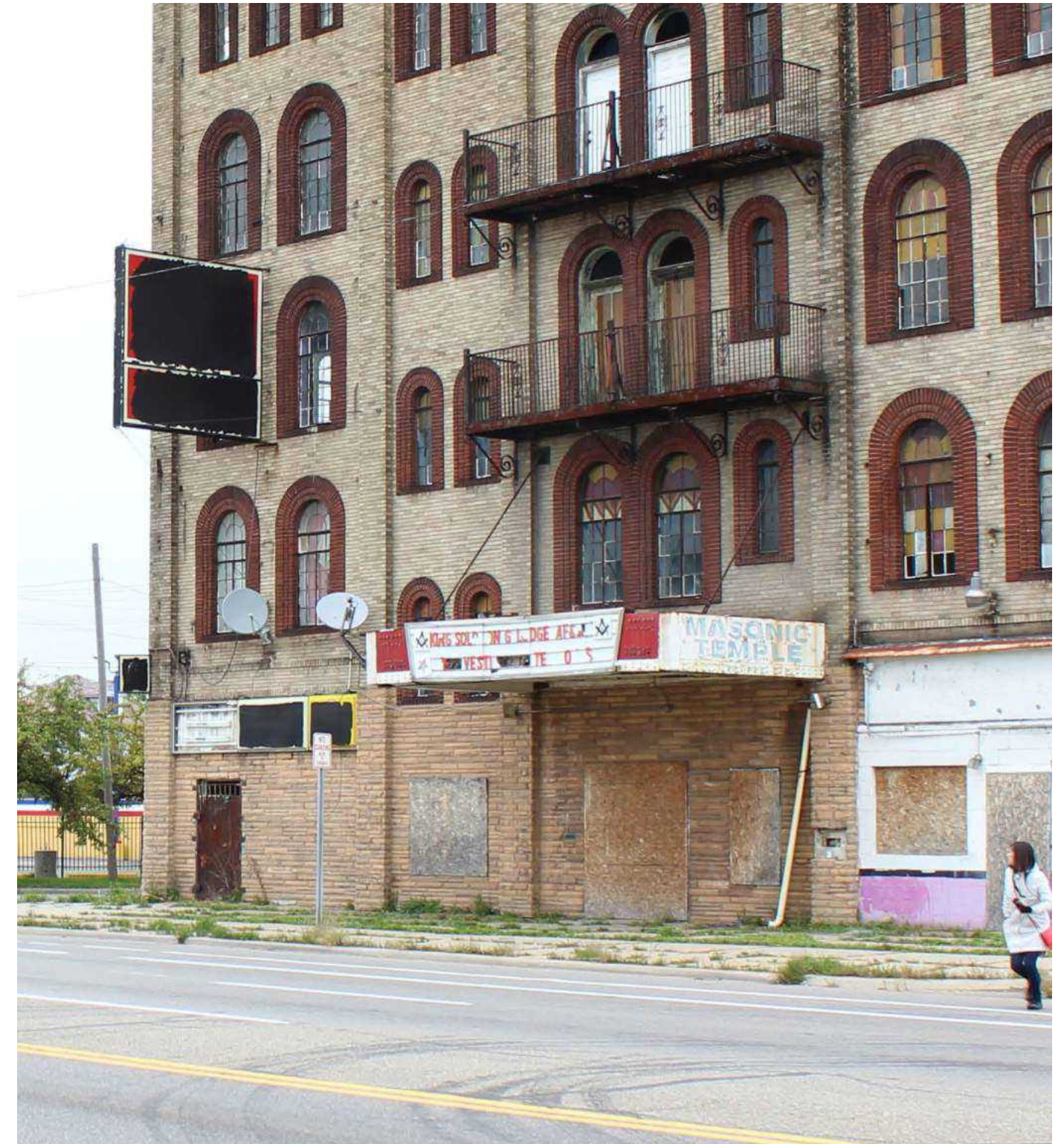
Russell Woods is more densely populated than the extremely vacant Nardin Park. Russell Woods also has a house designed by Nathan Johnson, a prominent black architect from Detroit, located on Russell Woods Park. The house was built in the 1950s in the Moderne and Bauhaus inspired styles. Johnson also designed the addition to the Second Baptist Church and several of the People Mover stations in the 1980s. Along with the residential structures, the institutional, commercial, and spiritual buildings also contribute to the architectural value. Most of these buildings were built in the 1920s in Revival styles. The institutional buildings, such as the McKerrow School, were built in the Romanesque style and stand in good condition due to their quality materials and construction alongside the houses in Russell Woods. The commercial and spiritual buildings range from Greek, Colonial, to Romanesque, Tudor, and Georgian. Greek styling is seen in the New Light Baptist Church on Richard Allen Park, while Tudor designs are seen across the street at the Ebenezer AME Church. Several different styles and typologies exist cohesively in both neighborhoods.

The values we identified within the study area shaped and created a statement of significance that defines the overall meaning and importance of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. The statement embodies each of the values and sums up in few words what we find valuable about the neighborhoods. Creating a statement of significance helps guide our research, interactions with neighbors, and purposed interventions at our sites. Our interventions can build on the values within the communities while being guided by the statement of significance. Our project focuses on 'equitable revitalization' rather than 'redevelopment' because of the negative connotations the term 'redevelopment' has for community members. Redevelopment means bringing in new uses that won't meet community needs and leads to eventual displacement; while, revitalization focuses on creating interventions for the neighborhoods and their community members while meeting their needs without displacement.

Russell Woods and Nardin Park embody the **development and decline** of Detroit, including the ascent of a stable black middle-class in the 1950s followed by an **impoverishment** of residents through redlining and disinvestment. These communities possess great potential for **equitable revitalization** through reuse of existing fabric, vacant land, and community enthusiasm for local history.



Figure 3.9. Dexter Avenue.



### CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

Though platted during the same period and surround by the same commercial corridors, Russell Woods and Nardin Park embody distinct and defined features. Developed as an upper middle-class suburb, most of the properties in Russell Woods are single family, two story homes. Many feature revival styles with half-timbering and masonry details around doors and windows. Properties are overall well maintained, and the original grain is still largely intact with few vacant lots. This is likely a result of its recognized architectural value of Russell Woods and its subsequent historic district designation and community organizing.

The housing in Nardin Park is typically smaller than those in Russell Woods, reflective of its development as a working-class community. Both single- and multi-family homes can be found. Most are one or one-and-a-half stories, though two-stories are common in multi-family properties. Craftsman is the predominate style, with features including shingles, dormers, and front porches. Though high-quality masonry and timber elements can be found, it is not uncommon to see properties with more economical materials such as vinyl. While some houses are in good condition, many are in various states of disrepair. Vacant lots interrupt the original grid. Unlike Russell Woods there is no historic district designation in Nardin Park to slow the rate of demolitions. However, streets of few vacant lots and abandonments can be found, reflective of the formation of community identities based on streets of residence rather than of the neighborhood as a whole.

Civic and religious structures are common within the residential portions of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. Historic, modern, and store-front style churches are all present. Some churches are of high architectural value and may reflect the neighborhood's changing demographics through their conversions between congregations. Very few of these are vacant; even as the population of the neighborhoods has declined, congregations continue to meet within Russell Woods and Nardin Park, with members commuting from the suburbs.

Both Russell Woods and Nardin Park have an abundant amount of open space. Though vacant lots make up the majority of the open space, purpose-built parks can be found throughout the neighborhoods.

These parks function as community gathering spaces and feature playgrounds and space for festivals such as Jazz in the Park. In vacant lots, community gardens have appeared showing the potential for reuse of other vacant spaces.

Car-oriented commercial corridors along Joy, Davison, Dexter, and Livernois surround the Russell Woods-Nardin Park area. While the majority of commercial structures reside on these streets, some can be found closer to the center of the neighborhoods. Commercial properties vary in style, but most are single or double-story masonry structures. Though active clusters remain, many commercial properties are vacant.



Figure 3.10. Small cluster of commercial properties along Joy Avenue



Figure 3.11. Two-story Nardin Park residence featuring a front porch and dormer, typical of multi-family housing in Nardin Park.



Figure 3.12. Craftsman bungalows like this one are common throughout Nardin Park. Note the vacant lots to both the left and right.



Figure 3.13. Tudor Revival residences in Russell Woods in good condition with the original grid still readable.

## ANALYSIS

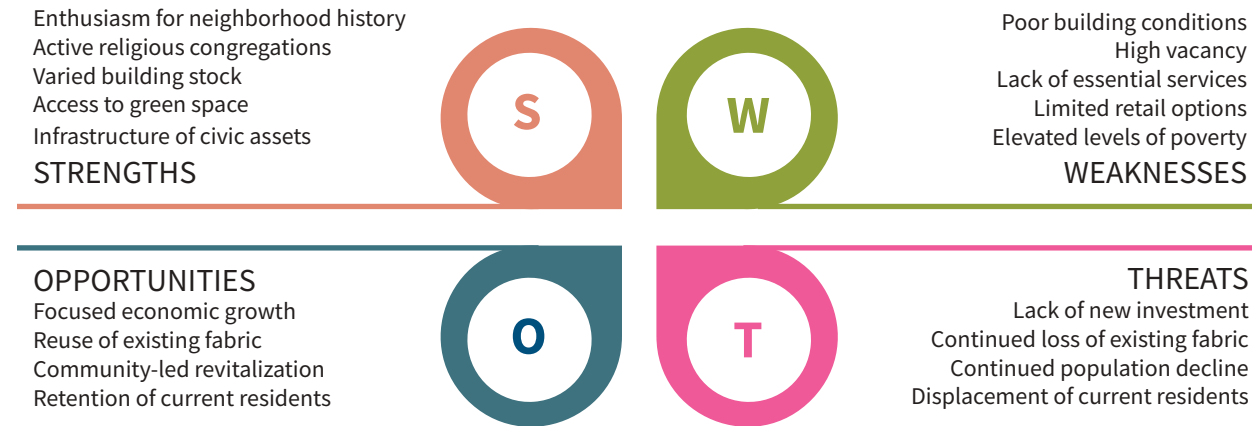


Figure 3.14. SWOT Analysis.

### SWOT ANALYSIS

Building on this analysis of existing conditions, we then used a SWOT framework to identify positive and negative trends as well as key issues and problems that need to be addressed in our study area. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats where Strengths and Weaknesses represent present conditions while Opportunities and Threats represent future conditions. The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to move from a broad existing conditions analysis to a set of priorities that can be used to identify strategies for action. We debated if separate SWOTs should be created for each neighborhood since they have slight differences. However, each SWOT identified the same strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for each neighborhood. We thus combined them into one SWOT. Using this framework allowed us to assess different aspects of Russell Woods-Nardin Park before recommending tactical preservation interventions.

As Figure 3.14 shows, Russell Woods-Nardin Park benefits from residents' enthusiasm for the history of their neighborhoods, as well as the presence of many active religious congregations that bring worshipers in from the suburbs and other parts of Detroit. The study area also boasts a variety of buildings that can support a diversity of uses. There are several open spaces such as parks, playgrounds, and gardens which can also contribute to site interventions. The number of civic assets like schools, a police station, social service providers, and a post office creates some structure to the neighborhood that

we can build off of. However, Russell Woods-Nardin Park also suffers from having many buildings in poor condition. High building and land vacancy is also prevalent with most of the vacant buildings in poor condition. Russell Woods-Nardin Park also contain high rates of poverty which is why most of the commercial corridors stand vacant. In addition, residents are faced with a lack of essential services, such as healthcare providers, professional services, and community centers, as well as a lack of retail options, such as non-fast food restaurants, cafes, grocery stores, and clothing and household goods shops.

While these present conditions are challenging, there are still many opportunities for the residents of Russell Woods-Nardin Park to enjoy a better future. For example, focused economic growth in key commercial nodes could support existing and new business that are patronized by residents as well as people who live outside of the area. In addition, the key to any revitalization of the area is the reuse of existing historic fabric, the participation of the community, and the retention of current residents. Although a better future is possible for Russell Woods-Nardin Park, it is also important that decision-makers are mindful of several threats to equitable revitalization. Chief among these is the potential for a lack of new investment, both from the public and the private sectors. Another concern is the continued loss of existing fabric through intentional and unintentional demolition, as well as continued population decline and the potential for current residents to be displaced due to an increase

## SWOT + COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

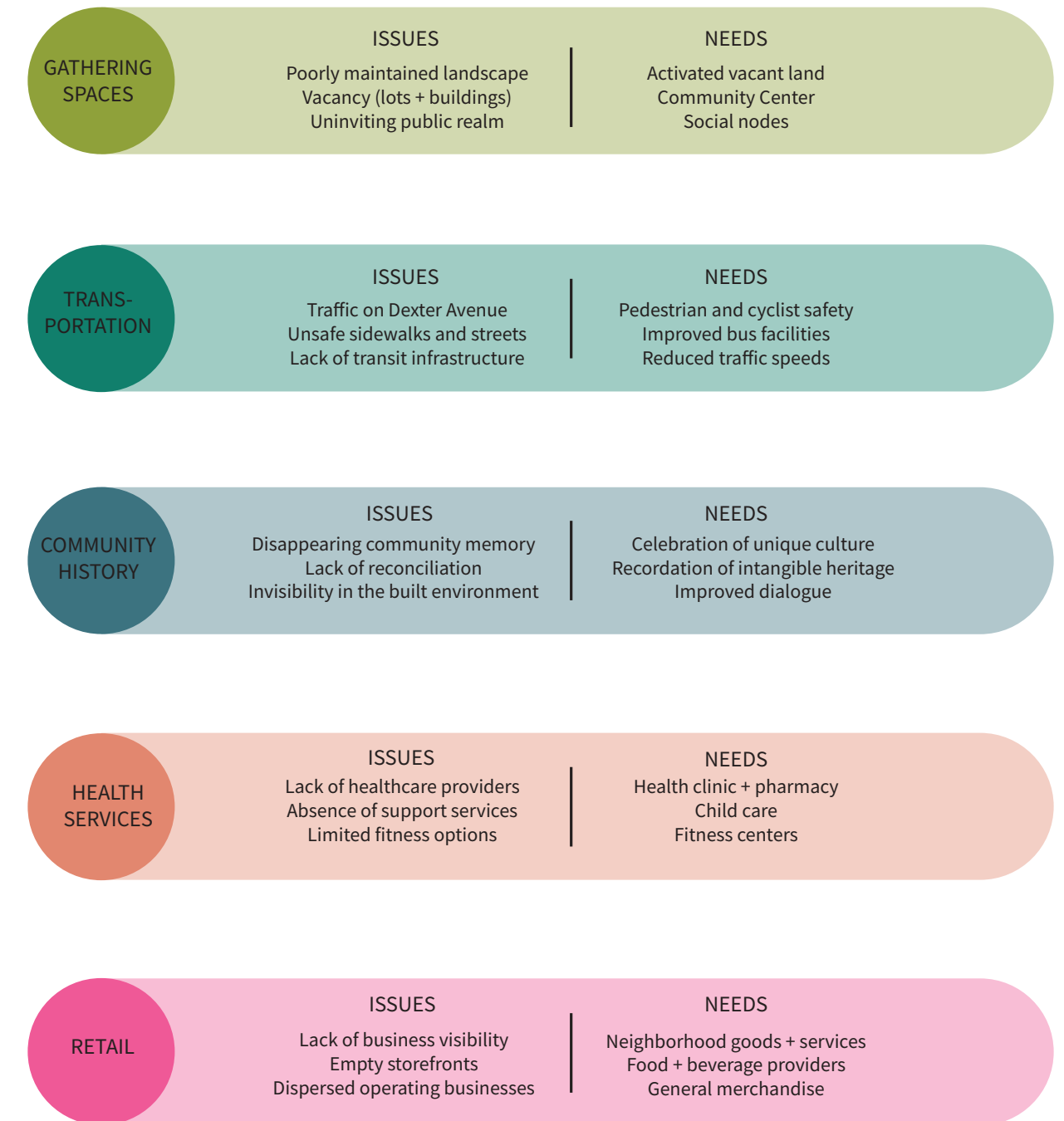


Figure 3.15. Community Needs Assessment.

## ANALYSIS

in land value. By building on strengths, overcoming weaknesses, advocating for opportunities, and being mindful of threats, stakeholders will be able to better guide the equitable revitalization of Russell Woods-Nardin Park.

### COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

After identifying the key factors that represent both present and future conditions through the SWOT analysis, we then conducted a community needs assessment to better understand the major trends and specific needs in our study area (see Figure 3.15). This analysis is based on reviewing primary and secondary source material on the history of Russell Woods-Nardin Park, examining demographic data, interviewing city officials, talking with members of the communities, and conducting multiple site visits. While this assessment connects to the overall findings of the SWOT analysis, it goes one step further to identify specific issues as well as distinct needs. The issues have a specific need that will address the issue, and they were grouped under five general needs. The five general community needs are gathering spaces, transportation, community history, health services, and retail. Currently, there are very limited places for community members to gather. Within the two neighborhoods, there are only three parks for neighbors to use and no other spaces, such as schools, restaurants, or gardens. Russell Woods has two parks,

Russell Woods Park and Zussman Park. The former was completely empty for each site visit in September and October; the latter is controlled by local gangs and avoided by neighbors during certain parts of the day. Neighbors explained that in the past gathering spaces were a vital part of their community identities. For transportation, there is a need for safer roads and intersections. There are several accidents each year at the major intersections of Davidson and Dexter, Davidson and Livernois, and Livernois and Grand River. There is also a need for safer bike lanes and sidewalks, so people without cars can safely travel through the neighborhoods. Neighbors also have a strong pride for their history, so there is a need to display and foster that history. Neighbors want to see and appreciate their history and also educate individuals not from the communities of the important people and events that have occurred in Russell Woods-Nardin Park. For health services, there are no primary care doctors or specialists within the area. Neighbors have to drive more than 30 minutes to get to the closest doctor. Neighbors also have to drive 30 minutes for the closest sit-down restaurants and retail stores. There are about 12 fast-food chains in the study area but no sit-down restaurants or grocery stores. There is a need for a variety of food options and healthy food options. Our site interventions in the next section will address these needs and will meet one to all needs.



Figure 3.16. The intersection of Davidson and Dexter Avenues has several accidents and fatalities every year. Each avenue is six lanes wide, not including the left turning lane, and are heavily used every day for residents throughout Detroit commuting to work.

## TACTICAL PRESERVATION

### TACTICAL PRESERVATION

#### Steps for site selection using tactical preservation

#### DEFINE

- 1 **IDENTIFY AREAS OF INTEREST**  
Define broad geographical areas where tactical preservation will be most viable.
- 2 **ASSESS CONDITION**  
Evaluate if the building is in usable condition, e.g. Fair, Good, or Excellent.
- 3 **DETERMINE VARIABLES & SCORES**  
Identify quantifiable variables and create a system of scoring for each.

#### ANALYZE

- 4 **SCORE BUILDINGS BY VARIABLE**  
For each building, assign a score to all variables based on research and fieldwork.

#### REFINE

- 5 **HONE AREAS OF INTEREST**  
Refine site selection based on non-quantifiable factors.
- 6 **SELECT FINAL SITES FOR INTERVENTION**  
Choose key sites for tactical preservation interventions.

Figure 3.17. Steps to assess sites for tactical preservation.

### WHAT IS TACTICAL PRESERVATION?

Tactical preservation refers to strategies using partial and incremental adaptive reuse of civic and commercial buildings to spark redevelopment. As a methodology, tactical preservation is still an idea to be tested. In choosing which sites to intervene at, our studio set out to prove that tactical preservation could be used across a variety of institutional and commercial building types. Our site selection reflects our desire to test the idea of tactical preservation in a

diverse range of settings. The selected sites represent a cross section of building conditions, are located on both the interior and exterior of the neighborhood, and vary in size, scale and proximity to existing businesses. At the same time, we wanted to ground our site selection decisions in a rational process, while still deferring to other subjective considerations (e.g. cultural significance, support, and public ownership).

Coming in as outsiders to a new neighborhood that we knew little about, we knew

## ANALYSIS

we needed a framework that could ground our site selection in the data and qualitative aspects of the study area. We did not want to select sites arbitrarily or independently of community input or in-depth research. Accordingly, we developed a methodology that demonstrates how sites can be selected from a broad study area for tactical preservation using both objective and subjective criteria. Put another way, this framework is not just a machine that churns out viable options for tactical preservation. It reflects a set of decisions that consider the data of each site (e.g. condition, visibility, proximity) as a baseline from which to make decisions that are non-data driven (e.g. significance, variety, and ownership).

### INITIAL SURVEY

To begin, our team researched the neighborhood remotely using Google maps and other traditional site investigation techniques, including historical research, media analysis, GIS mapping, and policy research. Before arriving in Detroit for our first visit, our team created a digital list of sites for investigation. These were added to an interactive map, to which we added photographs and field notes as we drove through the neighborhoods. In some cases, buildings were added to this map that did not come up in initial research. This map grew and shrank as we considered things like condition, ownership, and activity. If buildings were beyond repair, or currently active businesses, they were removed from our list.

Upon arriving in Detroit, we broke into two teams to conduct windshield surveys, or drive-by analyses, of the study area. Our windshield survey of the neighborhood sought out sites that not only caught our eye, but that we saw were in good-enough condition to be rehabilitated. In a series of two visits, we narrowed down the list, and in some cases grouped buildings together that were in close proximity or in commercial strips. At the end of this initial process, there were 57 sites up for consideration. At this point, in order to narrow down the list further we needed a more detailed framework that could help us make informed decisions.

### DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY

The flow chart (Figure 3.17) illustrates our approach to site selection. Step 1 builds on the initial

windshield survey and research and asks the question of whether our interventions were to be one site, or an aggregate of sites (i.e. an individual building or a commercial strip. Step 2 asks the very practical question of whether or not the building is beyond reasonable rehabilitation or repair. The simple yes or no answer helps filter properties right away. Step 3 assigns quantitative scores to individual sites based on criteria important to tactical preservation and preservation broadly: Is the building highly visible? Is the building close to other buildings (and likely to catalyze re-development)? What is the significance of the building? These three questions use a simple 1-3 score and are added to assign each building a score (Step 4). Step 5 reevaluates step 3 using qualitative criteria. These criteria reflected our desire to test a variety of tactical strategies in different building types, reflected on the benefit to the community, and asked two threshold questions of public ownership and city support. A visual survey is imperfect for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most obvious is that not all history or heritage is readily visible in physical fabric. This last step allowed us to move sites of immense cultural value back into the framework that didn't make it through the quantitative Step 3, like Vaughn's Bookstore. It also allowed us to adjust the lists of interventions to meet other needs like diversity of interventions, public ownership, and neighborhood support.

### USING THE FRAMEWORK

This framework is intended to be malleable and broad enough to be used anywhere for tactical preservation site selection. It offers a methodology for grounding site selection in a rational process. The framework should be used only as a baseline, with other criteria specific to each project making the final decisions. Criteria for evaluation will change based on the qualities and values of each place.

### SELECTING SITES FOR INTERVENTION

Building on initial field surveys and analyzing the results of the framework the studio selected 5 sites (individual buildings as well as groupings of buildings) for intervention on three scales of time: short term, tactical, and long term.

## TACTICAL PRESERVATION

## ASSESSMENT AND SCORING

### Steps for building assessment and scoring



VARIABLE	SCORE
<b>VISIBILITY</b> Is the building prominent and highly visible?	1 = LOW VISIBILITY 2 = MODERATE VISIBILITY 3 = HIGH VISIBILITY
<b>PROXIMITY</b> Is the building close to other buildings and activities?	1 = NO PROXIMITY 2 = MODERATE PROXIMITY 3 = HIGH PROXIMITY
<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b> Is the building representative of the place's values?	1 = NON-CONTRIBUTING 2 = UNSURE 3 = CONTRIBUTING



CONSIDERATION	QUESTION [Y/N]
<b>VARIETY</b>	DOES THE PRELIMINARY LIST OF SITES REPRESENT A VARIETY OF BUILDING TYPES, SCALES, AND OCCUPANCIES?
<b>COMMUNITY BENEFIT</b>	WILL THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM THE REUSE OF THESE BUILDINGS?
<b>POLITICAL CAPITAL</b>	WILL THE CITY OF DETROIT SUPPORT THE REUSE OF THESE BUILDINGS?
<b>OWNERSHIP</b>	IS IT POSSIBLE TO GAIN ENTRY INTO THE BUILDING?

Figure 3.17. Detailed look at steps 3-5 from Figure 3.17 for assessment and scoring of sites considered for tactical preservation.

Figure 3.1. Candela, Lillian, 2018.

Figure 3.2. “1950s Congregation B’Nai Moshe”. Santiago Preciado. October 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania.

Figure 3.3. “Nardin Park Methodist Episcopal Church, now Ebenezer AME Church”. Built in November of 1928. Detroit News. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. <https://digital.library.wayne.edu/item/wayne:vmc60525>.

Figure 3.4. “Community gathering”. City of Detroit. “Jazz in the Park”. “Russell Woods + Nardin Park Neighborhood Framework, Focus Group Historic Properties and Art.” Accessed September 26, 2018, [http://www.detroitmi.gov/Portals/0/docs/Planning/Russel-woods/180522\\_FG\\_Historic%20Properties%20Art\\_Slides.pdf](http://www.detroitmi.gov/Portals/0/docs/Planning/Russel-woods/180522_FG_Historic%20Properties%20Art_Slides.pdf).

Figure 3.5. Stevens, Amanda, 2018.

Figure 3.6. “Art Moderne Commercial Strip”. Amanda Stevens. September, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Figure 3.7. “Tudor Revival, Rusell Woods”. Santiago Preciado. October 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania.

Figure 3.8. “Nathan Johnson House”. City of Detroit. “Russell Woods + Nardin Park Neighborhood Framework, Focus Group Historic Properties and Art.” Accessed September 26, 2018, [http://www.detroitmi.gov/Portals/0/docs/Planning/Russel-woods/180522\\_FG\\_Historic%20Properties%20Art\\_Slides.pdf](http://www.detroitmi.gov/Portals/0/docs/Planning/Russel-woods/180522_FG_Historic%20Properties%20Art_Slides.pdf).

Figure 3.9. Stevens, Amanda, 2018.

Figure 3.10. Stevens, Amanda, 2018.

Figure 3.11. Maloney, Mia, 2018.

Figure 3.12. Maloney, Mia, 2018.

Figure 3.13. Pae, Evelyn, 2018.

Figure 3.14. “SWOT Analysis”. 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

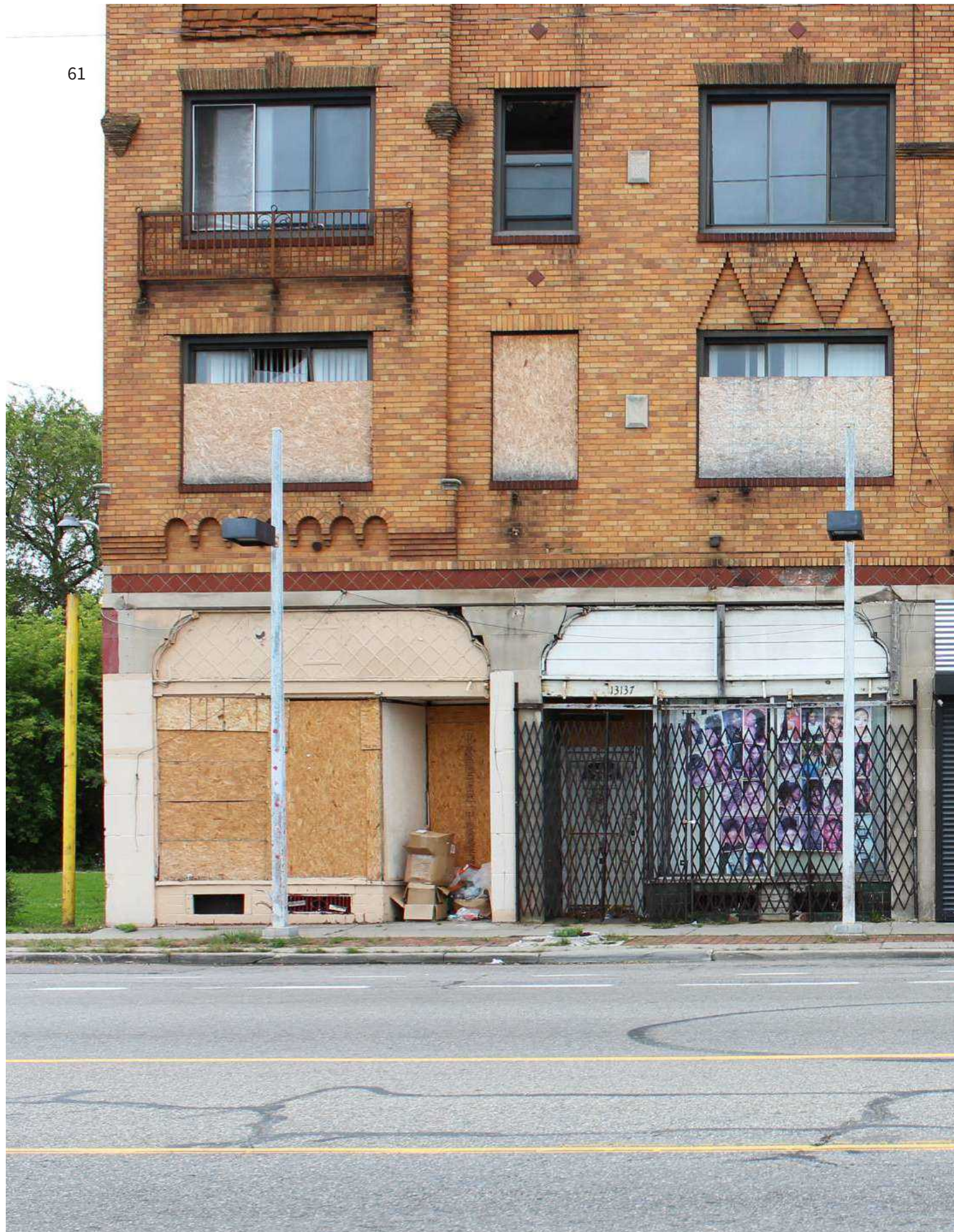
Figure 3.15. “Community Needs Assessment”. 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Figure 3.16. Google Maps, 2018.

Figure 3.17. Torkelson, Jake, 2018.

Figure 3.18. Torkelson, Jake, 2018.

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# 4. RESPONSE

Figure 4.1. The storefronts of the Tyler Apartments along Dexter Avenue, 2018.



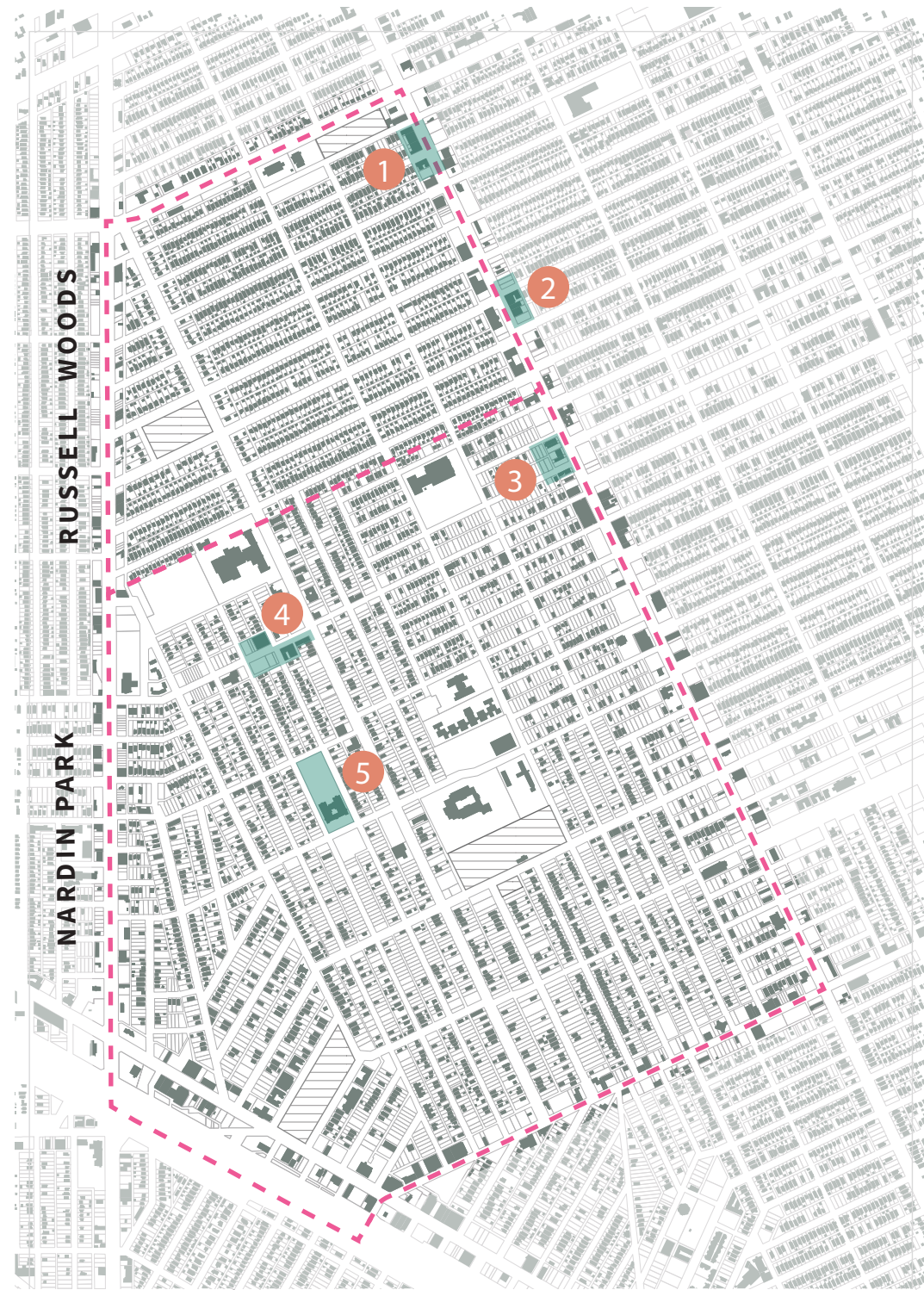


Figure 4.2. Project site locations, 2018.

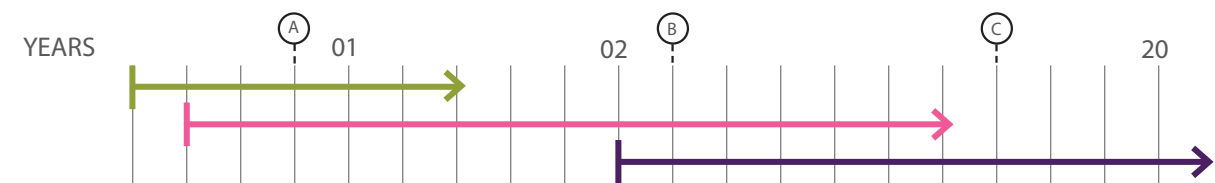


Figure 4.3.. Simplified timeline sample.

This section presents a number of tactical preservation proposals for five sites in Russell Woods-Nardin Park. Each site presents a series of design and programming proposals that are simultaneously site-specific and intended to be applicable to similar sites and situations, elsewhere in Detroit and in other historic communities. The proposals for each site are organized around three timescales: short term (e.g. two months), tactical (e.g. two years), and long term (e.g. 10-20 years). While some later proposals are intended to build on earlier ones, they are not necessarily dependent on them. This increases the flexibility of implementation and allows for prototyping, iteration and learning.

Each set of proposals is framed temporally and spatially. Timelines like the sample in Figure 4.3 were developed to illustrate how these proposals are intended to be implemented over time. These modified Gantt charts were chosen to highlight the timing and overlapping sequencing of varied proposals for each site – ranging from building interventions to open-space projects to streetscape improvements. Each proposal uses a timeline color-coded to note

the appropriate timescale for the projects. Each bar is annotated to describe the projects, which are described in greater depth in the following report sections. In addition, each site's proposals are illustrated by a series of axonometric drawings (as well as photographs and other drawings as needed) to better represent how these different projects interact spatially. Each drawing is tied to a specific point represented on the timeline; color-coding of different time-scales is consistent across all five projects.

The following five proposals are individual demonstrations of tactical preservation possibilities – the five are not integrated as part of a comprehensive master plan. While the projects draw on the same principles, shared assessment of the study area, and use of the three timescales, each site operates as an independent study of how tactical preservation strategies can be used to revitalize an area. The goal of this independence is to not only create recommendations for a specific site but to present strategies that showcase the applicability of tactical preservation as a framework for preservation and revitalization in Detroit's neighborhoods.

1

**Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor:** The Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor builds on the site's heritage of arts and commerce to create a vibrant commercial corridor that functions both as a neighborhood main street and as a regional destination.

2

**The Dexter Hub:** The Dexter Hub acts as a node connecting the Russell Woods, Nardin Park and Dexter-Linwood neighborhoods by providing a creative mix of essential services, recreational opportunities, and community gathering.

3

**McKerrow School:** McKerrow Elementary School's role in neighborhood history, large exterior spaces, and varied interior spaces create opportunities for rehabilitation interventions and for overall neighborhood revitalization.

4

**Vaughn's Bookstore:** Vaughn's Bookstore builds upon the rich legacy of black history, culture, and business ownership manifest in the life of Ed Vaughn and creates a center for memory and dialogue that focuses on reconciliation after the 1967 Rebellion.

5

**Elmhurst Corridor:** The Elmhurst Corridor seeks to take advantage of the legacy of Nardin Park's local industrial and commercial history through community programs along a revitalized main street corridor.



Figure 4.1. Stevens, Amanda. October 5, 2018.

Figure 4.2. SEMCOG, Open Data Portal, 2010.

Figure 4.3. Scott, Sarah. "Sample Timeline." 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



**DEXTER-TYLER  
CULTURAL CORRIDOR**  
EVELYN PAE + SANTIAGO PRECIADO OVALLE + SARAH SCOTT

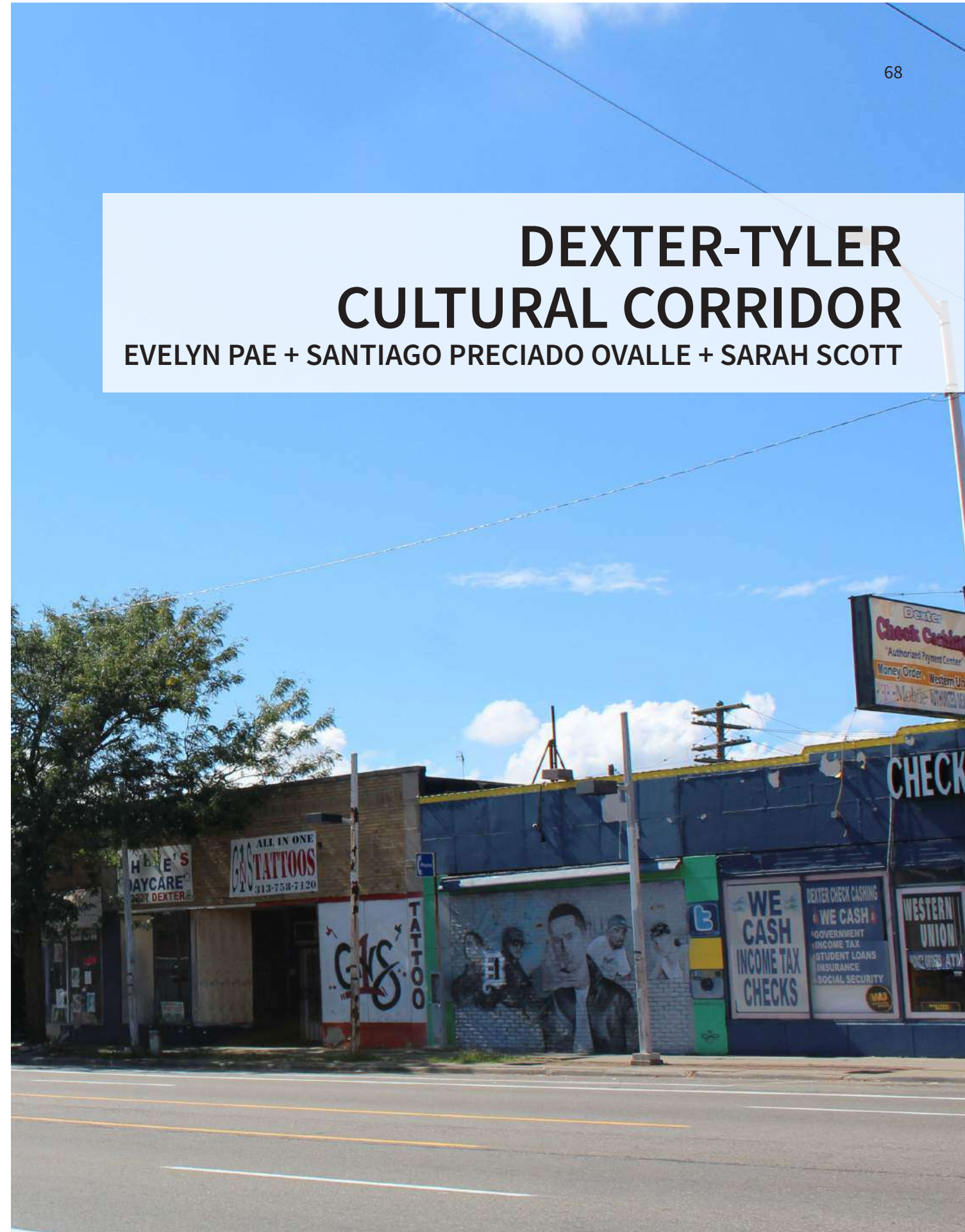


Figure 4.4. The Tyler Apartments and the commercial strip on Dexter Avenue

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR

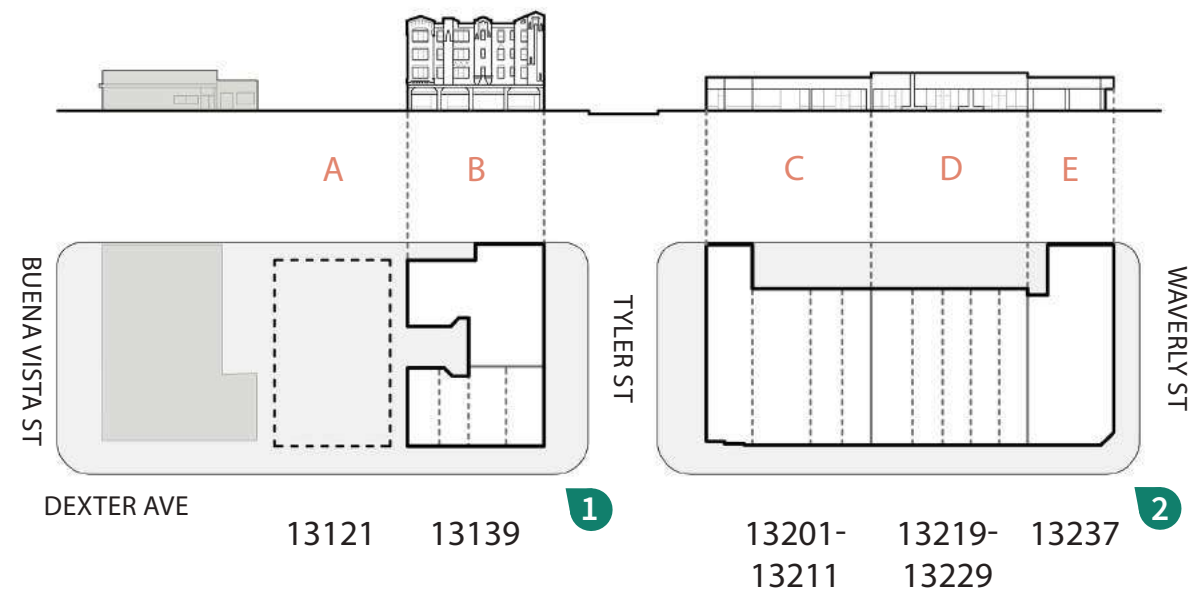


Figure 4.5. The Tyler Apartments on Dexter and Tyler.



Figure 4.6. The commercial strip from Dexter and Waverly.

## OVERVIEW



Figure 4.7. Map of Russell Woods and Nardin Park and our intervention site in the callout.

### OVERVIEW

This proposal centers on the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor, which is composed of a strip of three attached, commercial properties and the Tyler Apartments, a free-standing, mixed-use building (see Figures 4.2.2 and 4.2.3). This five-property commercial strip is located in the northeastern corner of the study area near the intersection of two high-traffic through roads: Dexter Avenue and Davison Street (see Figure 4.2.4). The first few blocks of Dexter Avenue are effectively a gateway to the Russell Woods-Nardin Park neighborhoods; however, their general appearance of vacancy and inactivity encourage drivers to pass by them without noticing the open businesses and close-knit residential community.

The site centers on the intersection of Dexter Avenue and Tyler Street and is bordered by Waverly Street to the north and Buena Vista Street to the south. It is within the boundaries of the Russell-Woods Sullivan Area Historic District and stands only a couple

of blocks away from the former residences of several famous Detroiters who lived here in the 1960s and 1970s, most notably all three Supremes. In addition, these buildings are representative of the once-vibrant commercial corridor that used to exist on Dexter Avenue, but struggled to come back after the 1967 rebellion and continue to face competition from big box stores in the suburbs.

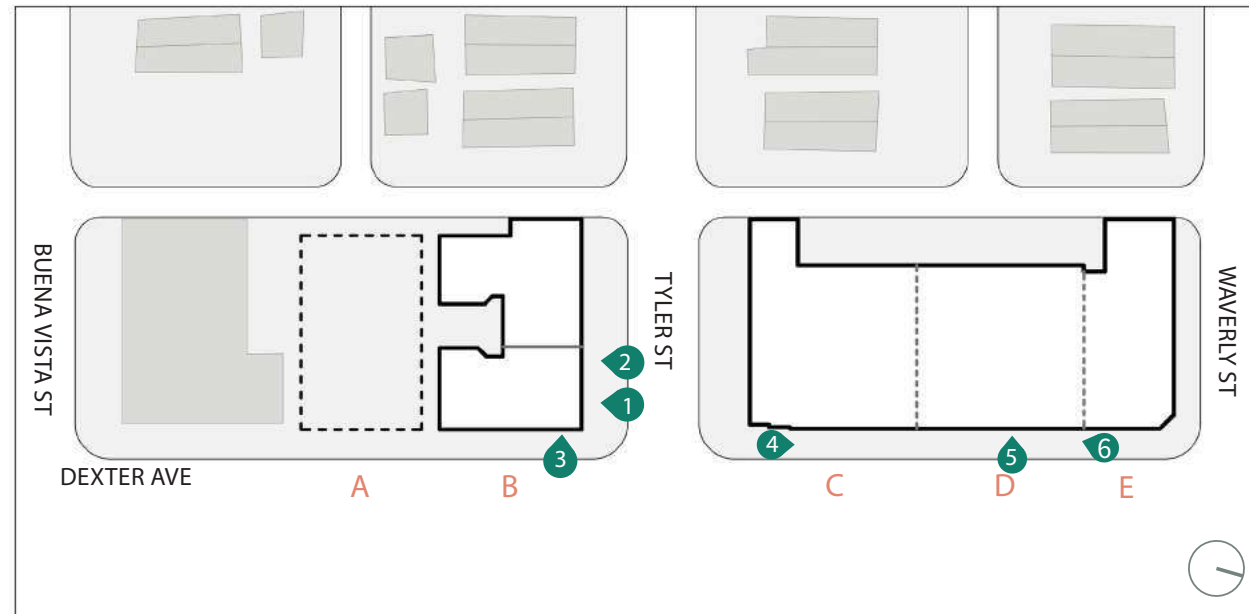
While these buildings are generally in good condition and some house long-standing local businesses, many of the storefronts are vacant. In addition, the public realm is unsafe, uninviting, and does not support these business owners. As a result, this proposal draws on the site's heritage of arts and culture as well as its heritage of commercial activity to create interventions aimed at revitalizing the surrounding community. Before looking at those interventions in greater detail, we first introduce the site and its history, condition, and assets.

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR

### ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

The Tyler Apartments were built in the Spanish/Moorish Eclectic style popular in the 1920s, and are the only such building in our study area. It was built in 1928, and has 29 apartments and 4 stores on the first floor. It makes use of a orange-red brick with varying shades, and its features include corbeled rounded blind arches, projecting bays, corbeled lancet arches over some windows, and a unique and eclectic parapet with several architectural details such as crenelations, gables, and corbeled ledges. On images 1, 2, and 3, we see such distinctive architectural elements, including the entrance with the building's original name above the entryway in cast stone, a decorated blind window with arrow brick pattern, and a prominent and unique parapet detail.

The most distinctive architectural details of the one-story commercial strip include the recessed and sometimes shared entryways, the historic signs above the stores (seen in image 4), and subtle hints of the Streamline Moderne style, particularly in the parapet of the blue-colored building.



## ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS



Figure 4.8. Distinctive Entrance



Figure 4.9. Blind Window + Brickwork



Figure 4.10. Parapet + Clay Tile Roof

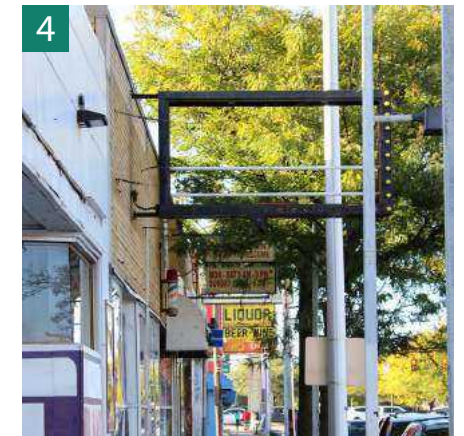


Figure 4.11. Commercial Signs

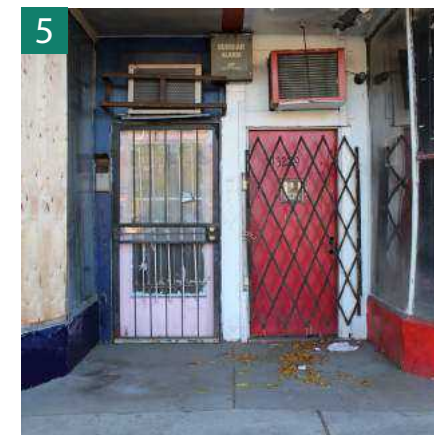


Figure 4.12. Recessed Store Entry



Figure 4.13. Streamline Moderne Style

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR

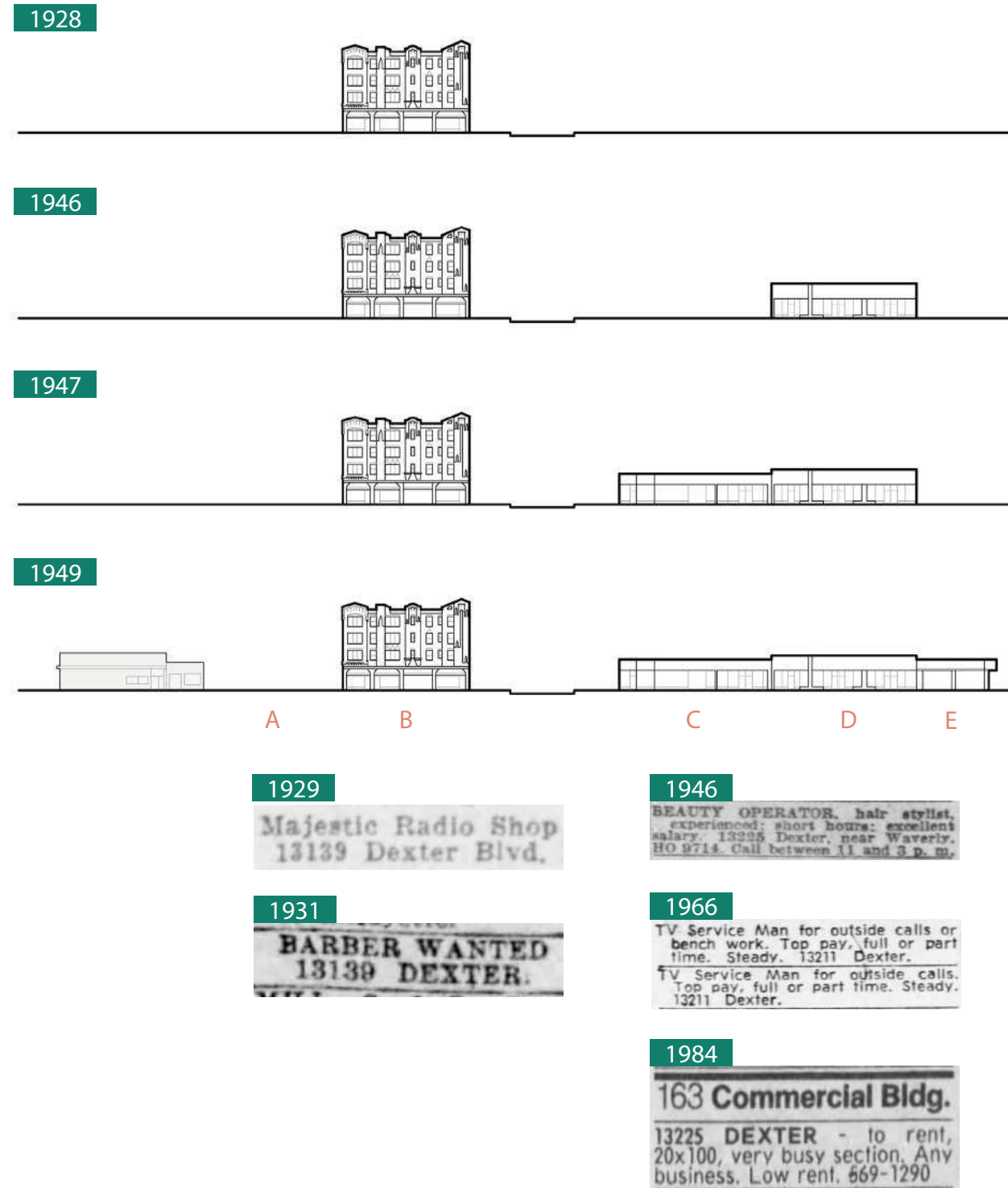


Figure 4.14. Newspaper ads for businesses along our commercial strip.

## SITE HISTORY



Figure 4.15. Circa 1940 image of the Tyler Apartments and no commercial strip, looking south from Davison and Dexter intersection.

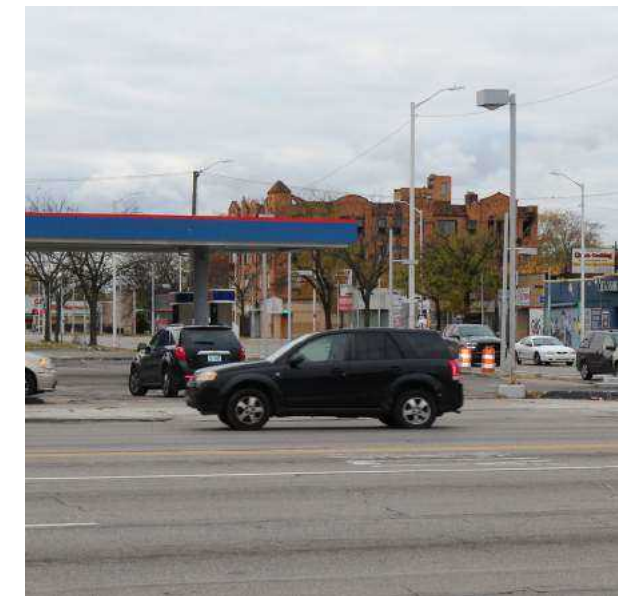


Figure 4.16. The site today, with the commercial strip.

### SITE HISTORY

Over the course of the last 50 years, a variety of shops and businesses have existed in the storefronts of these four buildings, many of them owned by the Jewish and later black residents of the surrounding communities. This site was particularly significant because of its proximity to Davison Street, which up until the late 1960s, was well-known as being a major commercial corridor for the entire city of Detroit. This commercial strip is one of the very few complete and well-preserved commercial strips anywhere along Dexter.

The Tyler Apartments building was built in 1928, part of the first wave of development in the community of Russell Woods-Sullivan, and was first occupied in 1929. While today the building is known as the Tyler Apartments, it was originally named “El Morada,” much like other apartment buildings that were constructed at the same time. It is one of a few free-standing apartment buildings built along Dexter

Avenue in the same decade, which provided an alternative housing type to the single-family homes elsewhere in the community. The Tyler Apartments was constructed with four storefronts on the ground level and three floors above with approximately 29 apartments total. Newspaper advertisements show that there were a variety of stores occupying those storefronts, including a radio shop and a barber (see Figure 4.14).

The commercial strip was built as three separate buildings with internal divisions for smaller stores within each structure. These buildings were constructed in three separate but relatively quick campaigns from 1946 to 1949, which reflects a post-war boom in population, housing, and commercial activity in the neighborhood. Like the Tyler Apartments, these stores hosted a variety of businesses, including salons, electronics repair shops, and even a Sanders soda fountain and candy store (see Figure 4.14).

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR

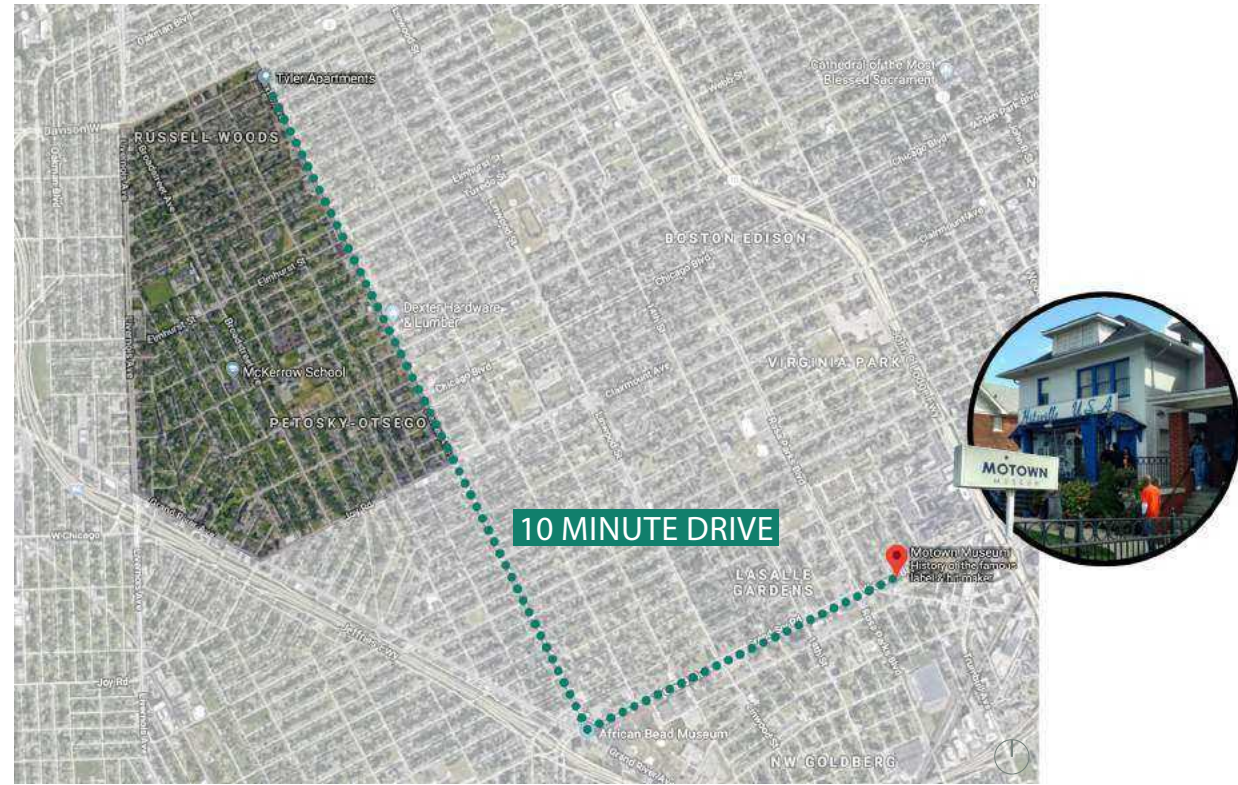


Figure 4.17. Proximity of our site to the Motown Museum, or Hitsville USA.

Another aspect of the heritage of this site is its connection to the history of Motown. Figure 4.16 shows its proximity to “Hitsville U.S.A.,” the recording studio for Berry Gordy’s Motown Records, now the Motown Museum. This building, a 10-minute drive from the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor, functioned as the central hub of the record label, which is where some of its most famous hits were produced. During the height of Motown in the 1960s, famous producers, songwriters, and performers worked and socialized at both Hitsville U.S.A. and Gordy’s mansion in the nearby Boston-Edison neighborhood.

Some of the most famous residents of Russell Woods are connected to Detroit’s history as the home of “the Motown Sound.” All three members of the Supremes, Diana Ross, Florence Ballard, and Mary Wilson, at one point lived on Buena Vista Street in the Sullivan subdivision (see Figure 4.17). While the women had grown up in the Brewster-Douglass Housing Projects in eastern Detroit, in 1965, after their first

wave of success, they bought houses in Russell Woods, which was then a prominent upper-middle-class black community. Notable Motown producer JoAnne Bratton also lived on Buena Vista near the Supremes (see Figure 4.17). In addition, the neighborhood was home to other prominent artists, including the poet laureate of Detroit, Dudley Randall, and composer Brazeal Dennard.

The Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor was once a vibrant node of commercial activity that supported a thriving residential neighborhood, one that was home to many prominent artists. The historic fabric that remains represents the heritage of arts and commerce in Russell Woods-Nardin Park and represents an opportunity to more fully tell these important stories.

## SITE HISTORY

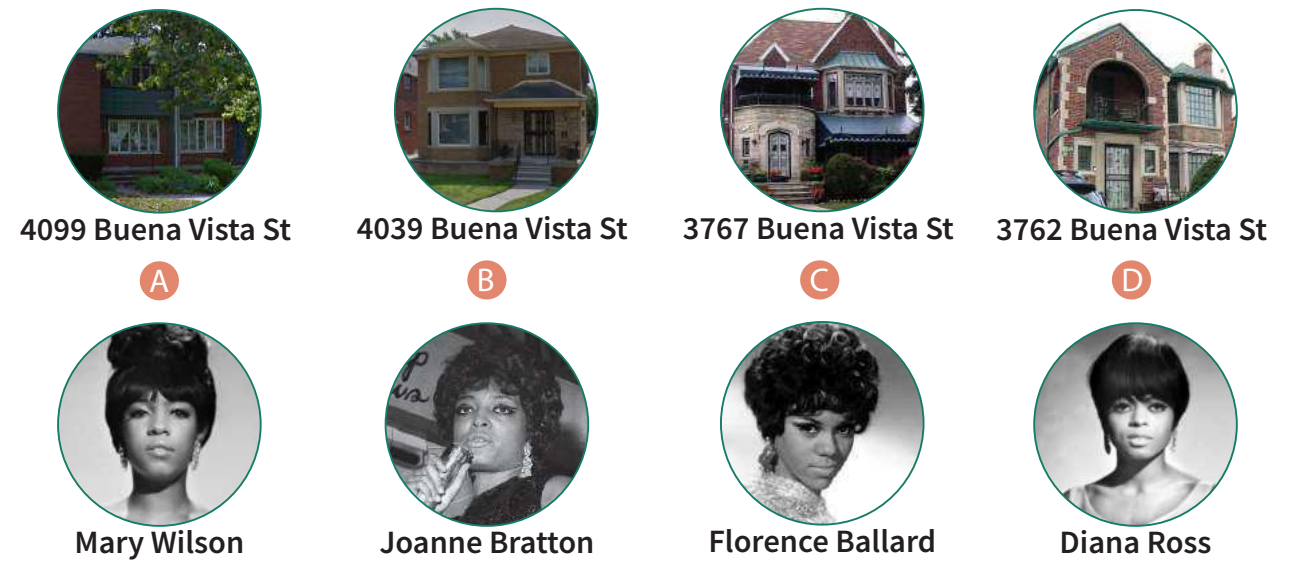


Figure 4.18. Two-block radius from our site showing proximity of the residences of the Supremes and Florence Ballard.

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



Figure 4.19. Sidewalk on the Strip



Figure 4.20. Vacant Storefront



Figure 4.21. Broken Sidewalk



Figure 4.22. Fire Damage Vestige



Figure 4.23. Water Damage Vestige

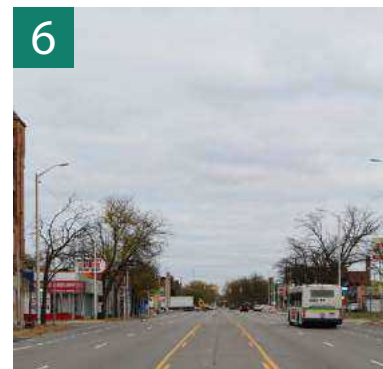
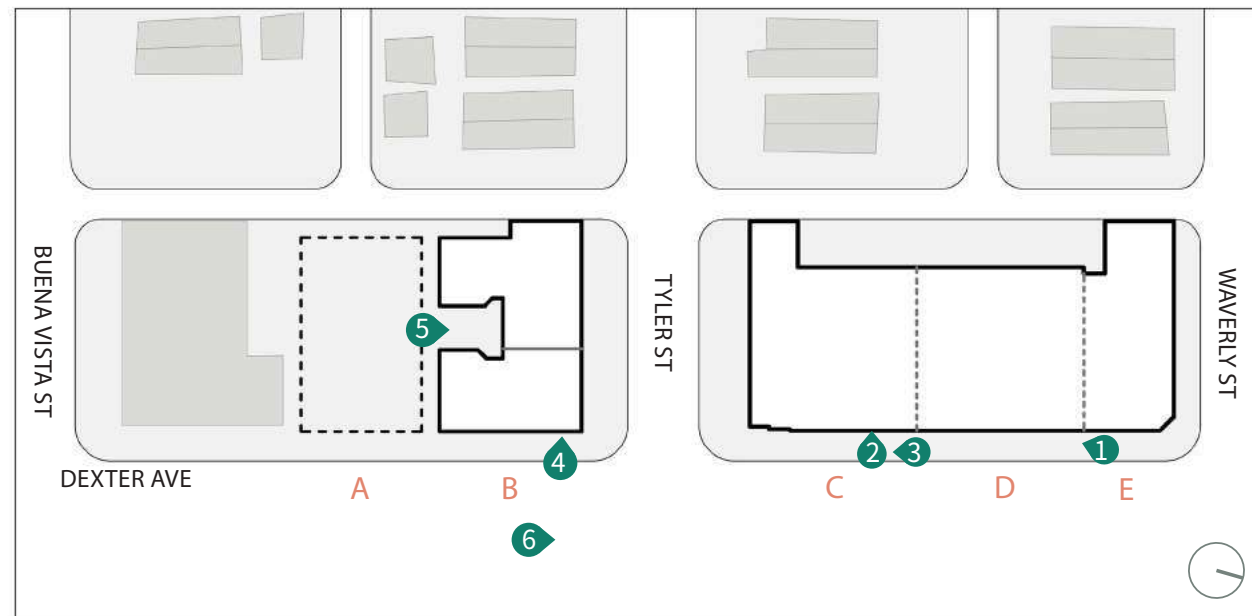


Figure 4.24. Wide Travel Lanes



## SITE CONDITION + STRENGTHS

### SITE CONDITION TODAY

The Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor is one of the only and best-preserved commercial strips along Dexter Avenue. However, like many sites in the study area, it still suffers from vacancy and disinvestment.

Out of the four storefronts in the Tyler Apartments building, only one has an active business, which is a clothing store. The other three storefronts are currently vacant, though signage indicates that they were recently home to a nail salon and a hair salon. The three upper floors of apartments are currently vacant due to a recent fire that is suspected to be caused by arson. Although the extent of the fire's damage is unclear (we did not gain access), the building appears to be in fair condition and structurally sound. However, the courtyard entryway exhibits significant damage to the bricks, including spalling, and there appears to be subsidence in the ground as well.

Between the three buildings of the strip north of the Tyler Apartments, six of the ten storefronts are vacant. The other four house a variety of businesses, including a check cashing place, a barbershop, an auto glass shop, and a dry cleaner. Some of the empty storefronts appear to have recently been occupied by a hair salon, an electronics repair shop, a soul food restaurant, and a day care facility. Overall, the condition of the buildings appears to be fair to good. There is some smaller-scale damage such as peeling paint, broken signs, and unpaved sections of the sidewalk, but these are mainly superficial damages.

The public realm beyond the buildings is also a highly visible component of this site. Dexter Avenue is a major thoroughfare that connects residents of northwestern Detroit to New Center, Midtown, and Downtown. However, a combination of wide travel lanes and minimal traffic lights encourages drivers to speed through Russell Woods-Nardin Park without recognizing the communities that they're driving through. There is also an issue with pedestrian safety since there are no crosswalks or stop signs, so pedestrians are often forced to sprint across Dexter Avenue when there is a break in the traffic. In addition, there is a stop in front of the Tyler Apartments for the Route 16 bus, which is considered a "key route" since it operates across the city for 24 hours a day, seven days a week and runs every 15-30 minutes. However, there is no signage or seating associated with the bus stop,

which reduces its visibility and makes public transit less desirable. There is also a vacant lot south of the Tyler Apartments that was once used as a parking lot, but has never been improved with a structure.

### SITE STRENGTHS

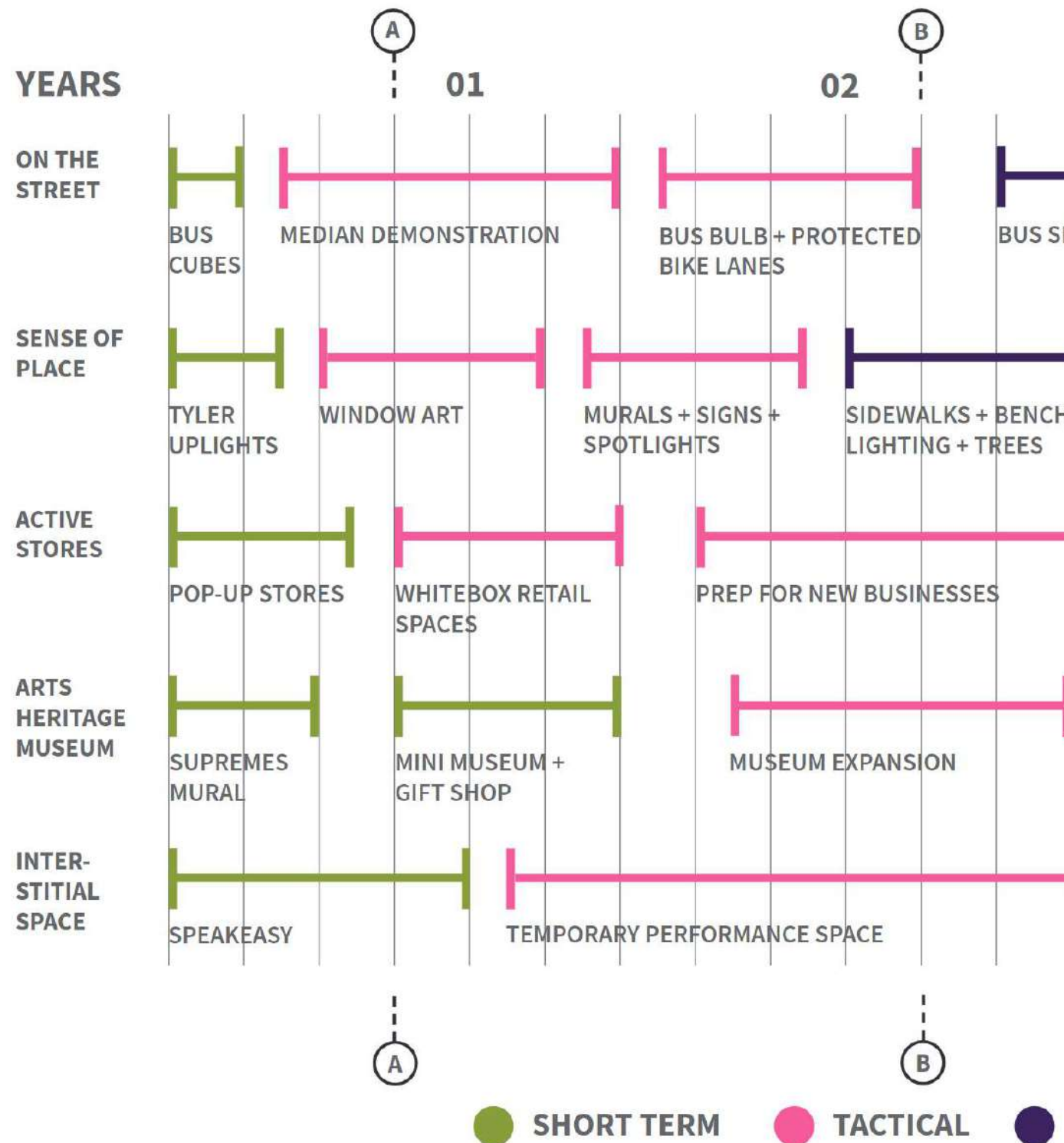
Even though our site presents some challenging conditions, it also benefits from several assets. Perhaps most importantly, it is adjacent to a stable community and is located on a highly-trafficked street, which means that there is a customer base. In addition, the site's heritage of commercial activity and the community's legacy of arts and culture provide a rich history on which to base future interventions. The presence of extant operating businesses and relatively intact historical fabric are key strengths of the site upon which tactical preservation strategies can build. And lastly, the site is only a 15-minute drive, a 30-minute bike ride, and a 45-minute bus ride from downtown Detroit, which makes it possible for the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor to become a local destination for Detroit residents.

### SITE STRENGTHS

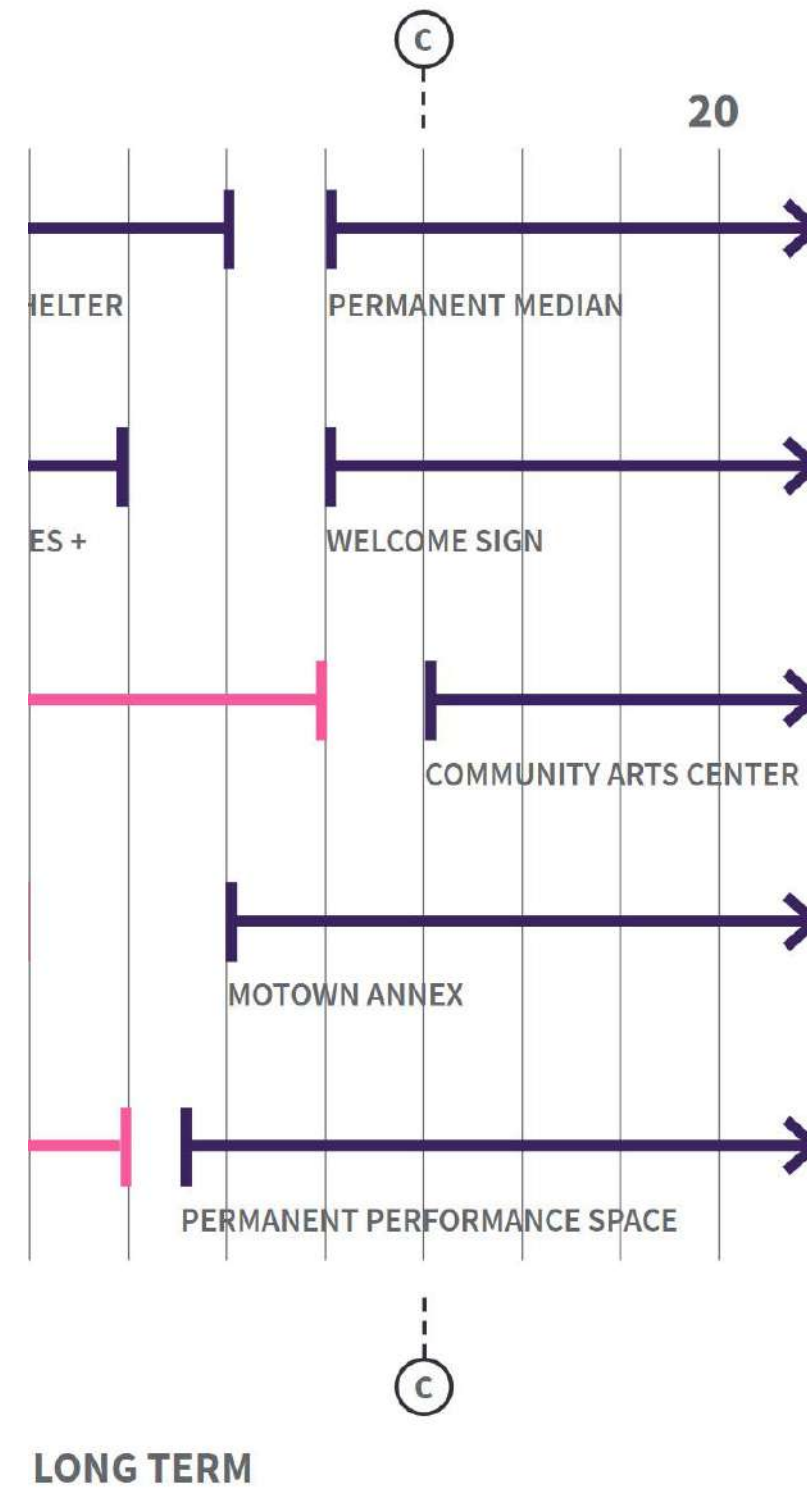
- Near stable neighborhood
- Located on highly trafficked street
- Heritage of commercial activity
- Legacy of arts and culture
- Operating businesses
- Intact historical fabric
- Proximity to downtown Detroit



## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



## INTERVENTION TIMELINE

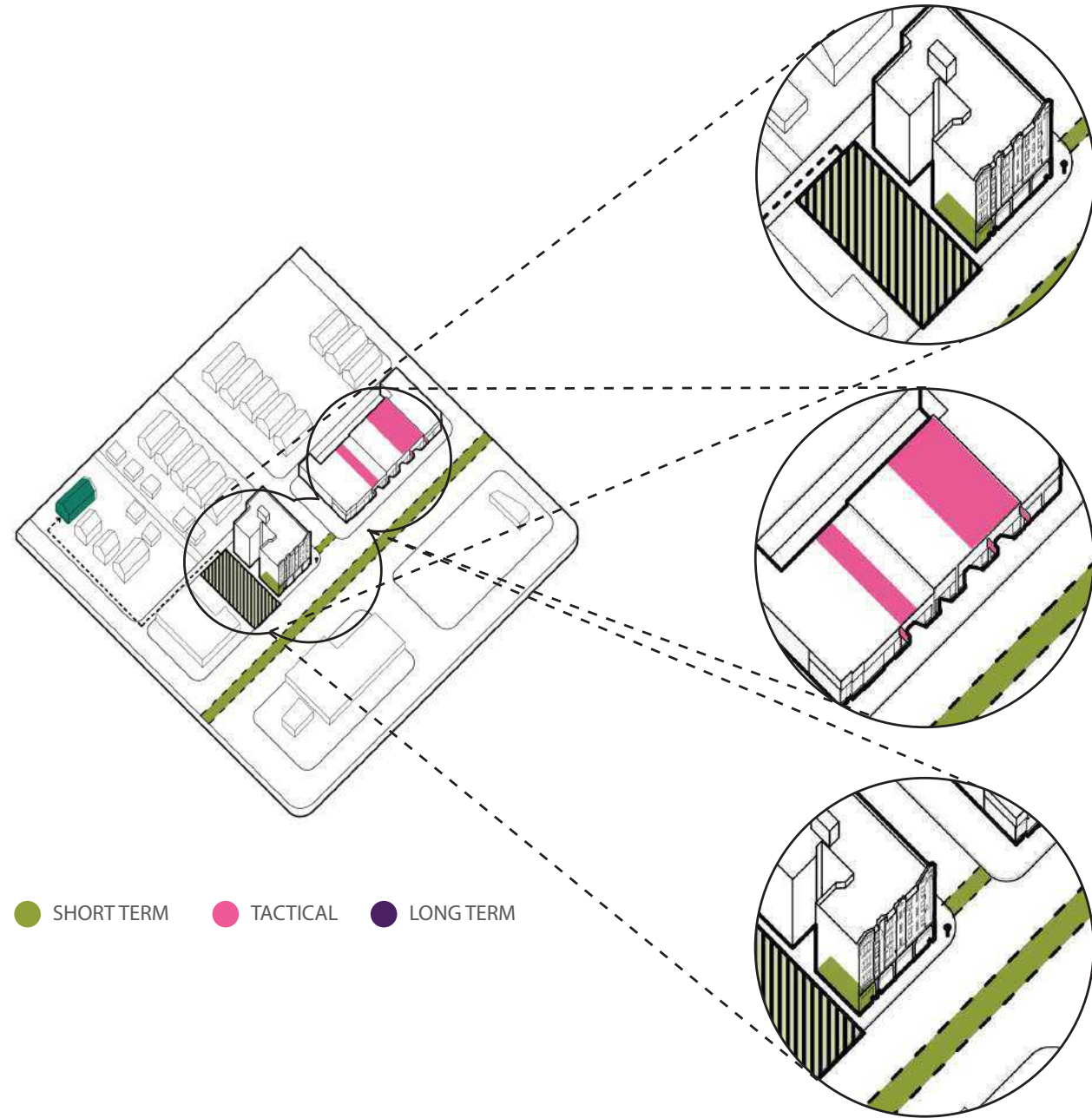
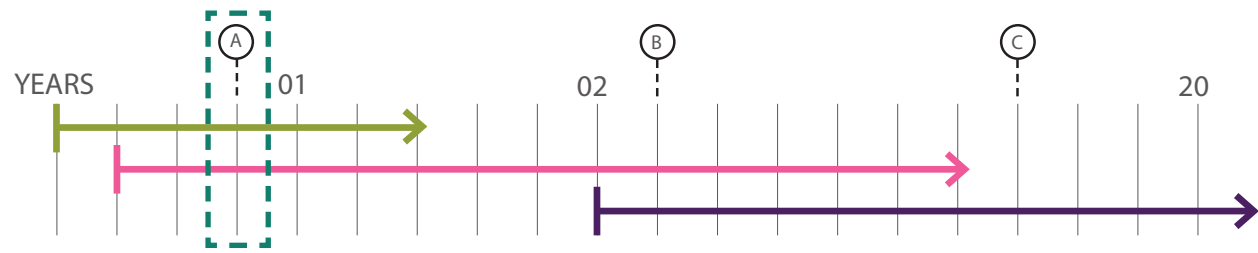


### INTERVENTIONS

The vision for the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor will be achieved through a series of both sequential and overlapping interventions. While it is more of a graphic representation than a project schedule, this timeline shows how multiple short term, tactical, and long term interventions are suitable to the site. It also demonstrates how these interventions interact in both space and time.

The tactical preservation interventions for this site are divided into five categories: On the Street, Sense of Place, Active Stores, Arts Heritage Museum, and Interstitial Space. Each category addresses a separate aspect of the vision for the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor. On the Street focuses on streetscape improvements that will increase the safety and aesthetics of the street. Sense of Place deals with physical improvements that enhance the public realm through art. Active Stores addresses strategies for physical and programmatic storefront improvements. Arts Heritage Museum includes steps to create and then expand a new community-based museum. And finally Interstitial Space tackles the vacant lot south of the Tyler Apartments to create an inviting, usable public space. Together, these interventions contribute to the overall vision for the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor.

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



● SHORT TERM ● TACTICAL ● LONG TERM

## INTERVENTION A: CORRIDOR ACTIVATION

**GOAL = BRING ATTENTION TO THE SITE**

### TYLER APARTMENTS



Supremes mural



Outdoor speakeasy



Community-based museum

One of the first short-term interventions is the painting of a large mural of the Supremes on the south-facing wall of the Tyler Apartments by a local artist. The outdoor space adjacent to the mural will be transformed into a multi-purpose, informal community gathering space or “speakeasy,” modeled off of a pop-up beer garden. The storefront in the southeast corner of the Tyler Apartments will become the home of a new, community-based museum that interprets the local arts heritage.

### THE STRIP



Signage installation



Wishing wall



Local artist gallery

To draw attention to the existing stores and historic fabric, the existing sign frames will be filled with colorful, backlit works of art. Inspired by artist Candy Chang’s installations, a chalkboard wall will be installed in front of a vacant store so residents can write both their memories of and dreams for these buildings. A local artist gallery will open in the storefront next to the auto glass shop, since the owner is enthusiastic about having the space be occupied. The gallery will serve to re-build a culture and community of arts in the neighborhood.

### PUBLIC REALM



Temporary median



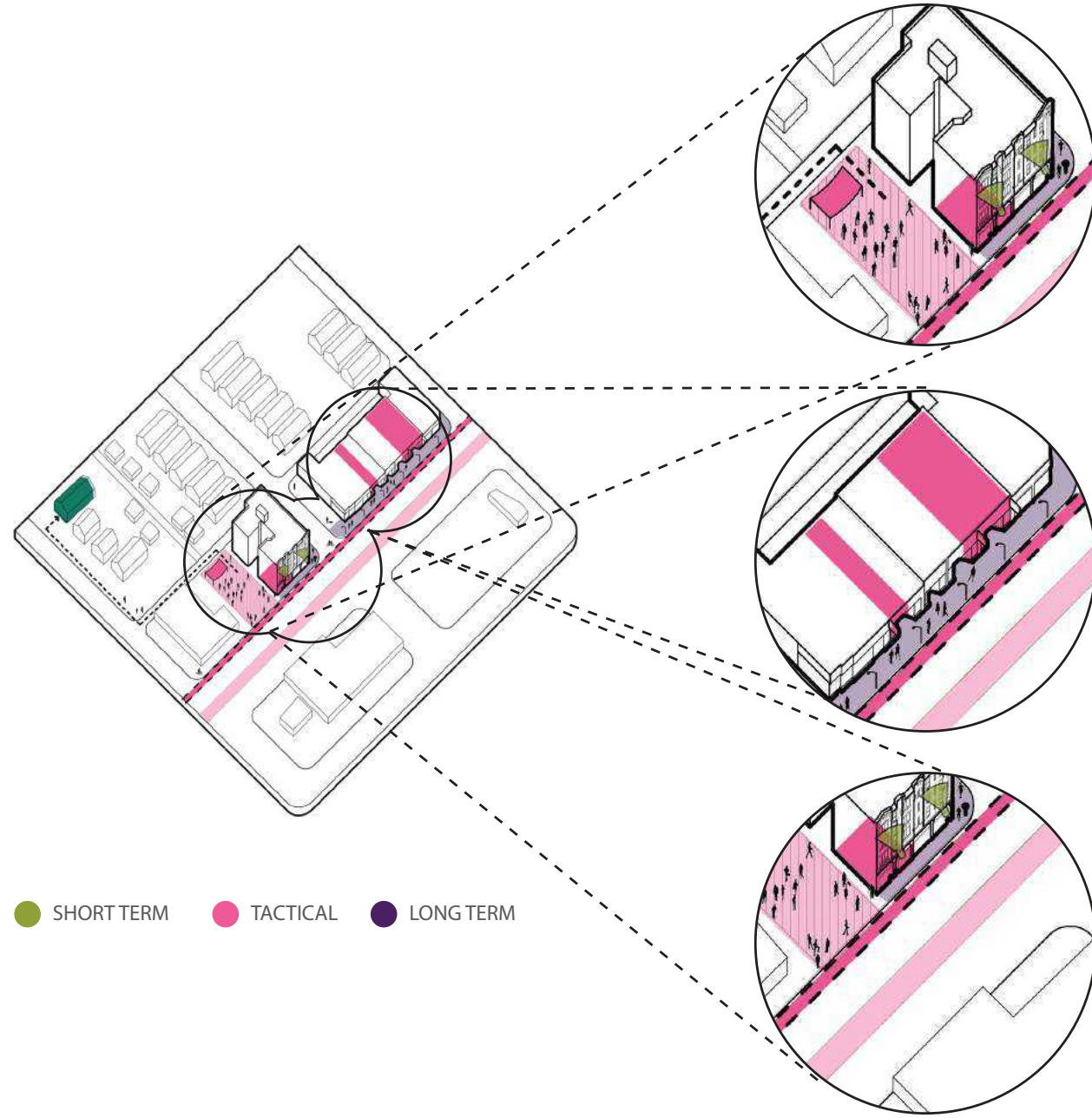
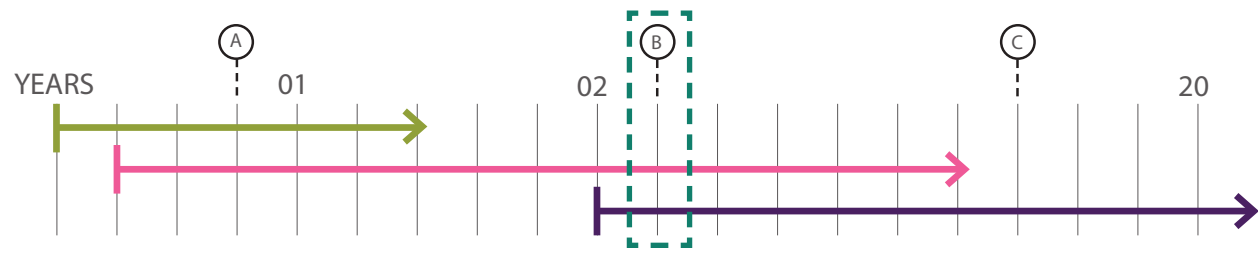
Painted crosswalk



Bus cube

The City can use funds raised by a recent bond to pay for streetscape improvements, such as a temporary street median that will be created using paint, planters, bollards, and signs to provide a pedestrian refuge. The City can also paint colorful crosswalks across Tyler Street to connect the corridor and install a seating cube at the Route 16 bus stop to provide a place for users to rest while they wait for the bus.

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



● SHORT TERM ● TACTICAL ● LONG TERM

## INTERVENTION B: SAFETY + VISIBILITY

**GOAL = IMPROVE SAFETY AND VISIBILITY OF THE SITE**

### TYLER APARTMENTS



Building uplights



Museum expansion



Performance space

Uplights will be installed on the exterior of the Tyler Apartments to highlight the architectural details of the parapet and catch passersby's attention. The heritage museum will expand into the adjacent storefront, which will provide space for a gift shop and allow for a greater variety of interpretive space. The outdoor space will become more permanent with the installation of surrounding hedges, paths, seating areas, and a temporary stage for performances.

### THE STRIP



Streetlights + banners



Street benches



Whitebox retail spaces

Along the strip, pedestrian-oriented streetlights and banners will provide light and wayfinding to people patronizing the stores. Street furniture, such as benches and waste receptacles, will also provide amenities to these patrons. Vacant storefronts will be whiteboxed to ensure that they are in usable condition and are attractive to future retail tenants.

### PUBLIC REALM



Protected bike lanes



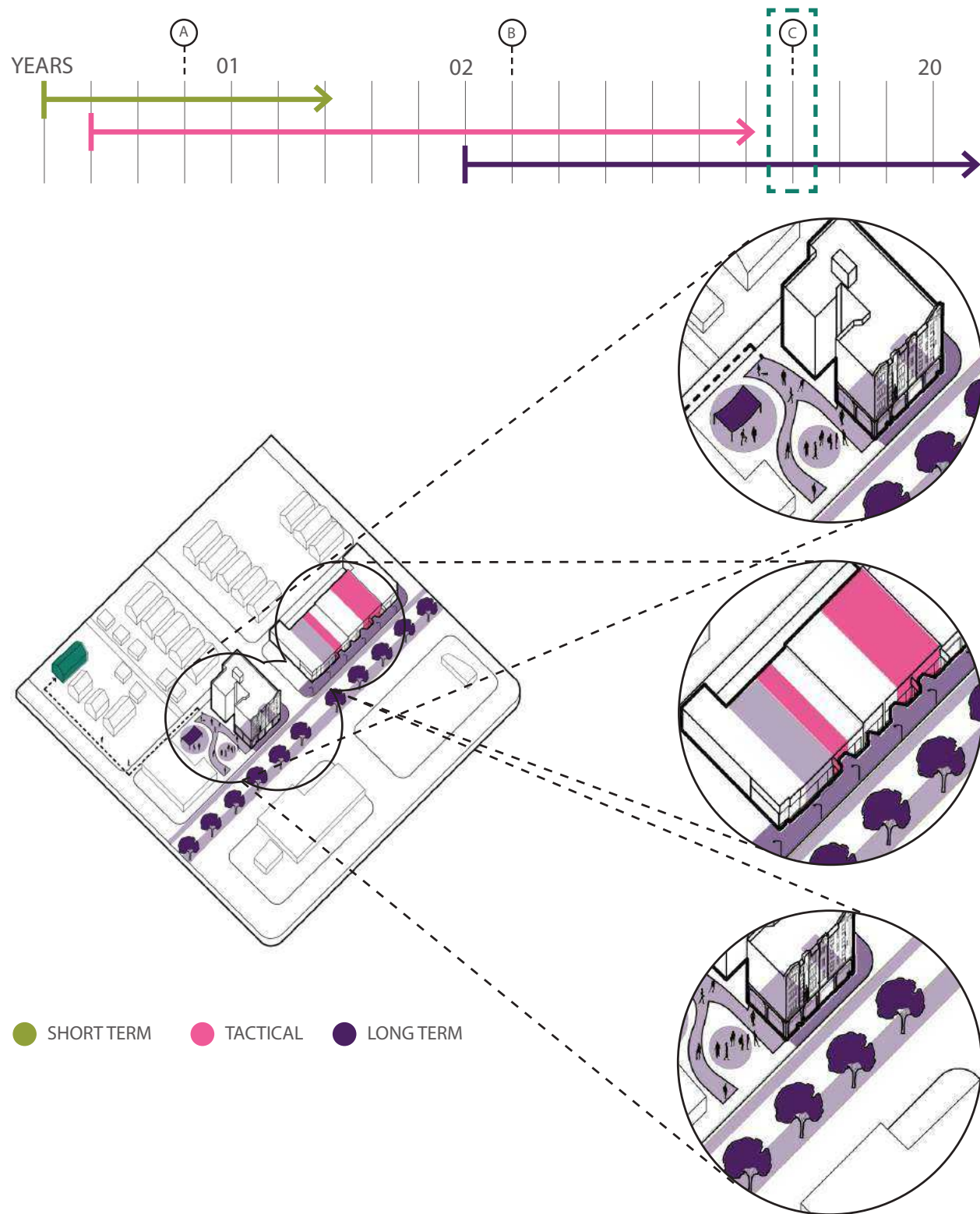
Bus bulb



Sidewalk improvements

For the streetscape improvements, a protected bike lane will be installed to provide safety to cyclists while maintaining existing parking spaces. A bus bulb will be installed in front of the Tyler Apartments bus stop, which will allow the bus to stay in its travel lane, thus reducing wait times and increasing efficiency. In addition, broken and unsafe sidewalks will be replaced and existing street trees will be limbed up to improve the visibility of the storefronts.

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



## INTERVENTION C: MOVE TO PERMANENCE

**GOAL = MAKE DEMONSTRATIONS PERMANENT**

### TYLER APARTMENTS



Museum annex



Museum shop



Outdoor event space

The heritage museum will become a satellite annex to the nearby Motown Museum and will expand to a third storefront. The extra space will be used to enlarge the gift shop and create an interactive music space. A new entrance on the south-facing wall of the building will allow better access to the outdoor space, which will serve as a gathering space for neighborhood tours. The former speakeasy will be improved with permanent furnishings, such as a stage, and will host regular programming, such as concerts, movies, and cookouts.

### THE STRIP



Active shops



Community arts center



Store spotlights

The remaining retail spaces will use short-term leases to attract entrepreneurs and local businesses. Ideally, these shops will include a mix of neighborhood-serving retail and professional offices, as identified in a recent Detroit Economic Growth Corporation study. One of the larger storefronts will become a community arts center that also includes a music academy. Store façades will be improved with new signage and spotlights to show that they're open for business.

### PUBLIC REALM



Planted median



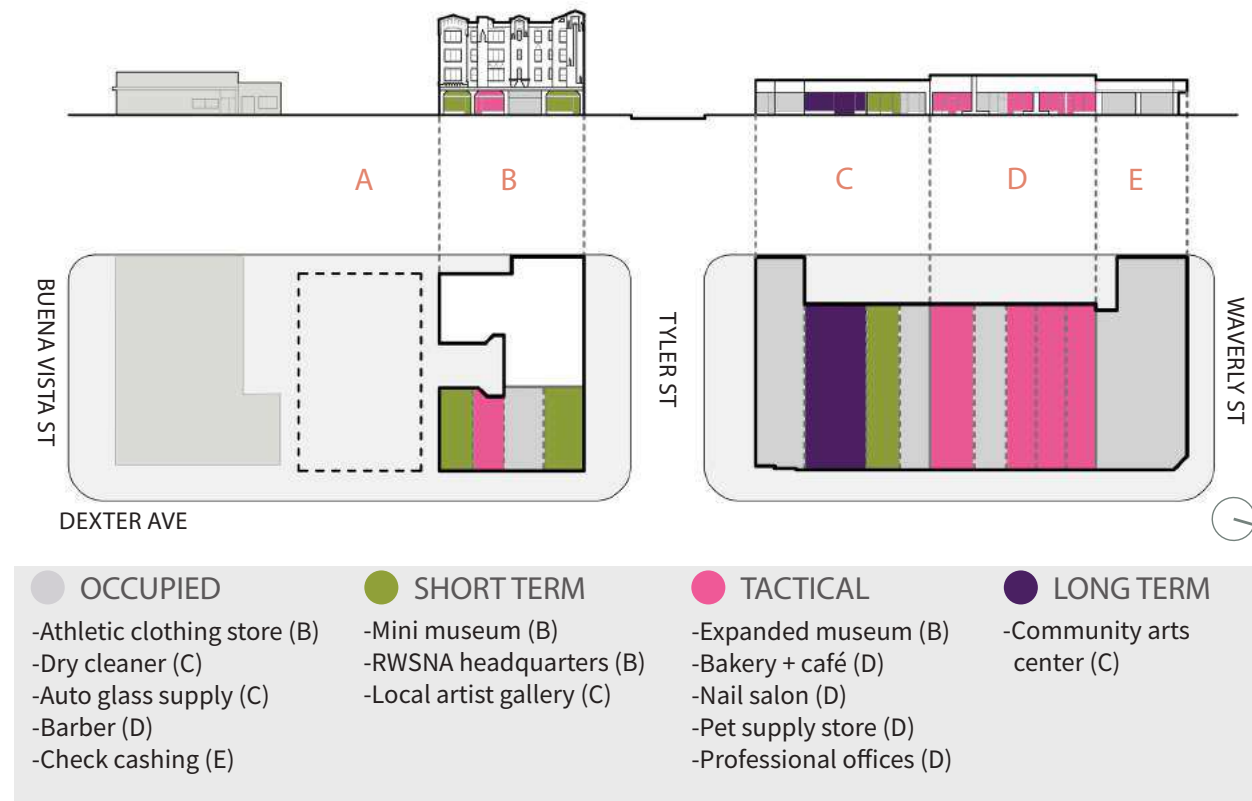
Welcome sign



Bus shelter

The temporary median will be replaced with a permanent, raised median that functions as a pedestrian refuge and vehicle turning lane. It will be planted with trees that not only provide shade and manage stormwater, but also slow down vehicular traffic and enhance the visual character of the corridor. In the middle of the median at the intersection of Dexter and Waverly, a sign created by a local artist will welcome people to the neighborhood. Lastly, a permanent bus shelter will be installed.

## DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



### FINAL PLAN

The elevation and plan shown above demonstrate how each of the fourteen storefronts will be targeted for tactical preservation interventions. The five existing businesses will not be displaced, so they benefit from the improvements and contribute to the commercial vitality of the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor.

Short term interventions are planned for spaces that are move-in-ready and adjacent to existing businesses. These include a mini, community-based museum that celebrates the community's arts heritage; a headquarters for the Russell Woods-Sullivan Neighborhood Association (RWSNA) that can also serve as a community meeting space; and a local artist gallery.

Tactical interventions include expanding the museum into the adjacent storefront in the Tyler Apartments as well as opening a variety of local-serving businesses. The suggestions for new

businesses are based on the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation's Neighborhood Retail Opportunity Study, which identified a market for neighborhood goods and services, food and beverage providers, and general merchandise. In addition, community members spoke to a need for professional office space since many residents currently operate businesses out of their homes.

The long term intervention consists of establishing a community arts center that provides space for classes, galleries, and performances. The center will work closely with the museum and will not only serve the surrounding communities, but will also make the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor a destination.

## FINAL PLAN + COMMUNITY NEEDS



Figure 4.25. The Tyler Apartment from the Dexter Ave.

### RETAIL

- Storefront improvements
- Public realm improvements

### TRANSPORTATION

- Protected bike lanes
- Bus shelter

### GATHERING SPACES

- El Morada Speakeasy
- Community arts center

### COMMUNITY HISTORY

- Museum of arts and culture
- Neighborhood-serving retail businesses

### COMMUNITY NEEDS

The tactical preservation interventions that contribute to the vision of the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor meet four of the five community needs identified for Russell Woods-Nardin Park: Retail, Transportation, Gathering Spaces, and Community History. The various physical improvements to both storefronts and the public realm will create better conditions to support existing and future retail. Street enhancements such as protected bike lanes and bus shelters will ameliorate safety concerns and improve multi-modal transportation access. The creation of the El Morada Speakeasy in the vacant lot south of the Tyler Apartments, a community arts center, and a headquarters for the Russell Woods-Sullivan Neighborhood Association will address the dearth of both indoor and outdoor gathering spaces. And finally, the new museum of arts and culture as well as the increase in neighborhood-serving retail businesses celebrate the community's history of arts and commerce.

# DEXTER-TYLER CULTURAL CORRIDOR



# VISION

**VISION**  
 Using a tactical preservation approach to community revitalization, the Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor will become a gateway to Russell Woods-Nardin Park. These interventions create inviting, usable public spaces; improve safety for all transportation modes; and celebrate the community's rich history of arts and culture.



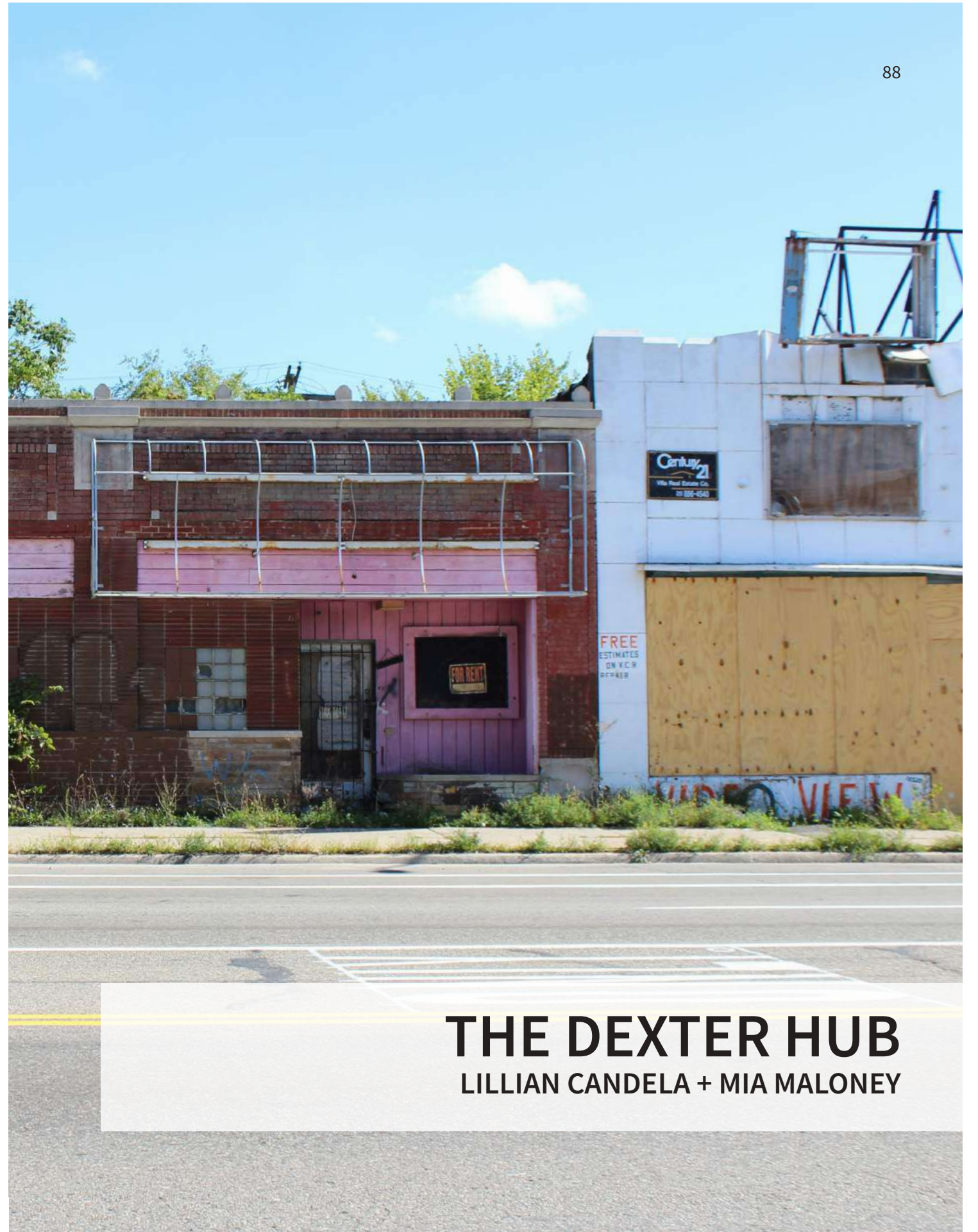
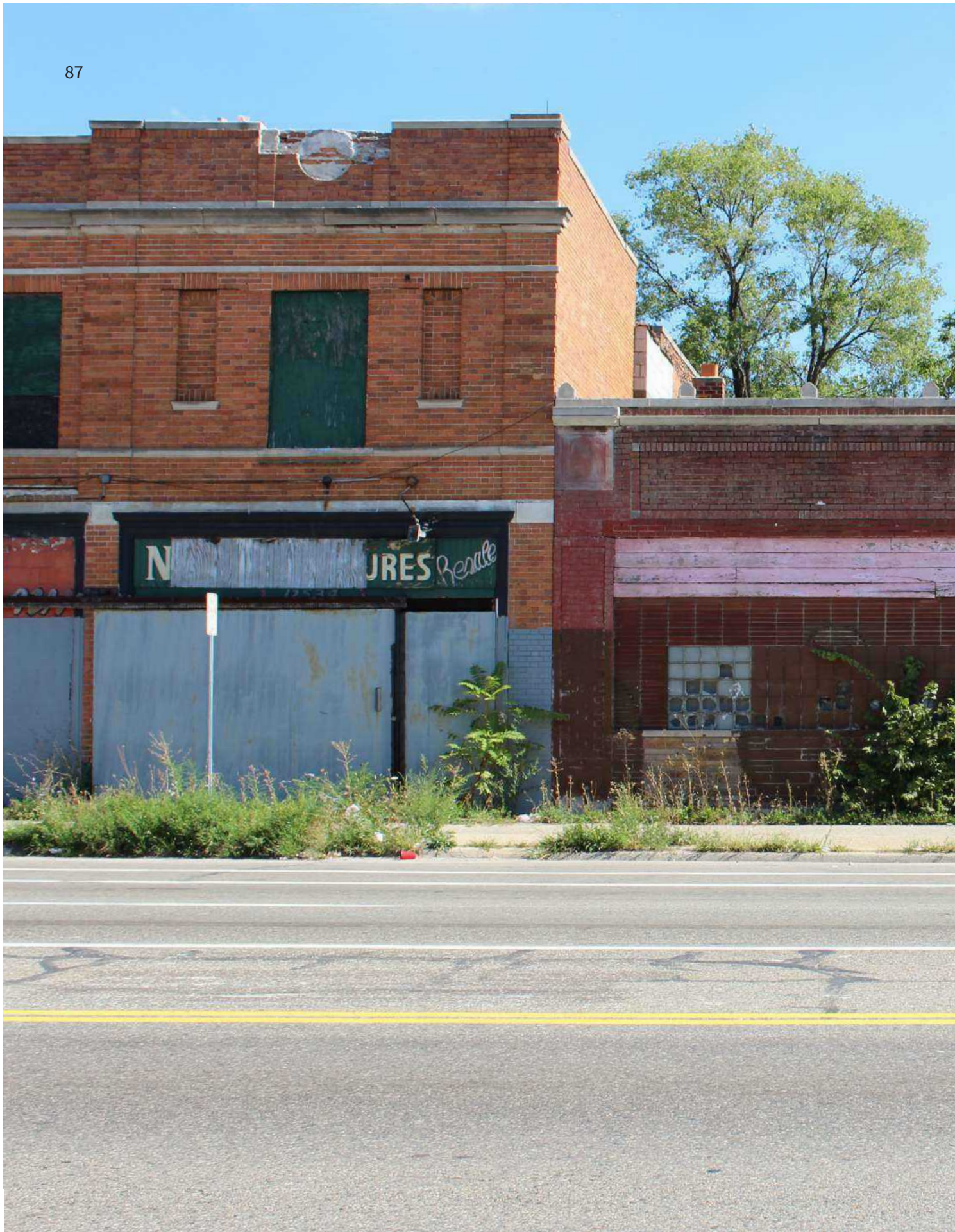
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**THE DEXTER HUB**  
LILLIAN CANDELA + MIA MALONEY

Figure 4.26. View of the Dexter Hub, facing northeast.



## THE DEXTER HUB

The Dexter Hub, located on Dexter Avenue between Fullerton Avenue and Sturtevant Avenue, features three connected commercial buildings. The northernmost building, (12546), is owned by the City of Detroit. It contains four commercial spaces on the first floor and vacant apartments in the rear. The center structure, (12546), contains two commercial spaces and is privately owned. The south-most building, (12512), also features two commercial spaces and is owned by the City of Detroit. The site is neighbored to the north and south by two vacant lots, both of which are privately owned.

The Dexter Hub was chosen due to its location along the well-traveled Dexter Avenue, its proximity to other commercial nodes – both active and inactive, and its character as a typical commercial strip common throughout Detroit.. A church, Grace Temple COGIC, is located across the street, and a Family Dollar is active just down the block. Additionally, the Dexter Hub has the potential to act as a connection between multiple neighborhoods, as it is located just north of Nardin Park, is bordered by Russell Woods to the west, and is bordered by the Dexter-Linwood neighborhood to the

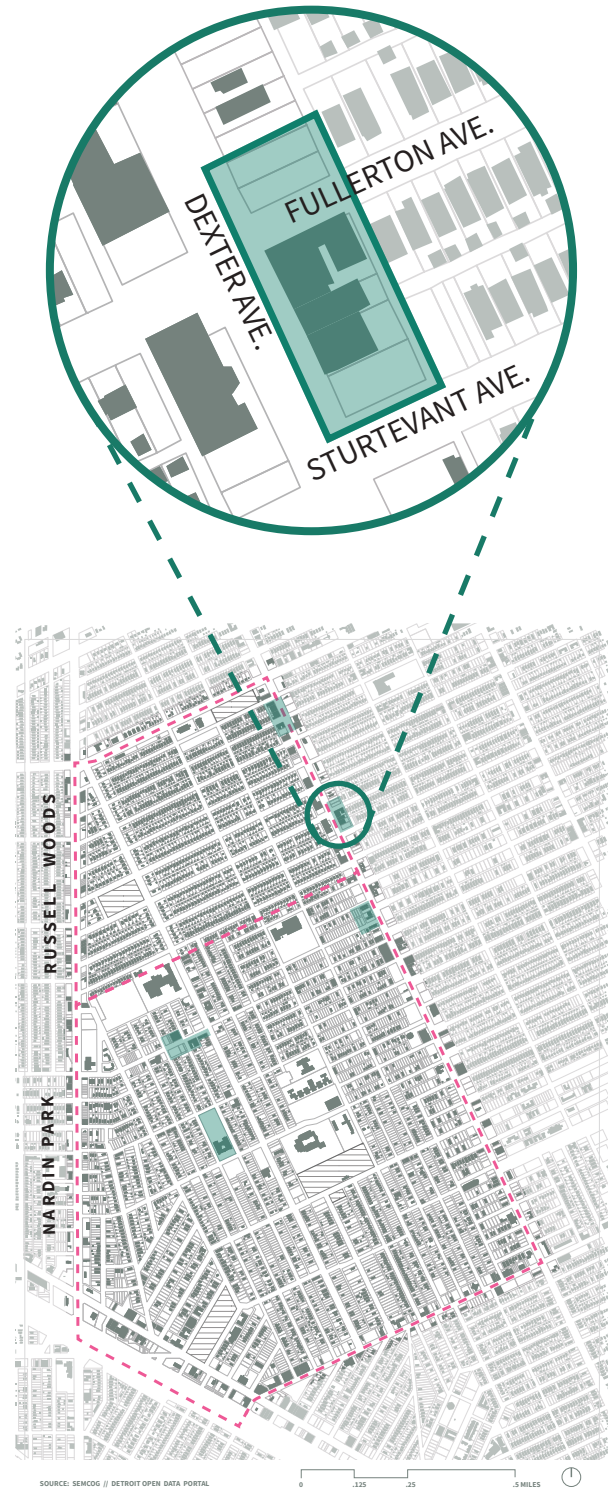


Figure 4.27. Location of the Dexter Hub.



Figure 4.28. View of front looking north.



Figure 4.29. North side of 12546.

## SITE INTRODUCTION

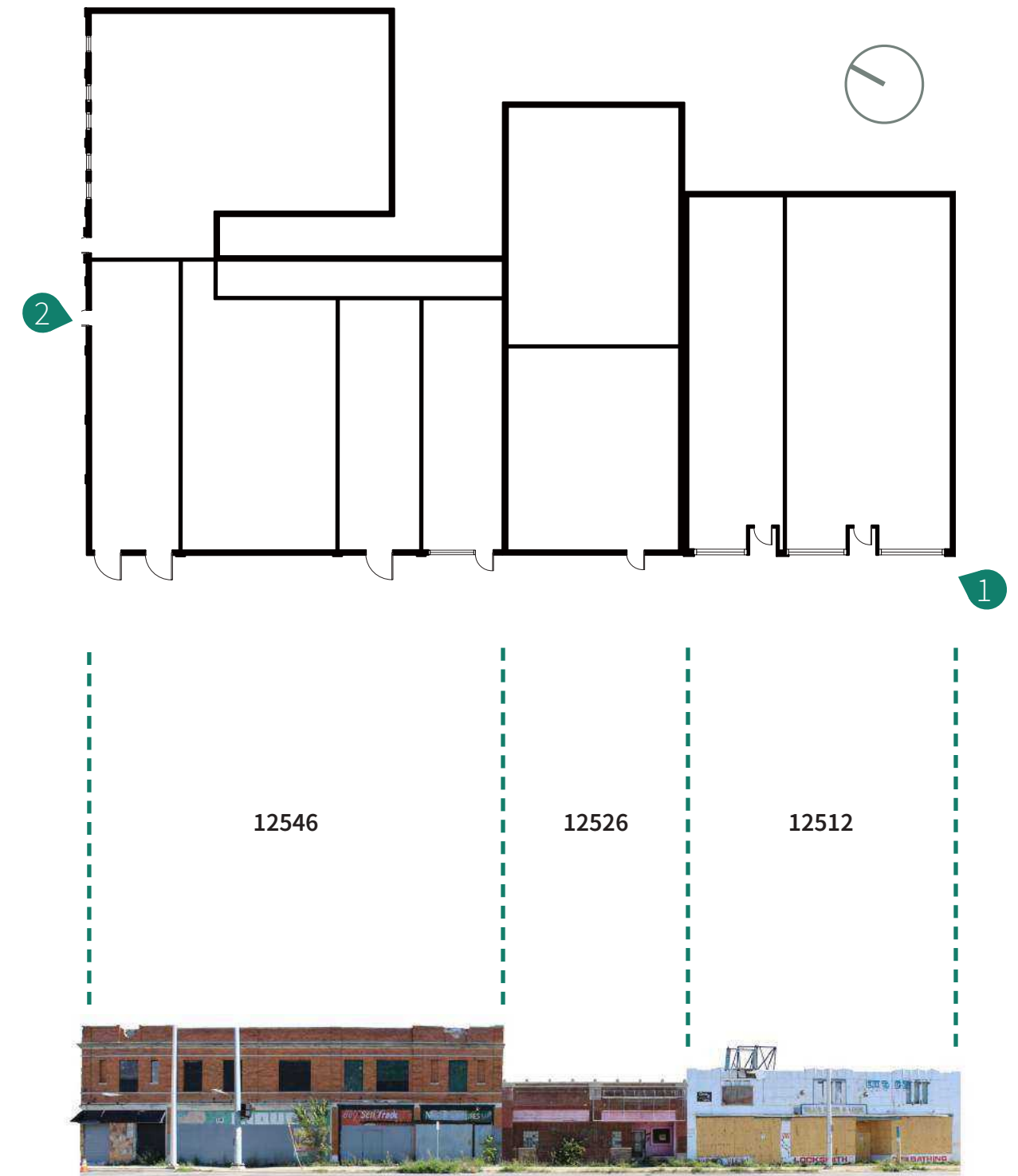


Figure 4.30. Facades of the Dexter Hub along Dexter Avenue.

# THE DEXTER HUB

## HISTORY

Development of the site began around 1926 when a realty company occupied the space where 12526 is located. This may be the front half of the present 12526, which is listed as being constructed in 1928 but shown in the 1926 Sanborn Map. A variety of businesses have historically functioned in the three buildings, including a construction company, cleaners, restaurant, drug store, party store, pet shop, and salon. In the 1980s, 12512 became a Neighborhood City Hall, accompanied by a Mini-Police Station. The City Hall remained on site into the early 2000s. Retail spaces in all three buildings closed between 2000 and 2010. All are currently empty. (Each buildings' retail spaces have been listed under multiple addresses. Addresses for 12546 have included 12546, 12542, 12540, 12538, and 12534. Addresses for 12526 have included 12530 and 12526. 12512 has included 12520, 12518, 12512, and 12510.)



Figure 4.31. 1926 Sanborn Map.

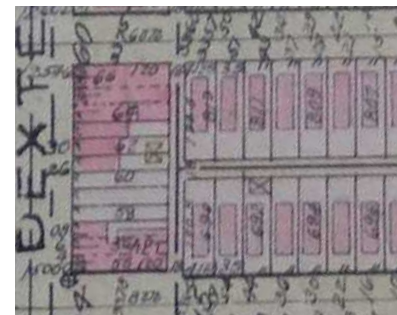


Figure 4.32. 1955 Sanborn Map.



Figure 4.33. 1980 Sanborn Map.



Figure 4.34. Aerial view from 2018.

1926 REALTY COMPANY

1955 DRUG STORE AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

1980 PARTY STORE, SALON, AND NEIGHBORHOOD CITY HALL

TODAY VACANT WITH TWO PROPERTIES OWNED BY THE CITY

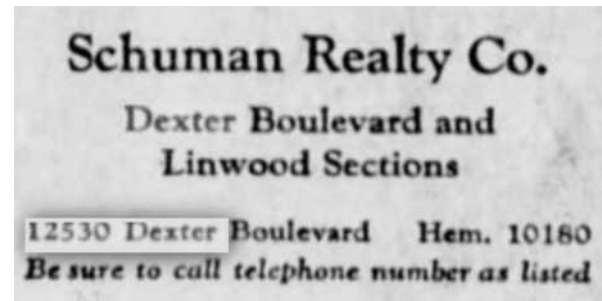


Figure 4.35. 1926 Advertisement for Schuman Realty Co. from the Detroit Free Press.

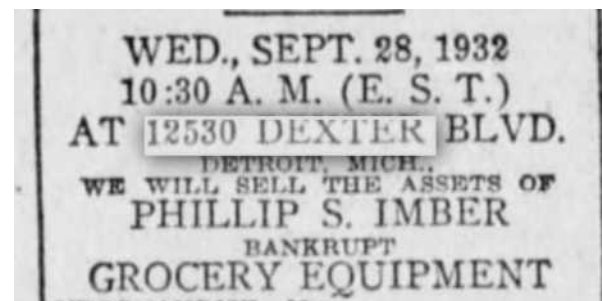


Figure 4.36. A grocery store occupied 12526. Advertisement from the Detroit Free Press, 1932.



Figure 4.37. 1938 advertisement from the Detroit Press for Burton Brothers, a construction company.

# HISTORY

**ting around**

**public safety**

The Detroit Board of Police Commissioners, established by city charter in 1974, is made up of five citizens appointed by the mayor with approval of the City Council. The board has five major responsibilities:

- To establish policies, rules and regulations of the Police Department; in consultation with the mayor and chief of police.
- To review and approve the department's annual proposed budget before its submission to the mayor.
- To receive and resolve any complaint concerning operation of the Police Department.
- To act as final authority in imposing or reviewing discipline of department employees.
- To make annual reports to the mayor and City Council regarding the department's activities.

**THE BOARD MEETS** Thursdays at 1 p.m. in Room 328A at Police Headquarters, except for the second Thursday of each month, when it meets at a police precinct. The next precinct meeting is at 7:30 tonight at the 15th (Gratiot) Precinct, 11187 Gratiot.

Here is a list of future board meetings at precincts: May 8, 12th Precinct; June 12, Greater Detroit Roundtable, 150 W. Boston, July 19, 14th Precinct; Aug. 14, 3d Precinct; Sept. 11, 6th Precinct; Oct. 9, 11th Precinct; Nov. 13, 10th Precinct; Dec. 11, 5th Precinct.

Because of holidays that fall on Thursdays, several meetings will be held on alternate days. They are: Tuesday, Nov. 25, Wednesday, Dec. 17; Monday, Dec. 22, and Monday, Dec. 29. All alternate meetings are at 3 p.m. in Room 328A at Police Headquarters.

The police commissioners are: Roy Levy Williams, chair; Richard Kughn, vice-chair; Harold Shapiro; David Ellis, and Sharon McPhail.

Citizens who want to lodge complaints with the board should call 876-0078, 8-5 weekdays. For general information, call 224-4117 during the same hours. Mail should sent to the Board of Police Commissioners, 1300 Beaubien, Room 328, Detroit 48226.

**A maximal year for mini-stations**

Last year was special for the Detroit Police Mini-station Section, which has been in operation since 1978. In November, the section, under the direction of Inspector Lawrence Holland, won the International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners Community Crime Prevention Unit of the Year award in recognition of its programs.

But the section is involved with a lot more than crime prevention, said Officer Sandra Dixon, who works in its main office, at Police Headquarters.

Basically, she said, the 55 mini-stations throughout the city "enable police and the community to be involved with each other." Officers assigned to the stations, and their phones, help schedule meetings, make referrals, answer questions regarding non-emergency requests for police services, provide surveys and workshops.

In addition, she said, most of the 90 officers assigned to the mini-stations are involved in the evenings with charitable work such as food and toy collections and fundraising for the Police Athletic League.

Officers must undergo at least 90 hours of monthly crime prevention training at the Police Academy before they are assigned to a mini-station. Some precincts have a mini-station as a station, many of which operate in storefronts.

Also in 1985, Dixon said, mini-station officers were involved in about 400 arrests, 5,000 police reports, 1,100 security surveys, and 500 organized Neighborhood, Business and Vertical (building) Watch groups.

**KEY TO THE MAP:**  
Police headquarters and precincts are represented by numbers in light circles, mini-stations in pink circles.

(1) Detroit Police Headquarters, 1300 Beaubien, between Clinton and Michigan  
(2) 3d (Warren) Precinct, 2851 W. Vernor at Twentieth Street, 224-4023  
Mini-station: 1544 Washington Blvd., at Grand Circle Park, 224-0444  
2222 Ferry Park, near Grand River, 806-2902  
Jeffrey Project, Building 502, 833-3757  
1346 Broadway, near Gratiot, 226-0444  
4424 W. Vernor, at Central, 287-9611  
1424 Michigan, near Church, near station, no phone yet  
(4) 4th (Fort-Green) Precinct, 7140 W. Fort, at Owen, 287-6000  
Mini-station: 6027 W. Jefferson, east of Dearborn, 287-9425  
2573 S. Schaefer Highway, at Deacon, 287-9425  
1744 W. Vernor, west of Central, 287-9424  
(5) 5th (E. Jean) Precinct, 11411 E. Jefferson at St. Jean, 387-6882  
Mini-station: 6167 E. Jefferson, near Genesee, 287-8550  
14209 E. Jefferson, at Newport, 287-8251  
11145 Mack, near Berkeley, 287-8551  
1342 Connor, near Warren, 267-8924  
1834 E. Warren, near Courville, 287-8555  
(6) 6th (McDow) Precinct, 6840 McDow at Martin, 388-2347  
Mini-station: 6027 W. Jefferson, east of Dearborn, 287-9425  
2573 S. Schaefer Highway, at Deacon, 287-9425  
1744 W. Vernor, west of Central, 287-9424  
(7) 7th (Mack) Precinct, 3300 Mack at Linwood, 267-8603  
Mini-station: 628 Charle, at Congress, 224-0482  
5036 Charle, near Ferry, 267-6923  
7737 Kercheval, near Solway, 267-6932  
8102 Detroit, at Parker, 267-6934  
8387 E. Jefferson, at Ingalls, 267-6930  
7754 Harper, near Bacon, 267-6428  
(10) 10th (Livernois) Precinct, 12000 Livernois at Elmhurst, 326-5181  
Mini-station: 6296 Grand River, near Joy Road, 325-4446  
2611 Livernois, near Linwood, 876-0411  
15511 Livernois, at Fullerton, 825-5425  
(11) 11th (DeWitt) Precinct, 3612 E. DeWitt, at Cozette, 876-0254  
Mini-station: 3102W Van Dyke, near Emory, 876-0253  
8702 Charle, near Spaulding, 876-0251  
18320 John R., near Margolis, 876-0412  
2827 E. Seven Mile, near Goodland, 876-0262  
1307 E. State Fair, at Russel, 876-0265  
(12) 12th (Palmer Park) Precinct, 1441 W. Seven Mile, between Pontchartrain and Woodward, 876-0401  
Mini-station: 13402 W. Seven Mile, near Showland, 925-3211  
13561 W. Chicago, near Sorrento, 935-4445  
5003 Terman, near Beechwood, 886-2293  
4130 Warren, near Bangor, 988-2293  
7824 Michigan, near Casper, 287-9427  
5425 Michigan, near Thelby-second, 886-4388  
(13) 13th (Cass) Precinct, 3300 Mack at Linwood, 267-8603  
Mini-station: 10357 Woodward, near Callwood, 878-0384  
2917 Cass, near Temple, 833-1122  
2027 Second, near Milwaukee, 876-5965  
2711 Woodward, near Pierson, 825-1135  
504 Park, near Beaubien, 833-1124  
8421 Ross Park Blvd., near Biddle, 986-2187  
(14) 14th (Schaefer) Precinct, 13350 Livernois at Grand River, 825-5121  
Mini-station: 4277 Fenwick, at Wilcoxon, 925-3277  
13460 Grand River, near Bryden, 925-4284  
13751 Grand River, near Montross, 925-4285  
56955 Joy Road, near Grandmont, 287-8428  
(15) 15th (Casswell) Station, 11187 Gratiot at Charle-magne, 287-4906  
Mini-station: 14354 Gratiot, near Seven Mile, 287-8608  
1963 Gratiot, near Harper, 287-4928  
12520 Joy, near Napleton, no station, no phone yet  
(16) 16th (Grand River) Precinct, 21400 Grand River, at Berline, 505-5203  
Mini-station: 1816 Fenwick, near Greenfield, 925-3225  
28445 Fenwick, near Preston, 925-3227  
18240 Joy Road, near Piedmont, 925-4287  
20250 W. Seven Mile, near Karloff, 925-4484  
(17) 17th (Hamtramck) Police Headquarters, 9450 Ewald, between Schaefer and Central, 878-7300  
7743 Schaefer, near Gratiot, 925-3333  
(18) 18th (Woodward) Precinct, 4747 Woodward, at Hancock, 825-4700  
Mini-station: 10357 Woodward, near Callwood, 878-0384  
2917 Cass, near Temple, 833-1122  
2027 Second, near Milwaukee, 876-5965  
2711 Woodward, near Pierson, 825-1135  
504 Park, near Beaubien, 833-1124  
8421 Ross Park Blvd., near Biddle, 986-2187  
(19) 19th (Hamtramck) Precinct, 13350 Livernois at Grand River, 825-5121  
Mini-station: 4277 Fenwick, at Wilcoxon, 925-3277  
13460 Grand River, near Bryden, 925-4284  
13751 Grand River, near Montross, 925-4285  
56955 Joy Road, near Grandmont, 287-8428  
MUNICIPAL and SCHOOL offices are located on the map by numbers in dark circles, as follows:  
(1) Hamtramck City Hall, 3671 Ewald at Winback  
(2) Hamtramck Board of Education offices, 11410 Casswell, near Grant  
(3) Highland Park City Hall, Gerald at Woodward  
(4) Highland Park Public School Offices, 26 Bartlett, at Woodward  
(5) Detroit City-County Building, Woodward at Jefferson  
Detroit Neighborhood City Hall  
(6) Dennis Annex, 822 W. Jefferson  
(7) DeLoe-Fullerton, 15219 Casswell at Fullerton  
(8) Fair Northwood, 16426 Grand River at Outer Drive  
(9) North Central, 2413 E. Seven Mile, at Goodland  
(10) Northpark, 14628 Gratiot, at Liberal  
(11) North End, 9489 Woodward, at Westminster  
(12) Northwest, 19118 Livernois, at Seven Mile  
(13) Southwest, 14345 Mack, at Schaefer  
(14) South Schaefer, 258 S. Vernor, at Beaubien  
(15) Southwood, 7760 W. Vernor, at Casper  
(16) Vernor Junction, 460 Vernor, at Junction  
(17) Detroit Public Schools building, Woodward at Pierson

Figure 4.38. An article from the Detroit Press in 1986 featuring Detroit's mini-stations, including the mini-station and Neighborhood City Hall which were located in the present 12512 building (highlighted in pink).



Figure 4.39. 1976 advertisement for King's Custom Design, which was located in 12546.



Figure 4.40. 1993 Advertisement for Ms. Chic, a salon which was located in 12526.

**ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS**

The site features a variety of architectural details. Decorative brickwork can be found on 12546, while enamel panels form the facade of 12512. Original wooden details are buried behind plywood. A sliding garage door on 12546 opens up the possible uses for the space. Missing details on the brick parapets are an opportunity for creative intervention during restoration of the facade. Side and rear entrances offer the opportunity for flow into adjacent side streets and lots, and strengthen the connection to the Dexter-Linwood neighborhood behind the site.



Figure 4.41. Side entrance of 12546 with decorative balcony and missing parapet detail along Fullerton Avenue.



Figure 4.42. Original signage and sliding garage door.



Figure 4.43. Decorative wooden details on 12546.



Figure 4.44. Enamel panels on 12512.



Figure 4.45. Rear view, facing northwest. Left: 12512. Middle: 12526. Right: 12546.



Figure 4.46. Parapet details and stone cornices on 12546.

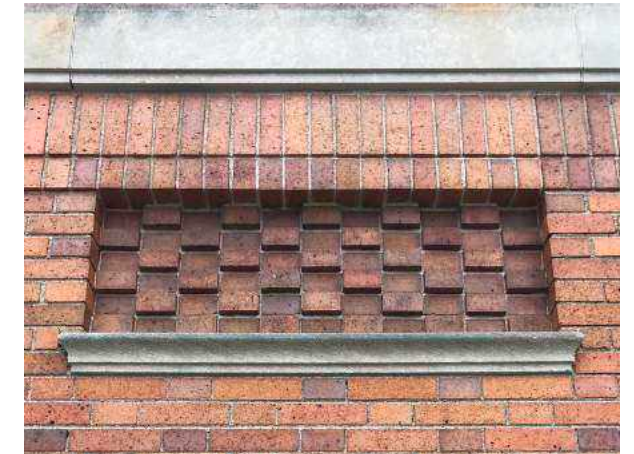


Figure 4.47. Decorative brickwork on 12546.

## THE DEXTER HUB

### CONDITION

While this is a historically commercial block, 12546 Dexter is commercial facing Dexter Avenue and residential in the rear. While the commercial spaces are all structurally sound, the residential portion of 12546 is structurally compromised. The exterior walls are compromised and the roof has caved in. Little fabric remains on the interior of the building. Because this residential portion is separated from the commercial spaces by a demising wall, this poor condition does not affect the front commercial portion of the building.



Figure 4.48. 12546 rear detail.



Figure 4.49. Roof of 12546.



Figure 4.50. 12512 interior detail.



Figure 4.51. 12512 exterior detail.

## CONDITION

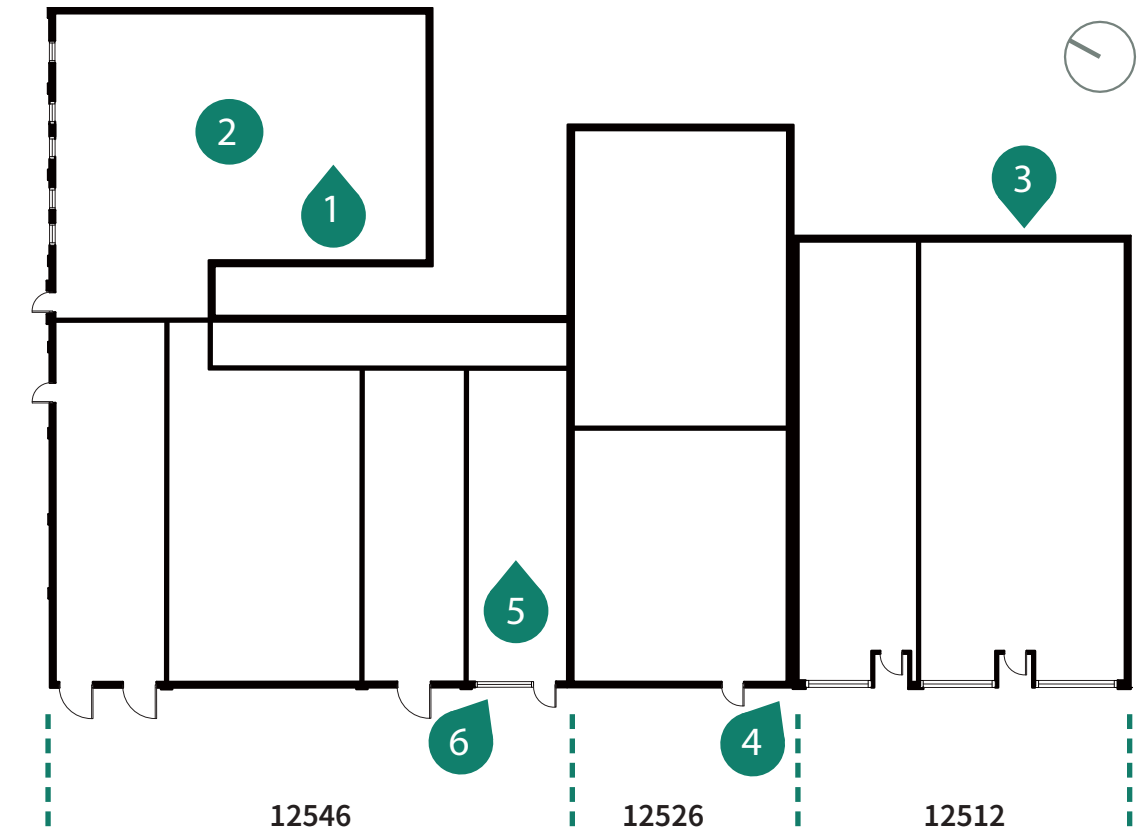


Figure 4.52. 12546 interior detail.

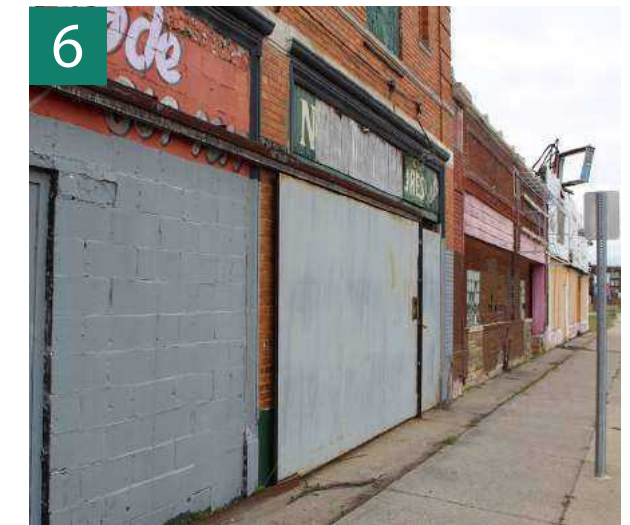


Figure 4.53. 12546 exterior detail.

## THE DEXTER HUB

### SITE STRENGTHS

Specific interventions were determined by identifying the strengths inherent to our site and merging them with the identified community needs of the site at large. Our site strengths include being located along Dexter Avenue, a well-traveled arterial road in the city. The site is also adjacent to a Route 16 bus stop, one of the more active bus routes in the city. Further, because this site is on the Eastern side of Dexter Avenue it has the ability to act as a connection between Russell Woods, Nardin Park and the Dexter-Linwood neighborhoods. Our site also has architectural merit in that there is much existing architectural character and there are many commercial spaces to both connect or divide allowing for many spatial possibilities.

### COMMUNITY NEEDS

Our proposed interventions address four of the five identified community needs categories for the site – retail, transportation, gathering spaces and community history. Our interventions specifically react to the site strengths and community needs which most appropriately correspond.

The community needs locator map (Figure 4.53) was created to determine if our proposed programs were indeed fulfilling unsatisfied needs within the site. By mapping food trucks, laundromats and recreation centers it is evident that these needs are not satisfied within a reasonable distance to the site. By bringing these programs to the site it will foster a more walkable community and bring together programs which are currently very disparate in the city at large.

### MARKET DATA

The Detroit Neighborhood Opportunity Study for Russell Woods has determined that 9,240 square feet of full-service restaurants and 905 square feet of alcohol permits are supportable by the neighborhood. While most of the current food and beverage demand are currently being served for by take-out restaurants, this may be replaced by affordable sit-down options overtime, with one or two restaurants supportable in the short-term. The success of these spaces will be largely dependent on marketing and accessible pricing. The lower initial costs of bringing food trucks indoors to begin to serve the need for sit-down restaurants may help to ensure that prices are kept affordable.<sup>1</sup>

### SITE STRENGTHS

- Along Well-Traveled Street
- Adjacent to Active Bus Stop
- Connects Multiple Neighborhoods
- Many Commercial Spaces to Connect to Divide
- Existing Architectural Detail and Character
- Open Space Nearby in Vacant Lots and Rear Yards

### ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

#### RETAIL

- Food and Drink
- Storefront Activation

#### TRANSPORTATION

- Bus Shelter
- Pedestrian Safety

#### SPACES

- Community Center
- Recreation Center

#### COMMUNITY HISTORY

- Community Center

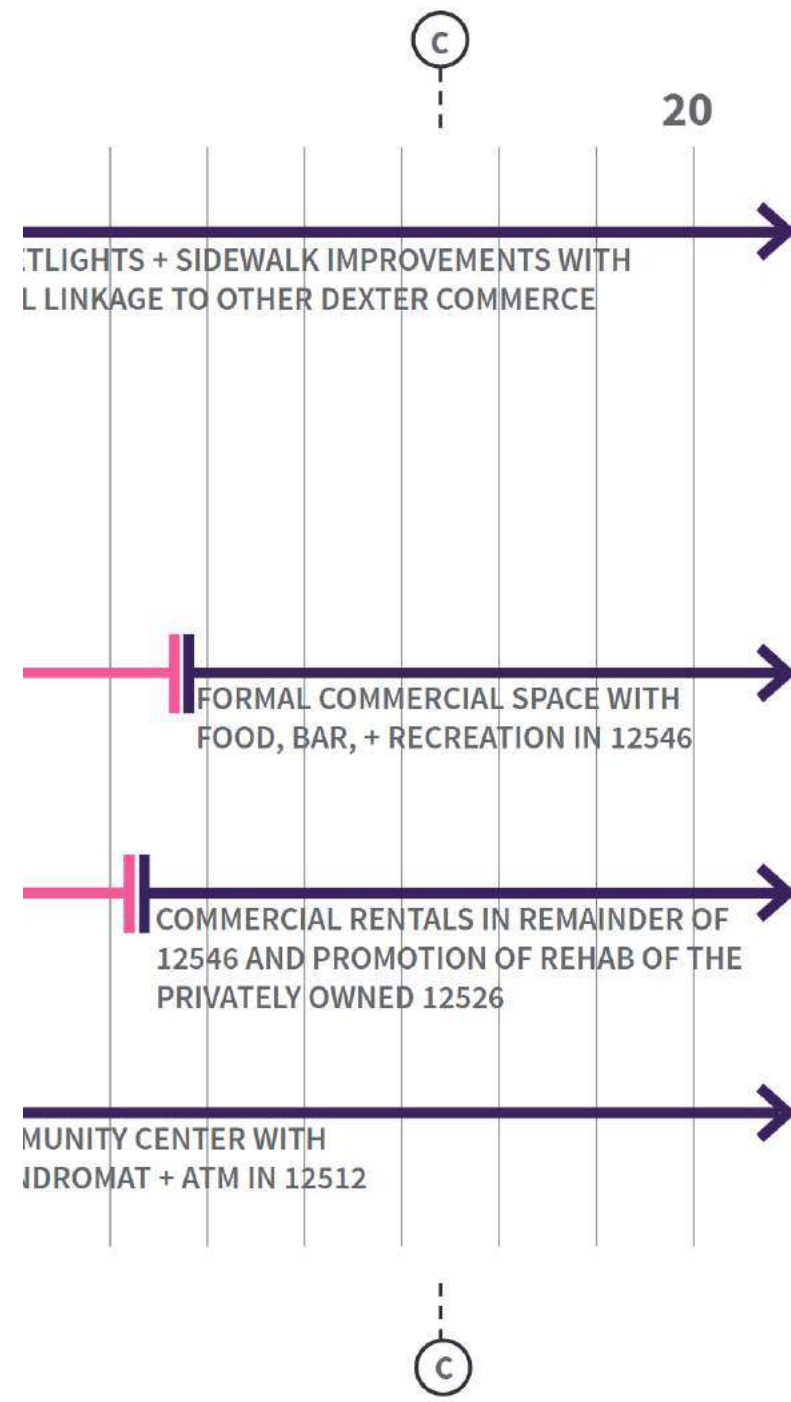
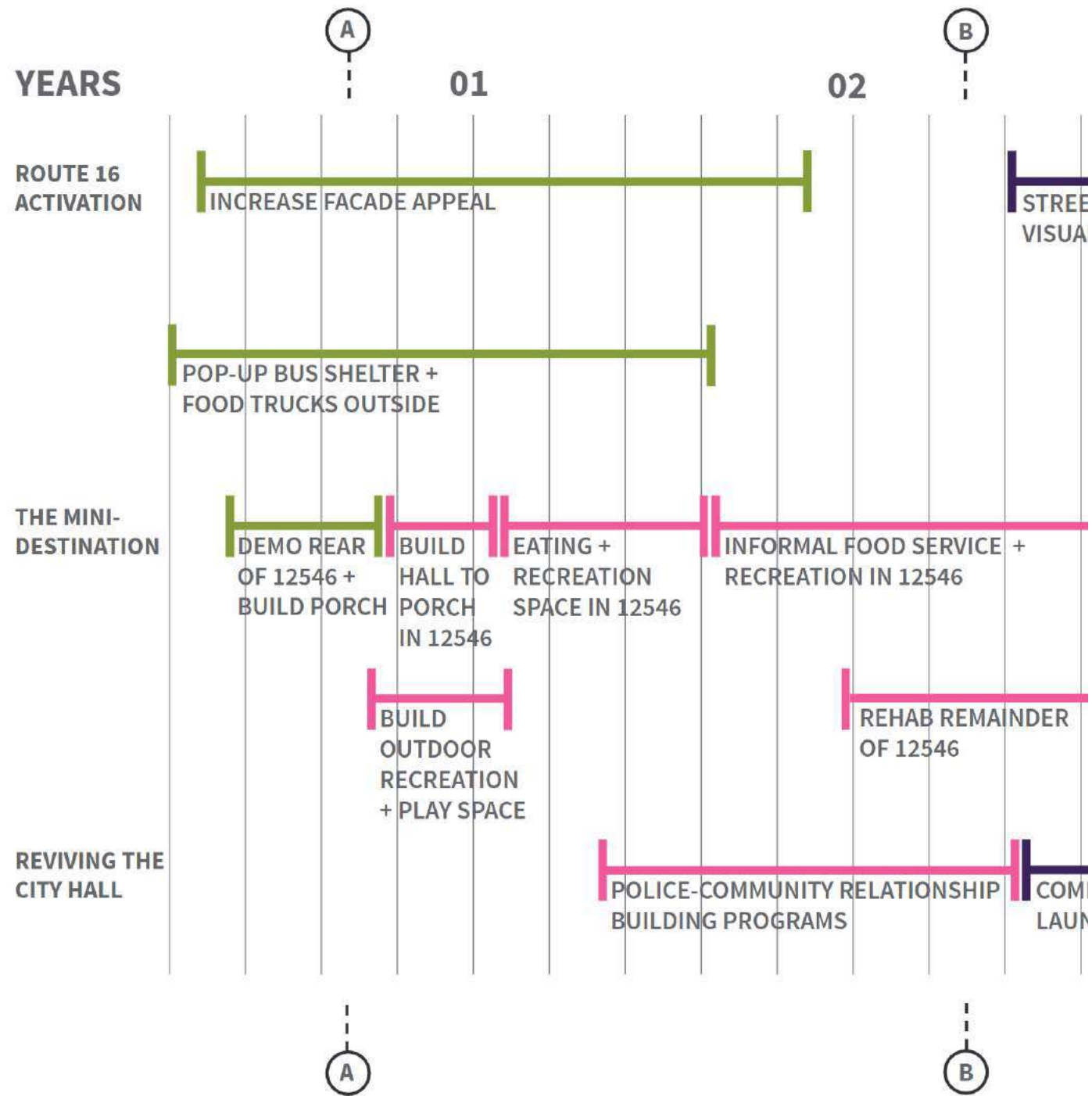
## STRENGTHS + COMMUNITY NEEDS



Figure 4.54. Locations of programming within Detroit similar to those proposed for the Dexter Hub.

## THE DEXTER HUB

## INTERVENTION TIMELINE



### TIMELINE

Early interventions we propose for the site include increasing the facade appeal through reviving the architectural details and construction of a pop-up bus shelter. This will be followed by the demolition of the rear apartments of 12546, as they are beyond repair and the rear space could repurposed to better serve the community. This includes the construction of an outdoor recreation space and porch, which will be made accessible from the front early into the project via a hallway. From here, interventions will begin to move inside, with the establishment of an indoor food truck hall and recreation space, accompanied later by the rehabilitation of the remaining retail space. This will be followed by the resurrection of the Neighborhood City Hall in 12512, beginning with pop-up police-community relationship building programs.

To reiterate, our interventions are split into three themes or goals: the activation of the route 16 bus stop, the creation of a mini-destination and the revival of the former city hall and mini-police station. These projects are staggered in length and duration in order to build interest and to create linkages so that short-term and tactical programs can generate income toward long-term goals.

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

**ROUTE 16 ACTIVATION**

Our first short-term intervention takes place not on our site but adjacent to it in a vacant lot where the current Route 16 bus stop is. Because there is no bench or bus stop infrastructure currently, we are proposing a bus shelter as well as an occasional food truck corral in the hopes that this generates both interest in the site and income towards the demolition of the structurally compromised portion of our site

The demolition of the formerly residential half of 12546 will happen simultaneously as facade and sidewalk rehabilitation take place. Storefronts will be reopened, windows replaced, bricks repointed and porcelain enamel panels rehabilitated. While our project is strictly focused on activating the ground floor of these buildings, the entire facade will be rehabilitated to attract future interest to the second floors.

**PRECEDENT**

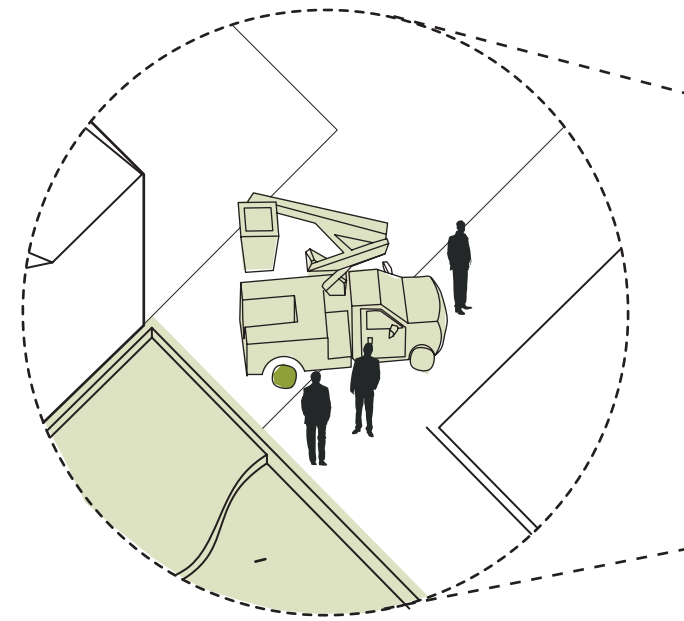
Pop-up bus shelters, like the one featured here in Minneapolis, have the ability to draw attention to the site, while creating amenity for transit users or pedestrians.<sup>2</sup>



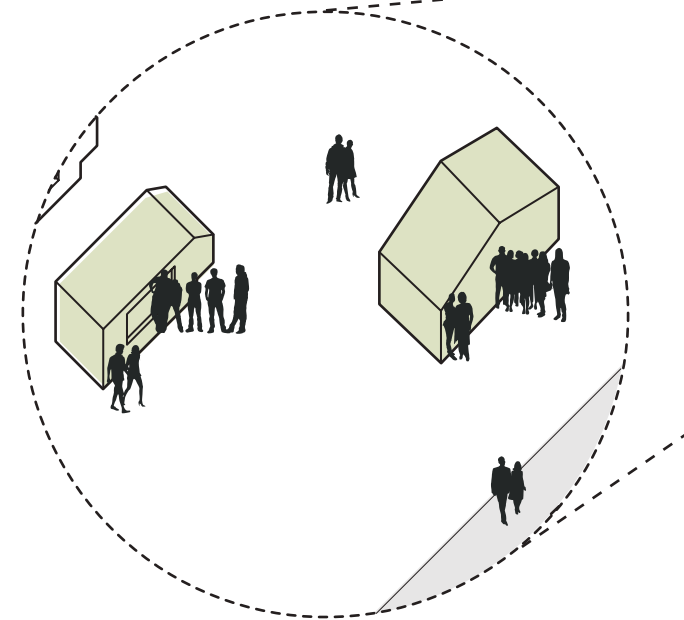
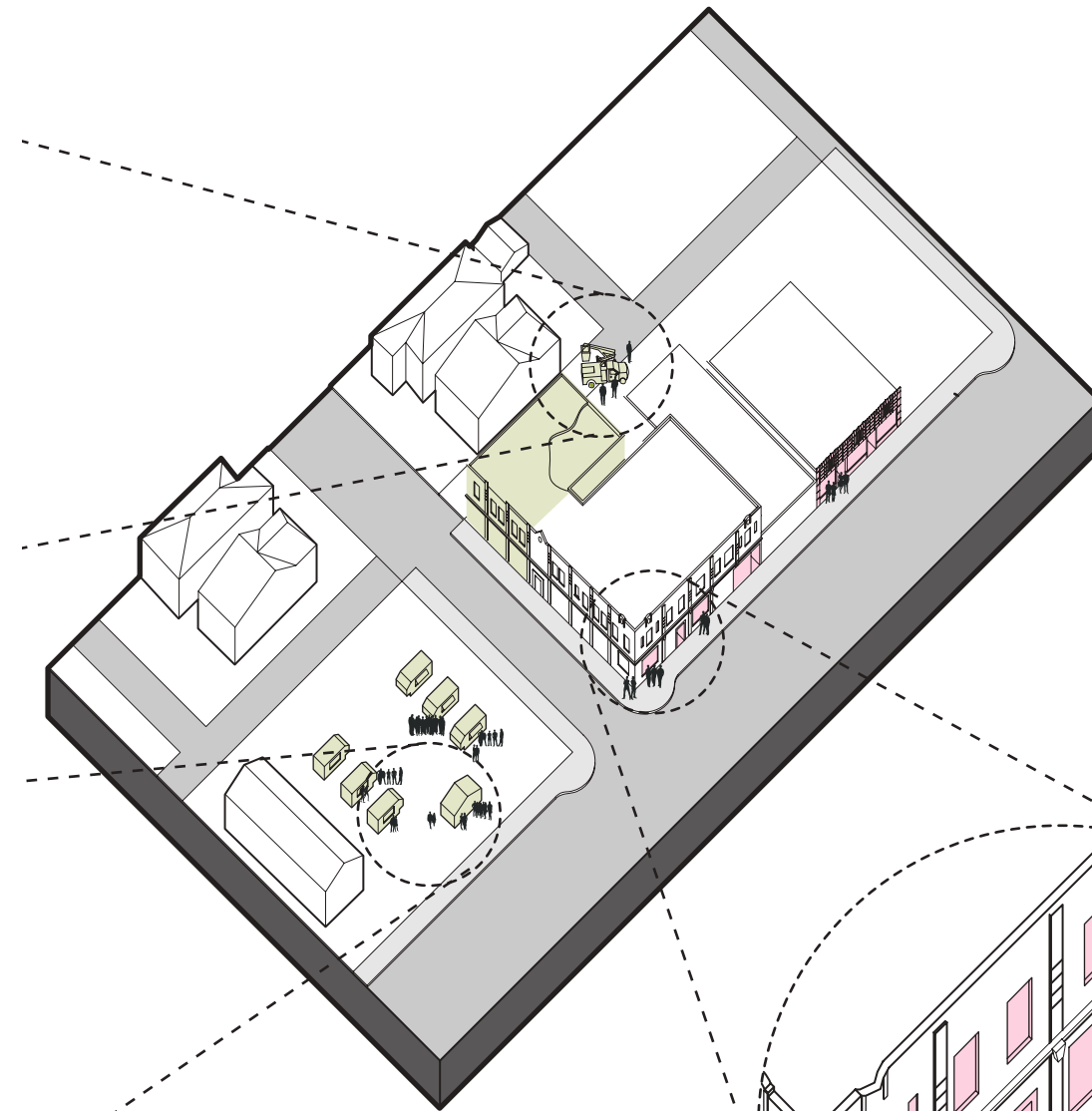
Figure 4.55. Pop-up bus shelter in Minneapolis.

**THE DEXTER HUB**

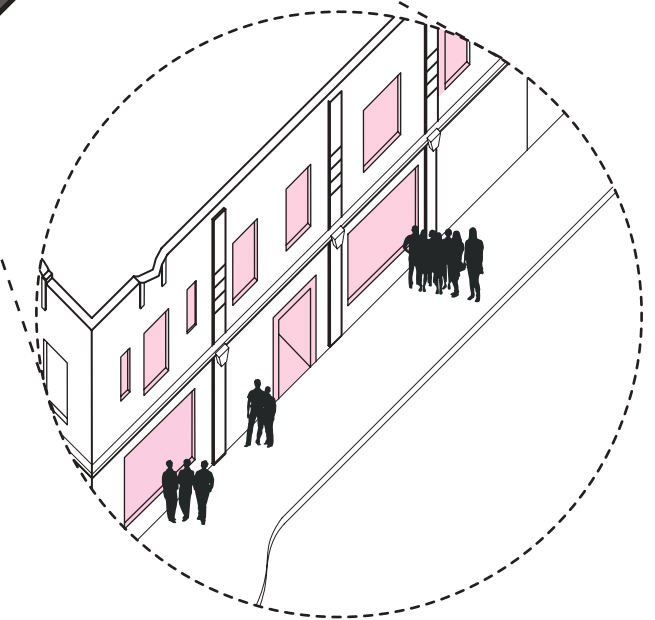
**ROUTE 16 ACTIVATION**



PARTIAL DEMOLITION

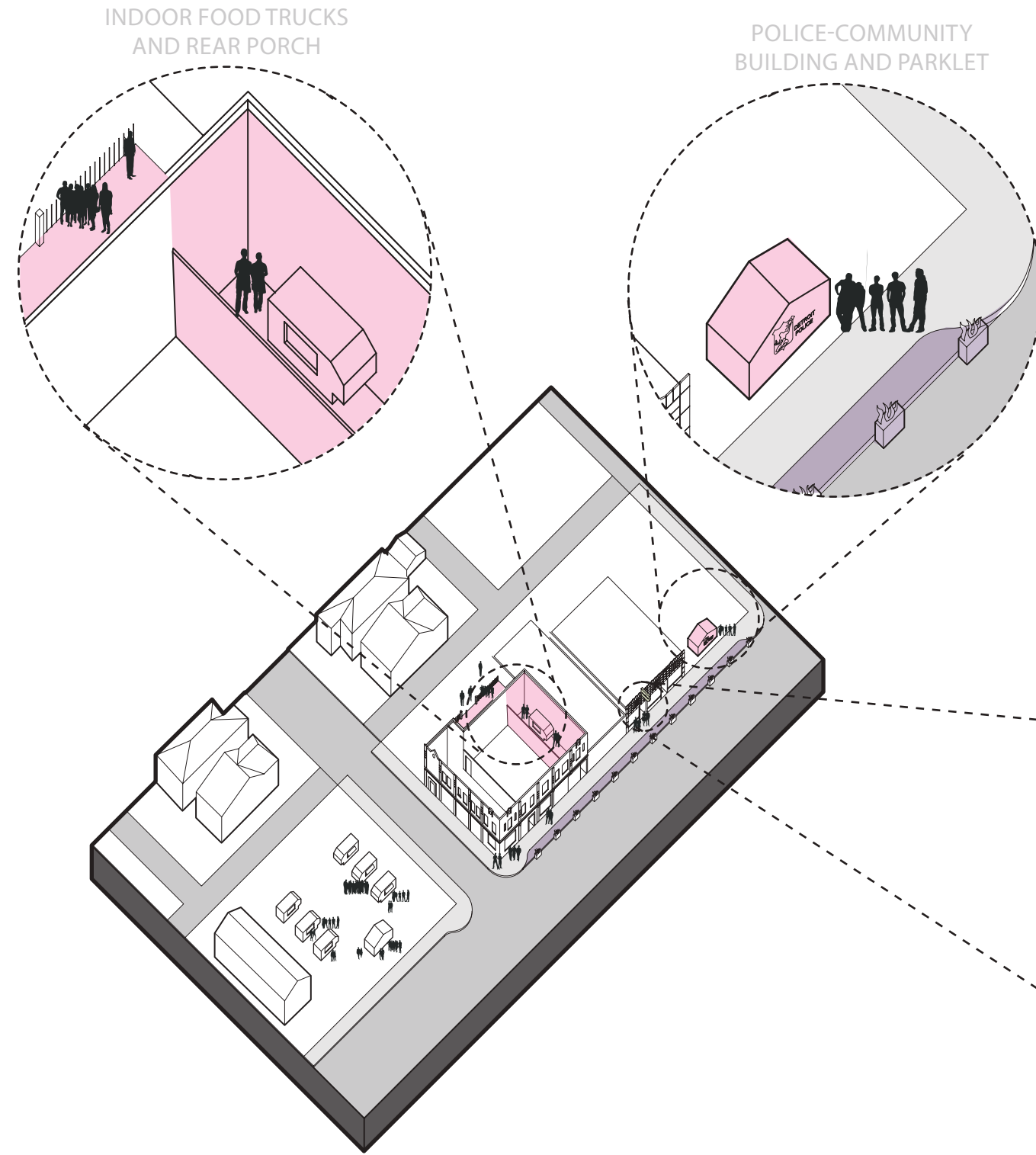


FOOD TRUCKS AND  
ROUTE 16 BUS SHELTER



FACADE AND SIDEWALK  
REHABILITATION

## THE DEXTER HUB



## THE MINI-DESTINATION

### THE MINI-DESTINATION

Once the demolition portion of our intervention is complete, we will begin a tactical occupation of the 12546. We will move food trucks inside one of the commercial spaces, using the sliding metal door and create an opening out to a porch to be built in the new rear yard.

By building a mini-food hall which opens to both the Dexter Avenue sidewalk and the new rear porch we aim to use this space as a through way which connects Russell Woods and Nardin Park to the adjacent Dexter-Linwood neighborhood. It is our hope that this year-round food hall will generate income to contribute toward the rehabilitation of the rest of the building.

As this tactical food hall is being implemented in 12546, we will begin to plant the seed of the revival of the community hall and mini-police station. While the community hall will not be rehabilitated yet, a temporary structure will be erected to facilitate police-community relationship building.

Facade improvements will continue and the reconstruction of historic signage will begin to build presence along the street. Further, the installation of a parklet with planters in the former parallel parking lane will encourage future pedestrian activity.

### PRECEDENTS

A Food Truck Hall located in St. Paul, MN, shows that it is possible to bring food trucks inside to create an informal eating space. Trucks function as kitchen, and simple picnic tables are used for seating.<sup>3</sup>

In Salisbury, North Carolina, a police pop-up ice cream truck is helping to build community relations. A similar pop-up police truck could easily be incorporated into the food truck theme at the Dexter Hub.<sup>4</sup>



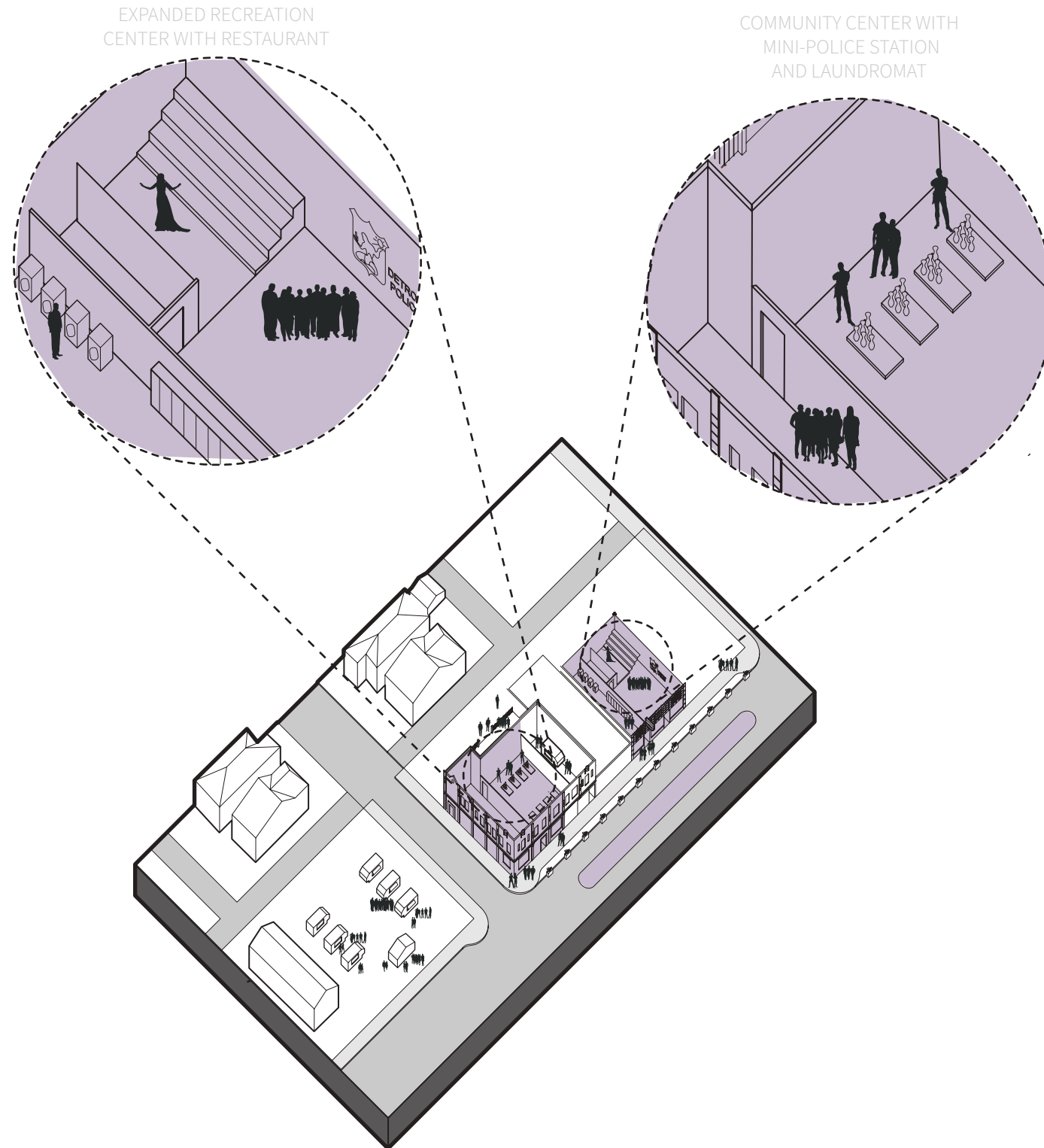
Figure 4.56. Food truck hall in St. Paul, MN.



Figure 4.57. Police pop-up in Salisbury, NC.



## THE DEXTER HUB



## REVIVING THE CITY HALL

### REVIVING THE CITY HALL

In the long-term, the interior of the community hall in 12512 will be rehabilitated and open as a community center featuring a mini-police station and a laundromat. This space should act to break down barriers between city officers and community members as well as to provide a much-needed multi-functional gathering place.

Meanwhile, we will expand the tactical food hall in 12546 (to become a more permanent dining hall) and build out a recreation hall in the rest of the building. We believe that this site is a great candidate to become a Fowling center. Fowling is a popular game in Detroit which combines bowling and football. It is similar to corn hole in that it needs no permanent infrastructure and is appropriate for all ages. While the recreation center's implementation is considered a long-term goal, this game could likely begin to be implemented through smaller tactical interventions in the rear yard or in the adjacent food truck corral.

Finally, we will implement a turning boulevard on Dexter Avenue to both beautify the street, create continuity with the other sites along Dexter, and limit the high traffic flow on the corridor.

### PRECEDENTS

Fowling has become a popular sport throughout Detroit, and offers an easy way to bring recreation to spaces that have not been fully restored.<sup>5</sup>

The Commons, a laundromat with a coffee shop and community space, recently opened on Mack Avenue in Detroit, approximately six miles southeast of the Dexter Hub. Like the Dexter Hub, the Commons is located within proximity to multiple neighborhoods. In addition to offering work spaces with wifi, programming includes reading activities for children and a performance space will be added in the future.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 4.58. Fowling in Hamtramck.



Figure 4.59. Community Center / Laundromat hybrid in Detroit

THE DEXTER HUB



VISION



VISION

Each of the spaces in 12546 has been restored, offering food trucks and recreation. 12512 features a welcoming Community Hub sign, with laundry machines in one portion. The sidewalks have been activated with seating, planters, and pedestrian-friendly street lights. A median in Dexter Avenue creates a safer space for pedestrian travel, and may help tie the site to other commercial corridors along Dexter with similar interventions. Architectural details, including the parapet of 12546 have been reconstructed with themed neon lights. It is hoped that this activity will lead to the rejuvenation of the privately-owned 12526, as well as the second story of 12546 in the future.



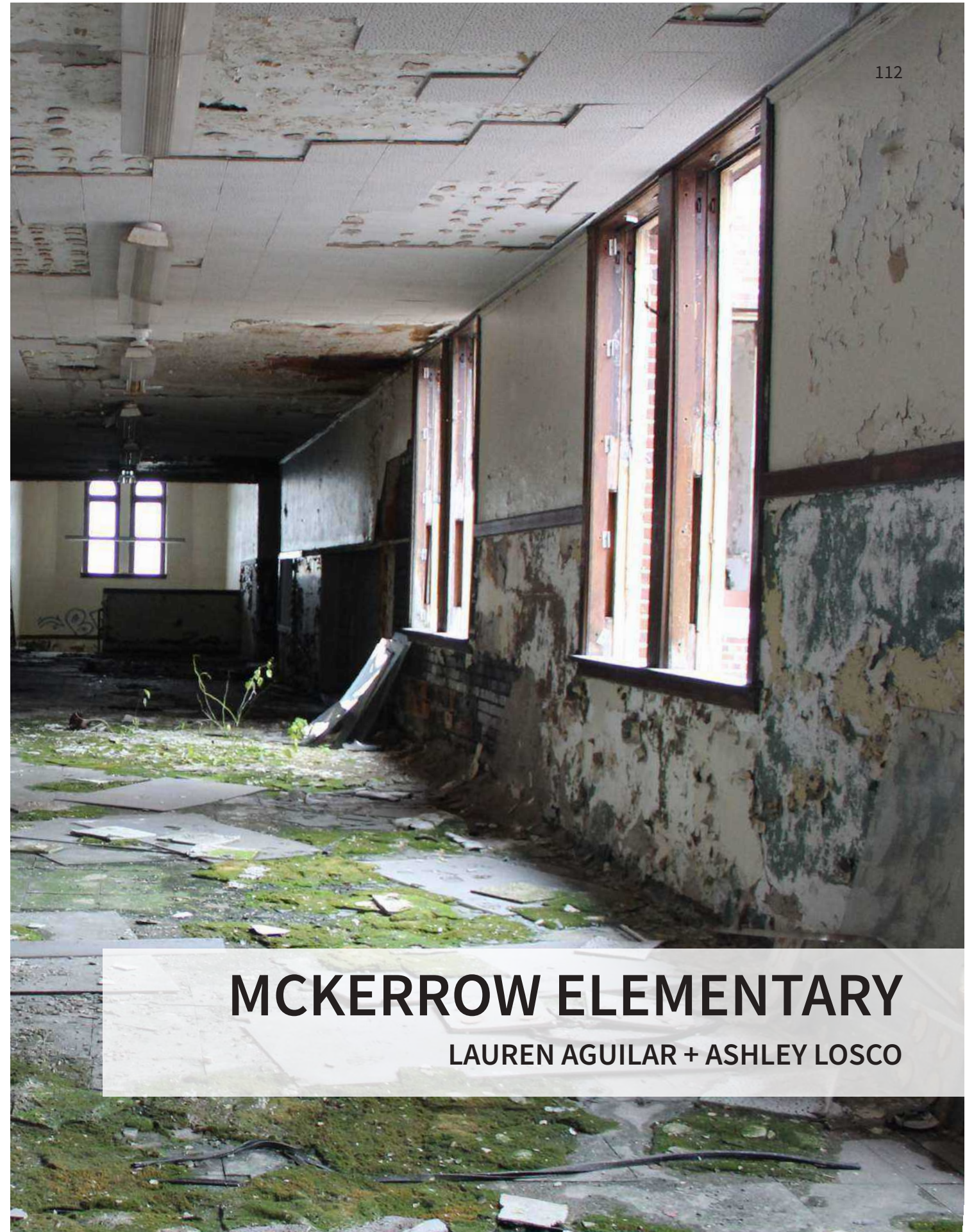
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1. Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, "Detroit Neighborhood Opportunity Study: Russell Woods," 2018.
2. Taylor-Hochberg, Amelia. "Homey Pop-Up Bus Shelter". <https://archinect.com/news/article/140015083/homey-pop-up-bus-shelter-hopes-to-increase-safety-for-minneapolis-commuters>.
3. "St. Paul Food Trucks", <https://speechfoodie.com/st-paul-food-trucks/>.
4. Paris, Todd. "The Salisbury Police Department's STEALTH Ice Cream Truck," Rowan Free Press. November 4, 2016. <https://rowanfreepress.com/2016/11/04/the-salisbury-police-departments-stealth-ice-cream-truck/>.
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## FIGURES

- 4.26. Stevens, Amanda, 2018.
- 4.27. Data from SEMCOG and Detroit Open Data Portal.
- 4.28. Wei, Ran, 2018.
- 4.29. Candela, Lillian, 2018.
- 4.30. Photos by Stevens, Amanda, 2018. Rectification by Maloney, Mia, 2018.
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- 4.44. Candela, Lillian, 2018.
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- 4.47. Candela, Lillian, 2018.
- 4.48. Lynch, Justin, 2018.
- 4.49. Google Maps, 2018.
- 4.50. Candela, Lillian, 2018.
- 4.51. Candela, Lillian, 2018.
- 4.52. Candela, Lillian, 2018.
- 4.53. Candela, Lillian, 2018. ↵
- 4.54. Maloney and Candela, 2018. Map image derived from OpenStreetMap. <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=13/42.3753/-83.1056>.
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**MCKERROW ELEMENTARY**  
LAUREN AGUILAR + ASHLEY LOSCO

# MCKERROW SCHOOL



Figure 4.60. Location of McKerrrow School.



Figure 4.61. Elevation of McKerrrow School.

# OVERVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

This school is located Collingswood Street, between Cascade Avenue and Yellowstone Street in the Nardin Park neighborhood. The surrounding area is entirely residential, with a high level of vacancy. The school has been closed since 2011 and has since been stripped of systems and interior details. The proposed interventions seek to connect the site to the adjacent residents, broader community, and city. The site could regain its function as a hub for community needs, culture, and gathering.



Figure 4.63. Plan of first and second floors of McKerrrow School.

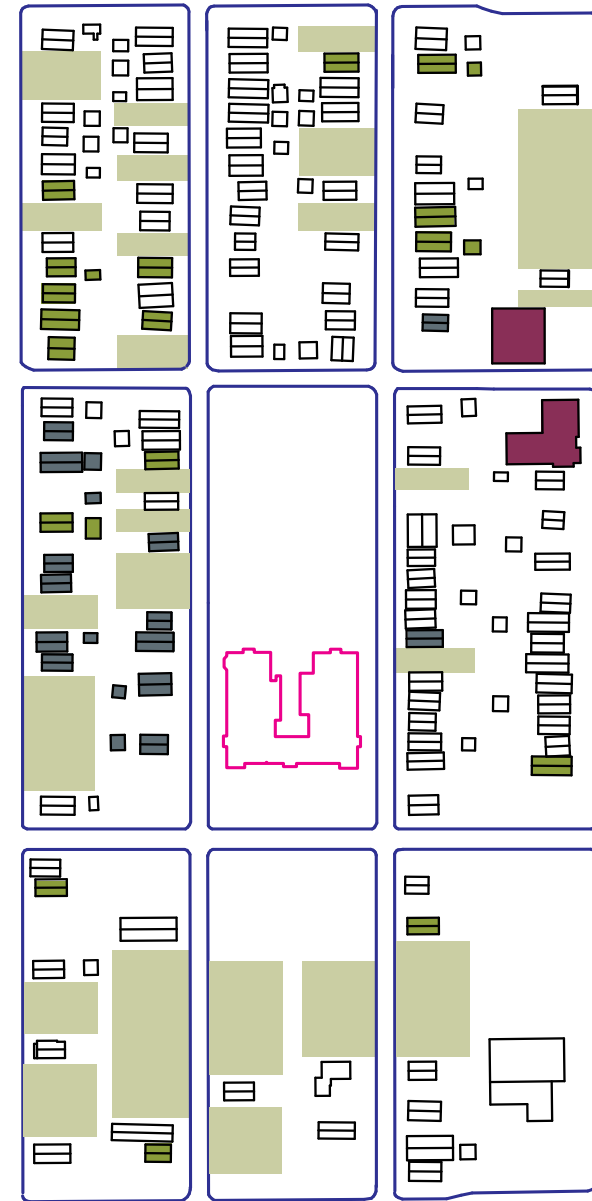


Figure 4.62. Rear of McKerrrow School.



Figure 4.64. Elevation of McKerrrow School.

# MCKERROW SCHOOL



- MCKERROW
- DEMOLITIONS
- PUBLICLY OWNED
- CHURCHES
- \* 15 CHURCHES WITHIN THE AREA
- \* 12 FAST FOOD CHAINS

### CONTEXT

McKerrow Elementary School is located at 4800 Collingwood Street. The north and northeast sides of the school are heavily populated with residents, while the south and southwest sides are mostly abandoned, including overgrown vacant lots and dilapidated houses. The surrounding empty lots provide continuous open space around the school. There are several churches in the area that bring in visitors to the neighborhood on Sundays.

# CONTEXT AND HISTORY



Figure 4.65. Black students returning to school in Detroit following the end of school segregation.

### HISTORY

The Helen W. McKerrow School was built in the Romanesque Revival style in 1926 by the Detroit architectural firm, Verner, Wilhelm, and Molby.<sup>1</sup> Rather than designing the school in individual parts over time, the traditional way to build a school, the firm designed and built McKerrow and several other schools in Detroit all at once. The school officially opened in 1927 to serve the neighborhoods of Russell Woods-Sullivan and Petosky-Otsego and acted as a Detroit Teacher's College training school until 1931. The surrounding neighborhood was predominantly white and Jewish when the school opened but gradually changed with Urban Renewal in the 1940s and 50s. As Detroit black families were pushed from their homes for large Urban Renewal projects, they moved to new areas of Detroit not open to them in the past, such as Russell Woods-Sullivan and Petosky-Otsego. At first, McKerrow was closed off to the children of the black families due to segregation. However, in 1960 Detroit

integrated their schools and McKerrow served the entire neighborhood. As more black families moved to McKerrow's surrounding neighborhoods, white families gradually moved out to the suburbs, which was exacerbated by the Detroit Rebellion in 1967.

After 1967, McKerrow served predominantly black residents. As families gradually left the neighborhoods and ultimately Detroit, the enrollment at McKerrow declined. Due to low enrollment, the school was converted to the John Deiter Center in 2004, which was a vocational school for young adults with special needs. However, in 2011 Detroit closed the Deiter Center and about 20 other Detroit schools. By 2013, the school was stripped of any valuable materials and has sat vacant to this day.

CONDITION

The McKerrrow School is in fair condition overall, though specific conditions range from good to poor. Starting with the exterior of the site, the lot the school sits on is in good condition, with a few cracks and plant overgrowth in the concrete parking lots and walkways, which can be easily removed. However, some of the walkways need to be cleaned and replaced. The foundation and structure of the school is in good, strong condition, including the exterior brick envelope of the structure, which has some graffiti, biogrowth, and dirt build up that can also be easily removed. Except for four windows on the second floor in the rear of the building, the remaining windows are gone and boarded up. The original greenhouse, which sat in the rear of the school on the north east side, was also destroyed and is now gone. The only remnants of the greenhouse are the short brick masonry wall, which held the glass, and shelving along the wall that held the plants. The opening between the greenhouse and the interior school room is now sealed with concrete blocks. Lastly, the doors to the exterior are in poor condition: door knobs and glass are missing and most of the doors have been welded shut. Graffiti covers the doors to the school lot in the rear, and the doors on the northeast and southwest sides of the school are boarded up. The exterior lighting and electrical is still in place, and the school is still connected to the city utilities.

Compared to the exterior, the interior of the school is in worse condition. The ceilings have deteriorated and tiles and plaster litter the floors along with other debris, trash, and dirt. Biogrowth and mold have built up throughout the interior due to lack of temperature control. The walls have large holes from people stripping the school of materials, such as piping, glass, light fixtures, fireplaces, and even door knobs. Paint and plaster are also peeling from the walls in most of the rooms, and graffiti persists throughout the site. Most of the original lockers are gone, and the ones remaining are scattered throughout the site in various conditions. Some of the original doors, built-ins, and electrical systems are still in place and can be salvaged. The auditorium is also in salvageable condition: the original auditorium seating, stage, and curtains still remain. However, the HVAC system and plumbing would need to be replaced. In order to meet ADA regulations, an elevator would also need to be installed.



Figure 4.66. McKerrrow gymnasium.

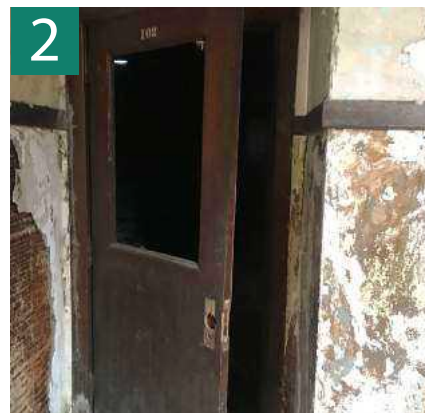
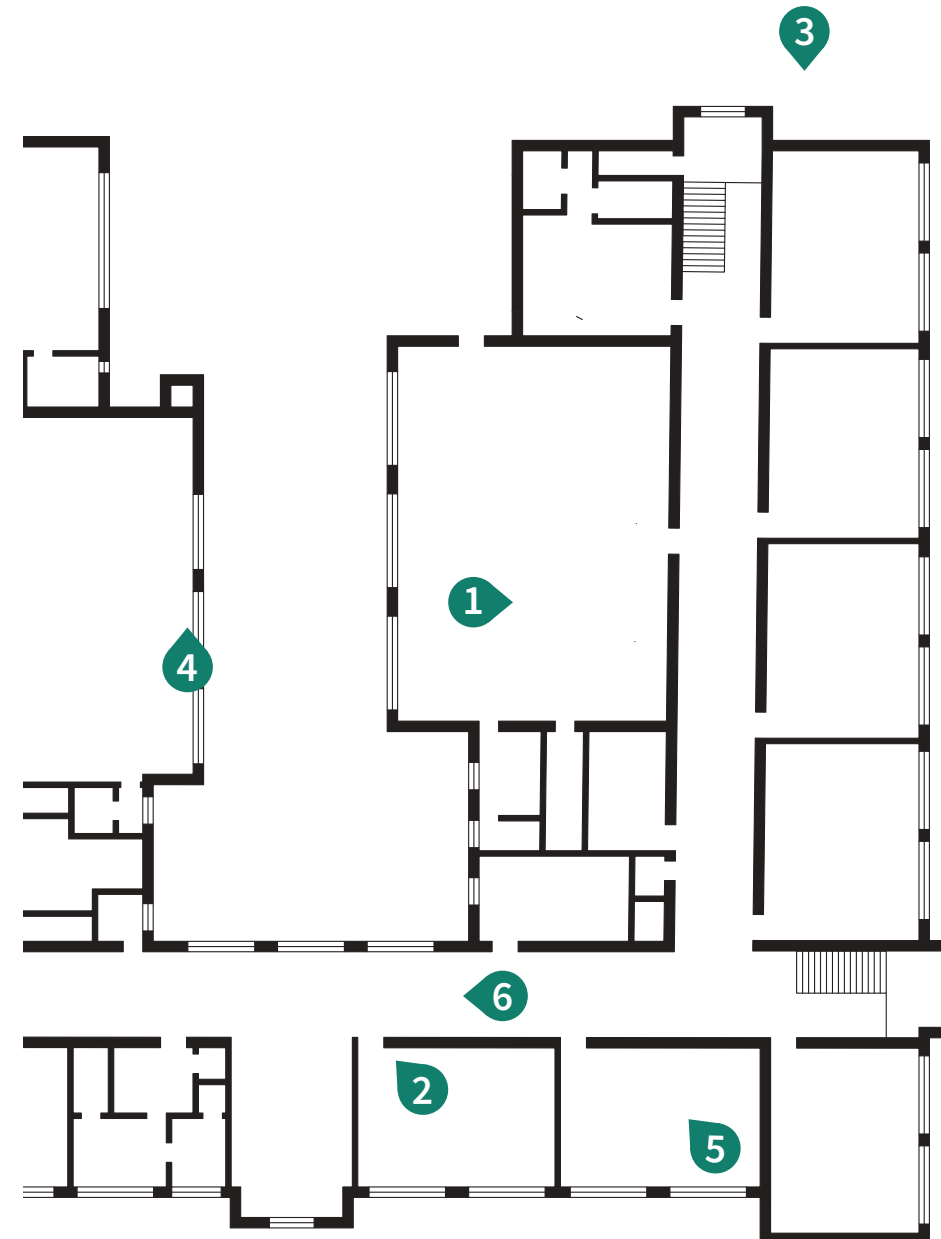
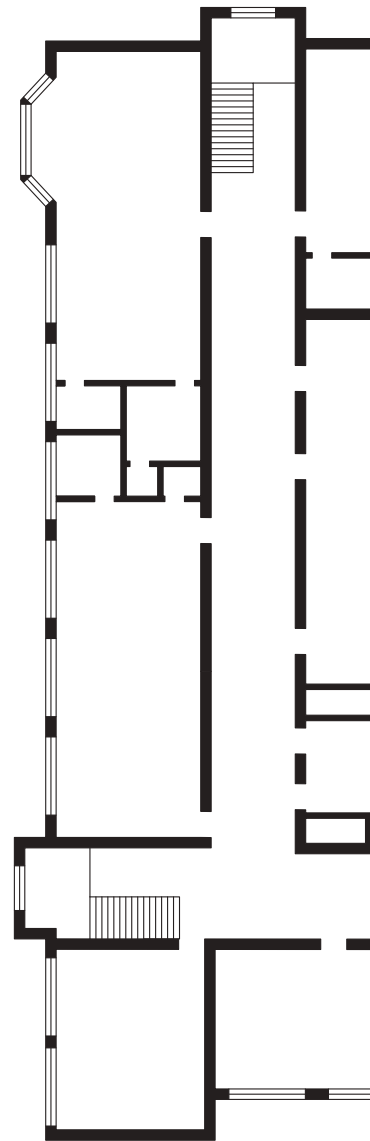


Figure 4.67. Room 102 in McKerrrow School.



Figure 4.68. Remains of the greenhouse behind McKerrrow School.



1ST FLOOR



Figure 4.69. Auditorium in McKerrrow School.



Figure 4.70. A classroom in McKerrrow School.



Figure 4.71. Hallway deterioration in McKerrrow School.

# MCKERROW SCHOOL

## SITE STRENGTHS AND ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Even though the building is in fair condition, McKerrow Elementary has several strengths that will meet community needs. The McKerrow School is a charismatic monument within the two communities. It is a well-known structure for its size and connection to Russell Woods and Nardin Park. As a two-story brick structure on a lot the size of a city block, McKerrow stands out amongst the small, one-story wood frame structures of the residential core. It is also a charismatic monument because of its integral role in the community as a social gathering space for neighbors before the school closed. McKerrow is integral to community history since it was built alongside the development of the two neighborhoods. It has seen the dramatic demographic changes of the neighborhoods and educated most of the older residents of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. Since the school plays a role in community history, it can meet the need to address and uplift community history in the revitalization of Russell Woods and Nardin Park.

Characteristics of the building, architectural and spatial, also contribute to McKerrow's strengths. These characteristics include distinguished brickwork

and high-quality design typical of public architecture of the pre-war and growth era of Detroit's history. The exterior spaces, such as the large school yard, welcoming front yard, and surrounding vacant lots, can be used in the interventions of the school to meet community needs for healthy food options and social gathering spaces. The varied interior spaces and materials, from the auditorium to a kitchen to small closets, can meet varied uses, based on the size of the space that use will need. These varied spaces will also bring in neighborhood-serving businesses, a variety of food options, and social gathering spaces since there is a lack of businesses and restaurants within the communities. McKerrow's location within the strong residential core will create businesses and uses that will be easily accessible to neighbors. Most neighbors have to get in their car to go to local businesses on the commercial corridors. McKerrow will bring essential services to the neighbors who can walk to the school. However, the several vacant lots will allow for ample parking since there is pride for car ownership in the Motor City. The next section will go into more detail of how the community needs will be met.

### SITE STRENGTHS

- Charismatic Monument
- Community Facing
- Integral to Community History
- Exterior Public Space
- Varied Interior Spaces/Uses
- Location: Strong Residential Core

### ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

#### RETAIL

- Neighborhood-serving retail businesses
- Provide variety of Food Options

#### TRANSPORTATION

- Pedestrian Accessible
- Space for Parking

#### GATHERING SPACES

- Sunday Variety Market
- Drive-In Theater, Senior Gathering

#### COMMUNITY HISTORY

- Art Installations
- Class Reunion Party

#### HEALTH SERVICES

- Providing Healthy Food Choices
- Non-Profit Offices, Work Shops

# SITE STRENGTHS AND ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS



Figure 4.72.

### ORNATE SCULPTURAL ELEMENTS



Figure 4.75.

### REMAINS OF GREENHOUSE



Figure 4.73.

### ORNAMENTAL BRICK DETAILING



Figure 4.76.

### PUBLIC PRE-WAR DESIGN

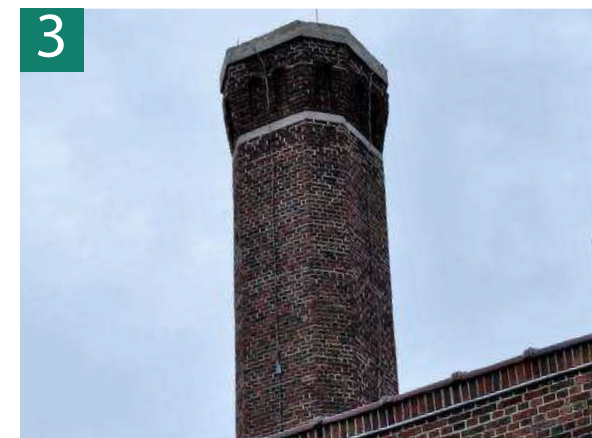


Figure 4.74.

### ROMANESQUE FORMS

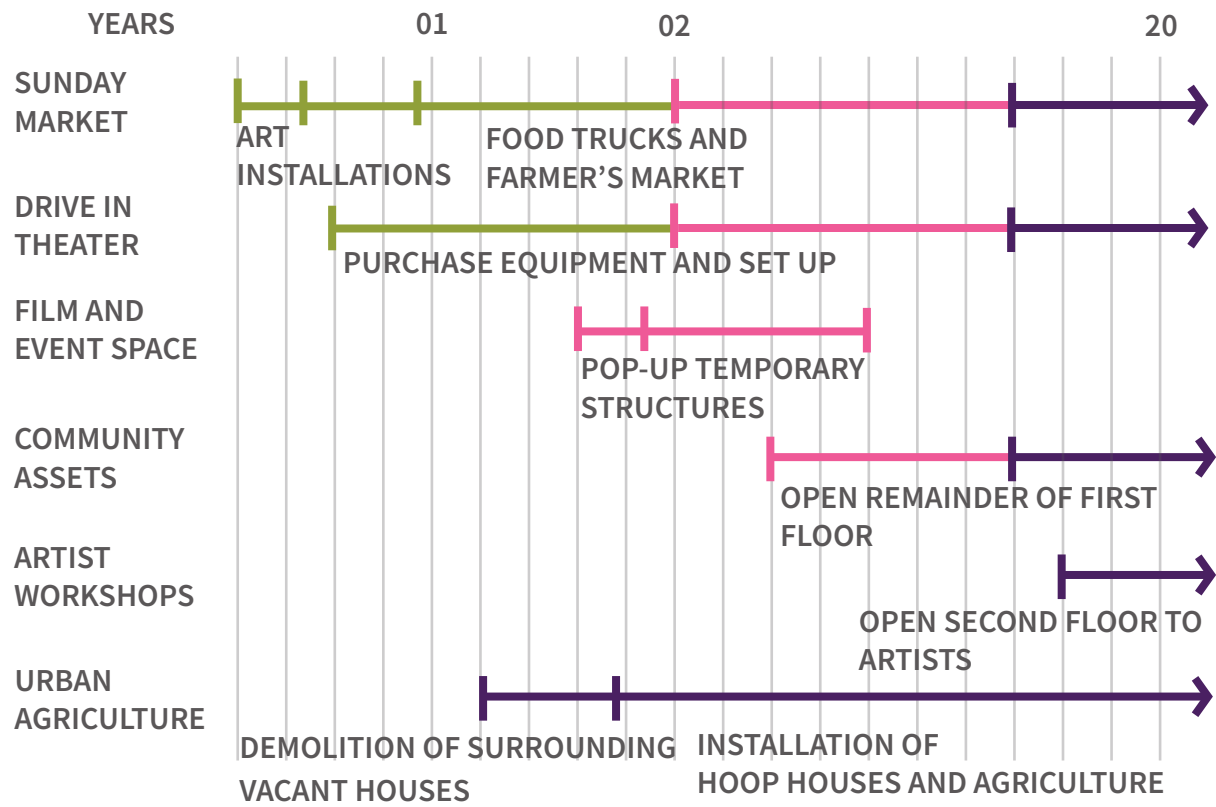


Figure 4.77.

### BAY WINDOW, LOTS OF LIGHT



# MCKERROW SCHOOL



## INTERVENTIONS

The rehabilitation interventions of the McKerrow School are divided into three preservation strategies: short term (2 months), tactical (2 years), and long term (+10 years). The proposed interventions will occur in six different phases starting with the short-term preservation strategy and moving gradually to long term. The rehabilitation of the site will focus on meeting community needs while generating a profit for the businesses located in the school and the surrounding neighborhoods.

# INTERVENTIONS



1ST FLOOR



2ND FLOOR

- 1. filming and event space (2-year)/canning (long term)
- 2. clean room, digital media (2-year)/mushroom cultivation (long term)
- 3. filming and event space (2-year)/pickling (long term)
- 4. library/used book store
- 5. reading room for library
- 6. office space for ground floor tenants
- 7. office space for ground floor tenants
- 8. office space for ground floor tenants
- 9. art gallery

- 10. art gallery
- 11. workshop/classroom
- 12. workshop/classroom
- 13. workshop/classroom
- 14. kitchen
- 15. tool library
- 16. community auditorium
- 17. small businesses (salon, day-care, senior care, start-up incubator)
- 18. artist studios

## MCKERROW SCHOOL

### FARMERS MARKET AND CELL PHONE TOWER

To initiate reuse of the site, the first proposed intervention is the Sunday Variety Market. Since money needs to be generated to rehabilitate the interior of the building, the first intervention will focus on generating profit through the exterior of the building. First, the lot and surrounding vacant lots need to be cleaned up to make the site more welcoming. To do this, art installations will be installed throughout the property of the school and in the surrounding vacant lots. Throughout the country, there are several examples of organizations using art to revitalize their communities and cities. In Detroit, Denby High School students painted the sidewalks from the surrounding neighborhood to the school to increase students' comfort level walking to class past abandoned buildings.<sup>2</sup> In Philadelphia, the Mural Arts Program was created to combat graffiti throughout the city. Murals are painted on the sides of buildings, bridges, and sidewalks to create beauty in Philly neighborhoods. They also install other forms of art, such as Light Drift which drew people to the river with light orbs in the water and on land that changed colors according to interactions by participants.<sup>3</sup> Denby received public support from the Detroit Works Project initiated in 2010 by Mayor Bing, while Mural Arts is a private/public partnership and receives funding from the city. For philanthropic support, the National Endowment for the Arts supports community art projects through the "Art Works Grant" and the "Challenge America Grant". The Knight Foundation and Kresge Foundation are currently working on several arts and community revitalization projects throughout Detroit and could be a source of support for McKerrow.

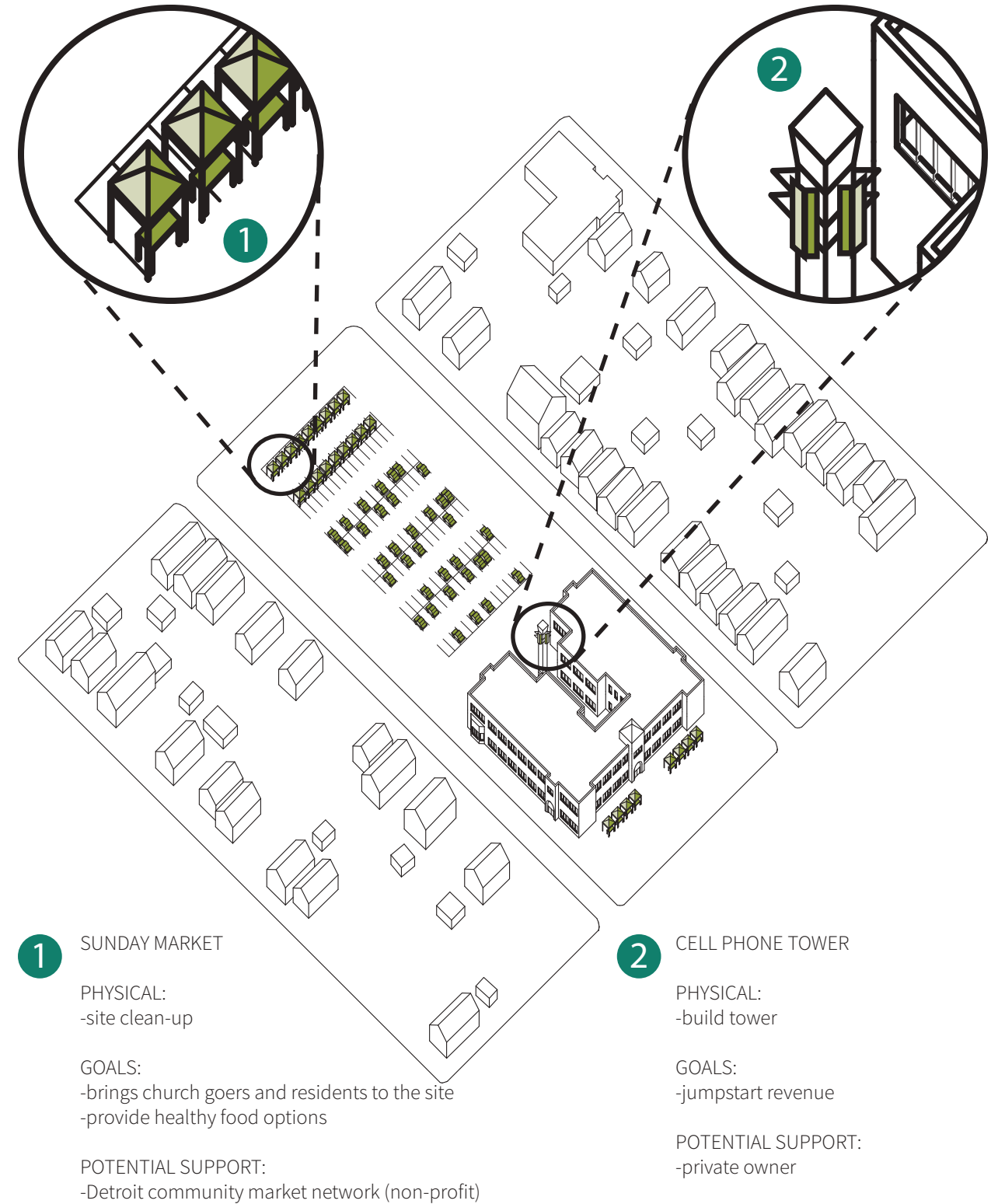
After the cleanup and installation of art, a Sunday Variety Market will be held surrounding the school, including the large back school lot, the small side lots, and specifically the front. Within the surrounding communities, there is a need for healthier food options and a wider variety of food choices. Currently, there is only one grocery store on Dexter Avenue, 12 fast food chain restaurants, and no sit-down restaurants. To meet this need, the Market will include food trucks, vendors, and a farmer's market. The food trucks will offer a variety of diverse food options not met in the neighborhood, while the farmers market will provide healthy food options. Revenue will be generated by either charging food trucks and farmers

a fee to participate in the Market, or a percentage will be taken of their profits. With the amount of unemployment in the neighborhood, the farmer's market could also take EBT, SNAP, and WIC. This is a common trend for most farmer's markets today, such as at the Freedom Farmer's Market in Atlanta, GA and The Food Trust in Philadelphia, PA.<sup>4</sup> To draw people to all sides of the school, the large lot in the back will be used for the large food trucks, farmer's market tents, and picnic tables. Attention also needs to be brought to the welcoming front facade of the school, which could hold more vendors and tents along the curved sidewalk in front of the main entrance.

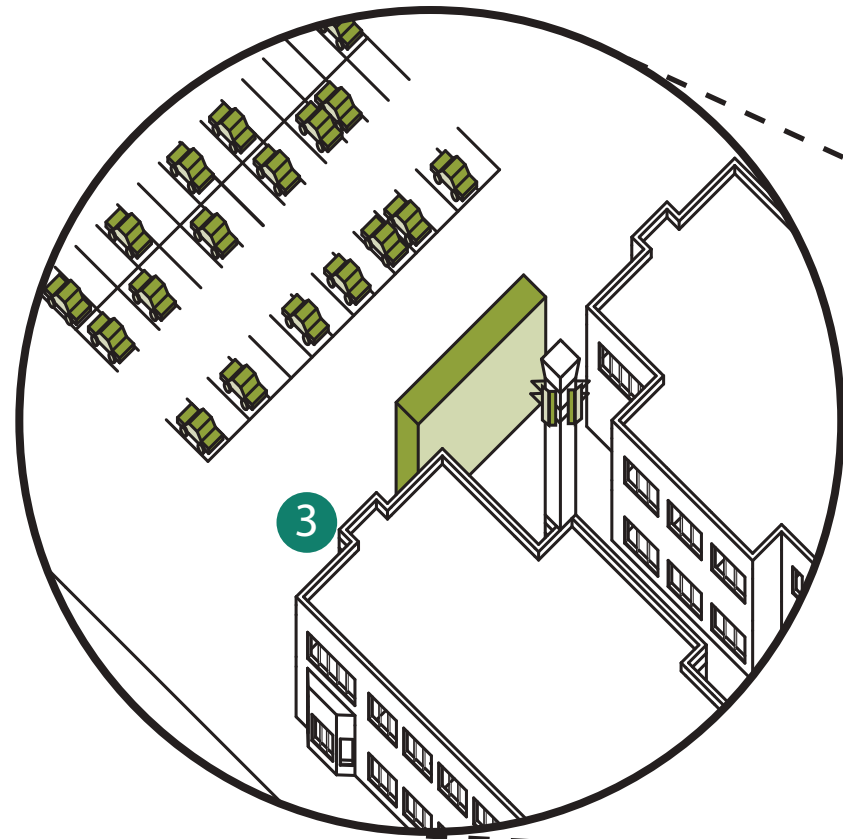
Holding the Market on Sundays will also draw in individuals who attend the several churches within the area. The congregations do not live in the neighborhood and leave immediately after church from lack of sit-down restaurants. The Market will give them a place to have lunch after church and will allow the neighborhood to profit off this large population. The Variety Market will create a community gathering place, which there is a need for, and bring life back to the school. To foster this sense of community, we will hold a Class Reunion Party during one of the Sunday Markets to celebrate the individuals who went to McKerrow. The party would bring old residents back to the neighborhood and remind people of the community once built around this school. With current fears of gentrification and displacement, the party will also tell residents that the rehabilitation of the school will meet their needs and not drive them out. For examples of funding, the city of Baltimore has the MECU Neighborhood Event Grants, which give local communities grants to foster placemaking in their neighborhoods.<sup>5</sup> Something similar could be applied to the Class Reunion Party.

Since the Sunday Market is only once a week, the smoketower will be rented as a cell phone tower to generate a constant source of revenue. Since new cell phone towers are intrusive and city zoning codes limit where they can be built, old smoke towers, silos, and fire watch towers are repurposed as cell phone towers. They are perfect for this purpose due to their height and already being a part of their surrounding environment. Renting a smoke tower to a cell phone company can generate up to \$1,200 a month. The antennas are installed and mounted around the top of the tower and can be easily removed.

## FARMERS MARKET AND CELL PHONE TOWER



## MCKERROW SCHOOL



### DRIVE IN THEATER

After generating enough revenue from the Sunday Variety Market and cell phone tower, another short-term phase of intervention will be the Drive-In Theater. As mentioned before with the Market, McKerrrow has the large back lot that was once the parking lot and school yard. Monday through Saturday, the large lot will be used as a vintage drive-in theater and screen family movies. Since Detroit historically developed around the automobile, Detroit residents have a strong commitment to using cars to get around. Therefore, the redevelopment of the school will use this important characteristic of the neighborhood as a way of revitalization. A movie screen and equipment will be purchased, and the screen will be placed near the back of the school. The lot can hold roughly 150 cars, and tickets will be sold either by the car or per person in each car. There will also be room for people who walk to the theater and sit on picnic blankets and lawn chairs. These people will be charged per

person. Along with the Sunday Variety Market, the Drive-In Theater will create another social gathering space for the community and remind neighbors of this important structure. The theater will also draw in other individuals from throughout Detroit. While creating a social gathering place, the drive-in will also generate profit through ticket and food sales. Food vendors from the Sunday Variety Market can sell their items during the movie. Clark Park in Philadelphia holds weekly movie screenings during the summer. They receive financial support from Philadelphia Parks and Recreation and private sponsors, such as a clean energy company who supplies the power, local credit unions, and restaurants. McKerrrow could also work with the city and Detroit Parks and Recreation for sponsorship and funding.<sup>6</sup> The Drive-In Theater can also work with other organizations that will meet community needs, such as local credit unions since there is a need for banks in the neighborhoods. "Movies in the Park" in Austin, TX is sponsored by several non-profit, public,

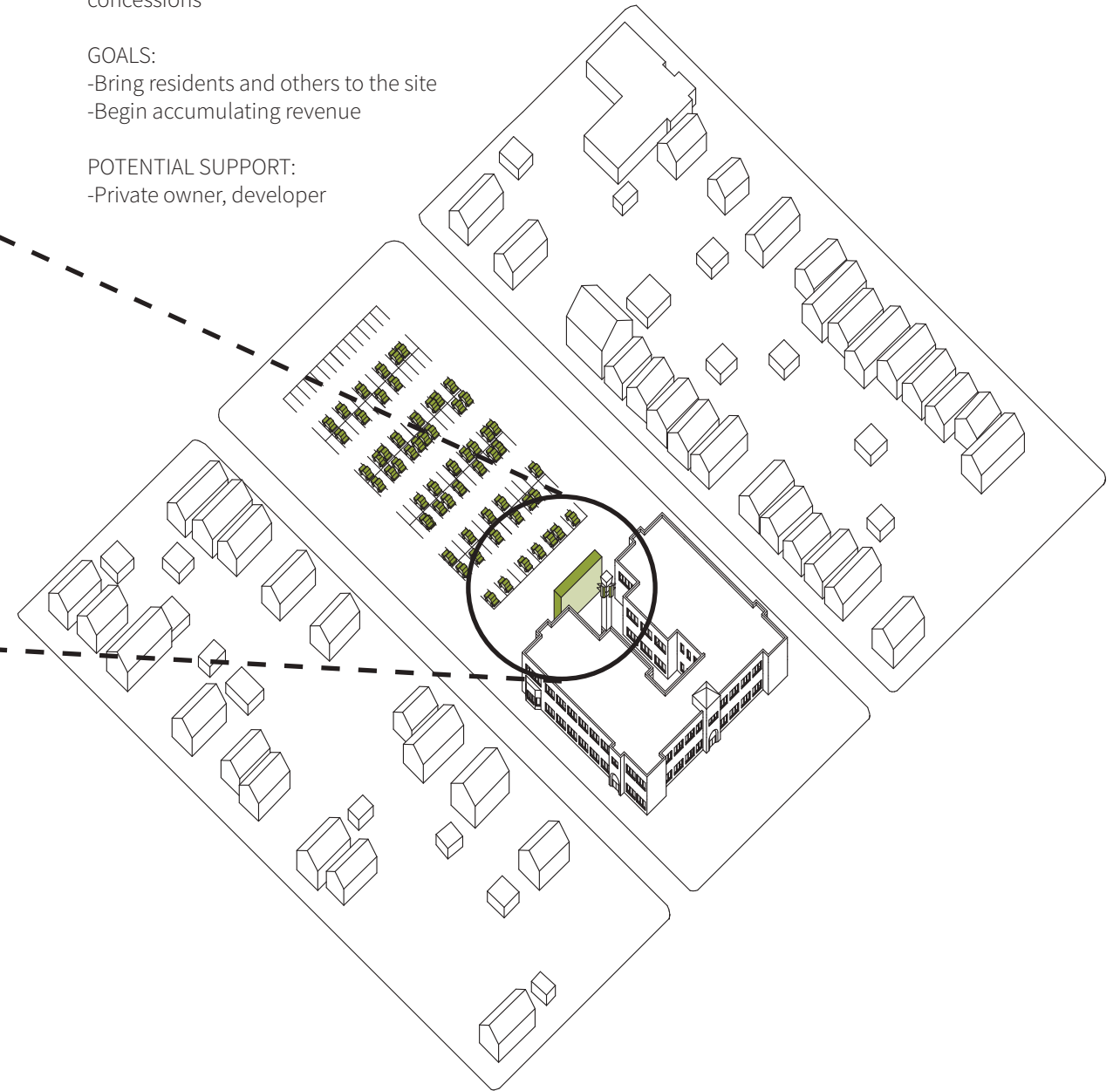
## DRIVE IN THEATER

### 3 DRIVE IN MOVIE

PHYSICAL:  
-Invest in equipment, provide space for concessions

GOALS:  
-Bring residents and others to the site  
-Begin accumulating revenue

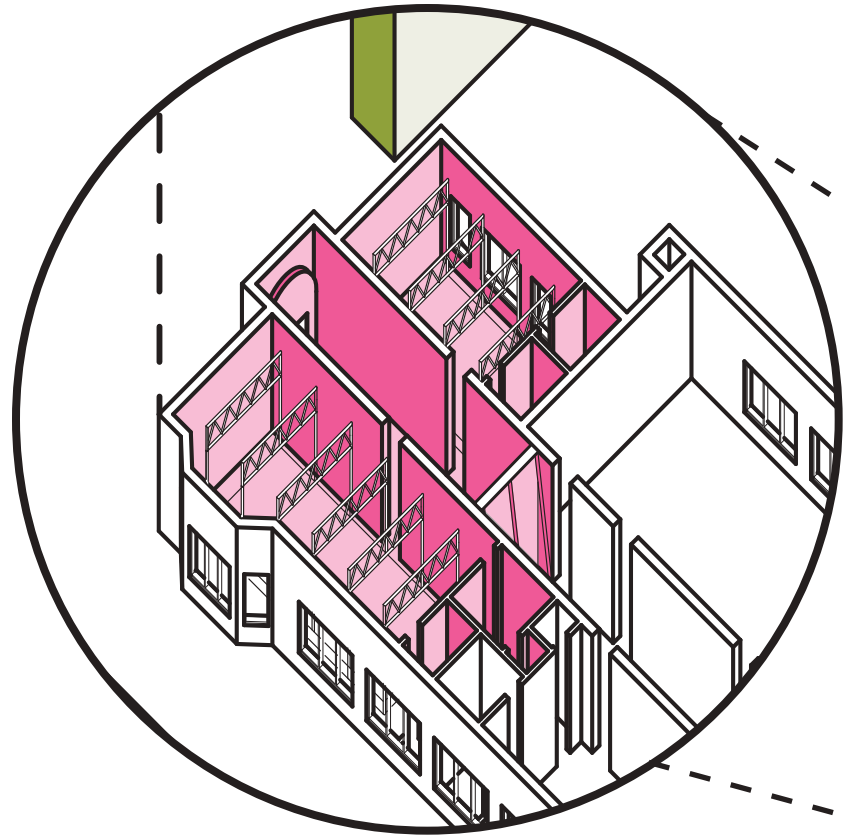
POTENTIAL SUPPORT:  
-Private owner, developer



and private organizations.<sup>7</sup> Whole Foods Market and other food companies provide funding to advertise their stores at the movie events by giving out free snacks and promotions. Since there is a need for healthy

food options in Russell Woods and Nardin Park, local groceries or co-ops could partner with McKerrrow for funding and sponsorship.

## MCKERROW SCHOOL



### FILMING AND EVENT

After generating enough revenue from the Drive-In Theater and the Sunday Variety Market, profits will be used to move into the school. The third phase, Filming and Event Space, will be the first of three phases of tactical (2 year) preservation. The interior of the school will be opened in stages, starting with the back of the southwest wing on the first floor. Revenue will be used for hazmat abatement, clean up, cosmetic updates, and restoring limited services. Since this process is costly, extra funding for rehabilitating the interior of the building can also come from the Detroit Development Fund or Invest Detroit. Both organizations have several grant and loan options to help local businesses and community organizations in any phase of business development.<sup>8</sup> After clean-up and hazmat abatement, the first spaces to be used will be the auditorium, kindergarten room, and several closet spaces. These spaces will be rented out, specifically to renters who could generate enough profit to float the business until the rest of the school can be opened, such as filming and event companies. The back corner of the southwest wing was chosen for these renters because of the large spaces, beautiful

features (a bay window, built-ins, an original fireplace), and the small private bathroom. Rehabilitation of historic buildings for event spaces is currently very common. The Art Factory in Patterson, New Jersey was once an industrial building and is now used for event rentals, filming, and artists' workshops.<sup>9</sup> The variety of spaces and materials are attractive to all kinds of filming, from music videos to yoga tutorials to clothing ads. McKerrrow also has a variety of spaces and materials which could be utilized for the same uses. Apartments and abandoned spaces are also being used by Instagram influencers to market companies and their products. Sponsors, which are a range of different businesses, rent out spaces and fill them with their products. They then hire Instagram influencers to take their photos in these spaces and market their products.<sup>9</sup> The spaces at McKerrrow could also be used as spaces for marketing and Instagram influencers. While the spaces are rented out, the Sunday Variety Market and the Drive-In Theater will still occur outside. They will meet the needs of the community, while the rental spaces will generate revenue to open up other phases of the interior.

## FILMING AND EVENT SPACE

### 4 FILMING AND EVENT

#### PHYSICAL:

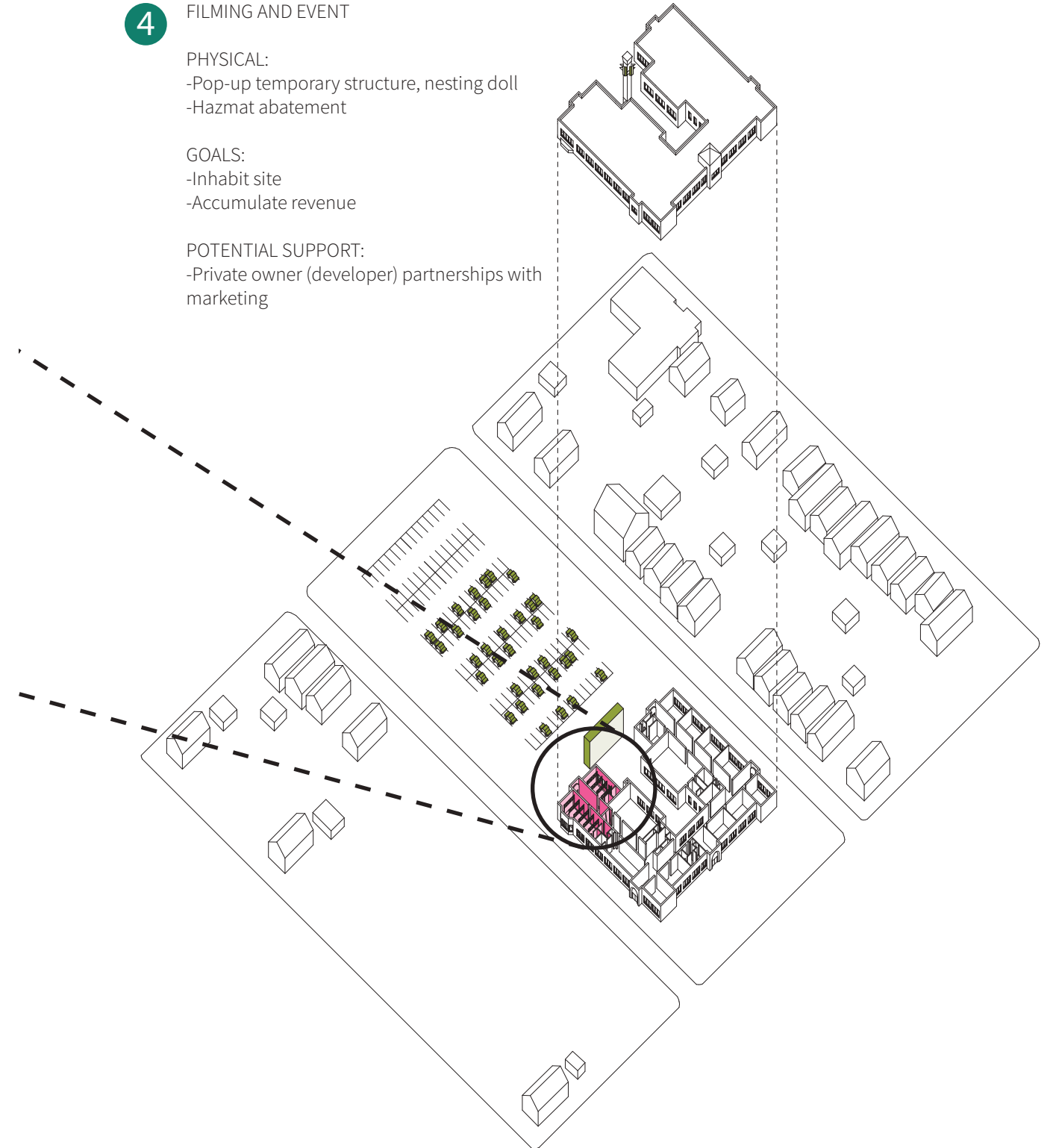
- Pop-up temporary structure, nesting doll
- Hazmat abatement

#### GOALS:

- Inhabit site
- Accumulate revenue

#### POTENTIAL SUPPORT:

- Private owner (developer) partnerships with marketing

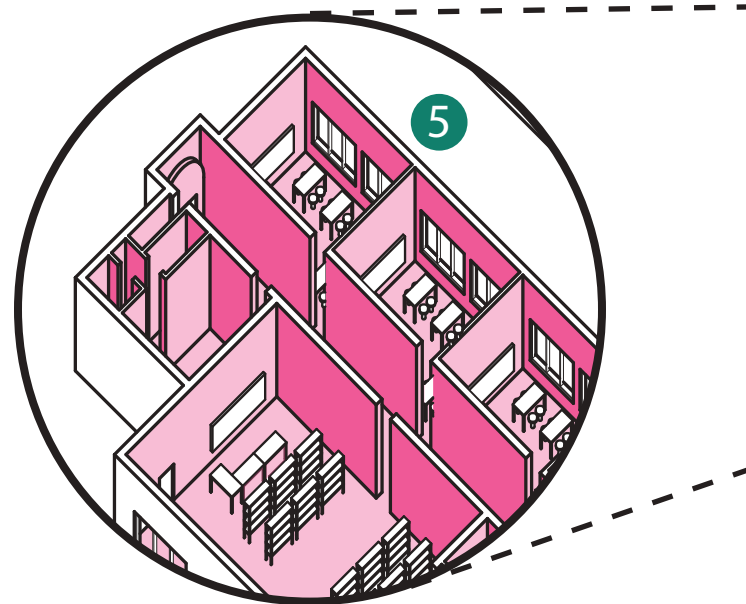


## MCKERROW SCHOOL

### COMMUNITY ASSETS

The next tactical preservation phase, Community Assets, will open up the rest of the first floor with its variety of spaces to meet community needs. Currently, there is a lack of spaces for children and teens in the neighborhood. The gym can be used as a shared tool library and build center for the kids in the neighborhood to give them a space to go after school and on the weekends. The gym is large enough to hold tool shelving and work spaces and is easily accessible in the back of the school from the neighbors nearby. Tiny WPA in Philadelphia, PA serves the same purpose for an impoverished neighborhood in the city of Philadelphia. The space gives teens a place to go after school, allows them to be creative, and even receive money from their projects. Tiny WPA also meets the needs of the community by building any projects a neighbor needs, from new bus benches to coffee tables to small play equipment. Tiny WPA receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the city of Philadelphia, and Stanley Black and Decker Grant Programs. For children of a younger range, one of the large classrooms can also be converted into a day care for working parents in the neighborhood. The day care will be in one of the corner rooms at the front of the school, since these rooms are near the side entrances and will only share one wall with other rooms. There are 10 classrooms ranging from 631 square feet to 1144 square feet. These classrooms will be used to meet several other needs within the community. One classroom will be used as a gathering space for the senior population of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. Most residents in the two neighborhoods are above 50 years old, so there is a need for senior living and gathering spaces for the aging but faithful community members. The large spaces could also be divided for artists' workshops, salons, and several other uses. Motor City Match in Detroit matches businesses with contractors and retail spaces. Several neighbors run businesses out of their houses, so they would be great potentials to fill spaces in McKerrow. The small offices and closets, on the other hand, could be used for non-profit offices or local artists. Bok School in Philadelphia was an abandoned school bought by a private development group in 2013. They rent out the several spaces to individuals based on the person's needs: if an artist needs a sink, they'll find a room with a sink, if a non-profit needs a small office,

they'll find them a small closet. The Garces Foundation and CAGE are both local non-profits that rent small spaces from Bok. The northeast wing has an industrial kitchen once used to make the school lunches. This space could be utilized by a caterer, community kitchen, or small restaurant. With its original shelving and built-ins still in place, the library could be used once again as a community used book store to create a community gathering space.<sup>10</sup> The Newbern Library outside Auburn, Alabama was designed and sponsored by the Auburn University Architectural School. They worked with an impoverished community to increase literacy and community gathering spaces. Funding came from Auburn University and several philanthropies. McKerrow could work with Wayne State University or another Michigan school to fund the library. Finally, Found Books is a non-profit book store outside of Seattle, Washington that donates its profits to local community events and programs. While neighbors gather there, adults receive a free cup of coffee while the kids receive a free book. The store also runs on local volunteer support and hires local kids. These small businesses and non-profits can also receive support from the Detroit Development Fund, the Detroit Community Loan Fund, BizLoan, and Invest Detroit.



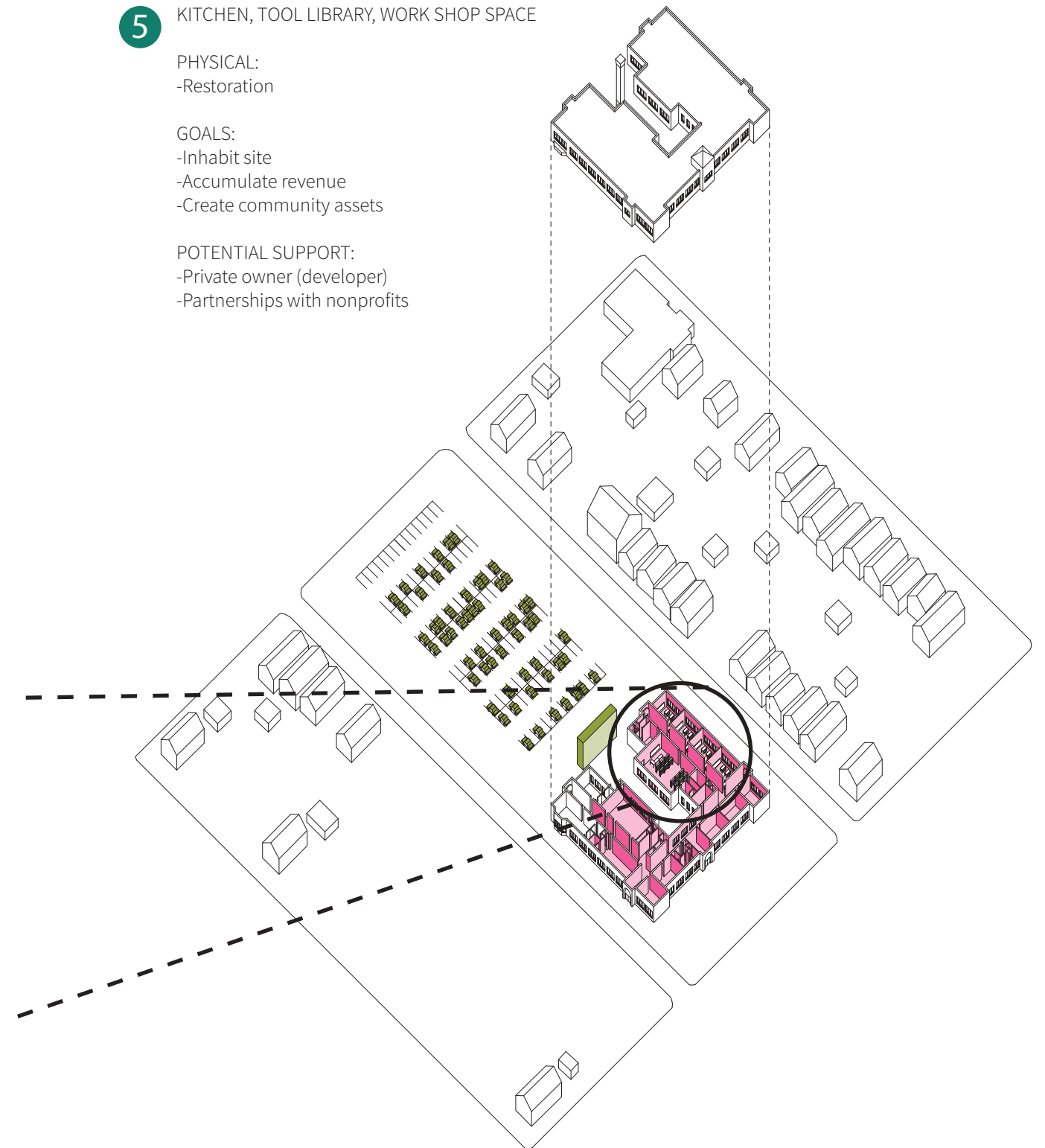
## COMMUNITY ASSETS

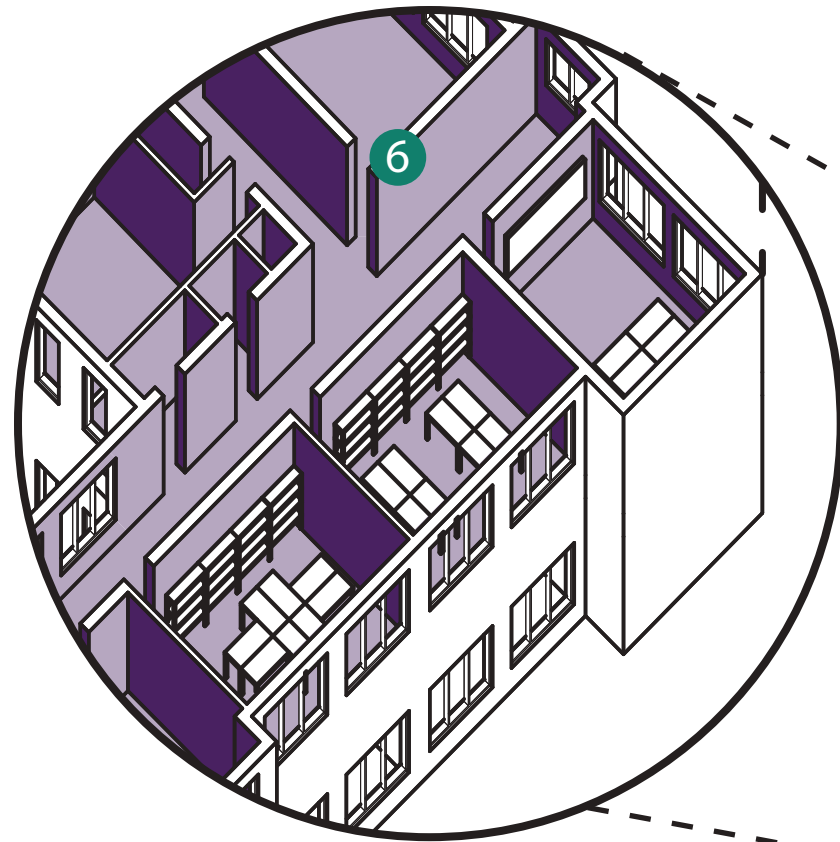
### 5 KITCHEN, TOOL LIBRARY, WORK SHOP SPACE

PHYSICAL:  
-Restoration

GOALS:  
-Inhabit site  
-Accumulate revenue  
-Create community assets

POTENTIAL SUPPORT:  
-Private owner (developer)  
-Partnerships with nonprofits





**ARTIST WORKSHOPS AND SMALL BUSINESSES**

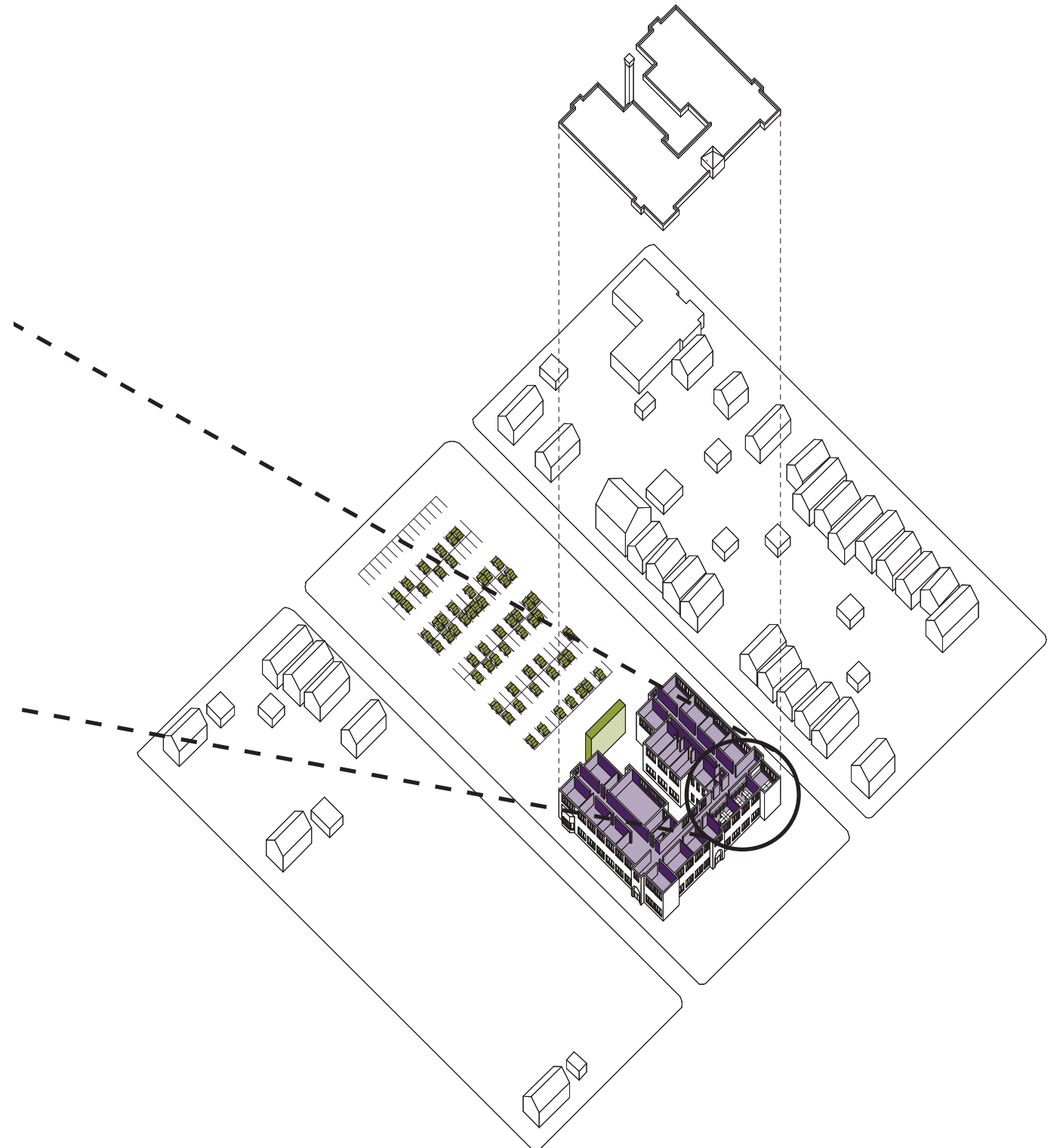
After generating enough revenue from rent of the first-floor spaces, sales or rentals from the Sunday Market, and ticket sales from the Drive-In Theater, the second floor will open. Since the school is in a U-shape, half of the second floor will be used for artists workshops, while the other half is used for more community businesses and services. First, the floor will need hazmat abatement and restoration of essential services, such as plumbing and lighting. Then, businesses and artists will populate the spaces based on how much space they will need. Again, revenue will be generated from rent.

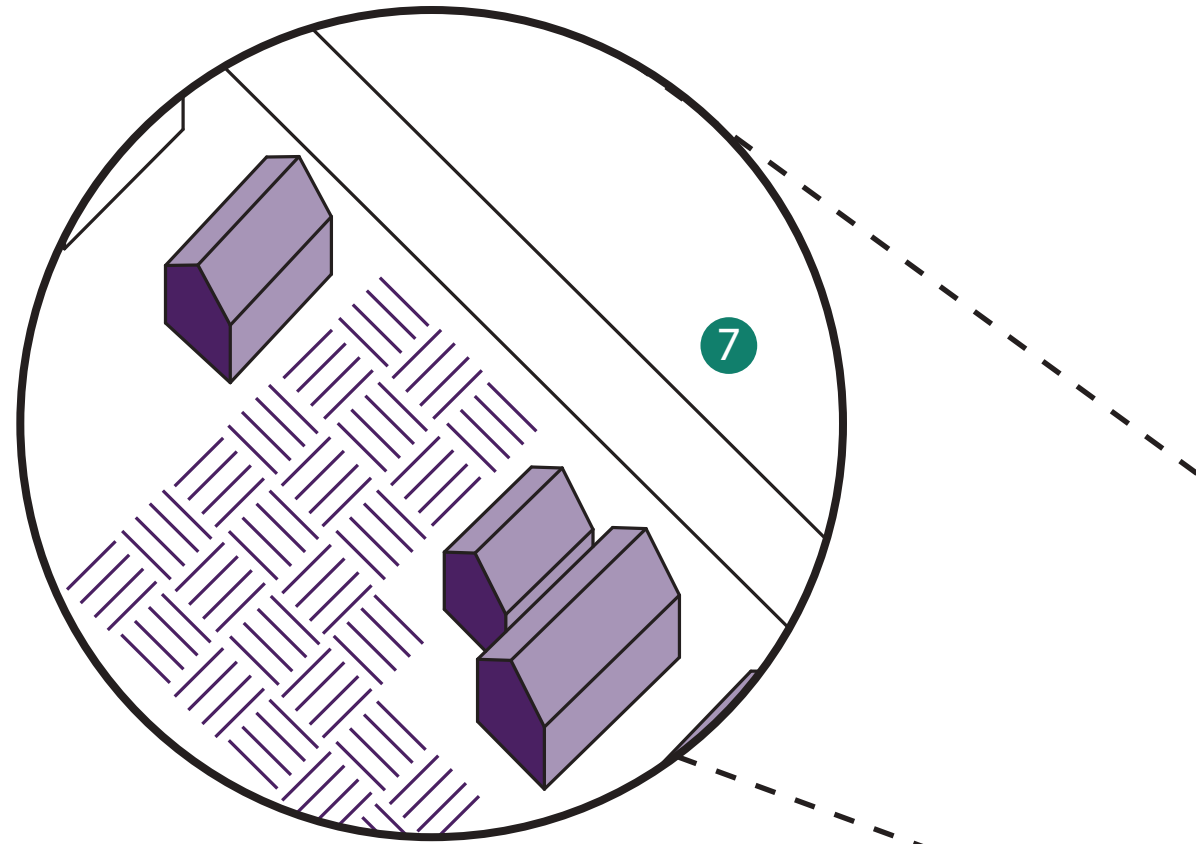
**6** ARTIST WORKSHOP + SMALL BUSINESSES

PHYSICAL:  
 -Restoration  
 -Hazmat abatement

GOALS:  
 -Inhabit site  
 -Accumulate revenue, support community businesses

POTENTIAL SUPPORT:  
 -Private owner (developer)  
 -Potential for Motor City Match





**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

For long term intervention of the McKerrrow School, the space will continue to be rented out for retail and community needs. The long-term intervention will also include urban agriculture and food production. Several of the lots around the school are vacant, and several of the abandoned houses are on the Detroit demolition list. These areas can be used by the surrounding community for agriculture and community gardens. Recovery Park, in East Detroit, is a non-profit foundation which creates jobs and community revitalization through urban agriculture. Like Recovery Park, the produce from McKerrrow will create a profit for the school and for community members and also create jobs and healthy food alternatives. The produce grown at the site can also be processed within the building. Filming and events renters will be temporary to initiate a generation of revenue. For long term, filming and events will be removed from the building and food production will

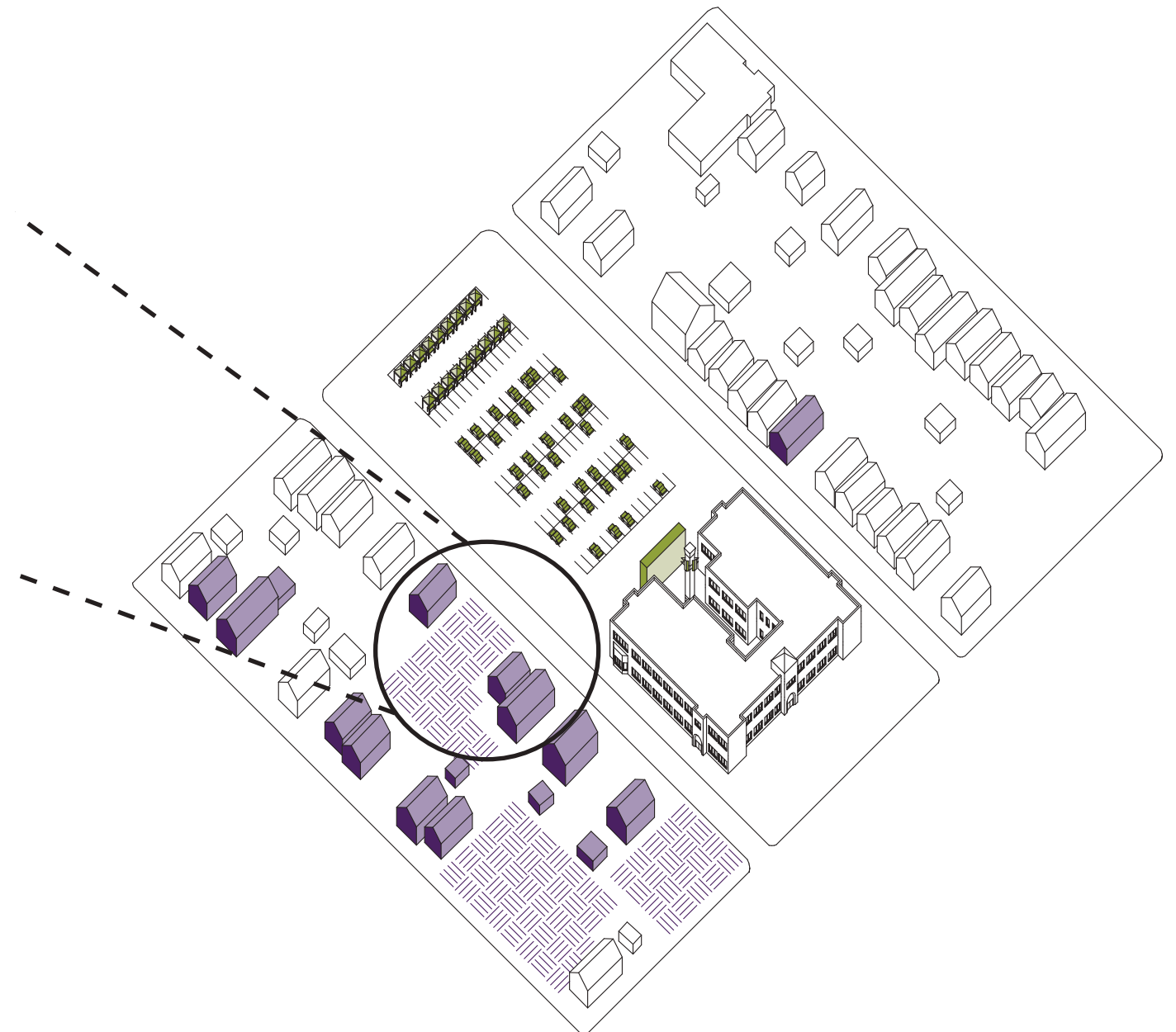
occur in those spaces on the first floor. The large rooms offer lots of space for packaging and canning produce. Food Chain Northeast in London finds empty spaces within impoverished communities to process food for local churches, schools, and organizations. Funding can come from private organizations or philanthropic entities. Detroit Future City playbook for reusing open spaces would also provide helpful ideas for activating adjacent spaces.

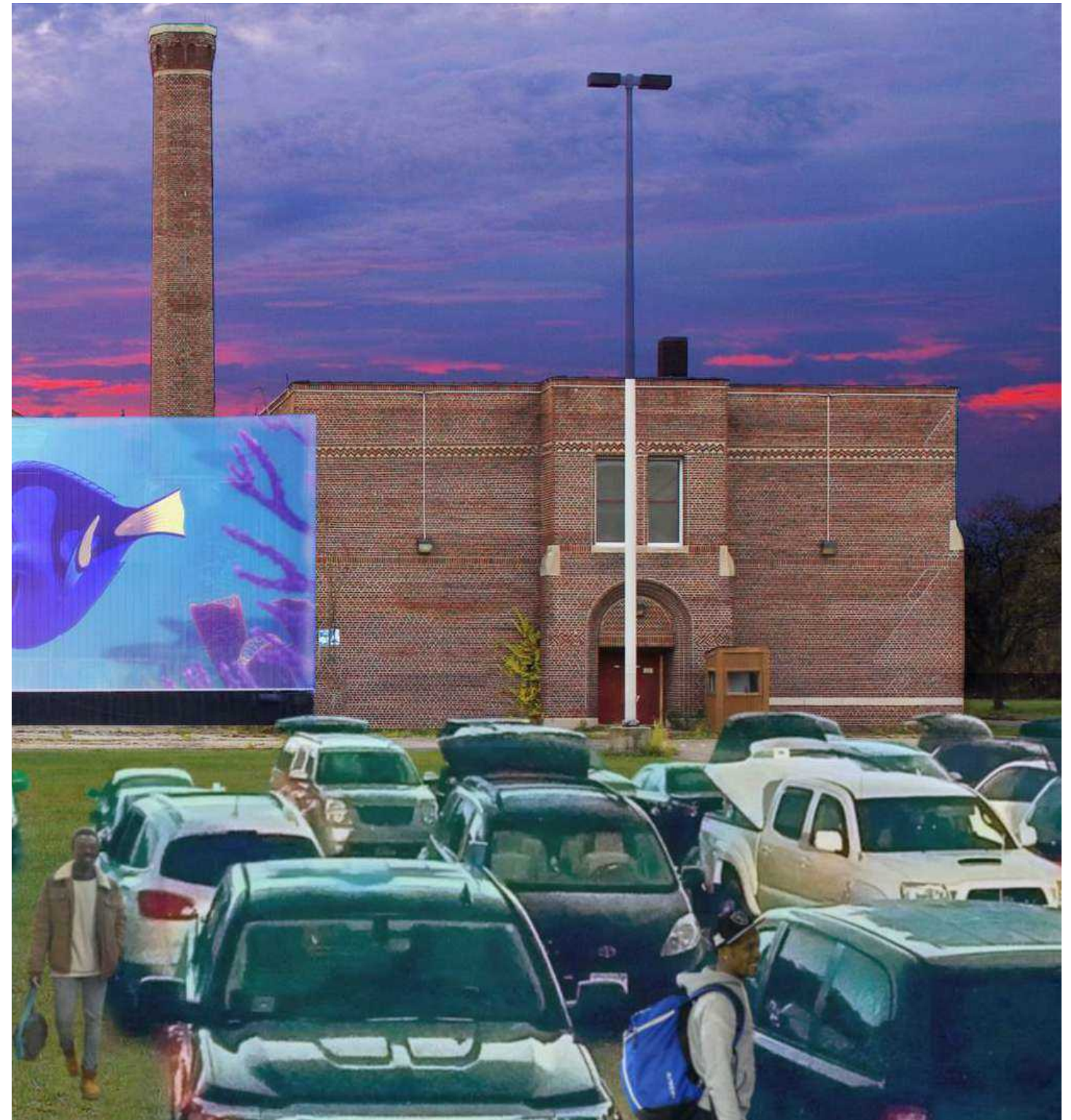
**7 AGRICULTURE + HOOP HOUSES**

PHYSICAL:  
-Plant crops and build hoop houses

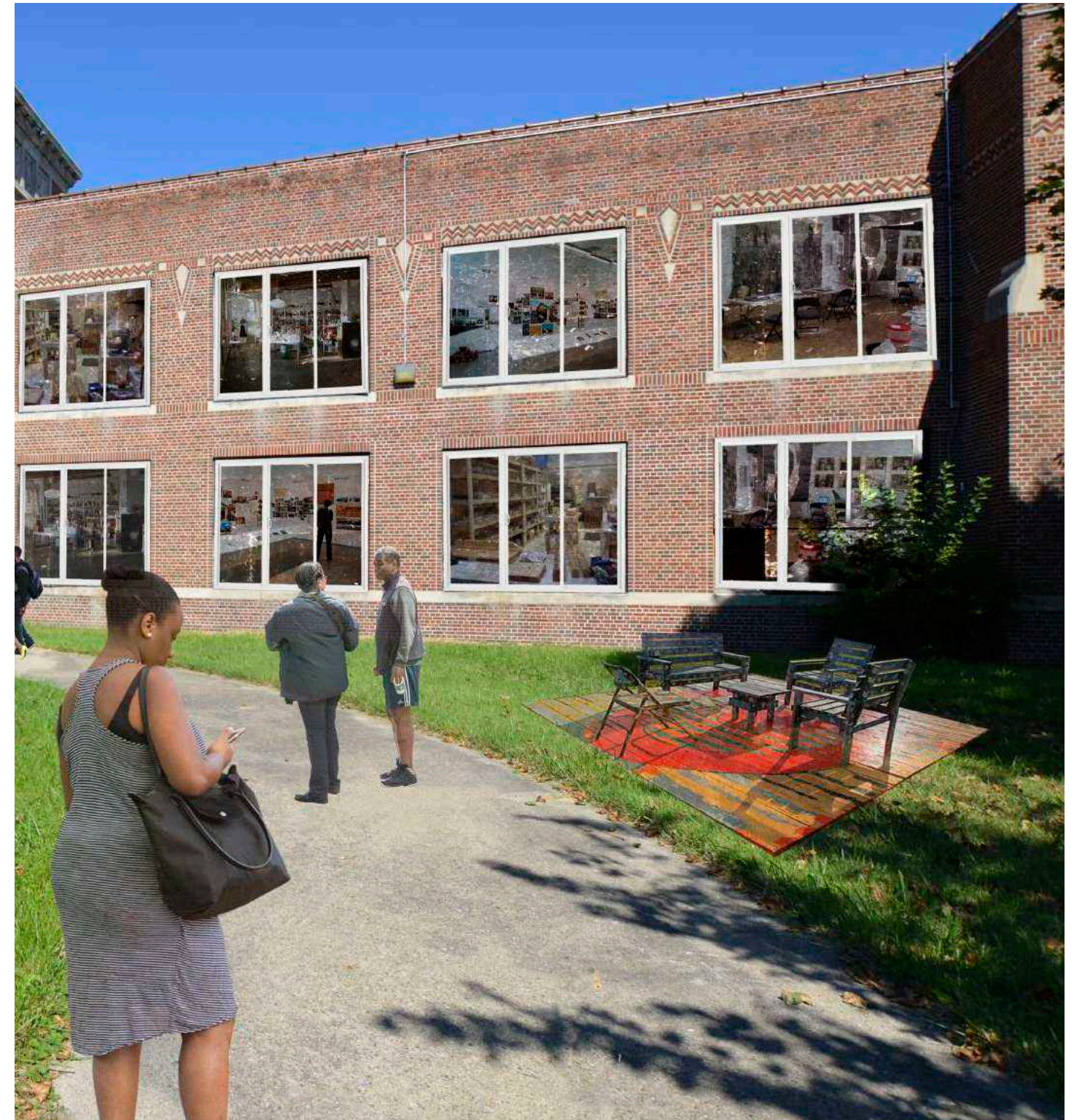
GOALS:  
-Develop surrounding area  
-Accumulate revenue, closed loop system with food growth, production, and market

POTENTIAL SUPPORT:  
-Private commercial company







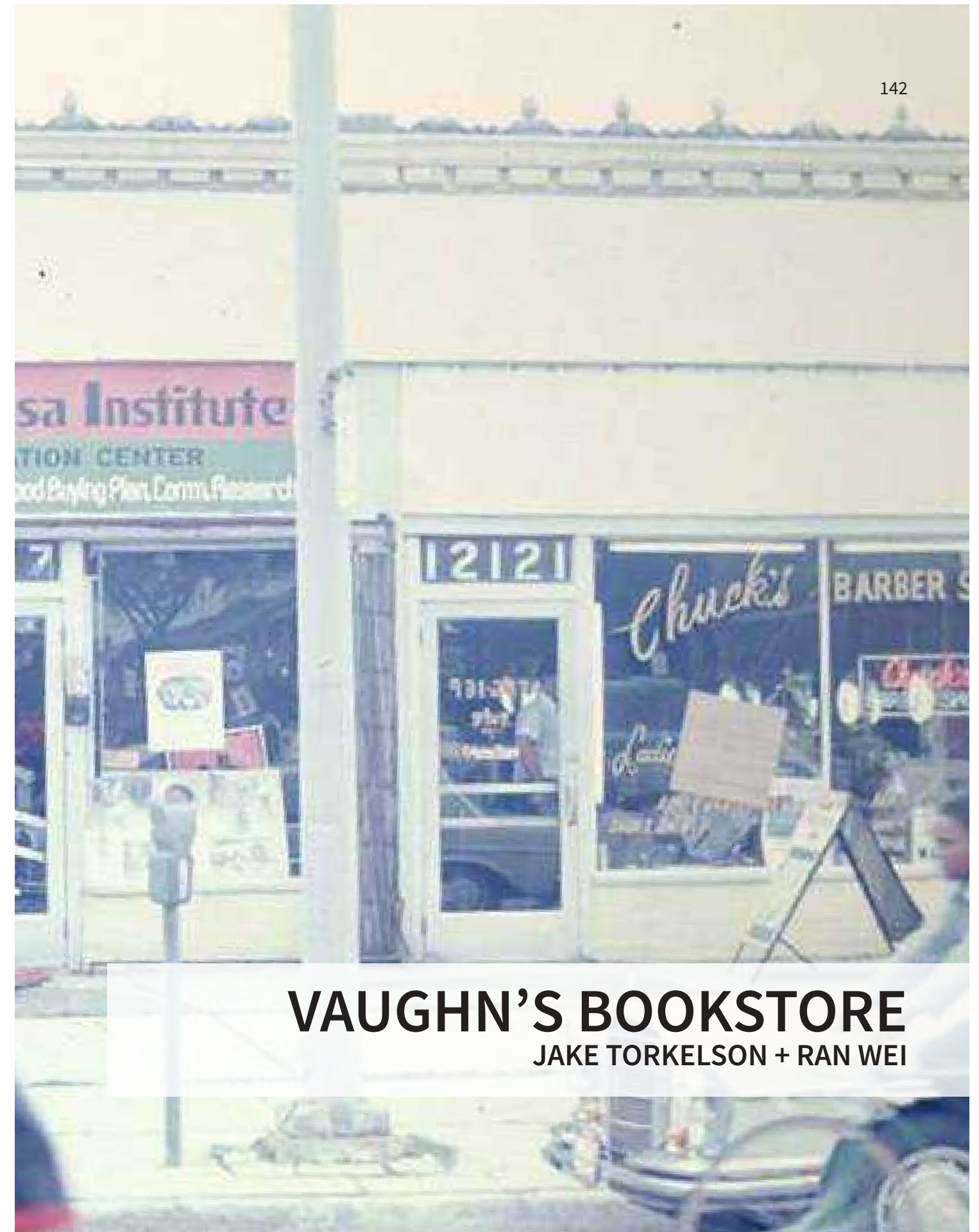
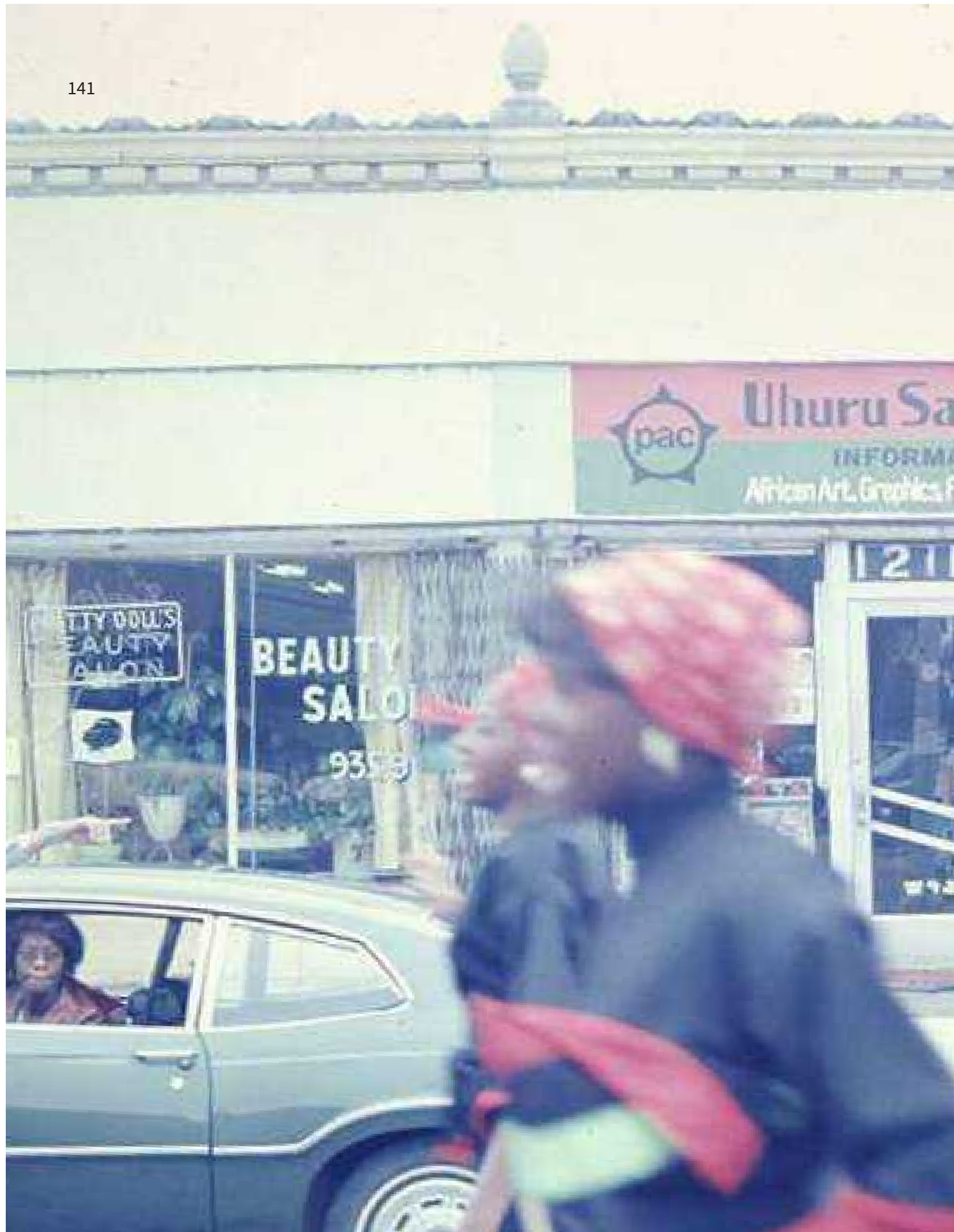


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**FIGURES**

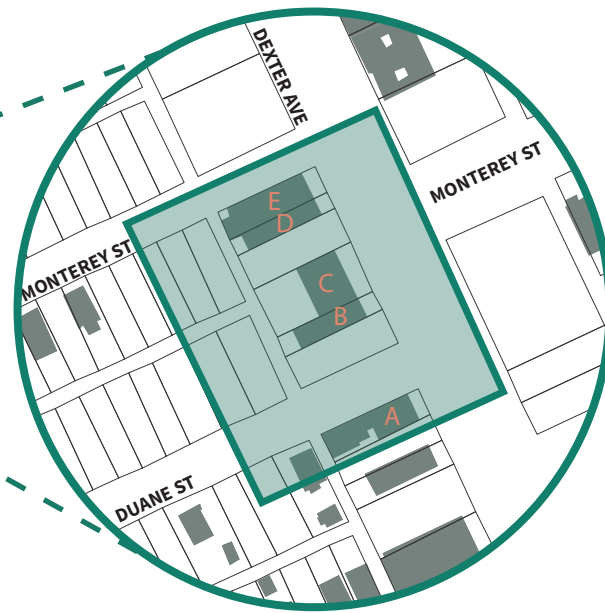
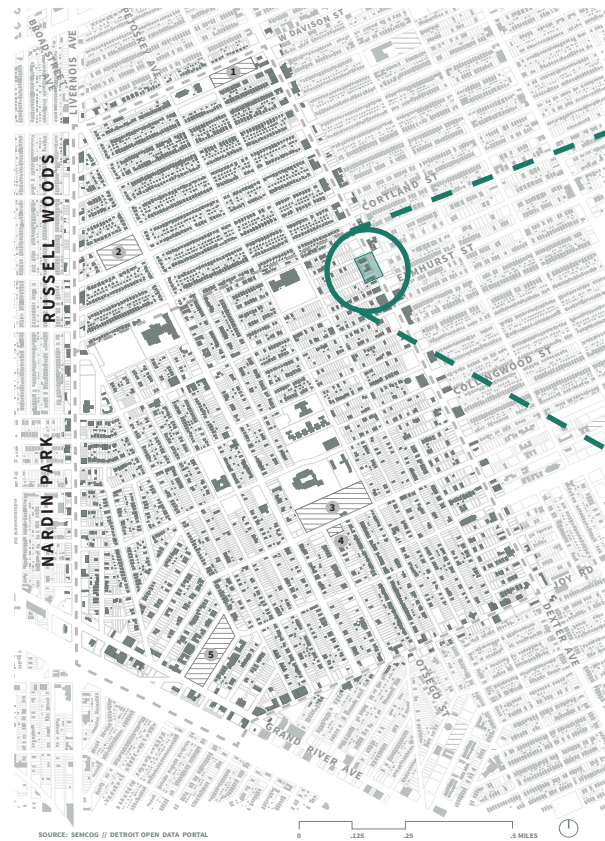
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- 4.74. Stevens, Amanda. "Smoke Tower". November 8, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- 4.75. Candela, Lillian. "Greenhouse". November 8, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- 4.76. Stevens, Amanda. "Front Entrance". November 8, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- 4.77. Candela, Lillian. "Kindergarten Room". November 8, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



**VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE**  
 JAKE TORKELSON + RAN WEI

Figure 4.78. Businesses and cultural institution in Vaughn's Bookstore building, 1976.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



- A Eleo's Coffee
- B Vacant Commercial
- C Vaughn's Bookstore Building
- D Vacant Commercial
- E Vacant Commercial

### INTRODUCTION

Vaughn's Bookstore was a center for black culture and a meeting place for black liberation politics in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>1</sup> Historically, the commercial strip that included Vaughn's had many different uses. At its height, in the 1960s and 1970s, it was a thriving black-owned commercial corridor consisting of Vaughn's Bookstore, a cultural institute, a church, a barber shop, and a beauty salon. Ed Vaughn, the founder of Vaughn's bookstore sold black literature and held discussion about race, politics, and black history at his store. During the 1967 Rebellion, the bookstore and other nearby black-businesses were heavily damaged by what many believe to be intentional police retaliation, direct at centers of black culture.<sup>2</sup>

Today, the strip is in poor condition and vacant. Despite their poor state of repair, this strip holds immense cultural significance for the surrounding neighborhoods and Detroit at large. It retains good integrity in architectural features and

general commercial storefront proportions. It is located on the west side of Dexter Avenue, on the modern boundary between the neighborhoods of Russell Woods and Nardin Park.

### QUICK FACTS

- Historically black-owned business corridor
- Vaughn's Bookstore was open from 1962-late 1970s
- Served as a gathering place for Black Liberation Politics
- Consists of four buildings
- Poor condition
- Strong cultural significance
- Adjacent to newly-opened Eleo's Coffee

## SITE OVERVIEW

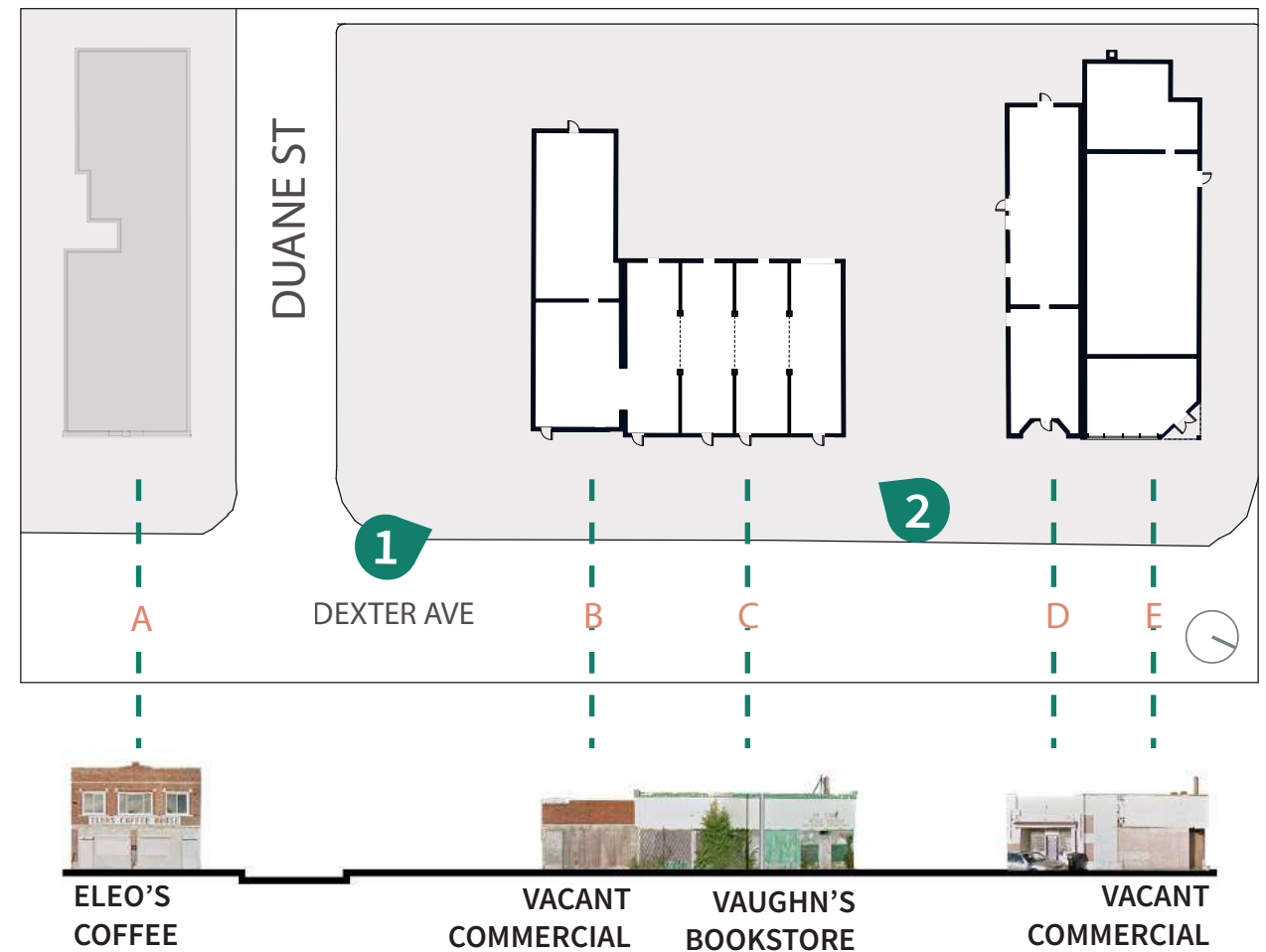
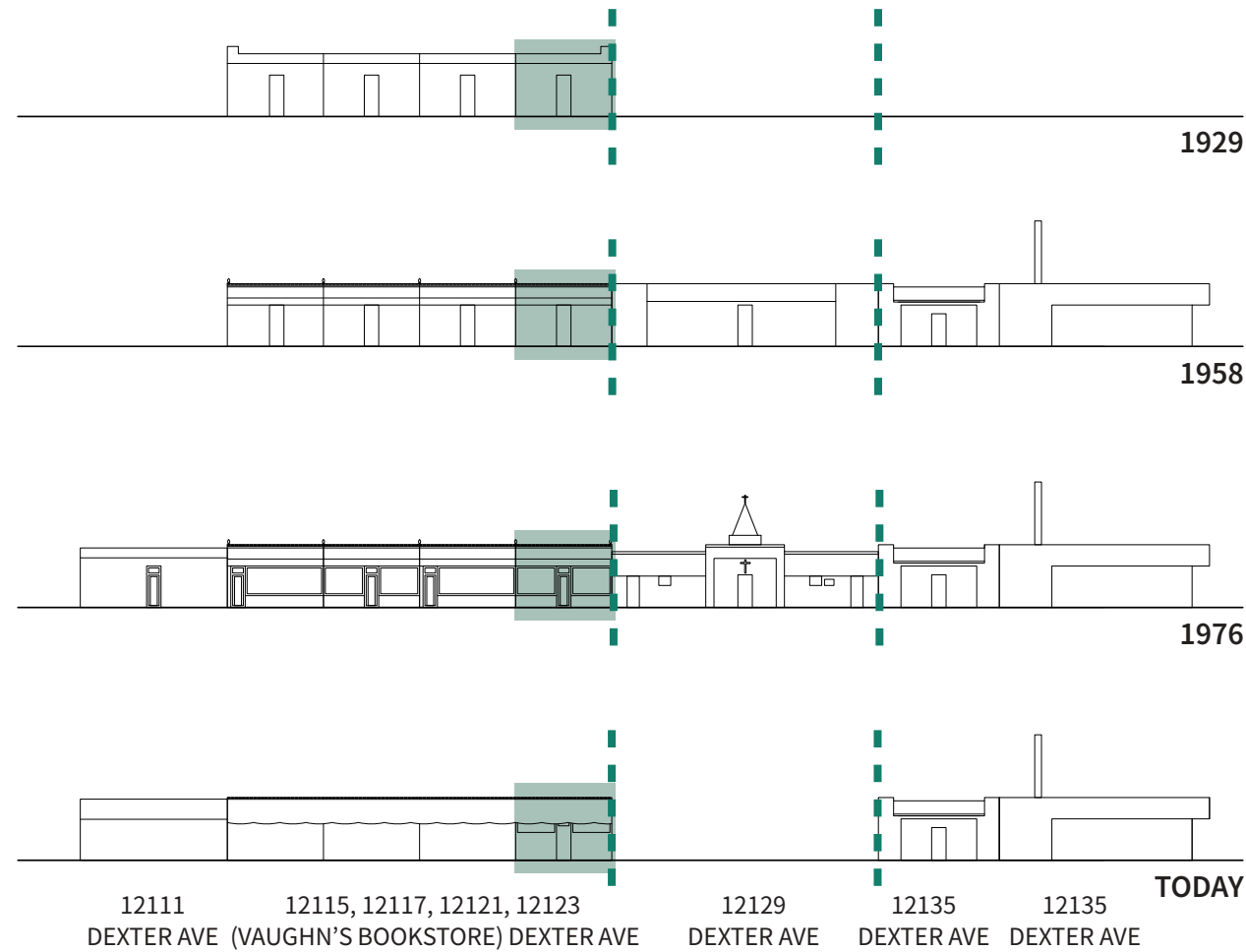


Figure 4.79. Vaughn's Bookstore Strip today. Vaughn's Bookstore is the teal building at center, 2017.



Figure 4.80. Vaughn's Bookstore as seen today, 2018.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### HISTORY OF THE STRIP

Vaughn's Bookstore strip was developed from late 1920s to late 1960s, which follows the major development periods of Russell Woods/Nardin Park. In 1929, the first building was constructed with four units. From late 1920s to 1930s, there was a shoe repair shop, a laundry, a grocery store, and a meat shop in the four units respectively. From 1948 to 1958, four more buildings were constructed on the north and south side of the first building. Among the four new buildings, 12141 Dexter Avenue was used as a cleaning and pressing store for approximately three decades.

In 1962, Edward Vaughn opened Vaughn's Bookstore in 12123 Dexter Avenue which was the north most unit of the first building on this block, as highlighted in teal in the elevation drawings. According

to the 1976 historic photo (Figure 4.4.6), there was a beauty salon, a cultural institution, and a barbershop in the other three units of the first building on the block.<sup>3</sup> The cultural institution was called Uhuru Sasa Institute and was opened by the Youth League of the Pan African Congress USA in 1975. Around 2009, 12129 Dexter Avenue which was a synagogue in 1950s and 1960s and a Baptist church after 1960s, was demolished.

### HISTORY OF VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE

Edward Vaughn, a black socialist, started his book selling business in late 1950s. In 1962, Vaughn and his business partner, Polly Ross, opened Vaughn's Bookstore primarily selling black literature in 12123 Dexter Avenue. The store quickly became a gathering

## SITE HISTORY



Figure 4.81. Details inside Vaughn's Bookstore, 1966.



Figure 4.82. Vaughn's Bookstore after the 1967 Rebellion, 1967.



Figure 4.83. Businesses and cultural institution in Vaughn's Bookstore building, 1976.

place on Thursday nights for the black community to discuss the pressing issues of the day. Vaughn called the gatherings Forum '65, Forum '66 and Forum '67 among which, Forum '66 was the most successful one. It brought together Black scholars, activists, and poets from all over the country, including Nikki Giovanni and Haki Madhubuti. The June 1966 issue of Negro Digest announced the Forum '66/Black Arts Convention and its theme, "Toward a Greater Understanding of Our Heritage," along with scheduled participants, John O. Killens, Ossie Davis, LeRoi Jones, Julian Bond, Max Roach, Charles P. Howard and "various African delegates to the United Nations." The attempt to organize a national Black conference, "something which had not been done since the days of Marcus Mosiah Garvey," according to Vaughn, was largely successful.<sup>4</sup>

The 1967 Rebellion in Detroit heavily affected the bookstore. After the Rebellion, the book business as well as other businesses along Dexter Avenue started to decline. Several years after the Rebellion, Vaughn moved his bookstore a few stores down the street. In the late 1970s, Vaughn moved his bookstore to Downtown Detroit. The last business in the bookstore unit was O.M. School Resale & Boutique which sold "a little bit of this, a little bit of that" according to the commercial sign on the façade.<sup>5</sup>

Speaking about Vaughn's Bookstore, Stuart House, Detroit native and longtime activist, says that, "It was important, prominent, central and made an invaluable contribution to intellectual life and ideological development of all the people who were struggling for Black liberation, regardless of what their particular organization or movement was about. Vaughn's bookstore was an important place to hone one's Black intellectual skills."<sup>6</sup>

Although most of the lots and buildings on this block are vacant now, the strip was not only an active commercial strip, but more importantly, a cultural center of the two neighborhoods in 1960s and 1970s.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



Figure 4.84-87. Scenes of the Detroit Rebellion of 1967.

### RIOT (n.)<sup>7</sup>

1. a violent disturbance of the peace by a crowd.

### ON THE TERM REBELLION...

The year 2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Rebellion or as it is historically known, the 1967 Race Riots. In more recent years, cultural institutions in Detroit have moved away from using the term "riot" and now use "rebellion" in its place. At a simplistic level, some might see this simply as parsing words, swapping a synonym for the same word. In reality, the term Rebellion is quite different than riot; it focuses on the underlying causes and highlights the built-up anger and resentment over discrimination, social injustice, and police brutality that African Americans endured in Detroit for years. It gives agency to participants and discusses the long-term battle against the powers that be. It is an imperfect term

### REBELLION (n.)<sup>8</sup>

1: opposition to one in authority or dominance  
2: open, armed, and usually unsuccessful defiance of or resistance to an established government

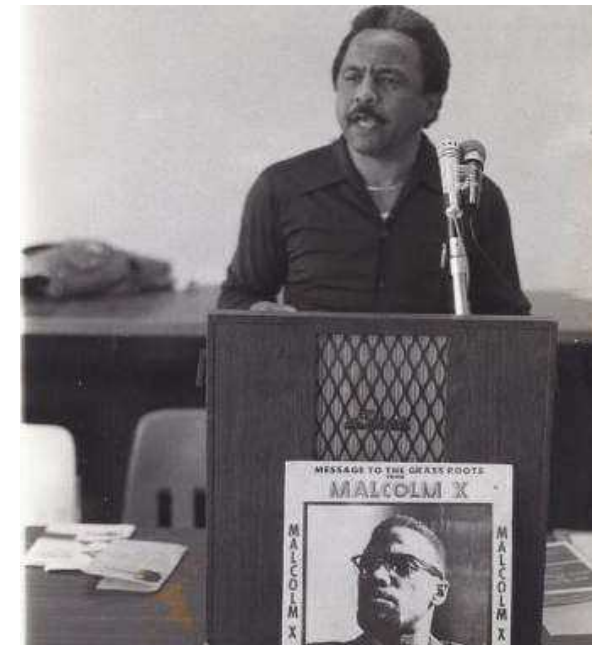
that changes based on who is speaking, but its use highlights a significant shift in the perception of black history, especially in Detroit.

"It wasn't Black Power that caused the rebellion, it was the lack of power that caused the rebellions around the country. People did not see any hope for themselves, people were beginning to be unemployed more and more, we had no access to government, we were still pretty much confined to the ghetto and, what, and then our consciousness was being raised at the same time, and I think the masses of people made a decision that they would do something and I think that they did." —Ed Vaughn, 1989<sup>9</sup>

## THE 1967 REBELLION & ED VAUGHN



Figures 4.88-89.. (Top) Ed Vaughn outside his store, collecting donations for the Pan-African Congress. (Bottom) Ed Vaughn speaking on Malcom X.



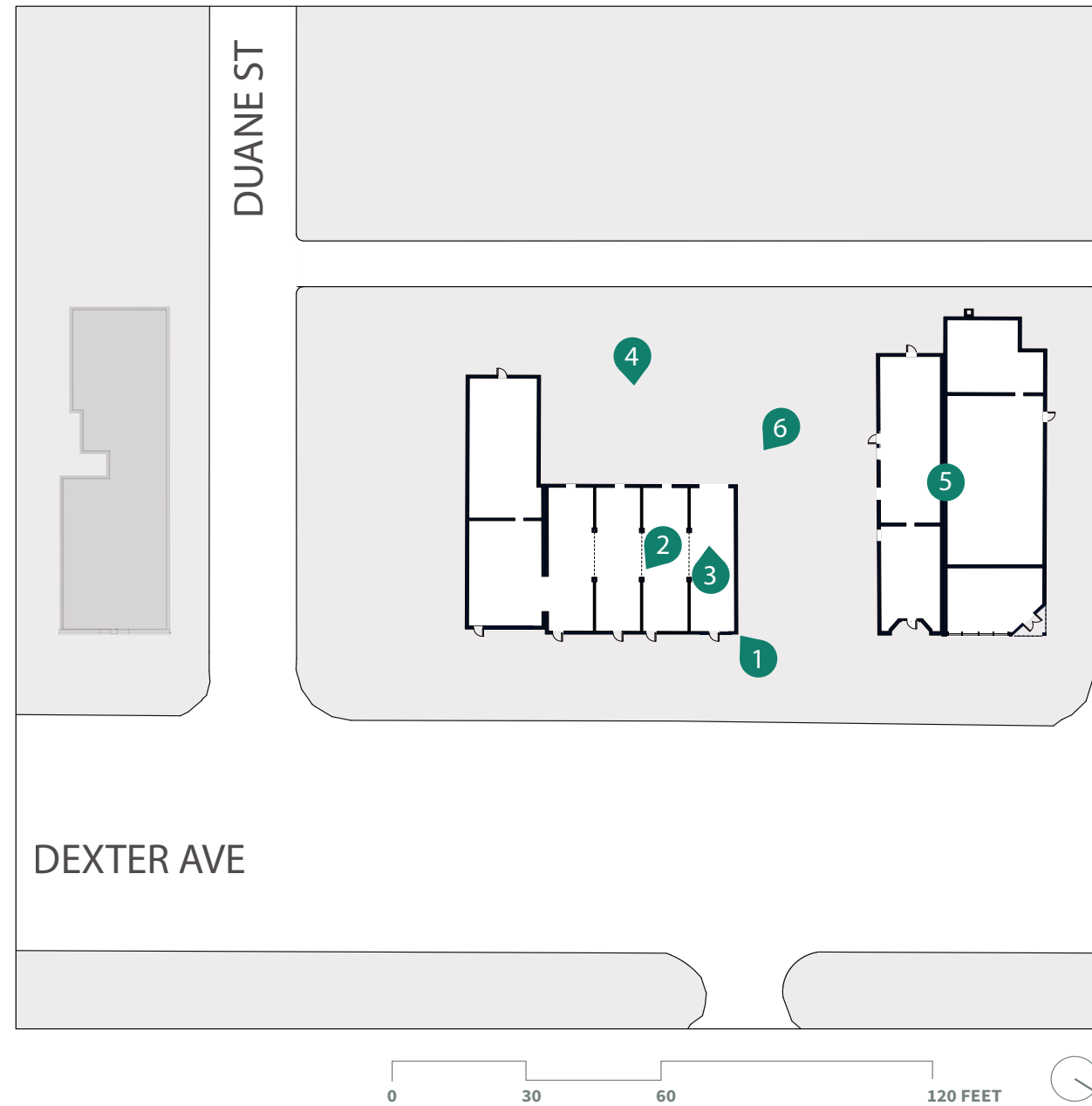
### SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF ED VAUGHN

After returning from two years of military service in the army in 1957, Ed Vaughn noticed that there was a demand for knowledge of black history and a thirst for black literature. In the early years, Vaughn sold black literature out of the back of his car, enjoying enthusiasm from many neighborhood residents. With the rise of the Civil Rights Movement and Black Politics, Vaughn opened his bookstore. He hosted weekly Thursday gatherings called "Forum" between 1965 and 1967. As Vaughn's Bookstore grew in popularity, so did his own profile. The FBI and other law enforcement groups began to see Vaughn and what his store represented as subversive. Ed Vaughn holds this ignorance to be the cause of his store's destruction by police during the Rebellion. Businesses along Dexter Avenue began to disappear after the Rebellion, but Vaughn and others rebuilt and, in many cases, benefited from the public awareness. In the late 1970s, Vaughn moved his bookstore, ultimately closing its doors in the 1990s, following his election to the state House of Representatives. Vaughn also worked for Mayor Coleman Young's office and taught black history at local public schools. Today, Vaughn lives in his birthplace of Dothan, Alabama.

### VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE & THE REBELLION

Vaughn's bookstore was heavily affected by the 1967 Rebellion. When the rebellion started, Ed Vaughn was out of town at a Black Power conference in Newark. When he finally arrived at his store, phrases like "long live the black revolution" had been painted on it, yet it was largely unscathed, and he reopened for business the next day. Two days later, Detroit Police broke into the store under the ruse that Vaughn had been stashing guns. They smashed portraits of prominent black men like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr., and fire-bombed the building. Once again, Vaughn re-opened his store the next day with what was left of his shop, only to be re-visited by the police that evening. This time, police clogged the sink and flooded the store, tossing books into the water. An official investigation was conducted, and the police were cleared of all wrong doing.<sup>10</sup> This is a tale common in multiple cities across the country, one in which black consciousness was seen as dangerous and shops like Vaughn's equally so.<sup>11</sup>

# VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Vaughn's Bookstore strip is currently in poor condition, however not beyond repair. The façade of the bookstore building is cracking and not fully attached to the wall (Figure 4.90). The partition walls, roof, and back wall of the building are compromised

(Figure 4.90-4.92). However, considering the cultural significance of the strip, as well as the architectural details such as the cornice and the proportion of the façade of the building, we would like to keep the original façade. Based on current condition assessment, the rehabilitation of the building will need

# CONDITION



Figure 4.90. Cracking facade of Vaughn's Bookstore, 2018.



Figure 4.93. Vegetation on the vacant lot behind the strip, 2018.



Figure 4.91. Roof of Vaughn's Bookstore building, 2018.

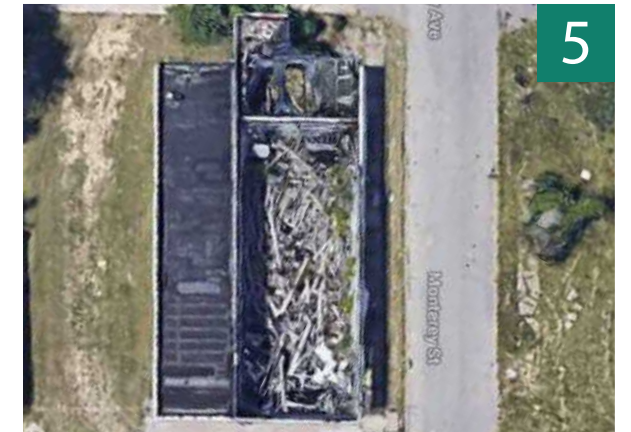


Figure 4.94. Missing roof of 12141 Dexter Avenue, 2018.



Figure 4.92. Back wall and partition wall of Vaughn's Bookstore, 2018.



Figure 4.95. Back wall of Vaughn's Bookstore, 2018.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE

to keep and stabilize the façade and the side wall of the building, install a steel structure inside the exterior walls, brace the building to provide lateral support, and knit the façade and the side wall together. The rehabilitation should be completed at once.

Besides, the roof of the building on the north corner, 12141 Dexter Avenue, is missing. We will thus add a new roof to the building (Figure 4.94). Vegetation on vacant lots around the buildings needs to be cleaned up before reusing the vacant lots for outdoor programming (Figure 4.95).

Due to the limited access to the buildings, the current condition assessment has some unsolved questions, including whether the roof is stable or not, and whether the side wall is still able to provide enough lateral support. Therefore, we recommend conducting more comprehensive investigation and condition assessment before developing a complete and feasible rehabilitation plan for the buildings.

### ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Although Vaughn's Bookstore was restored after the Rebellion, it still retains its general character and integrity despite its poor condition.

On the shattered transom, the address number of the unit, 12123, is partly visible (Figure 4.96 and 4.97). The historic character of commercial spaces is one of constant change. However, the general storefront proportions of the building behind the plywood are kept together with the cornice (Figure 4.98 and 4.99). Some of the architectural elements such as the finials are missing (Figure 4.100 and 4.101). Thus there are opportunities to make creative installations and interpretations for the proposal. Current condition studies indicate that the original layers of the façade are still behind the plywood, thus it is possible to peel back and present the original façade.

Simple as it is, the existing original fabric of the bookstore building has witnessed the revolution of the strip. It adds to the architectural value to the strip, and is part of its cultural significance. Therefore, we would like to preserve the original fabric on the façade of the bookstore building to display the historic characteristics and help support the interpretation of the strip.



Figure 4.96. Details inside Vaughn's Bookstore, 1966.



Figure 4.97. Transom of Vaughn's Bookstore, 2017.

## ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

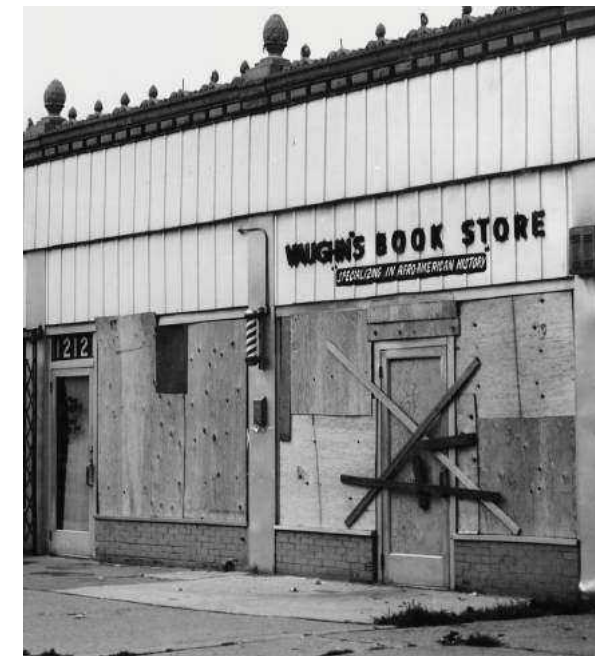


Figure 4.98. Vaughn's Bookstore after the 1967 Rebellion, 1967.



Figure 4.100. Businesses and cultural institution in Vaughn's Bookstore building, 1976.

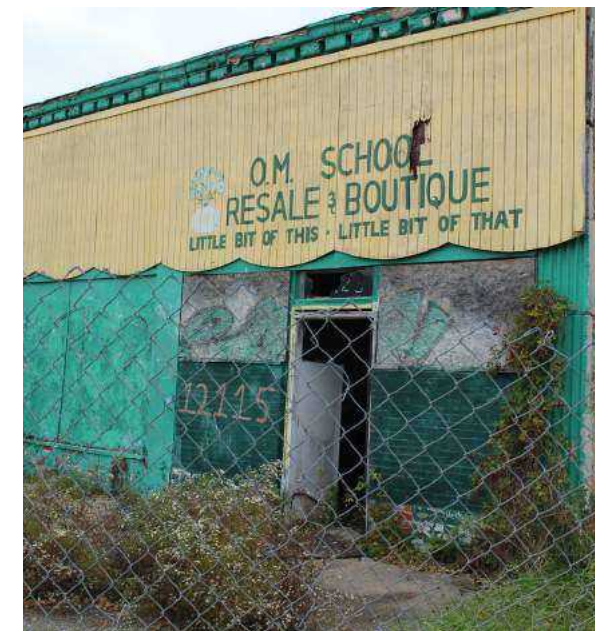


Figure 4.99. Facade of Vaughn's Bookstore, 2018.

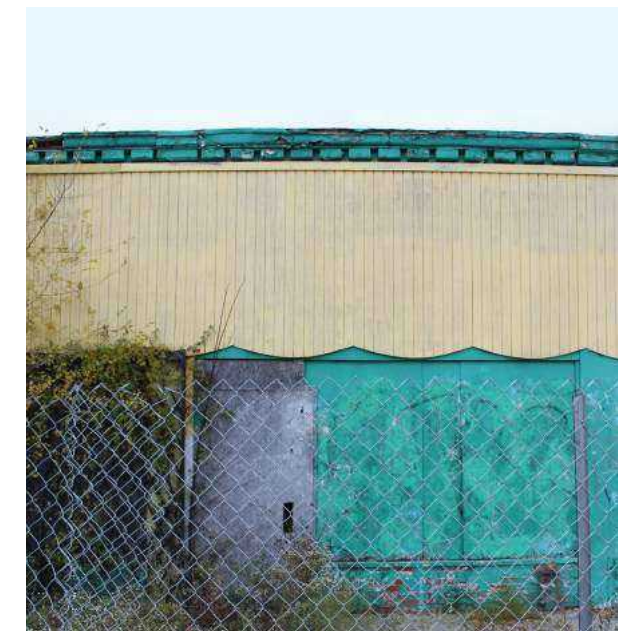


Figure 4.101. Facade of Vaughn's Bookstore building, 2018.



## VAUGHN’S BOOKSTORE

### SITE STRENGTHS

We identified five site strengths that help guide the interventions:

**Place-based history:** The history of Vaughn’s Bookstore as well as the strip was highly involved by the entire community. The history about the Rebellion is also an important part of the neighborhood history and the history of the strip which contributes to the cultural significance of the strip. Vaughn’s Bookstore strip can be viewed as a physical container of the intangible heritage of the neighborhoods, and is a good place for interpreting the community history. The interventions will be able to recreate the physical space for community history and dialogue.

**Legacy of black ownership and culture:** The strip was an active commercial and cultural center of the neighborhoods in 1960s and 1970s because of the active and black-owned bookstore, other black-owned businesses, and several cultural institutions inhabited in the buildings. The legacy of black ownership and culture stemmed from the history of the strip is another contributor of the cultural significance of the strip.

**Proximity to Eleo’s Coffee:** Eleo’s Coffee is located to the south of the strip. Opened in 2016 by Eleos Ministries based in Kansas City, it is now an active commercial as well as gathering space in the community aiming to join the effort of revitalizing the once thriving city. The annual carnival initiated by Eleo’s Coffee since 2016 has been successful in terms of bringing more people to the area and creating a public space for the community to share joy.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, it is a good opportunity to build partnership with Eleo’s Coffee. The annual carnival can be then expanded.

**Momentum to discover and interpret neighborhood history:** From conversations with the local community, the neighborhoods have expressed strong desire to have more black-owned businesses, and to interpret and display the neighborhood history more, which is corresponding to the history of the strip. The interventions will need to consider black-owned

businesses as the major option for the rehabilitated stores, and focus on preservation and interpretation of community history.

**Strong historic and photographic record:** There is a relatively large number of newspaper articles about the history of Vaughn’s Bookstore. Historic photos on Vaughn’s Bookstore strip and Edward Vaughn are also available. The narratives about the history of the bookstore is a starting point of the interpretation. While the photographic record of the bookstore will be reference for the rehabilitation work which requires to keep some original fabric of the bookstore building intact. At some point, Mr. Vaughn himself should be approached for an oral history.

### SITE STRENGTHS

- PLACE-BASED HISTORY
- LEGACY OF BLACK OWNERSHIP AND CULTURE
- PROXIMITY TO ELEO’S COFFEE
- MOMENTUM TO DISCOVER & INTERPRET NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY
- STRONG HISTORIC AND PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

## ASSETS + INTERVENTIONS

### ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

The interventions we propose address three community needs:

**Retail:** We would like to install black-owned businesses in rehabilitated stores to provide retail and daily services for the community. The retail can be a barbershop and beauty salon which is not only in accordance with the history of the strip, but also a social place for the community.

**Gathering spaces:** We hope to use Vaughn’s Bookstore, side lots, and businesses to create a cultural center for the community to dialogue about their memories, identity, and heritage.

**Community history:** We hope to explore community history through exhibits and art in the bookstore and on the side lots and sidewalk. The exhibits will be the history about the strip, Dexter Avenue, the two neighborhoods, the Rebellion, etc. The art will include art installations on vacant lots and sidewalk as well as murals on the exterior walls of the buildings. Part of the history will be oral histories that we hope to collect from the community using recorders and cameras during events and programs and display the histories in the exhibition spaces.

### RETAIL

Install black-owned businesses

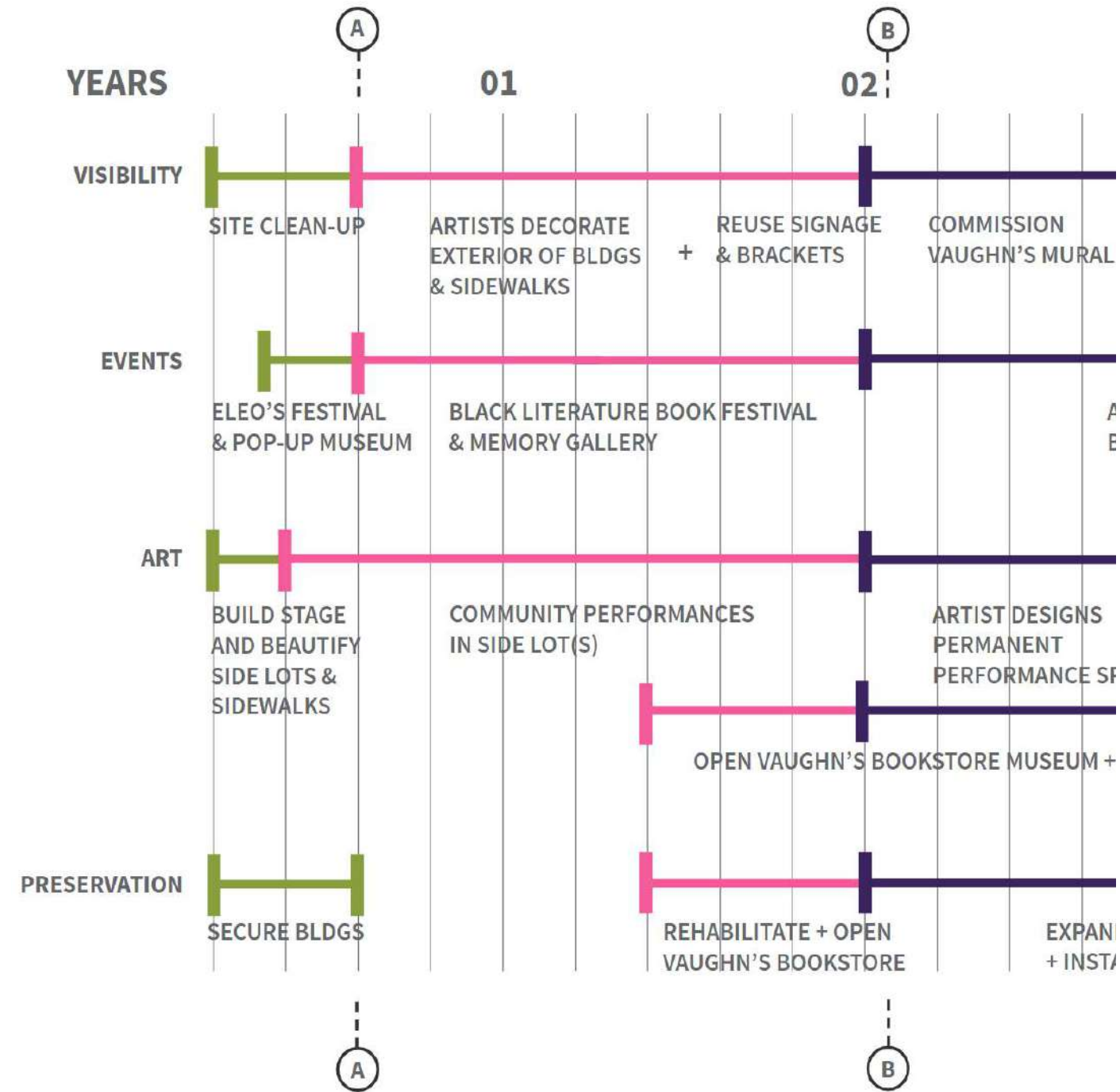
### GATHERING SPACES

Create a center to dialogue about memory, identity, and heritage

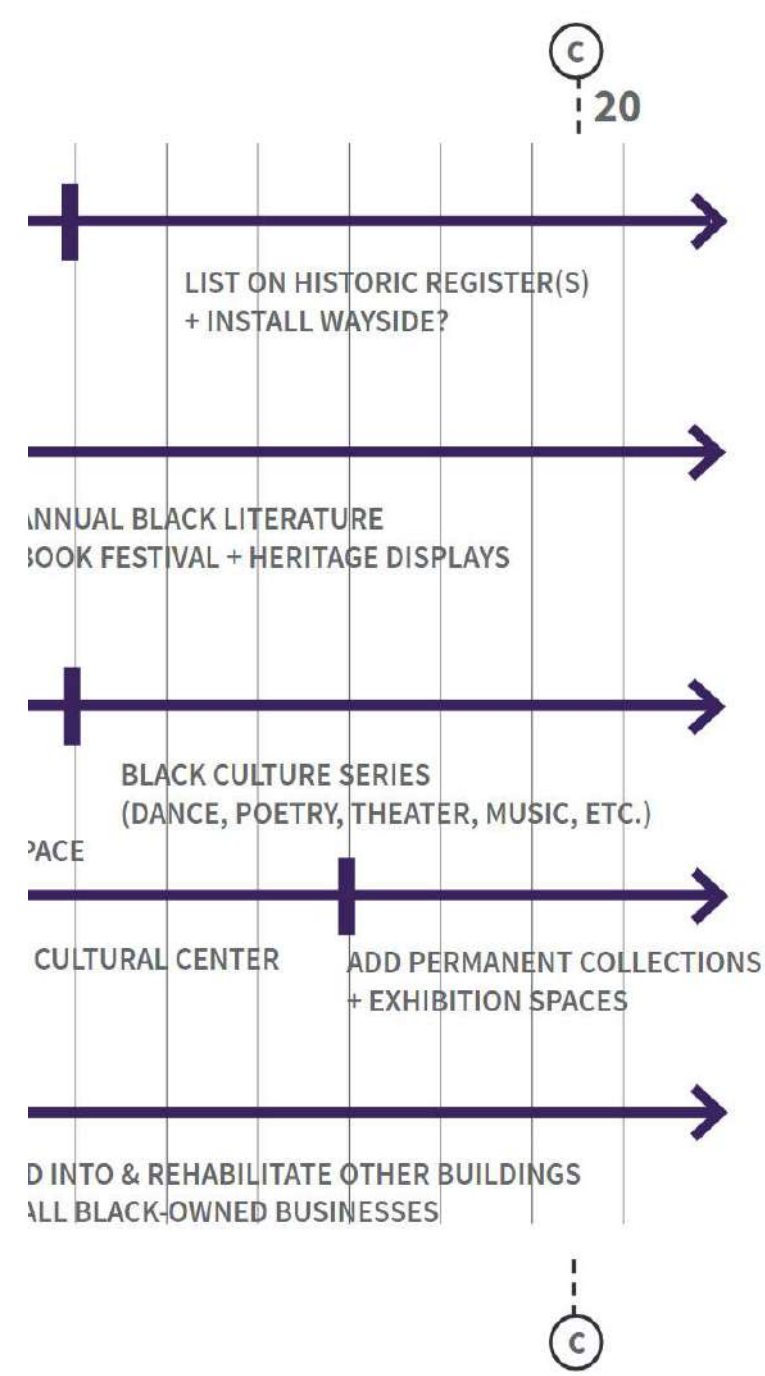
### COMMUNITY HISTORY

Explore community history through exhibits and art, collect and display oral histories

# VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



# TIMELINE



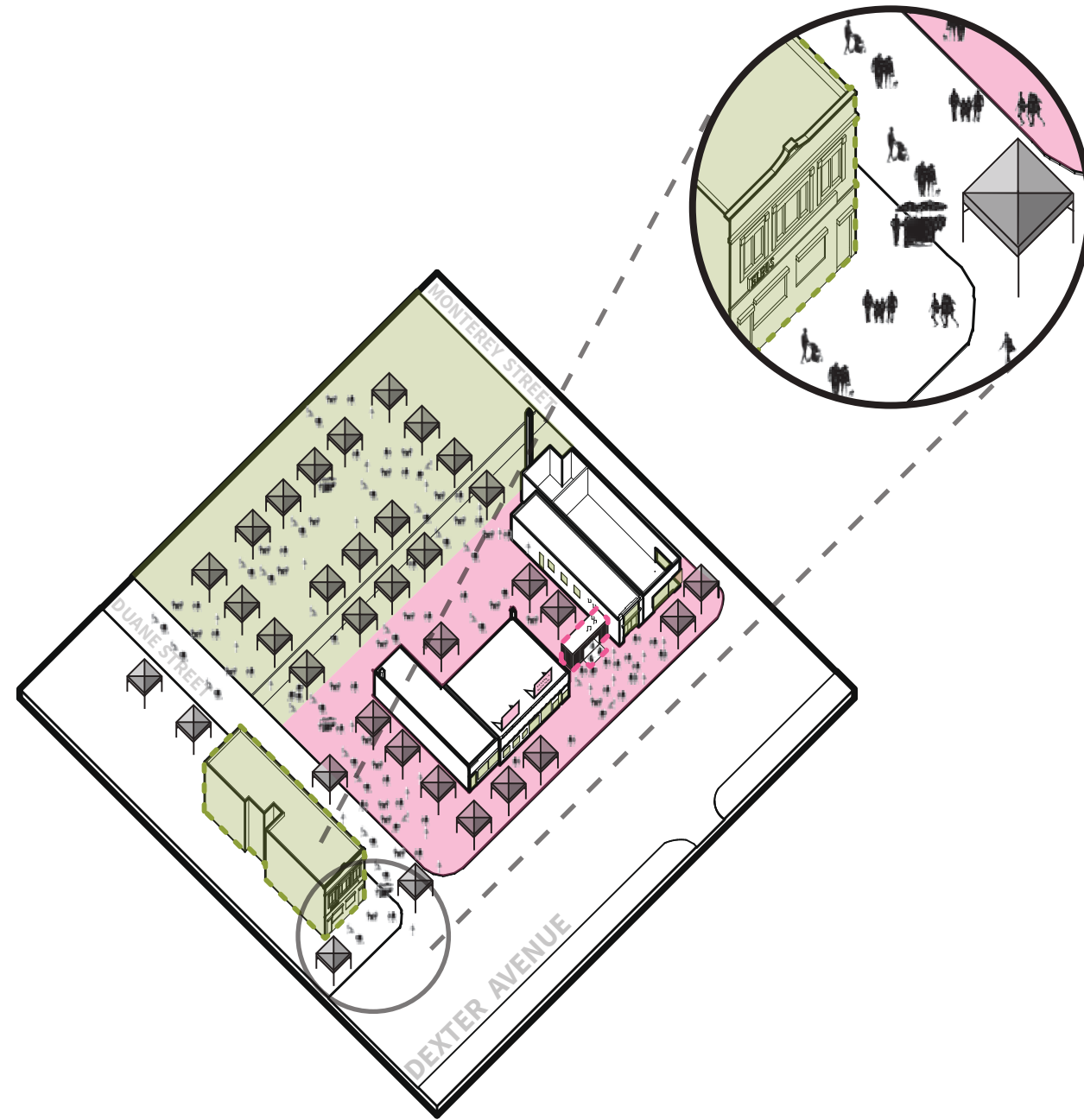
## TIMELINE

On the programming timeline, green represents short-term interventions (approximately 2 months), pink represents tactical interventions (approximately 2 years), and purple represents long-term interventions.

The interventions to Vaughn's Bookstore can be divided into four groups based on the types of the programming: increasing visibility, events, arts, and preservation. Meanwhile, the interventions are grouped under three themes based on the goals of the programming: Remembering and Collecting Memories for the short-term interventions, Making and Sharing Memories for tactical interventions, and Preserving Memories for long-term interventions. The focus of the interventions is designing and preserving Vaughn's Bookstore strip as a neighborhood catalyst that anchors the cultural corridor. Starting from collecting memories, oral histories, artifacts, the interventions will provide a place for the community to celebrate black culture by interpreting and displaying history, dialoguing about ongoing issues of race and heritage, and installing arts.

The three axons are taken at three points in time as shown by the letter A, B, and C on the timeline. Each of the axons represents the three themes of the interventions, Remembering and Collecting Memories, Making and Sharing Memories, and Preserving Memories. Under each of the themes, the axon will be divided into 2-3 phases, as shown in the following pages.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### A1 Remembering + Collecting Memories

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

## SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS: 2 MONTHS

### PARTNER WITH ELEO'S COFFEE

Before Eleo's Coffee opened in the fall of 2016, the Eleo's Ministry launched its mission in the neighborhood with a carnival on the vacant lot behind Vaughn's Bookstore. The second carnival with various games and food on June 8, 2017 attracted about 600 people from around the neighborhood. Eleo's Coffee with its annual carnival will be a good partner to start the programming. The main purpose of the first step is to increase visibility of the site and bring in more people.<sup>13</sup>

The programming will be a pop-up museum where residents can bring objects and tell stories about neighborhood history. Similar to StoryCorps which is an organization that collects people's stories and offers a platform to preserve and share the stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world, we would like to use recorders and cameras to collect oral histories from the community during the events as a preparation for the future exhibition and interpretation.<sup>14</sup> The subsequent pop-up museum will start displaying and interpreting the histories collected from previous ones, while history collecting will continue. We hope as the museum goes on, more people will participate in the events.

In addition to Eleo's Coffee, potential partners include Detroit Historical Society, Russell Woods Sullivan Neighborhood Association, etc.

### PRECEDENT

"Marketplace: Seeds of Sovereignty" is a one-day market organized by Philadelphia Assembled in collaboration with local black-businesses to celebrate West Philly's 52nd Street historic legacy. The market was along the 52nd Street Corridor from Walnut Street to Spruce Street. The aim was to set a stage for collaborations that will promote a sovereign society and to engage sustainable economic development opportunities in West Philadelphia and around the world.<sup>15</sup>

### Marketplace: Seeds of Sovereignty Philadelphia, PA



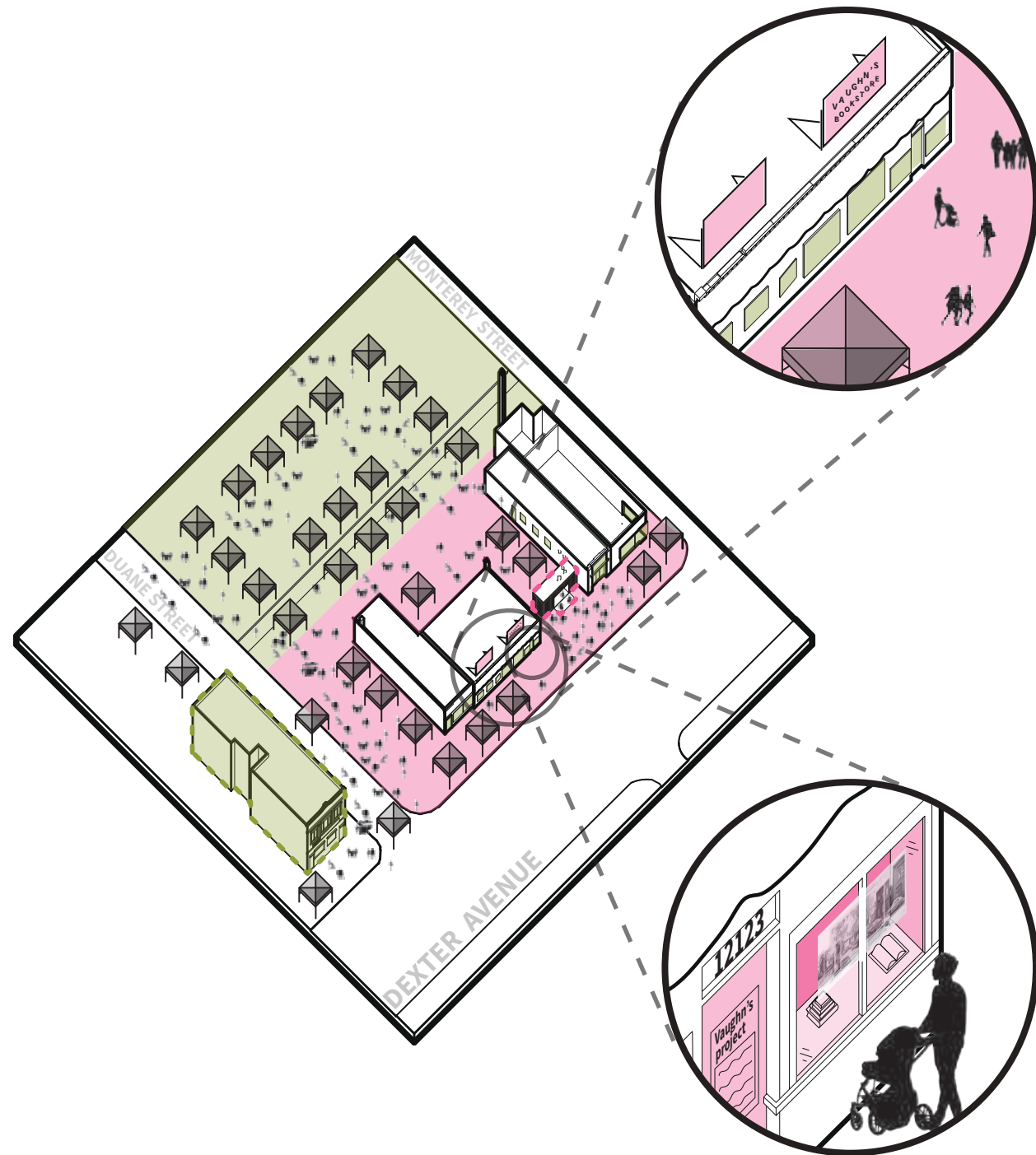
Figure 4.101-4.102. Marketplace: Seeds of Sovereignty, 2018.

### Eleo's Coffee Neighborhood Festival Detroit, MI



Figure 4.103. Eleo's Coffee neighborhood festival, 2017.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### A2 Remembering + Collecting Memories

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

## SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS: 2 MONTHS

### REUSE SIGNAGE & STOREFRONTS

In our short-term interventions, we recommend commissioning artists to design and reuse the historic signage and storefronts of the Vaughn's Bookstore building.

This step begins by securing the building, white-boxing the structure, and stabilizing it for reuse. We then commission artists to reuse the commercial signage on the buildings. Commercial signage on top of commercial buildings is a characteristic of Dexter Avenue as well as the City of Detroit. By reusing the signage, we hope to attract more people visiting the festivals and the stores. The window display project will start from short-term and go into the tactical phase. In the short-term, we will install plywood boxes behind the restored storefront. Historic photos showing what Dexter Avenue looked like, the Rebellion and the history of the neighborhoods, and historic objects collected from the community can be displayed in the window boxes. By designing and reusing the window boxes as an exhibition space, we hope to make the storefront appear vibrant and to increase visibility of the strip.

### PRECEDENTS

Olayami Dabls is an African American artist based in Detroit who runs the MBAD African Bead Museum. Dabls has worked as a story teller using a wide range of materials including wood, iron, mirrors, and brick to build murals and other art installations. The art works are viewed as a quiet revolution that sparks a vital conversation with global and local audiences. Dabls has created a large number of art works in different neighborhoods in Detroit which have helped enhance the living environment of those neighborhoods.<sup>16</sup>

Black Bottom Street View is a photo assembly created by Emily Kutil. Emily used hundreds of historic photos taken during the demolition of Black Bottom in Detroit. She assembled them into street panoramas, and placed them in a street grid for visitors to understand what Black Bottom looked like before demolition. This installation brings to light what it means to displace a community.<sup>17</sup> Black Bottom Street View is a great example of art and history merging to recreate a lost landscape and could be used to recall what Dexter Avenue looked like before the 1967 Rebellion, a strategy that could be displayed in the restored window boxes of Vaughn's Bookstore.

### Dabls African Bead Museum Detroit, MI



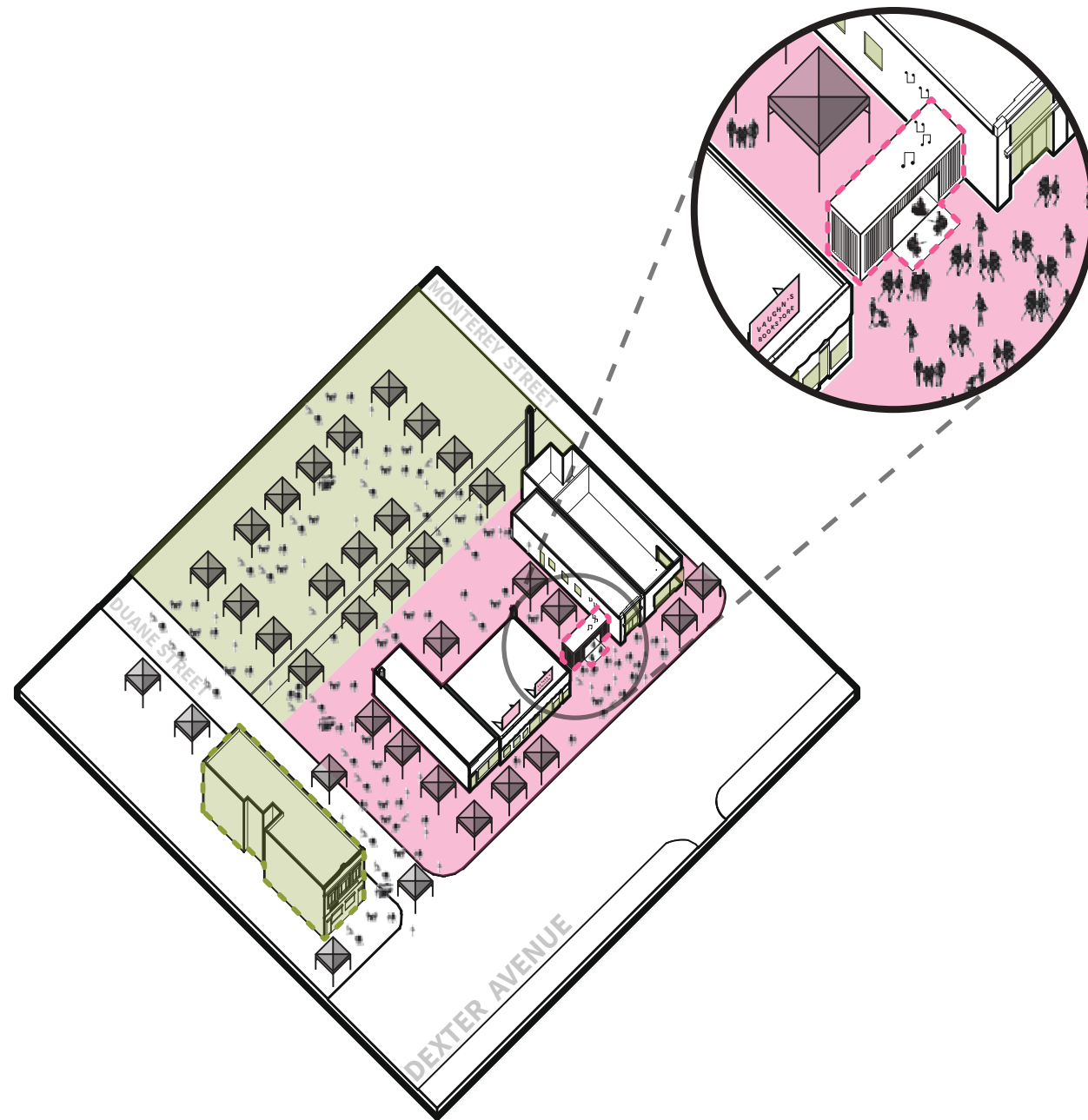
Figure 4.104-4.105. (Top) Dabls's artwork, 2018. (Bottom) Dabls, 2015.

### Black Bottom Street View Detroit, MI



Figure 4.106. Black Bottom Street View, 2015.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### A3 Remembering + Collecting Memories

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

## SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS: 2 MONTHS

### INSTALL TEMPORARY PERFORMANCE SPACE

On the vacant lot, we propose to install a temporary performance space with a shipping container stage. The space can be used by the community to host black culture performances such as poetry, plays and music. History performances and talks based on neighborhood interviews or stories told earlier can also be performed in the space. We hope the performance and the use of the space can be an ongoing semi-regular series which can increase visibility of the strip as well as provide a different type of space and function for the community to broaden their channels of communication.

### PRECEDENT

August Wilson was a Black Nationalist and playwright whose work included a series of ten plays. He received two Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his work *The Pittsburgh Cycle*.

His former residence, August Wilson House (AWH) is located on 1727 Bedford Avenue in Pittsburgh's Hill District. The house was derelict when August Wilson visited it in 1999 after moving out for a long period of time and still derelict when he died in 2005. The house became a site of cultural pilgrimage shortly after, but the pilgrims saw a wreck. Paul Ellis, August's nephew, later formed the Daisy Wilson Artist Community which was named for August's mother. The house was landmarked and had initial restoration to stop the decay. Pittsburgh foundations and government ultimately supported the restoration of the outer shell, after which the programming began.

In 2016, a back-yard production of *Seven Guitars* staged in the outdoor space of the AWH. The event was collaborated with Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre, which ran for four weeks to overflow audiences. Outdoor productions of August's plays will be annual events.<sup>18</sup>

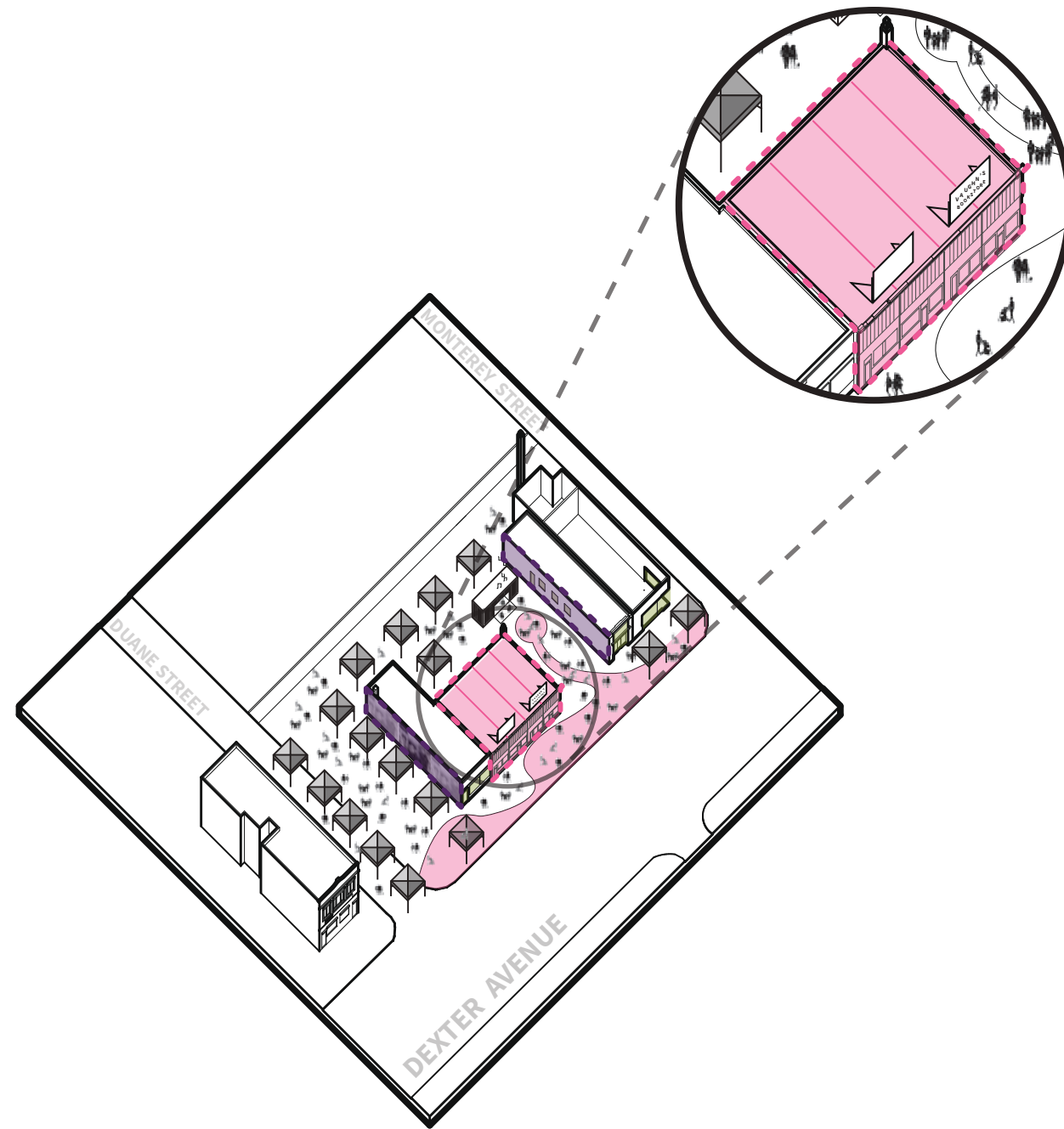
Similar to Vaughn's Bookstore strip, the August Wilson House was in poor condition. By creative programming using outdoor space first, AWH has become a vibrant community gathering space with opportunities to interpret the history and story of August Wilson and his house, as well as perform August's play. The restoration and programming of the August Wilson House shows a potential for rehabilitating Vaughn's Bookstore strip as a cultural center for the surrounding community.

August Wilson House  
Pittsburgh, PA



Figure 4.107-4.109. (Top) August Wilson House' backyard event, 2016. (Middle) AWH, 2018. (Bottom) August Wilson, 1999.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### B1 Making + Sharing Memories

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

## TACTICAL INTERVENTIONS: 2 YEARS

### REOPEN VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE

The next series of axons uses the theme "Making and Sharing Memories." Our first large tactical-preservation move begins here with the Reopening of Vaughn's Bookstore.

In the tactical phase, we recommend using profit from previous festivals to rehabilitate and reopen Vaughn's Bookstore as a black-owned bookstore selling black literature. We recommend using a small section of the space first, then expanding gradually into the entire space. The African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation is available for rehabilitation and can be applied multiple times, which can be another financial source for the rehabilitation project and can support expanding the rehabilitation into other buildings.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, the historic signage on top of the building and the window exhibition space will still be used.

### PRECEDENTS

Uncle Bobbie's Coffee and Books is a black-owned bookstore and café selling black-literature in Germantown, Philadelphia. The bookstore uses a rehabilitated historic building constructed in 1930. It is now a space for the community to chat and host events and creative programming.<sup>20</sup>

Mahogany Books is an online book-seller specialized in black literature which opened the first brick-and-mortar bookstore in Washington, D.C.<sup>21</sup> Online book entrepreneurs seeking brick-and-mortar locations is therefore an option for Vaughn's Bookstore.

### Uncle Bobbie's Coffee and Books Philadelphia, PA

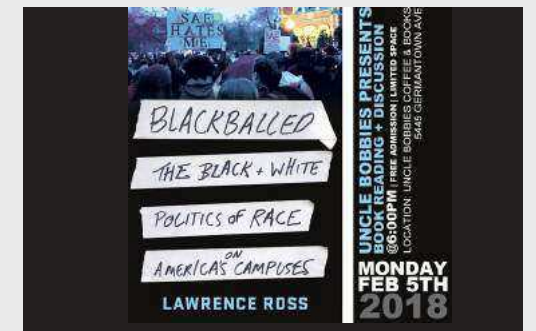


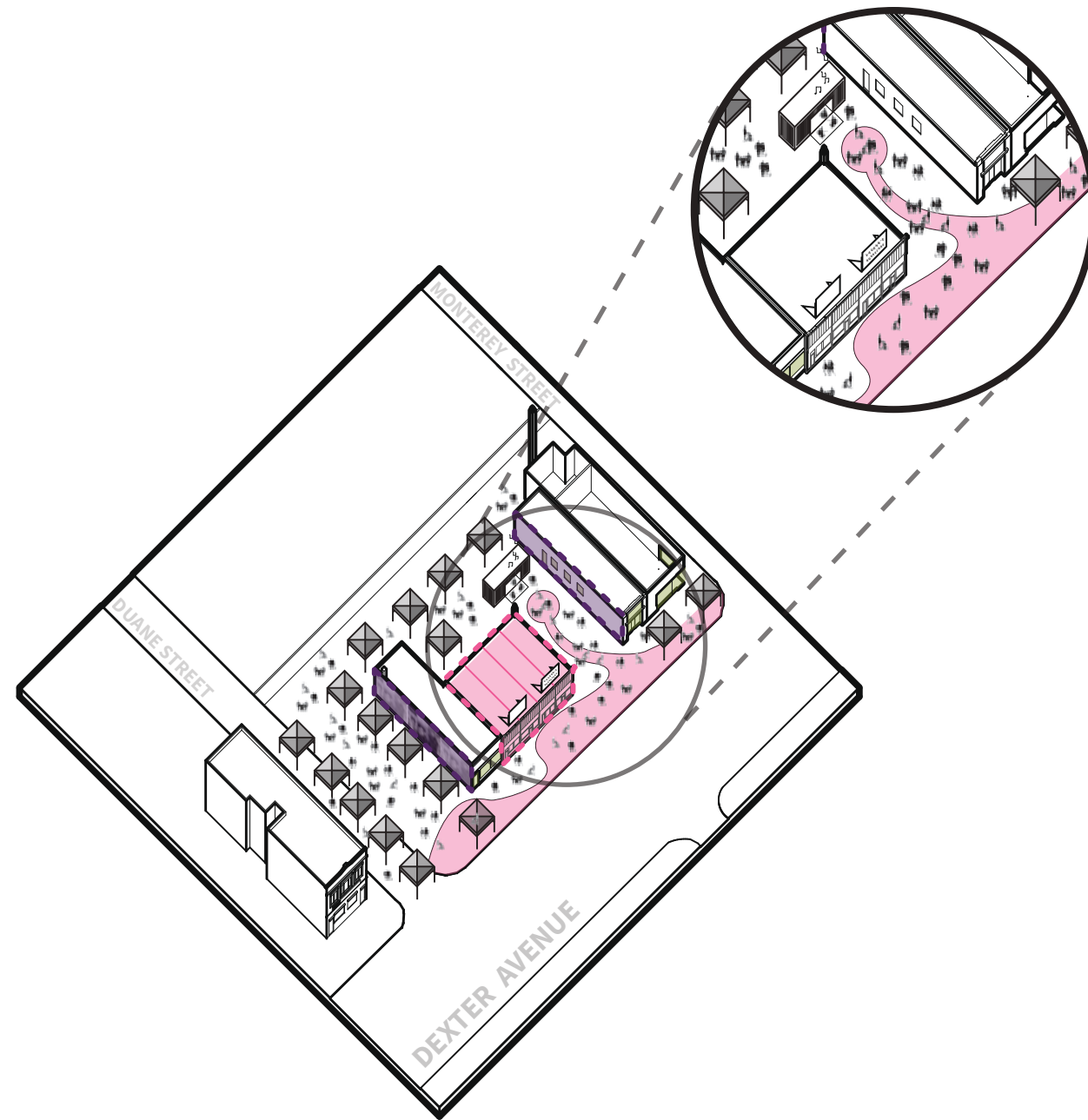
Figure 4.110-4.111. (Top) Uncle Bobbie's Coffee and Books, 2017. (Bottom) Event poster of Uncle Bobbie's, 2018.

### Mahogany Books Washington, D.C.



Figure 4.112. Mahogany Books, 2018.

## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### B2 Making + Sharing Memories

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

## TACTICAL INTERVENTIONS: 2 YEARS

### DESIGN SIDEWALK + SIDE LOT

The second move we recommend during the tactical period is to commission artists to design side lots and sidewalk.

The setback of the strip is large and can be put into good use by designing the sidewalk to increase visibility. On the side lots, we would like to turn the temporary shipping container stage into a permanent community performance space.

In terms of events, the short-term pop-up museum will turn into a long-term black literature book festival and memory gallery. The function of the book festival will be more connected to the reopened bookstore, while the gallery will be a space to display community history. It will be able to generate more profit for future development at the same time.

The major financial resources will be art grants such as the Neighborhood Arts Project in Detroit and grants from the Kresge Foundation.<sup>22</sup>

### PRECEDENTS

The Neighborhood Arts Project is initiated by Live6, a nonprofit planning and development organization focusing on enhancing quality of life and economic development in Northwest Detroit.<sup>23</sup> Live6 is working with local artists to decorate neighborhoods with murals and other art installations to enhance the living environment of the neighborhoods.<sup>24</sup>

Chicago Arts + Public Life is an initiative of the University of Chicago which provides platforms for artists through education, arts-led programs and events. The project is working closely with the South Side's communities in Chicago. Jessica Stockholder, Chair of the Department of Visual Art at the University of Chicago finished an art installation called Color Jam at a crossroad in Chicago, which is a precedent of the sidewalk design in our proposal. We also recommend seeking partnership with local universities.<sup>25</sup>

### Neighborhood Arts Project Detroit, MI



Figure 4.113-4.114. (Top) Megan White's artwork with Live6, 2018. (Bottom) Dabls' artwork, 2018.

### Arts + Public Life | UChicago Arts Chicago, IL

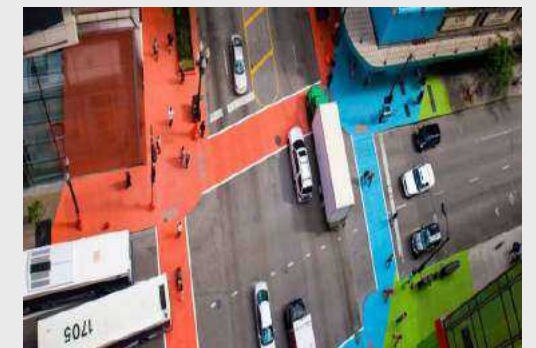
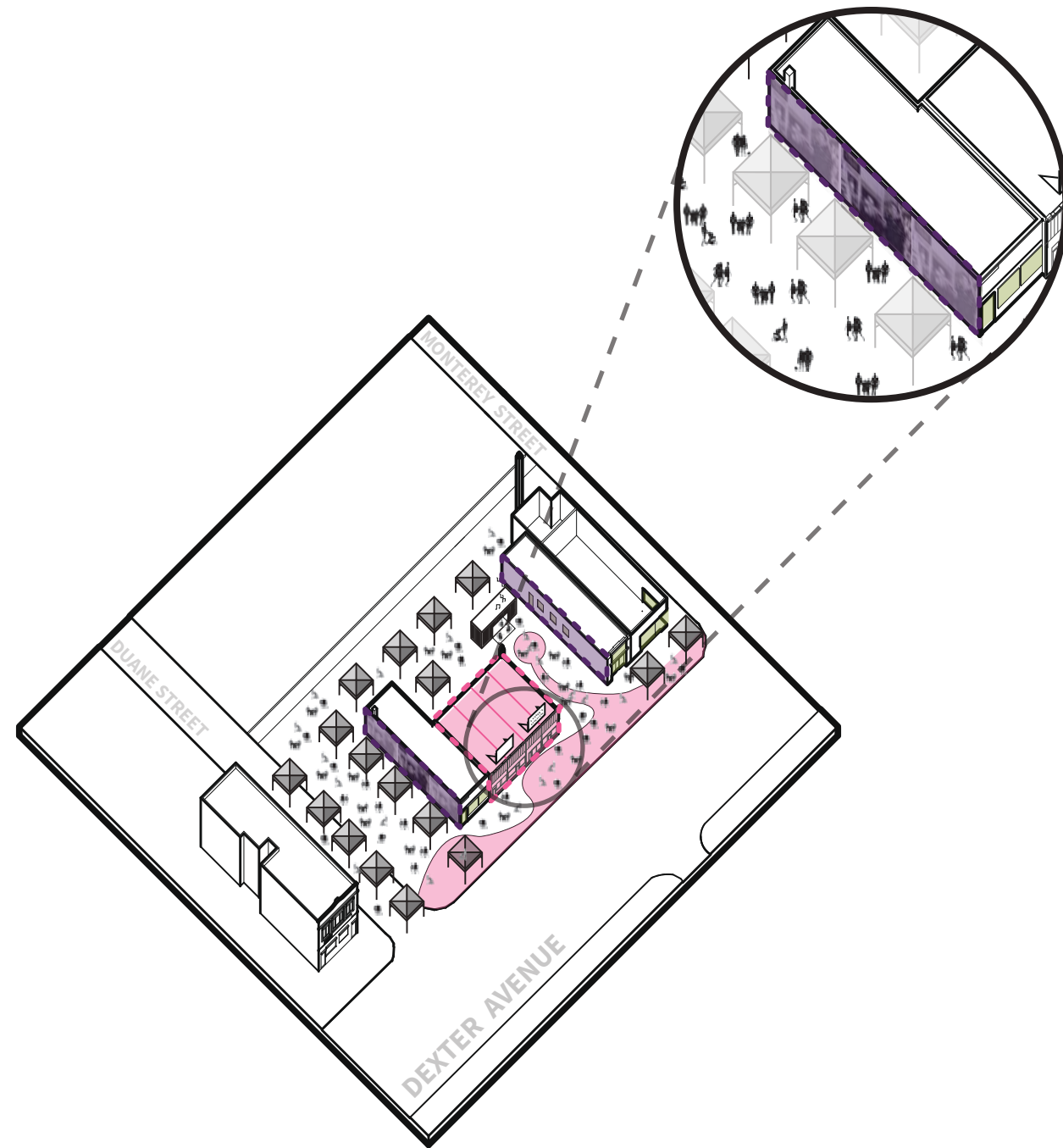


Figure 4.115. Color Jam by Jessica Stockholder, 2018.

### VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



**C1 Making + Sharing Memories**

- SHORT TERM
- TACTICAL
- LONG TERM

### TACTICAL INTERVENTIONS: 2 YEARS

**CREATE MURALS OF BLACK HISTORY**

The third move we recommend in the tactical period is to commission artists to paint murals about neighborhood black history on the south exterior wall of the building on the south corner of the strip. This intervention uses the same funding sources that are used during the sidewalk and side lot designs.

**PRECEDENTS**

A Dabls' mural, as previously mentioned, is one mural option for consideration.

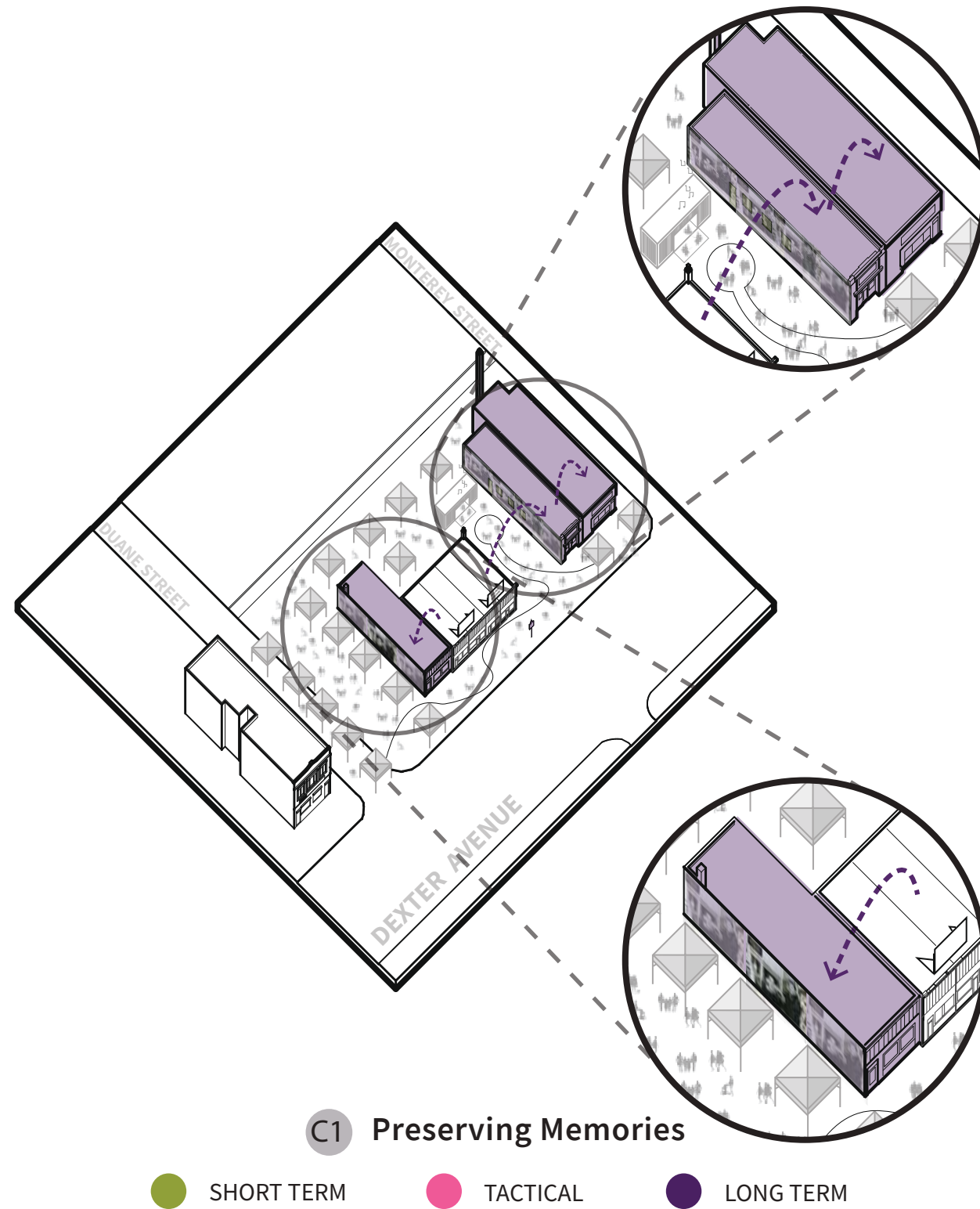
**Dabls African Bead Museum  
Detroit, MI**



Figure 4.116-4.118. (Top and Middle) Dabls's artwork, 2018. (Bottom) Dabls, 2015.



## VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



## LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS

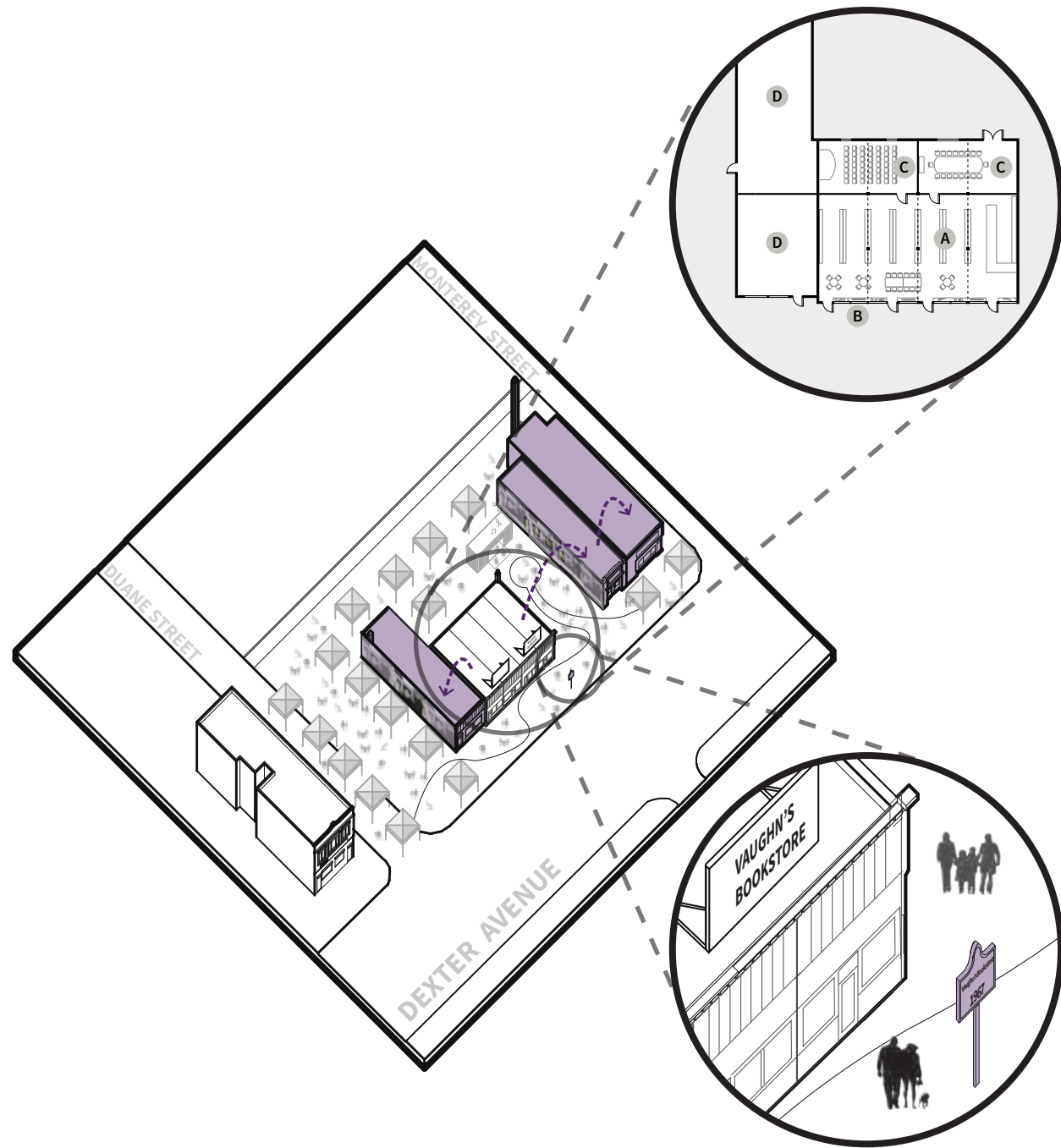
### REHABILITATE ADJACENT BUILDINGS AND INSTALL BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES

The short-term and tactical interventions will ideally increase visibility of the strip, which will create enough customers for new businesses. In the long-term, the interventions will seek more permanent and self-sustainable uses for the buildings.

The first step of the long-term interventions will be rehabilitating other buildings on the strip using funding from the reopened bookstore and the regular

book festival. As aforementioned, the African American Cultural Action Fund provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation can be applied again for the rehabilitation of other buildings. Historic Preservation Tax credits will also be used for the rehabilitation. After receiving certificates of occupancy, we will install black-owned businesses such as a barbershop, hair salon, and cultural institute into the stores to rebuild the active commercial strip.

### VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



- C1 Preserving Memories**
- SHORT TERM
  - TACTICAL
  - LONG TERM

### LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS

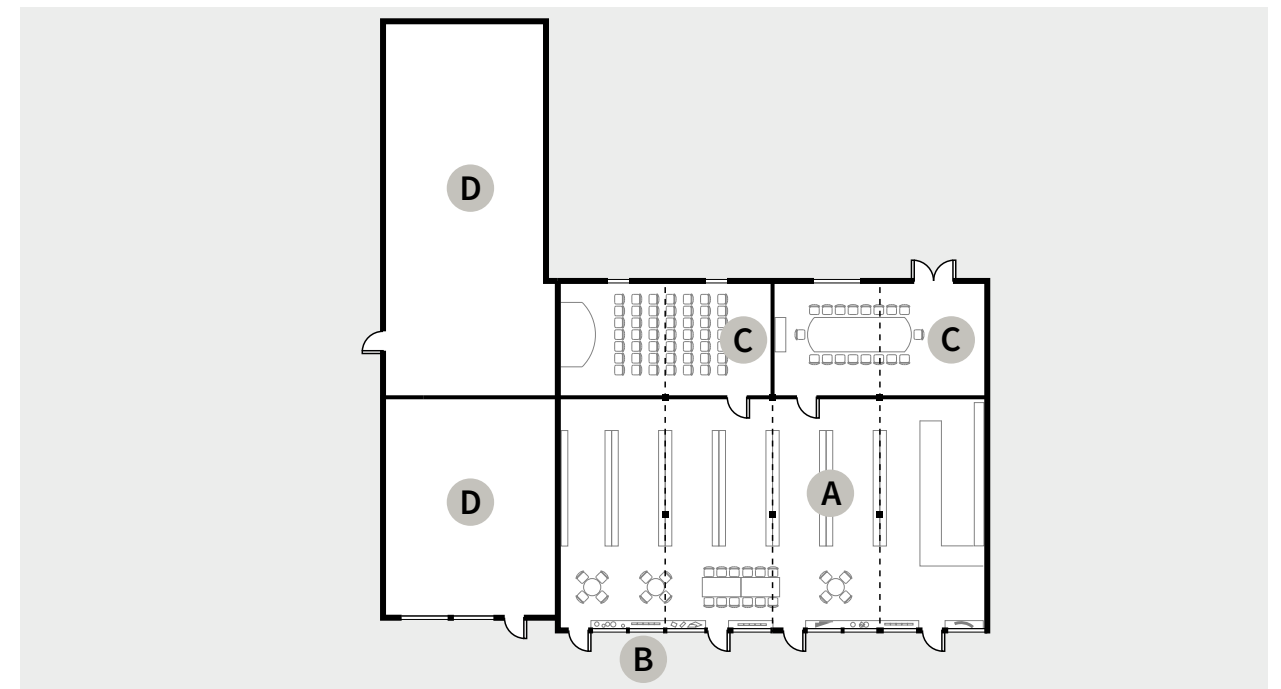
#### EXPAND AND DESIGN PERMANENT VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE

In the long-term, the interior of the bookstore will be redesigned and organized as a permanent bookstore as well as a cultural center and gathering space for the community to host events and programs. We would like to restore some of the original features inside Vaughn's Bookstore and restore windows and fenestration. The inner space will be divided into window space for continuing exhibition, flex space for exhibition, events, and programming, reading space for book buyers and book readers, book shelves, and a café.

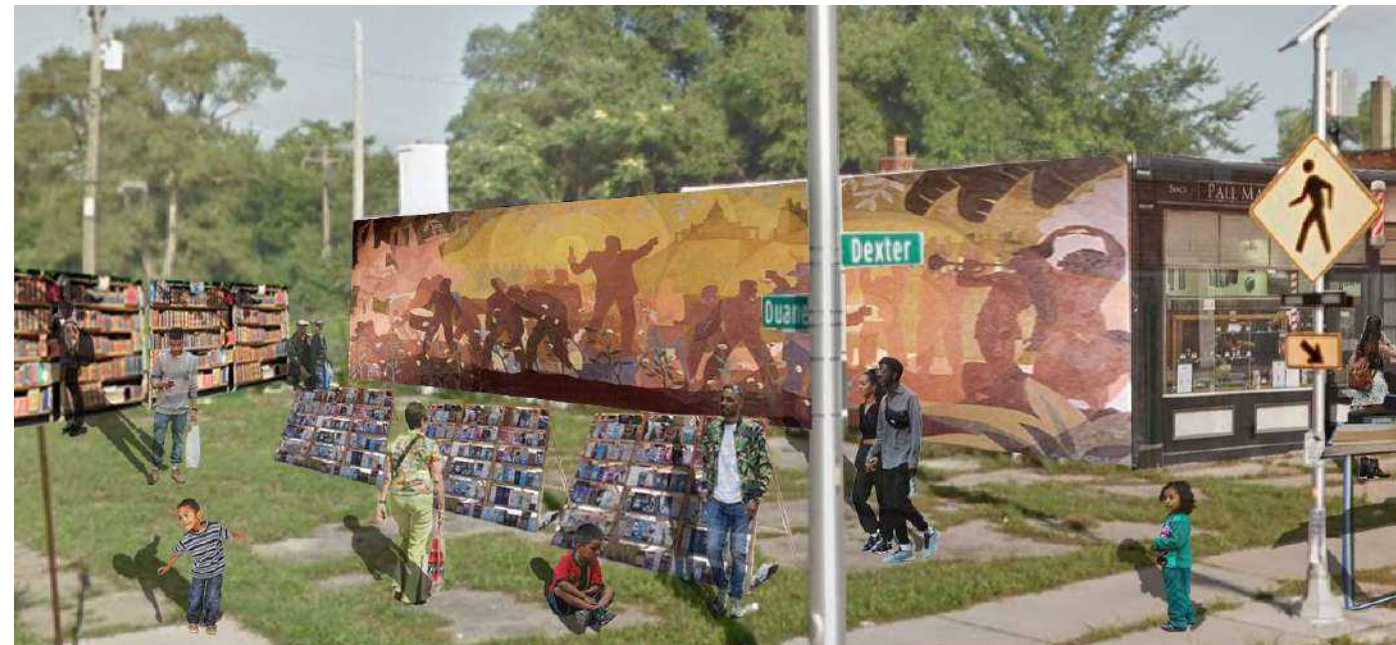
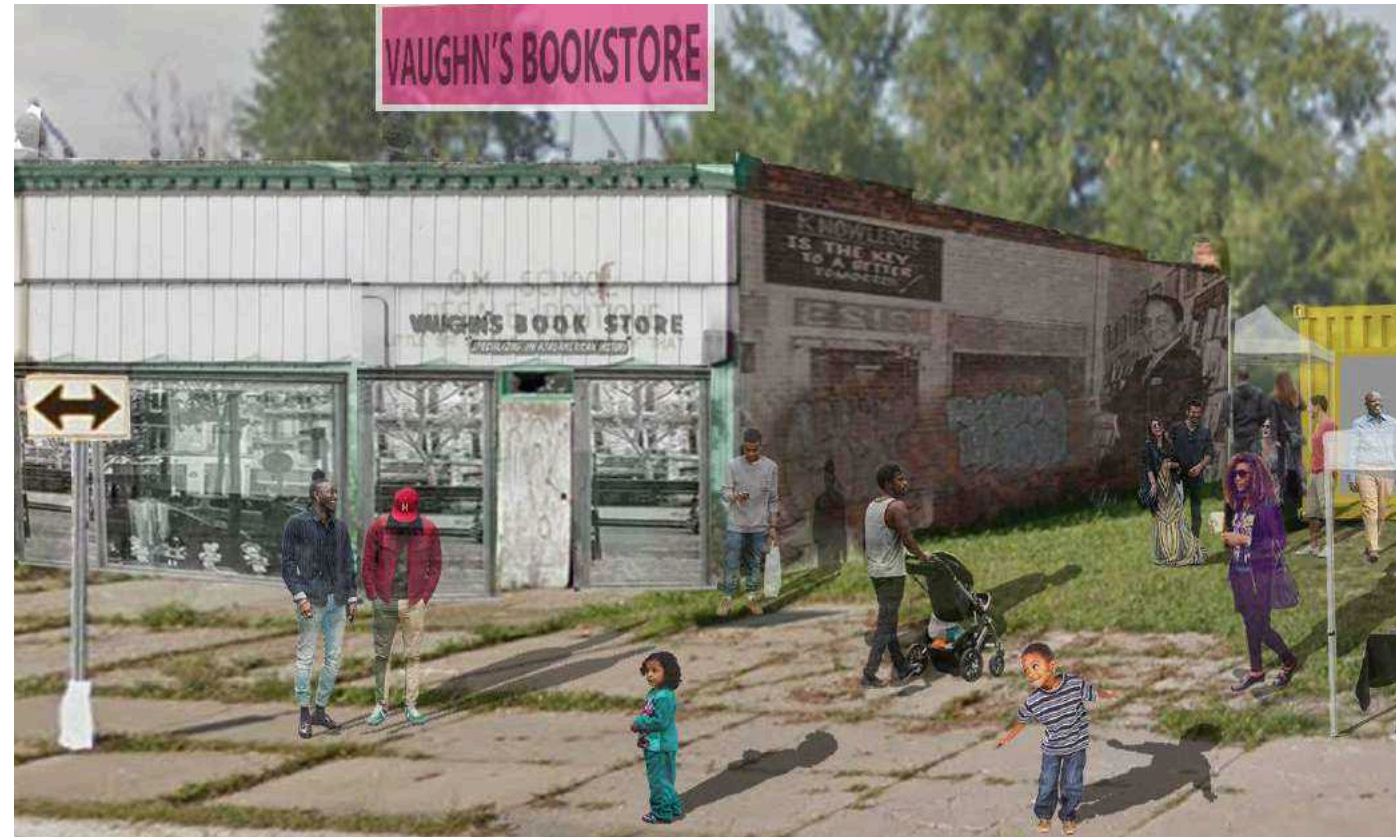
#### LIST ON HISTORIC RESISTER(S)

We would like to nominate Vaughn's Bookstore to local or national register so that the building can benefit from tax credits and the Underrepresented Communities grant offered by the National Park Service, ultimately offering greater resources and protections. Eventually, we will cement the legacy of black culture and provide a tangible location for the community to discuss neighborhood history.

- A Vaughn's Bookstore
- B Window Exhibition Space
- C Flex Space
- D Black-owned Business



### VAUGHN'S BOOKSTORE



### VISION



### VISION

These visions, or photo-collages, are representative of multiple time periods in one image. Historical photos, and all phases of interventions, short term, tactical, and long term, are reflected in these images. The angles of the images are from north to south, and from south to north respectively. The images mainly display the performance space on the vacant lot between the buildings, the book festival on the sidewalk and vacant lots, and black-owned businesses in the rehabilitated stores. Vaughn's Bookstore will be reopened with its historic façade. People's presence will be one of the main outcomes of the proposal.

### SUMMARY

The analysis of the proposal draws on the intangible heritage and values of the strip. The interventions are focused on interpreting the community culture and history. We hope that Vaughn's Bookstore will not only function as a regular bookstore, but will brand the entire strip and help create a cultural center for placed-based history and community dialogue in Russell Woods/Nardin Park.

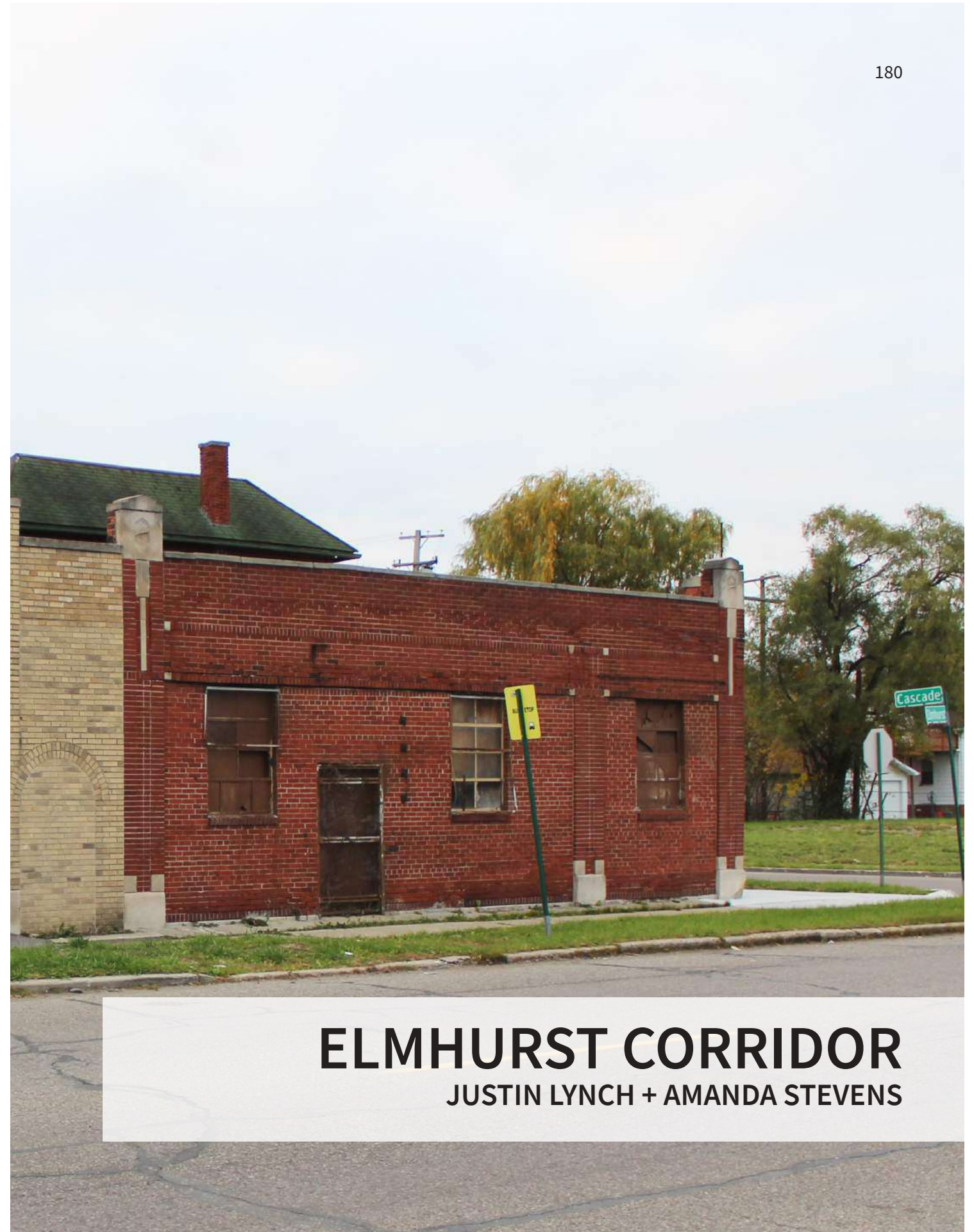
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**ELMHURST CORRIDOR**  
JUSTIN LYNCH + AMANDA STEVENS

Figure 4.119. View looking west on Elmhurst Street, 2018.

## ELMHURST CORRIDOR



Figure 4.120. Elmhurst Corridor locator map, 2018.

The Elmhurst Corridor is located away from the commercial perimeter of the study area, situated in the interior core of Nardin Park at the intersection of Elmhurst Street and Broadstreet Avenue. This intersection is the heart of the Russell Woods-Nardin Park area and offers a prominent location for future interventions.

The majority of buildings in the project site are located along the south side of Elmhurst Street with the exception of building E which fronts Cascade Avenue and building G, which is not pictured, located on the north side of Elmhurst. The project site contains six buildings, most of which are located on the south side of Elmhurst between Broadstreet and Cascade and one large vacant lot to the west.

Historically, Elmhurst was an active commercial corridor which transected the largely residential neighborhood; however, today there are no active businesses. The site and many of the adjacent lots are vacant, but the site still holds the

memory of this time through its former commercial and industrial buildings and one multifamily structure. Although these buildings now sit empty, the subsequent intervention recommendations aim to return Elmhurst to a thriving commercial corridor and neighborhood main street. The location along a prominent intersection, commercial and industrial history, proximity to community institutions and the proposed Joe Louis Greenway support the potential for revitalization. Proposals will draw from these factors as well as the identified community needs to recommend new uses for the structures and lots along Elmhurst Street.

## OVERVIEW



Figure 4.121. Plan and elevation of Elmhurst Street, 2018.



Figure 4.122. Elmhurst Corridor looking east towards the Broadstreet Avenue intersection, 2018.



Figure 4.123. Elmhurst Corridor's overgrown sidewalk and vacant storefronts, 2018.

## ELMHURST CORRIDOR



Figure 4.124. Arched, brick facade.



Figure 4.125. Chamfered corner and parapet detail.



Figure 4.126. Brick facade and parapet detail.



Figure 4.127. Industrial fenestrations.



Figure 4.128. Streamline Moderne corner.



Figure 4.129. Scroll-themed entryway.

### ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

In addition to the cultural and historical importance of the Elmhurst Corridor, the site includes some noteworthy architectural elements that serve as character-defining features for the neighborhood. The front of 4737 Elmhurst St. includes a beautiful, arched-masonry façade that used to hold shop windows (Fig. 4.124). Six arches are embedded in the masonry and preserve the legacy of the strip's former industrial past. In addition, 4757 Elmhurst St. includes a chamfered corner and parapet that welcome people to Elmhurst St (Fig. 4.125). The former apartments at 11744 Cascade Ave. also have these parapet details, along with a scroll-themed entryway at the front door (Figs. 4.126 and 4.129). The corner of Broadstreet Ave and Elmhurst St. is characterized by a shop corner in the Streamline Moderne style, a rare element in an otherwise largely residential area (Fig. 4.128). Architectural details also aren't limited to the facades of these buildings, as 4737 Elmhurst St. includes a large

chimney and industrial fenestrations that reminiscent of the building's former use (Fig. 4.127).

### SITE HISTORY

The buildings in the project site first began to populate the blocks around 1926. Development began with corner properties, and as time progressed, development moved towards the center of the blocks, with most of the buildings being constructed between 1926-1930. By the mid-20th century the south side of Elmhurst between Broadstreet Avenue and Cascade Avenue was full of businesses while the block between Cascade Avenue and Yellowstone Street was slower to develop and was never fully occupied.

Most buildings between Broadstreet Avenue and Cascade Avenue were constructed as freestanding structures; however, over the years the small alleys between sites were filled in as buildings expanded or properties were joined together.<sup>3</sup> Buildings C and D are an example of two properties joined together,

## ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS + SITE HISTORY



Figure 4.130. Elmhurst Street's structures over time, 2018.



Figure 4.131-4.135. Collection of newspaper clippings from the *Detroit Free Press* of the businesses found in the Elmhurst Corridor, various.

as for most of the buildings' lives they were owned and operated by the same company. It is likely that at this point the two lots were consolidated and listed under the address of 4757 Elmhurst Street. Due to the distinctions in architectural style between the two parts of the parcel and for clarity in later interventions, the property will be referred to as two separate structures (C and D) under the original parcel addresses.

In regard to the businesses which once occupied the project site, there was no single dominating field or activity which took place on the site. Over its history a variety of businesses and services found their home along Elmhurst. Some of these include the following:

- Building A:* Gas heating equipment sales; deli or market
- Building B:* Iron works; salon
- Building C/D:* Curtain laundry
- Building E:* Apartments
- Lot F:* Machine shop; paper company

### THE SITE TODAY

Today, there are no active uses in the buildings or lots. Some of the sites – particularly those between Cascade and Yellowstone – have been demolished. While it is not included in the scope of the project, it is important to note that there is one nearby active business on Elmhurst Street, located across Broadstreet Avenue – Broadstreet Auto Repair. The legacy of Elmhurst as a commercial center is important to recommendations moving forward.



## ELMHURST CORRIDOR

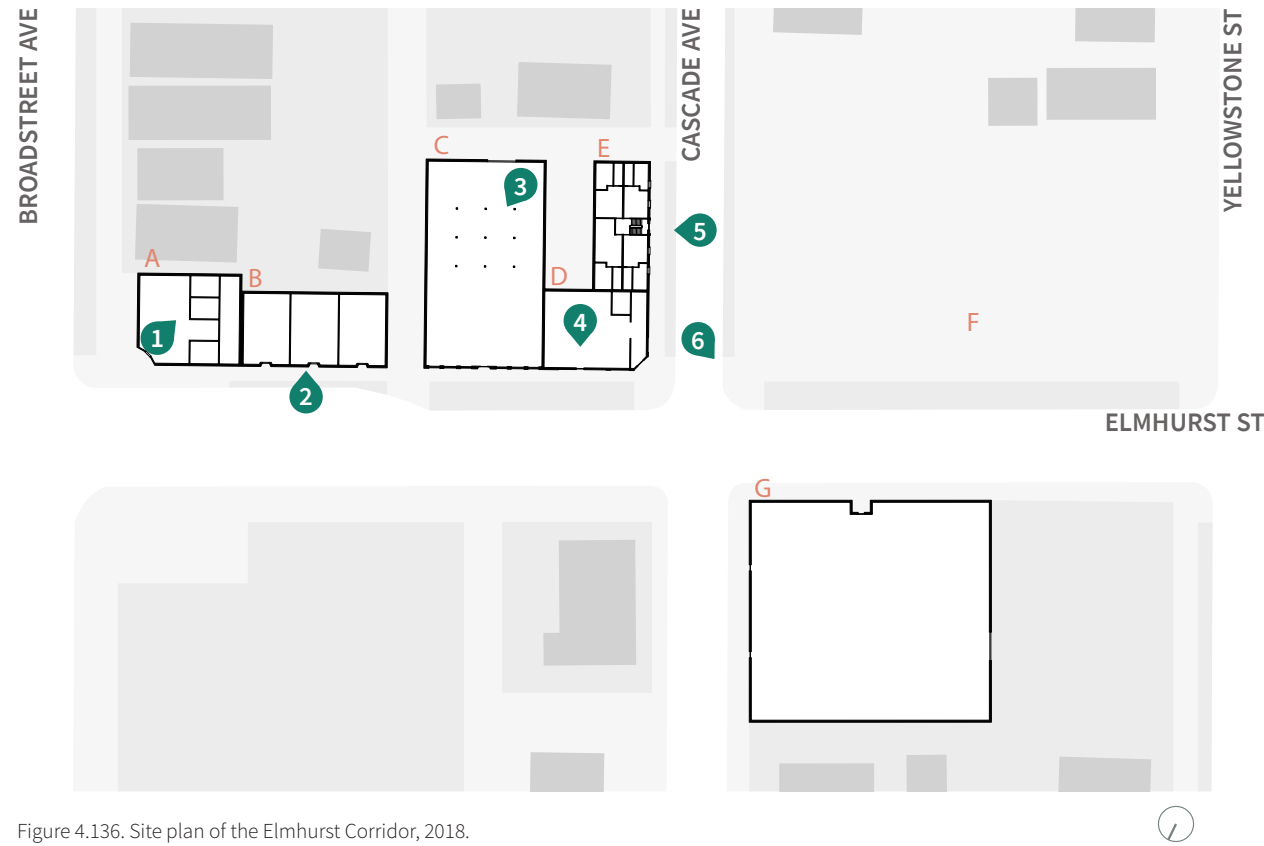


Figure 4.136. Site plan of the Elmhurst Corridor, 2018.



Figure 4.137. Interior, Building A.

Building A has stable exterior walls, although part of the roofing system will likely have to be replaced due to deterioration. Interior partition walls and plaster-work will have to be replaced at some point in the future. Additionally, the building is full of garbage and debris that will have to be cleaned out. This building will need entirely new systems (Fig. 4.137).



Figure 4.138. Exterior, Building B.

Building B is structurally failing, and this project recommends full demolition (Fig. 4.138).

## SITE CONDITIONS



Figure 4.139. Interior, Building C.

Building C (the old curtain laundry) is in fair condition, and the walls appear structurally stable. However, with the roofing system partially collapsed, the walls may need bracing in the next few years. The roof will need partial to full replacement. New, modern windows are needed along the sides of the building. Fortunately, the cast-iron pillars that support the roof are in good condition. All interior partition walls and plaster work have been lost or are deteriorated beyond repair. There is a large hole in the wooden floor that will have to be replaced as well. From these characteristics, new systems are recommended (Fig. 4.139).



Figure 4.141. Exterior, Building E.

Building E is in good condition and has only been vacant in the last few years. The windows on the first floor are covered in boards, but the ones on the second floor remain uncovered and unbroken. There appears to be no breach in the envelope, and the interior is likely in a well-maintained state. From these characteristics, it is probable that most of the systems in the building are still operable (Fig. 4.141).



Figure 4.140. Interior, Building D.

Building D is also in fair condition, although it is largely devoid of interior partition walls and plasterwork. However, part of the wall is completely missing in the back of the building. New systems are recommended (Fig. 4.140).



Figure 4.142. Exterior, Building G.

Lot F – between Cascade and Yellowstone – is mostly covered with asphalt that is cracking and becoming overgrown with grass. On the other side of Elmhurst St, Building G is in very good condition, and the envelope is completely sealed off from the elements. This building would only need minimal system replacements (Fig. 4.142).

## ELMHURST CORRIDOR

### SITE STRENGTHS

- Mostly Intact Block
- Retained Storefronts
- Sited at a Major Intersection
- History of Commercial Activity
- Nearby Neighborhood Institutions
- Located Along Public Transit
- Adjacency to Future Greenway
- Variety of Building Types
- Availability of Vacant Lots
- Wide Sidewalks
- Reusable Fabric

### ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

#### RETAIL

Prepared Food + Groceries  
Storefront Improvements

#### TRANSPORTATION

Greenway Access + Bike Repairs  
Sheltered Bus Stop

#### GATHERING SPACES

Public Park + Courtyard  
After-School Care, Resource Center, Offices

#### COMMUNITY HISTORY

Neighborhood Corridor  
Maintaining Storefronts

#### HEALTH SERVICES

Pharmacy

In order to determine the types of programs that should be implemented in the Elmhurst Corridor, it is necessary to consider the site's pre-existing assets that promise continued use in the future. Viewed in its entirety, the Elmhurst Corridor is a mini-main street corridor with convenient access to public space. The buildings have a long industrial and commercial history that display relatively good integrity. The wide sidewalks, convenient access to public transportation, and location at the major intersection on Broadstreet Avenue create an environment that is friendly to commuters and pedestrians alike. The vacant lots and intact storefronts also provide a crucial asset, providing the necessary elements for a site that could be social, cultural and, commercially relevant.

With the necessary characteristics identified, it is also important to determine if such elements are compatible with community needs. The Elmhurst Corridor is in the middle of a residential neighborhood, characterized by families who frequent local schools

and churches. The proximity to these active institutions provides a population supply that can be used as a driver for development along Elmhurst (Fig. 4.143). These populations are not always present on the site. Churchgoers are mainly present on Sundays and K-8 students from Hope Academy are nearby on weekdays into the early afternoon. However, in tandem with the residents, these populations can serve as important users for interventions on Elmhurst.

Residents in the surrounding area have expressed a desire for convenient access to pharmaceutical care and groceries. In addition, this is a highly active community that could benefit from increased public space, parks, and educational resources for children. With the introduction of the Joe Louis Greenway, the area could also serve as a trailhead for biking to other places around the city, and bike repair resources could be beneficial for travelers.

## ASSETS + INTERVENTIONS

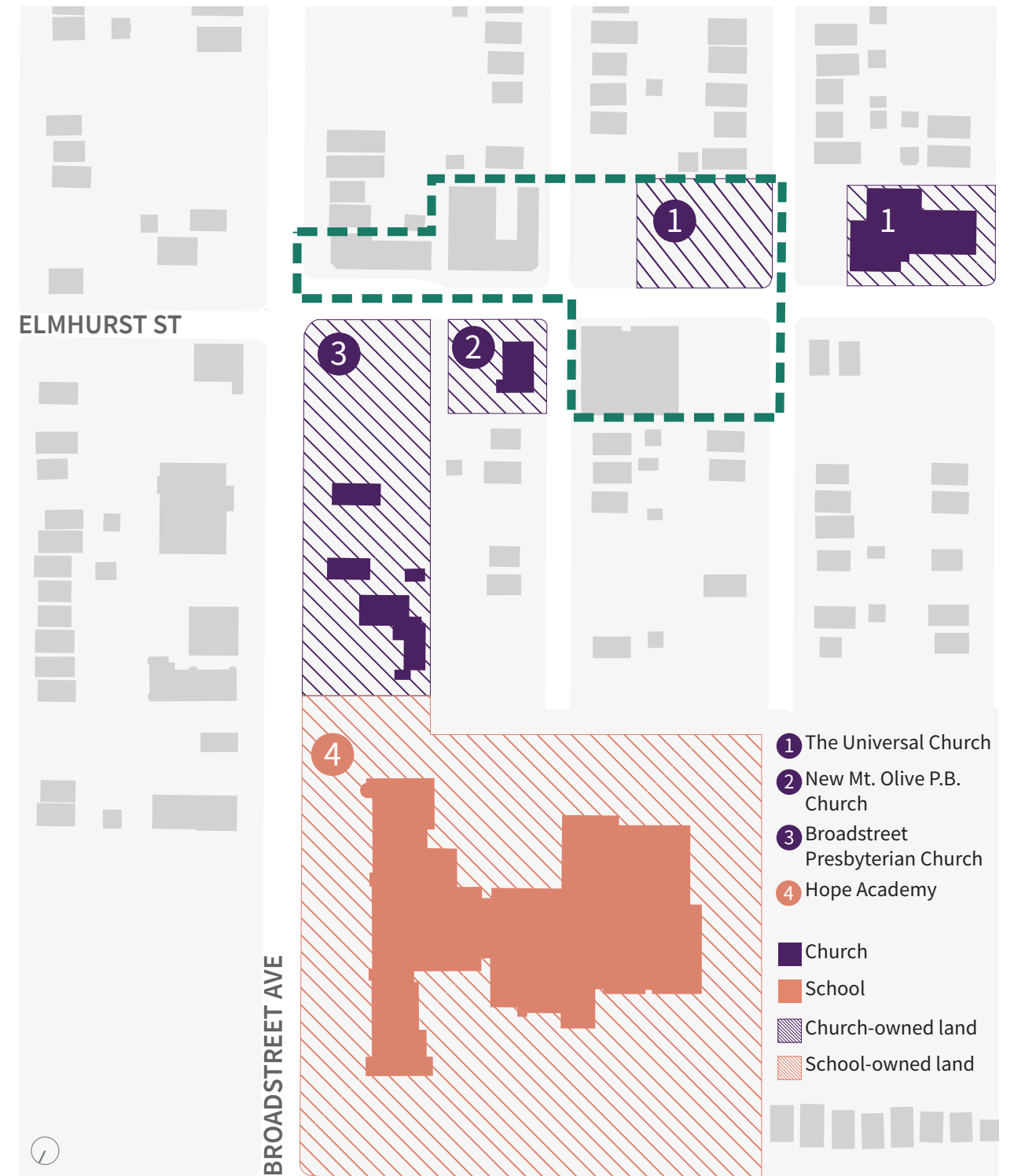
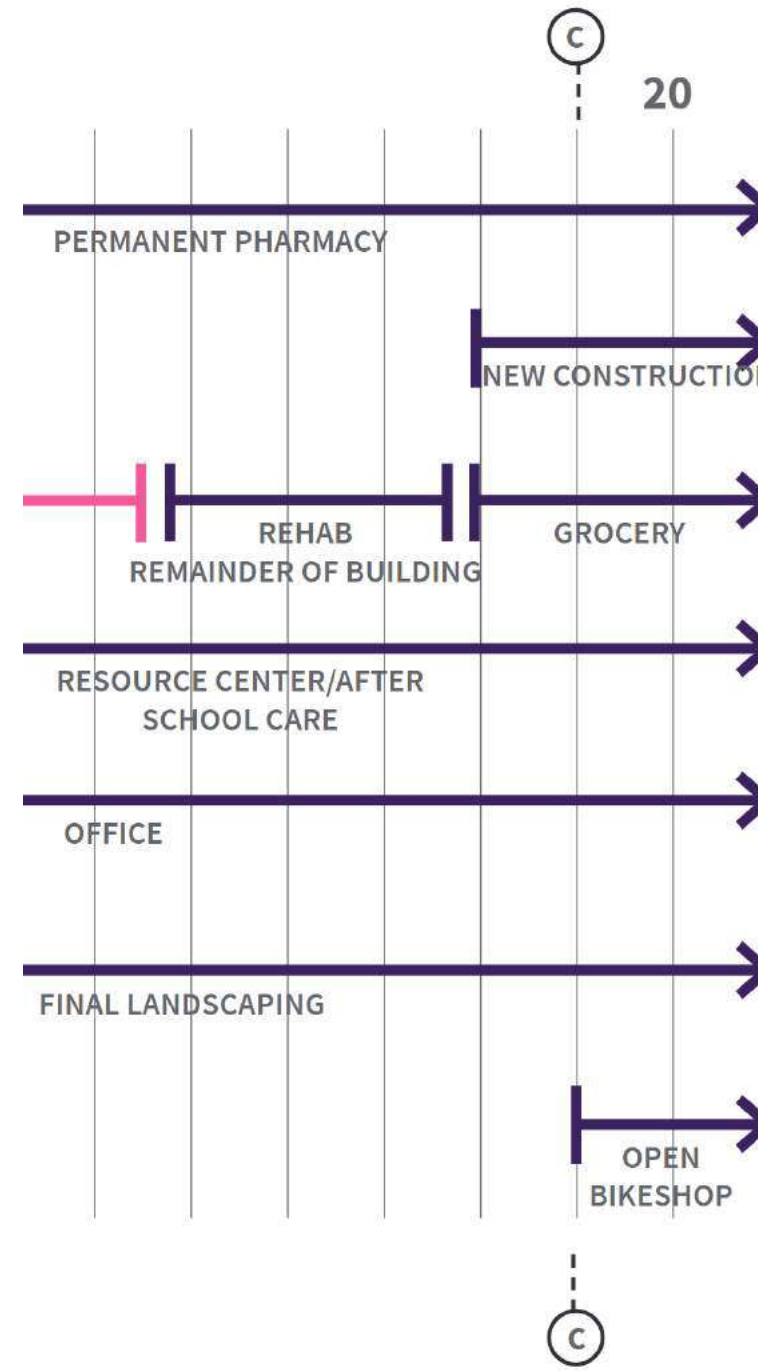
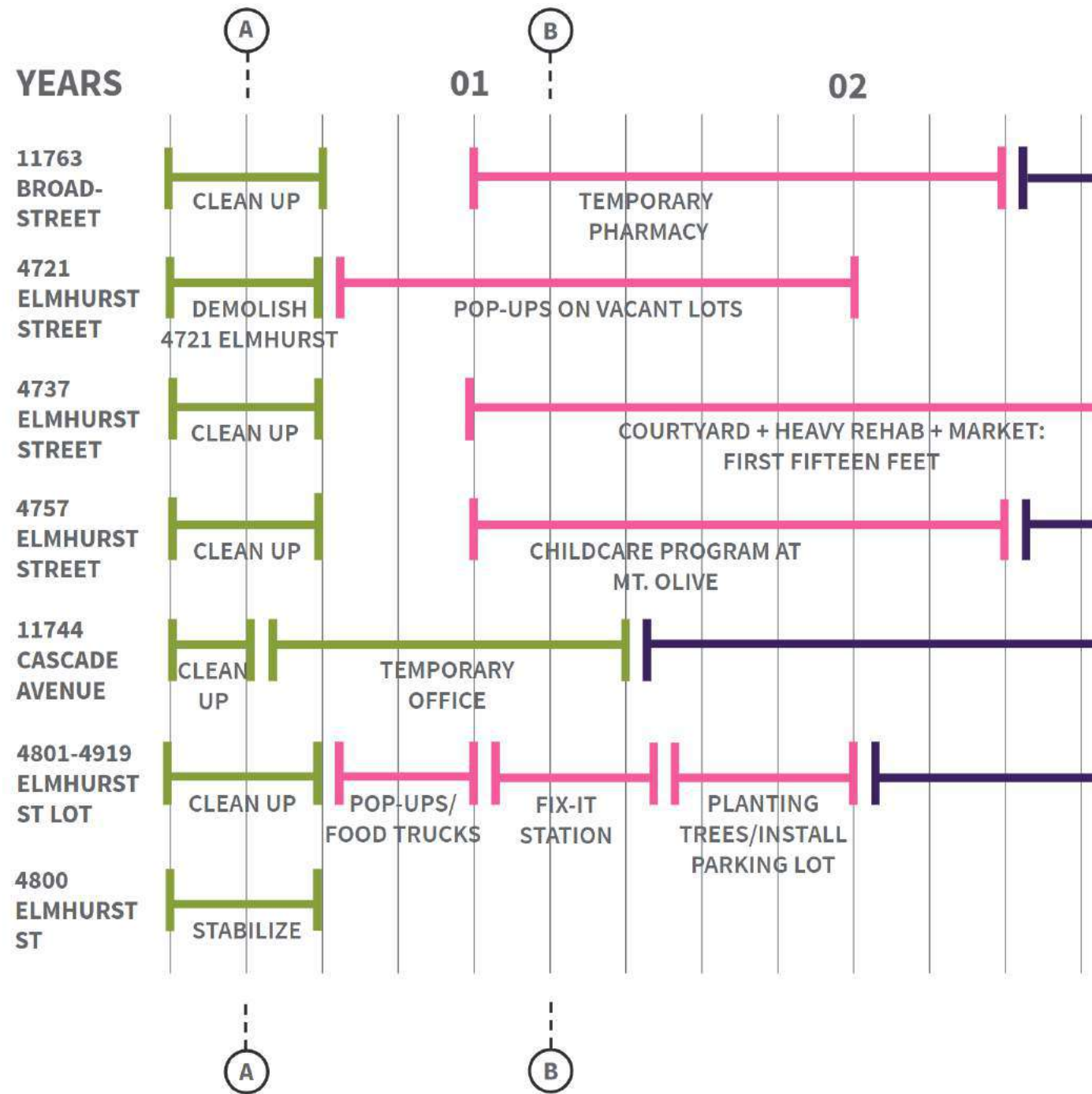


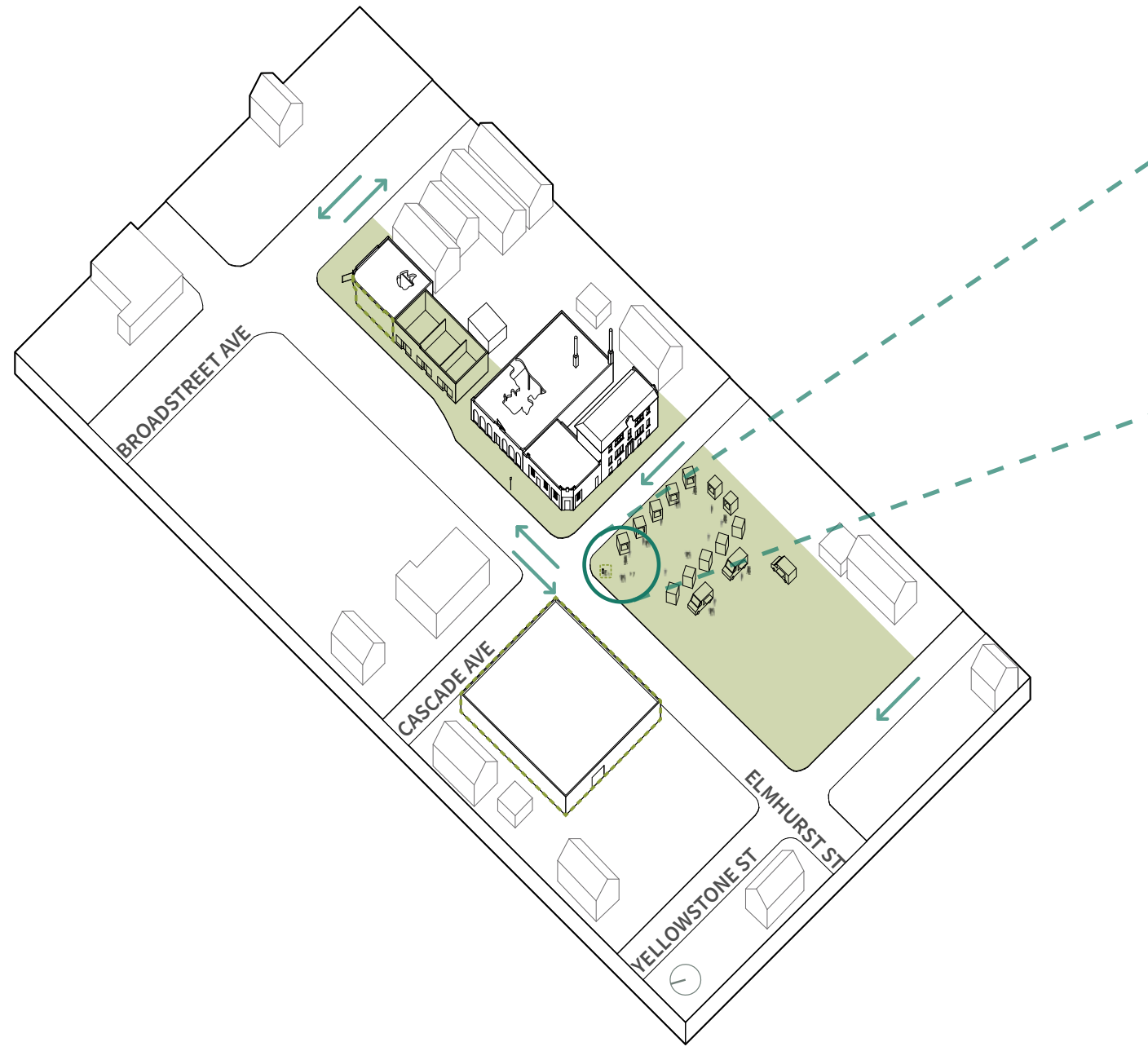
Figure 4.143. Site context of Elmhurst Corridor and nearby institutions, 2018.



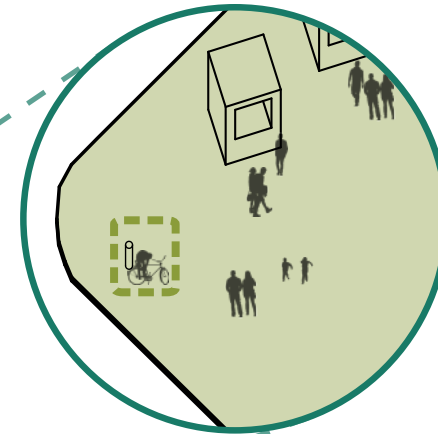
**INTERVENTION TIMELINE**

The following proposals call for multiple stages of intervention for each lot. These range in scale – both in terms of the time needed to complete and the physical affects. Taken together, all three phases of intervention for the Elmhurst Corridor represent staggered campaigns of immediate site clean-up, establishment of tactical programs, and long-term realization of the site in full use. Due to the unique role of each intervention, the site has been organized by each address along a timeline. Within a year, each building and lot will be cleaned up. Due to its relatively good condition, 11747 Cascade Avenue will be converted into offices during this period, and 4800 Elmhurst St. would be stabilized for future use. The second phase on this timeline roughly covers years one through two and includes the beginnings of temporary and permanent tactical interventions. This phase witnesses the immediate addition of pop-ups on the vacant lots. Some buildings, such as 4757 Elmhurst St. and 4737 Elmhurst St., require more time for site clean-up and rehabilitation, so their periods of tactical interventions have been extended further on the timeline. Other buildings, such as the pharmacy at 11763 Broadstreet can begin more permanent programming during this middle phase. Systematic development of the 4801-4919 Elmhurst St. lot will begin during this phase, with some landscaping and park design beginning around year two. The long-term tactical interventions in Phase 3 will begin at different times for each site, depending on preparation. Toward the end of Phase 3, a new building for the vacant lot at 4721 Elmhurst St. and a bike shop at 4800 Elmhurst St. could be considered for long-term programming.

● SHORT TERM ● TACTICAL ● LONG TERM



● SHORT TERM ● TACTICAL ● LONG TERM



Pop-ups + Food Trucks  
Bike Fix-it Station

**PREPARE SITE**

The first phase of interventions involves preparing the site as a whole for inhabitation. These interventions primarily impact the public realm such as clearing away litter and overgrowth on the sidewalks and alley. As part of preparing for future occupation, the minor maintenance and stabilization efforts for the buildings will be taken. This includes removing the outer blue coat of paint on Building A (11763 Broadstreet) to grant greater cohesiveness as a block and ensuring that all buildings are securely boarded for the time being. During this phase we also recommend applying for a demolition permit for Building B (4721 Elmhurst) as its current condition is too deteriorated for rehabilitation.

To prepare people for the return of Elmhurst as a neighborhood corridor, pop-up retail stalls and food trucks will be brought to the vacant lot. While the types of retail to be held in the pop-up stalls are not fully prescribed, they would ideally serve as an affordable, small-scale, rental space for residents who have products they would like to sell. There would be no set rent length and they could be used to test the viability of small businesses or simply as a showcase for goods. Rent and a small portion of the revenue from the pop-ups and food trucks would go towards supporting the rehabilitation of the Elmhurst Corridor. A bike fix-it station can be introduced on the corner of the vacant lot at Elmhurst and Cascade. The future Joe Louis Greenway is slated to have a neighborhood

connection branch down Elmhurst, and to prepare people for the future bike lanes that will be going through the site, bike-oriented programming will be introduced at a small scale.

**PRECEDENTS**

Shown in Fig. 4.144 is an example of a typical bike fix-it station that can be installed in a park or campus. These stations provide a variety of tools necessary for the repair and maintenance of bicycles.<sup>4</sup>



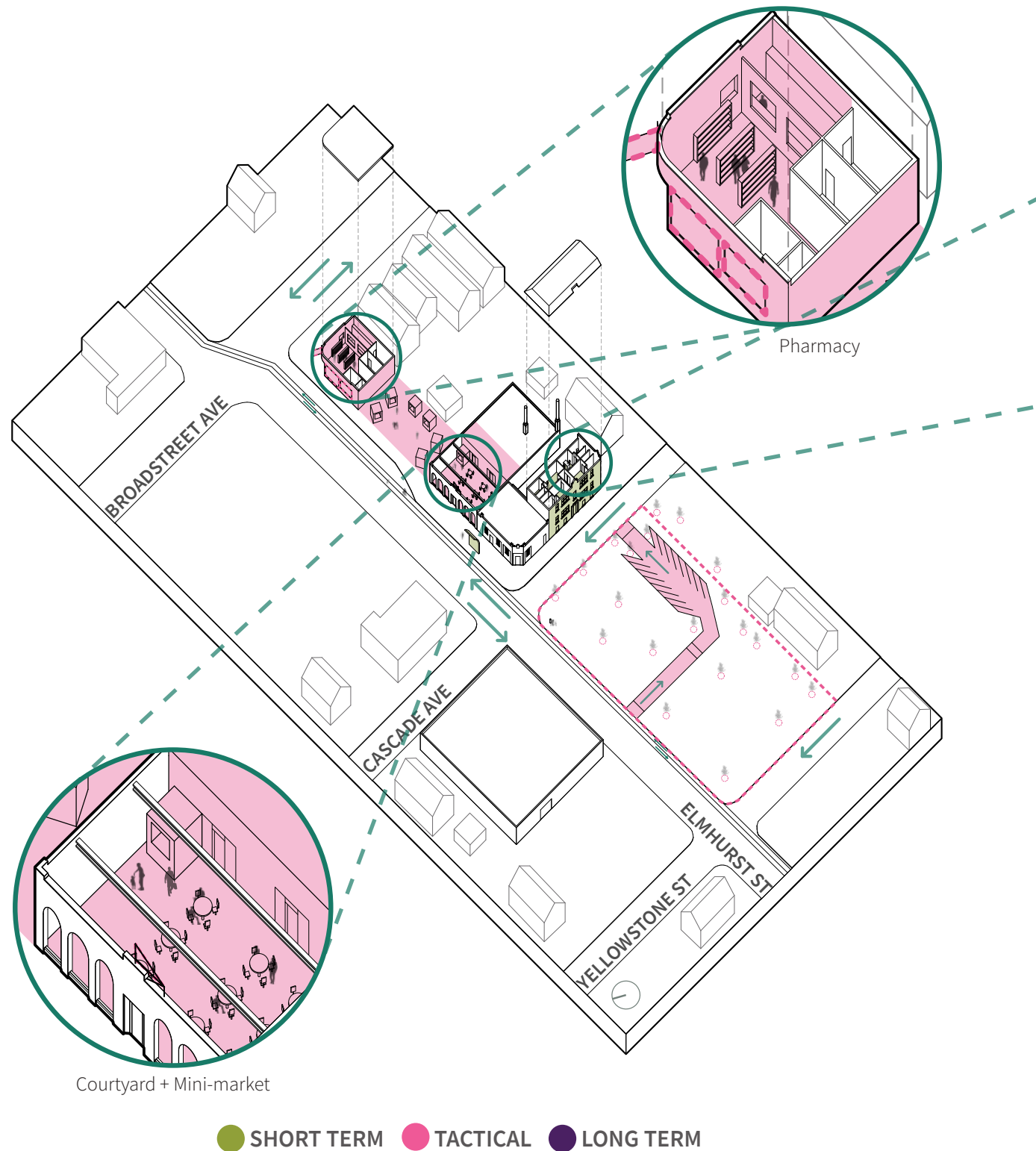
Figure 4.144. Bike fix-it station, Pasadena.

The Crowds Pop-Up Park created an active, engaging, inclusive public space as part of a four-day experiment (Fig. 4.145). The park can be adaptable to its environment and aims to foster dialogue between visitors and the neighborhood.<sup>5</sup>

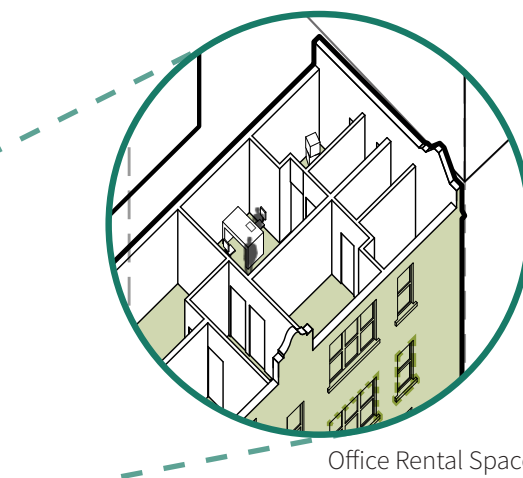


Figure 4.145. Crowds Pop-Up Park, Dallas.

## ELMHURST CORRIDOR



## INTERVENTION B: ACTIVATE SITES



### ACTIVATE SITES

The second phase is designed to bring uses and people into the sites in the tactical timeframe, except for Building E (11744 Cascade) which can be achieved in the short-term. The building is in good condition and likely only needs minor system updates. The existing apartment configuration will be retained and used as office rental space. Offices can be rented to members of nearby churches or to residents who require a physical space for their business/practice. Because the building is removed from Elmhurst and contains multiple floors, units would be well suited to people like real-estate agents or accountants who do not require a direct street presence for the success of their business. Revenue from rent can be used to further rehabilitation along the corridor.

The tactical time period will begin at Building A (11763 Broadstreet) by turning the building into a neighborhood pharmacy. Early efforts will focus on reopening the bricked in storefront-windows and rehabilitating the main floor in order to introduce a pharmacy that offers health products and services, such as vaccines. The remaining rooms can be stabilized and mothballed for future use as seen fit. The site of the demolished Building B can be used to house pop-ups. This will continue to generate a small amount of revenue and provide a place for people to sell goods, as well as contribute to maintaining a continuous, active street front.

Building C (4737 Elmhurst) has significant damage in the front part of the roof. The damaged part

of the roof should be removed and the rest stabilized. This will create an open-air courtyard in the front of the building that can provide seating and room for food stalls to sell prepared meals. It will also be possible to start white boxing the first 15 feet behind the courtyard. Here unprepared food products and produce can be sold at a small scale while also providing an enclosed space for when the weather worsens. The long-term proposal for Building D (4757 Elmhurst) – detailed in the next phase – calls in part for the use of the site as an afterschool day-care center. While the building cannot be safely rehabilitated in the tactical timeframe, it is recognized that childcare service is an important need in the community. Partnering with New Mt. Olive, the church across the street, can provide temporary services while the building is being rehabilitated.

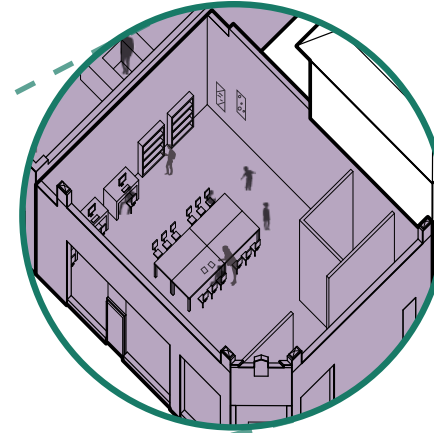
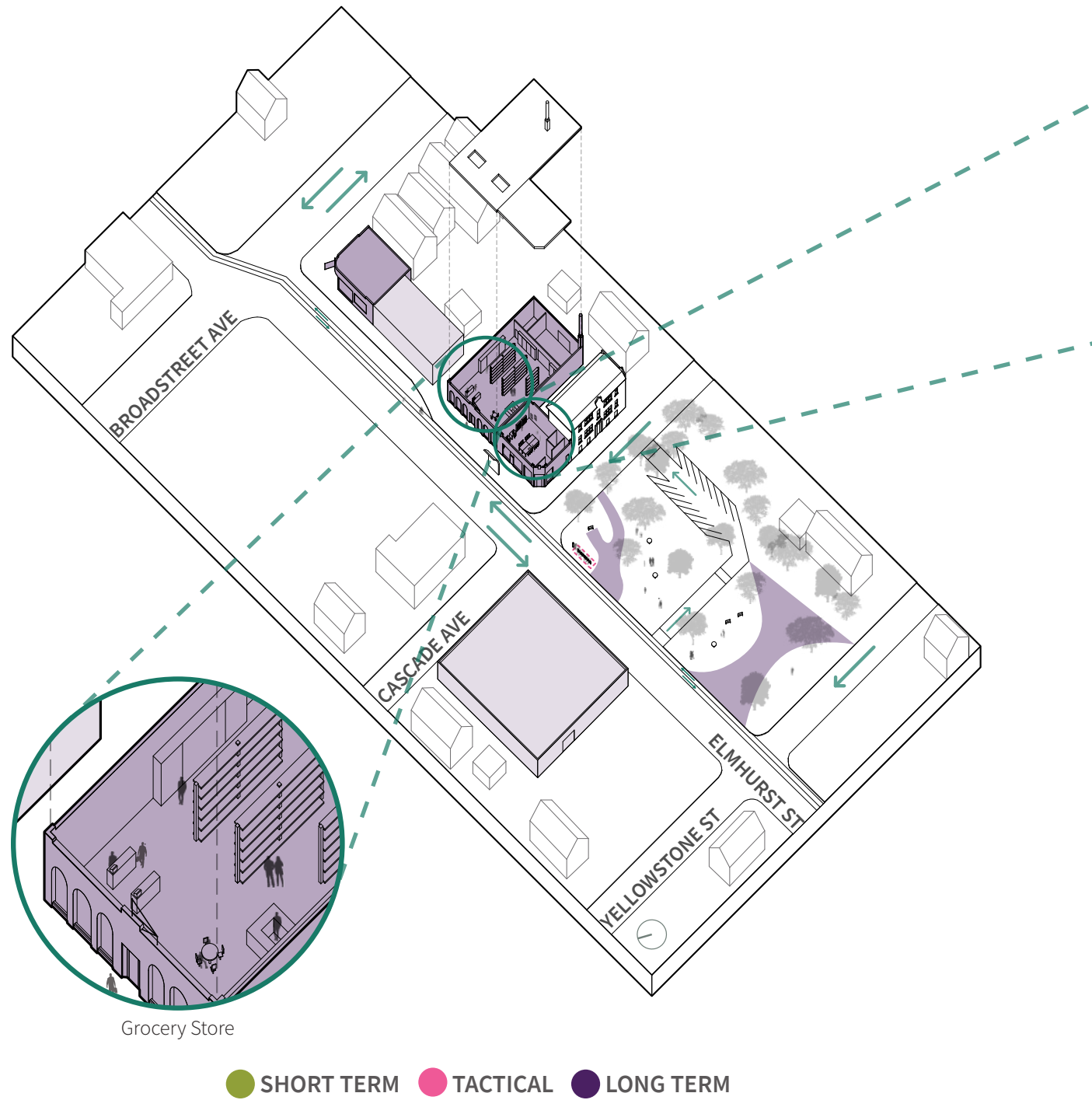
The final component of this phase involves the transformation of the vacant Lot F. The Joe Louis Greenway is likely to be introduced in the next few years, and the lot can be used as a place of gathering to support the Greenway and the Elmhurst Corridor. This phase calls for removing the scattered patches of asphalt and installing a formal parking lot that can serve those biking, the churches, businesses, and offices. The remaining areas will be greened, and trees will be planted to prepare for use as a small park. A sheltered bus stop will also be added along Elmhurst to increase the comfort and appeal of using transit.

### PRECEDENT

Fig. 4.146 shows an example of a small-scale, neighborhood pharmacy found in Point Breeze, Philadelphia with targeted products and services.



Figure 4.146. Neighborhood pharmacy, Philadelphia.



Resource Center

**NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES**

The long-term intervention plan for the Elmhurst Corridor will see the realization of permanent programming, use of public space, and the creation of a mini main street. Early during this period, the park will be completed, featuring access to parking, green space, trees, and bike repair resources.

The offices at Building E (11744 Cascade) will be finished during the early part of this phase, as well. Although the offices can be finished in the short-term time period, the long-term preservation of the building will account for any minor interior reconfigurations or adjustments that would make the units better meet the needs of the tenants. At this period of intervention, any interior rehabilitation that had been mothballed at the pharmacy in Building A (11763 Broadstreet) will be completed. This will signal the transition from a temporary intervention into a permanent business.

This final phase will also see the completion of the resource center at Building D (4757 Cascade). In addition to now housing after-school care, the structure will also include the following: a flexible space that can be used for neighborhood meetings, information, or training sessions; access to texts geared towards improving skills; and computer stations. The final rehabilitation campaign of Building C (4737 Elmhurst) will see the floor, roof, and interior partitions repaired. Now fully covered with a roof and with new storefront windows added, a grocery will open in the back portion of the building. As part of the grocery store, prepared food options will continue to

be offered, and the former open-roof courtyard will provide enclosed, public seating and dining options. The courtyard and the grocery will be connected in floorplan, allowing heavy foot traffic, seating, and goods for the local community.

As the Elmhurst Corridor is revitalized, new businesses and construction will occur. Such businesses could include a bike shop at the site of Building G (4800 Elmhurst). New construction can and should include a new building constructed on the lot of the former Building B (4721 Elmhurst) lot for commercial purposes. This building would replace the pop-up stalls that had been housed there and would once again create a fully intact block.

**PRECEDENTS**

Like the proposed grocery store on Elmhurst St, BFresh Groceries caters to local communities, offering fresh produce and fruit (Fig. 4.147).<sup>6</sup>



Figure 4.147. BFresh Groceries, Boston.

The resource center is inspired by the Mighty Writers center in Philadelphia that offers writing courses to local youth in the community (Fig. 4.148).<sup>7</sup>



Figure 4.148. Mighty Writers, Philadelphia.

**ELMHURST CORRIDOR VISION**

The long-term vision of the Elmhurst Corridor is a mini main street corridor that caters to the residential community of Nardin Park and beyond. Wide sidewalks line the storefronts, providing easy mobility for cyclists and pedestrians alike. A community park serves as a gathering space for families and other residents in the community. People can park their cars nearby, cross the street, and get groceries. A resource center offers books and educational services for local children, and the pharmacy offers much-needed health services to the community. In addition, the physical fabric is maintained, preserving the local history through storefront facades. This vision hopes to one day be sustainable, spurring economic growth and community involvement elsewhere.



**ENDNOTES**

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2. Sanborn Map Company. Detroit, Wane County, Michigan. 1950.
3. Sanborn Map Company. Detroit, Wane County, Michigan. 1980.
4. Caltech Bike Lab. <http://caltechbikelab.blogspot.com/2013/05/check-out-new-dero-fixit-diy-bike.html>.
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7. "Mighty Writers." <https://mightywriters.org/gramming/>.

**FIGURES**

- Figure 4.119. Lynch, Justin. November 8, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 4.120. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 4.121. Stevens, Amanda. "Elmhurst Plan and Elevation." 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 4.122. Wei, Ran. October 5, 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
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- Figure 4.130. Stevens, Amanda. "Elmhurst Timeline." 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Figure 4.131. Newspaper Clipping. *Detroit Free Press*. October 29, 1933. <https://www.newspapers.com/>.
- Figure 4.132. Newspaper Clipping. *Detroit Free Press*. March 29, 1948. <https://www.newspapers.com/>.
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- Figure 4.143. Stevens, Amanda. "Elmhurst Corridor Site Context" 2018. HSPV 701, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
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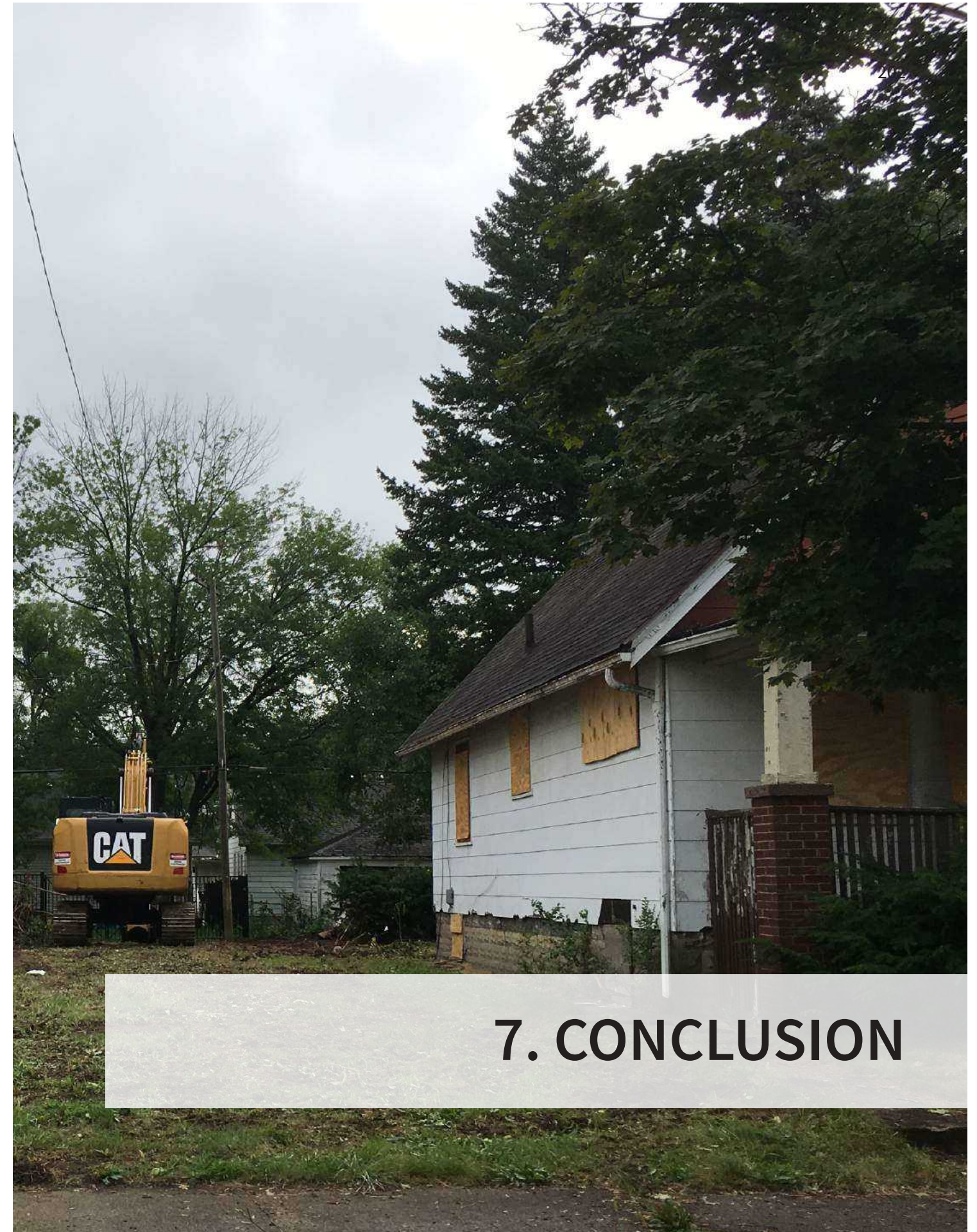
Figure 4.145. Castaneda, Eduardo. "Creating Community: pop-up parks provide active, engaging and inclusive public space." *You Are Here*. <https://www.callisonrtkl.com/you-are-here/creating-community-pop-parks-provide-active-engaging-inclusive-public-space/>.

Figure 4.146. Google Maps Street View.

Figure 4.147. Berger, Mike. "Ahold's 'bFresh' Store In Boston To Host Grand Opening Sept. 18." *The Shelby Report*. <http://www.theshelbyreport.com/2015/09/08/aholds-bfresh-store-in-boston-to-host-grand-opening-sept-18/>.

Figure 4.148. "Mighty Writers." <https://mightywriters.org/gramming/>.





## 7. CONCLUSION

Figure 7.1: Abandonment and demolition are characteristic of the landscape in Russell Woods-Nardin Park.

**FINAL THOUGHTS**

The five proposals developed through this project demonstrate the potential for using tactical preservation strategies as a vital component of the equitable revitalization of historic communities that have experienced institutional disinvestment and population loss. By using Russell Woods-Nardin Park as a primary area of study, this project illustrates that a tactical preservation approach to the reuse of historic built fabric presents an opportunity to ground community development in the specificities of place. Because tactical preservation is based on an incremental approach, it offers a flexibility in both space and time that allows for the incorporation of feedback. As a result, it is a more iterative process than a traditional approach to adaptive reuse.

The visions set forth for Dexter-Tyler Cultural Corridor, The Dexter Hub, Vaughn's Bookstore, Elmhurst Strip, and McKerrow School are based on a deep study of the sites' histories, architectural details, and conditions. They view these sites as assets, not as liabilities, and propose how they can be reinterpreted and reused to once again serve community needs. Each proposal illustrates how tactical preservation strategies can be implemented concurrently, sequentially, and in various

combinations. As a whole, the goal of this project was to address current and future community needs while simultaneously preserving the historic built fabric of Russell Woods and Nardin Park. By doing so, this collection of proposals reflects the cultural heritage of Detroit and demonstrates how the preservation of the built environment is a vital component of equitable revitalization.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Tactical preservation is still a relatively new concept that has not yet been practiced on many sites. At its core, it is a flexible approach to adaptive reuse that allows for partial and temporary interventions. It also encourages prototyping and collaboration. After deeply engaging with tactical preservation over the course of this project, students identified a few critical components.



Figure 7.2: Remaining fabric represents both the history of these communities as well as more recent policies of targeted demolition.

**TACTICAL PRESERVATION IS...**

**1** An incremental process that requires vision and patience.

**2** Dependent on respecting residents and listening to their concerns, needs, and ideas.

**3** Best suited to buildings with high integrity and good conditions.

**4** Appropriate for all communities regardless of residents' demographics and building typologies.

**5** A way to guide future growth that is grounded in place.

**6** Contingent on innovative funding sources.



Figure 7.3: Tactical preservation presents the opportunity for projects and interventions to vacant and interstitial land between buildings and sites.



Figure 7.4: Large commercial, institutional, and religious structures are ideal candidates for tactical preservation interventions

### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

While this project covered a lot of ground, by necessity it operated within a limited scope. As a result, there remain opportunities for future research and work on tactical preservation, both within Russell Woods-Nardin Park and in other communities in Detroit. In the study area specifically, there are many more sites and structures that are good candidates for tactical preservation interventions. In addition, this project did not address residential structures, so an opportunity for future work could include exploring a tactical preservation approach to housing. Looking beyond Russell Woods-Nardin Park to Detroit as a whole, another project could study the historical and cultural value of the voids that exist due to the demolition of the historic built environment as well as the opportunities that these voids present for interventions ranging from urban agriculture to the interpretation of history and memory. Another key factor that deserves more exploration is the role of

implementation, namely how to bridge the capacity gap between residents, property owners, the City, private funders, and other stakeholders. Lastly, the most critical thing that proponents of tactical preservation can do is to continue building momentum around the concept by illustrating how it can be used to benefit a diversity of communities.

Figure 7.1: Mason, Randy. 2018. Detroit.

Figure 7.2: Stevens, Amanda. September 16, 2018. Detroit.

Figure 7.3: Mason, Randy. 2018. Detroit.

Figure 7.4: Stevens, Amanda. September 16, 2018. Detroit.

