

# East Warren-Cadieux, Detroit Tactical Preservation Plan for East Warren Avenue





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This report is the final product of a semester-long studio hosted during Fall of 2019 by the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania (Weitzman School of Design). The research and contents of this report were developed by the following students:

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Fig 0.1, (cover photo) The Alger Theater. Source: Friends of the Alger Theater.  
Fig 0.2, The Alger Theater. UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.

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## INTRODUCTION



PREFACE

The Fall 2019 Weitzman School of Design Historic Preservation Studios tested the idea of tactical preservation by applying it to neighborhood commercial districts 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 is being applied there to change the narrative of decline in neighborhoods with long legacies of disadvantage.

Two teams of Weitzman School of Design graduate students were challenged to carefully study a particular neighborhood with rich historic built environments and complex histories of growth and decline. The overriding goal for each studio team was proposing projects that take advantage of the neighborhoods’ valuable heritage assets to plant seeds of equitable redevelopment. The groups worked to discern the mix of cultural and economic values of the extant environment, understand the enabling environment and the social issues demanding attention, and employ tactical preservation principles to advance equitable redevelopment for existing communities.

Each team of four students studied the neighborhood centered on an historic commercial corridor with a century or more of layered development. On the basis of this broad understanding, each student devised specific interventions for a civic, institutional or commercial building along the main thoroughfare. (Preservation and redevelopment of housing presents its own set of challenges in these neighborhoods; it was not included in these studios simply to keep the scope of issues reasonable).

One team worked in Kingsessing in southwest Philadelphia; the other in the East Warren-Cadieux corridor joining Morningside and East English Village neighborhoods on Detroit’s east side. Over the 15-week semester, each team produced a snapshot of the neighborhood (for about 5 weeks), then shifted to designing interventions for single buildings in the neighborhood. The endpoint of each individual project is a three-part proposal for reuse and

architectural/urban transformation of commercial corridor sites, outlining strategies that play out over immediate-, short-, and medium-term phases (2-month, 2-year, and 10-year time frames).

The aim of these preservation planning studies was a holistic strategy, balancing different factors – taking in account cultural and historical significance, urban dynamics, demographic processes, architectural and design moves, policy structures, interpretation projects 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 2019 Studios are the second of a three-year project to explore and experiment with the roles of preservation in the equitable redevelopment of Philadelphia and Detroit neighborhoods (supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation). Additional research and implementation of test projects is being pursued between the annual Fall Studios. A growing number of stakeholders, interest groups and institutions in each city are getting involved as partners and clients. At the conclusion of the three-studio series, a synthesis of lessons and insights will be presented in a research publication.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the report that follows, the four-student group for Detroit’s East Warren-Cadieux neighborhood summarizes the histories and current conditions of their target neighborhood, and presents their main points of analysis with regard to values, narratives, environmental conditions, community needs and specific sites of intervention. Tactical preservation interventions for four specific buildings make up the bulk of the report. They serve as further proof-of-concept for tactical preservation and inspire future work in both cities. We hope the ongoing conversation about tactical preservation and equitable redevelopment among professionals, leaders and citizens of both cities will deepen and connect community uses of heritage to materially better futures.

Fig 1.2, Aerial view of E Warren Ave study area. Source: ArcGIS.

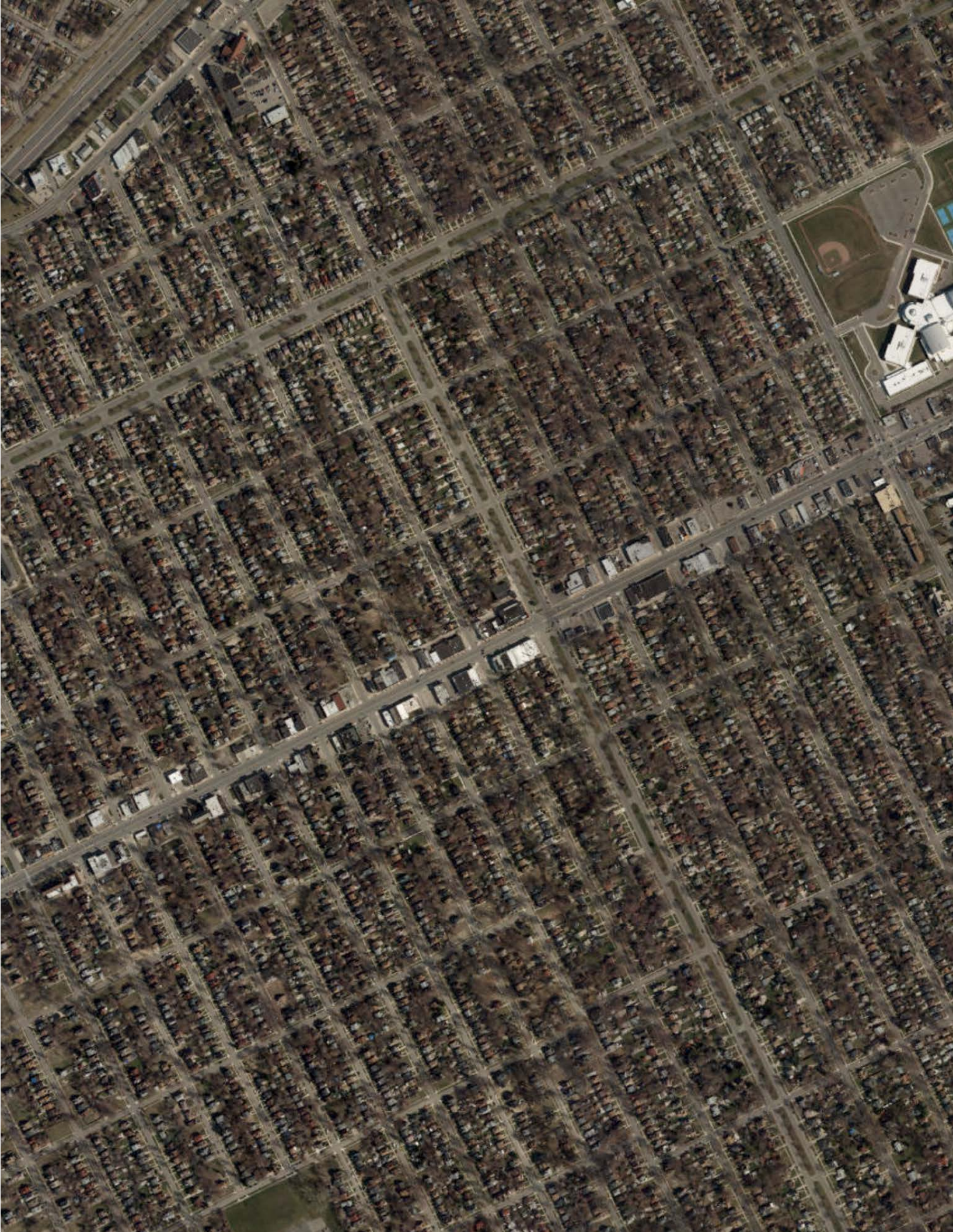






Fig 2.1, McGuire Cleaners on E Warren Ave. UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.





Fig 2.2, Locater map.

## ■ INTRODUCTION

The East Warren–Cadieux (EWC) commercial corridor is in the most eastern part of Detroit proper, located along the city’s municipal boundary and adjacent to Grosse Pointe, an affluent suburb of Detroit. The study area defined within this report focuses on the section of E Warren Ave as defined in the City’s community plan and Strategic Neighborhood Fund interventions. This area spans three distinct neighborhoods: Morningside, East English Village and Cornerstone, from west to east respectively.

Of this broader study area targeted for the Strategic Neighborhood Fund, we have chosen to focus on a condensed stretch of East Warren Ave that runs from Haverhill Road to Cadieux Road. This stretch spans part of Morningside and the entirety of East English Village (EEV); it does not include Cornerstone. For this reason our maps do not include Cornerstone as it outside the chosen scope of study. We chose to narrow the study area with the idea that rehabilitating and subsequently reactivating buildings within a confined area will best promote catalytic growth along the corridor.

Morningside, EEV, and Cornerstone at one time were regarded as one neighborhood but have since split, each with distinct geographic and social boundaries. Our research indicated that there are points of distinction and contention between the populations of East English Village and Morningside. EEV is much smaller in area, spanning only 6 blocks along E Warren while Morningside spans 19. Demographically, EEV has a higher median income and their well-established neighborhood association provides strict regulations on home maintenance, and supplies residents with a private local safety system as well as extensive programming. Morningside also has an active neighborhood group and somewhat more modest lot and house sizes. It was one of the hardest hit neighborhoods in Detroit during the 2008 recession and suffered from extremely high rates of foreclosure. The geographic separation between the two neighborhoods is defined by Outer Drive. When defining our study area, we chose Outer Drive as the center to ensure that we would be pursuing projects in both EEV and Morningside and help build connections between them.



Fig 2.3, Figure ground map of Morningside and East English Village, two neighborhoods covering E Warren Ave study area between Haverhill Rd and Cadieux Rd (highlighted in yellow).



# ■ HISTORY OF DETROIT

## INTRODUCTION

Detroit’s history has been widely documented, studied, and written about since the city’s founding in the early 18th-century. Fundamental to this history, a significant body of work focuses on the indigenous populations that once occupied Southeast Michigan. Given our focus on the commercial corridor, the transition from indigenous to European communities is briefly noted. The primary focus of this section of the report will be on the late 19th- and 20th-centuries, the period that developed the East Warren-Cadieux corridor we encounter today. With this in mind, a brief acknowledgment of earlier history (pre-19th century) is important in understanding the broader historical land settlement patterns as well as economic trends which have served largely to shape and define Detroit. Most notable among these perhaps is the French influence on the area’s land organization through the Seigneurial System and the rise and fall of Detroit as a major industrial center. The strong imprint of both of these topics can still be found along the corridor.

## EARLY SETTLEMENT

By 1600, it is estimated that over 100,000 people lived within the current boundaries of the state of Michigan.<sup>1</sup> The Potawatomi, Ottawa, Ojibwa/Chippewa, Miami, and Huron tribes made up the bulk of the indigenous peoples in the region, thriving on the area’s naturally fertile soils and waterways.<sup>2</sup> In 1618, Etienne Brule, under the leadership of

French explorer and the founder of the Canadian province of Quebec Samuel de Champlain, was the first European to set foot in present day Michigan.<sup>3</sup> Subsequent French exploration campaigns throughout the remainder of the 17th century brought disease and death to over half of the indigenous peoples in the region leaving deep wounds between the two groups.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer of 1701, French imperialist Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac established Fort Pontchartrain (named for Count Pontchartrain, Cadillac’s benefactor) in the area deemed “le Detroit” or “the strait,” in an effort to protect the newly established French fur trade around the Great Lakes from the English and Iroquois.<sup>5</sup> In the decades following Cadillac’s initial settlement, Detroit became an important trading post in the region, occupied by the British following The War of 1812, and the Americans following the Revolutionary War.

By 1707, Cadillac began granting land to French settlers around the fort.<sup>6</sup> Settlement patterns took the shape of the elongated river-lots (ranges) of New France’s Seigneurial System; an institutional form of land distribution established in the 17th century, inspired by the feudal system of land management which was commonplace in medieval Europe. These long strips of farmland with narrow river frontage were designed to facilitate interaction between neighbors as well as to provide maximum access to the principal trade route, the river.<sup>7</sup> Although these unique land patterns have been altered significantly to accommodate modern uses, they can still be observed in areas of North America once settled and occupied by the French. Seigneurial lots shaped late 19th and early 20th century neighborhood development on the east side of Detroit adjacent to the river. Evidence of the long and narrow farms can still be found along the East Warren-Cadieux corridor, in the long residential streets perpendicular to the river, and particularly in the survival of the 19th century farmhouse located at 4932 Cadieux Rd adjacent to the outermost boundary of the East English Village neighborhood.

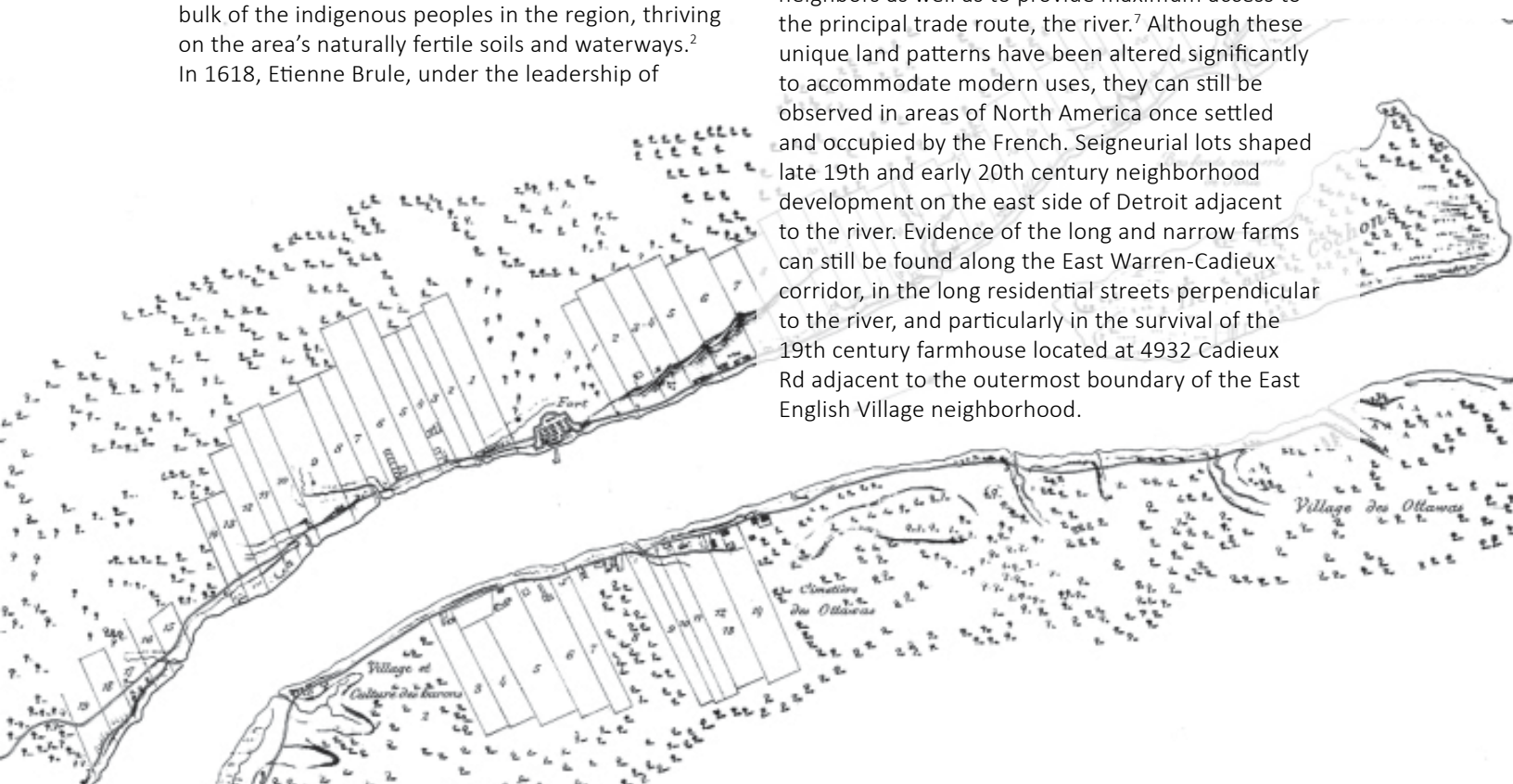


Fig 2.4, (left) Detroit Ribbon Farms Map, 1796.  
Fig 2.5, Bird’s eye view of Detroit MI, 1889. Calvert Lithographing Co.  
Fig 2.6, Ford River Rogue Plant, 1940.  
Fig 2.7, 1906 Paragon Automobile Advertisement.

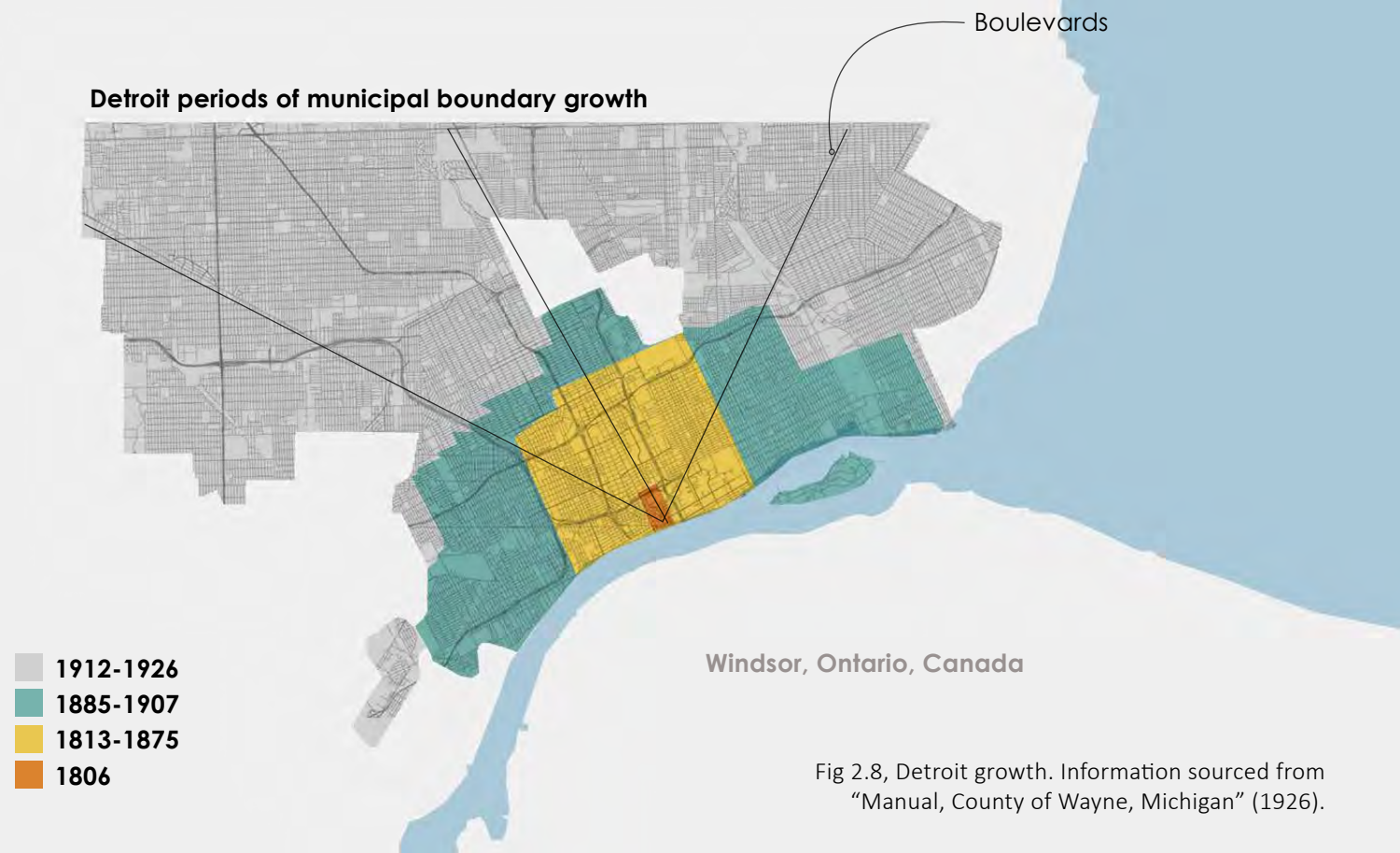
## A CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE

Detroit continued to expand over the course of the 19th-century, experiencing population and subsequently commercial booms with the completion of major infrastructure projects, such as the Erie Canal in 1825, and later waves of German, Irish, and Scandinavian immigrants, connecting the region’s resource-based economies to the national system.<sup>8</sup> The city also became a major stop along the Underground Railroad with the establishment of the Detroit Anti-Slavery Society in 1837, harboring escaped slaves and assisting them in their journeys to Canada.<sup>9</sup> By 1850, shipping had become the largest industry in Detroit, supplying many of the residents of the city (now at 21,000) with work.<sup>10</sup> This push toward industrialization continued with the completion of Detroit’s first railway link to New York in 1854, and the production of the first Bessemer type steel in 1864 at Eureka Iron Works, just south of Detroit in Wyandotte, Michigan.<sup>11</sup> This innovation laid the groundwork for the expansion of the railroad, stove, and (eventually) automobile industries in the city. By 1870, the census reported Detroit’s population had reached nearly 80,000 residents, almost half of them immigrants.<sup>12</sup>

## BECOMING THE MOTOR CITY

By the late 19th-century, Detroit’s wide boulevards and grand mansions earned it the nickname “The Paris of the West,” attracting new industrial entrepreneurs seeking their own fortunes. Among them were Ransom E. Olds (Olds Motor Works, 1899), Henry Ford (Ford Motor Company, 1903), and William Durant and Charles Stewart Mott (General Motors, 1908).<sup>13</sup> Although all these companies – and many others -- would contribute greatly to the rise of the automobile industry in both Detroit proper and its region, it was Henry Ford who in 1913 adapted the assembly line technique to the production of automobiles, enabling the company to reduce the normal production time for a single automobile from twelve hours to two and a half.<sup>14</sup> Automobile ownership soon became an attainable goal of many middle-class Americans, fueling the growth of the industry nationwide and further nurturing a sense of personal independence and desire to separate oneself from the dense urban centers of the past and look to the open suburbs of the future. A destination which seemed at the time to only be accessible by car.





## NEW URBAN LAND PATTERNS

By the late 19th-and early 20th-century, many large cities in the nation experienced their first wave of large-scale suburbanization brought on by technological innovations such as the streetcar, and mass production and adoption of the automobile. Detroit's growth in this period exemplified this model of vast expansion and land-development, creating countless blocks of single-family houses connected to jobs and commerce by automobiles and the growing infrastructure of streets. This development succeeded through the use of the grand boulevards developed out of Augustus Woodward's 1806 plan for Detroit, which drew inspiration from Pierre L'Enfant's 1792 plan for Washington D.C. and Georges-Eugene Haussmann's 1853 plan for Paris.<sup>16</sup> These boulevards acted as radial arteries leading from urban residential neighborhoods to the business district of downtown. Thus, these vast transit thoroughfares allowed rural land to easy transition into residential development and generated rapid sprawl of the city during the early 20th-century. As a result, residential communities were able to accommodate single-family houses with yards, rather than the cramp confines of traditional urban density, while adhering to the traditional urban grid.

development of other suburban developments in the area, including what became the Morningside neighborhood. By 1925, the majority of this portion of East Detroit would be completely subdivided, leaving behind only traces of the ribbon farms which once dominated the landscape. The first houses to be constructed in the neighborhoods of East English Village and Morningside in the late 1920s and early 1930s exhibited much of the same spirit of individualism, as those first developers subdivided land into small lots fitted to a variety of house-types and architectural styles giving the neighborhoods distinct character despite the repetition of basic pattern.<sup>17</sup> Long blocks of houses connected to a few larger, arterial corridor roads where all businesses were concentrated.

E Warren Avenue served as the community commercial node for Morningside and EEV. Developed in the same years as the adjacent residential blocks, E Warren businesses occupied a single strip of commercially zoned properties accessed by automobile (there were no trolleys or other fixed transit in this part of the city). The growth of these two neighborhoods brought the growth of new businesses along the major arterial roads of Harper, Mack and Warren Avenues.<sup>18</sup> By the 1950s and 1960s, the corridor was nearly fully occupied with a diverse set of commercial uses and private-practice professionals.

One of the earliest examples on the east side of Detroit of the transition of land patterns from ribbon farms into individual housing lots took place in 1913 with the development of Grosse Pointe Manor by the Detroit-based Investment Land Company.<sup>15</sup> This area came to include the East English Village neighborhood, and served as a catalyst for the

The East Side was home to several of Detroit's many automotive companies, including the Packard Motor Car Company Complex and Hudson Jefferson Plant. Many Detroiters were drawn to the neighborhoods of East Detroit by the availability of high-wage entry-level jobs offered by plants such as these. Along with the large number of automotive workers in the area, E Warren and its surrounding neighborhoods were also home to a strong professional class of doctors, lawyers, dentists, and other professionals leading to the development of a strong, varied social and economic landscape along the corridor into the postwar years.

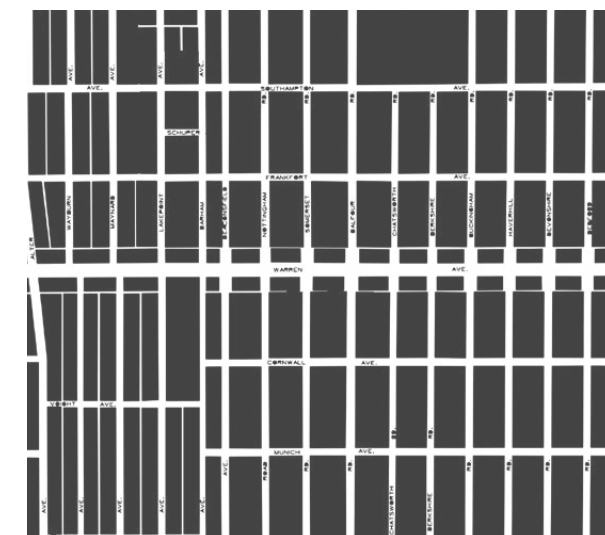
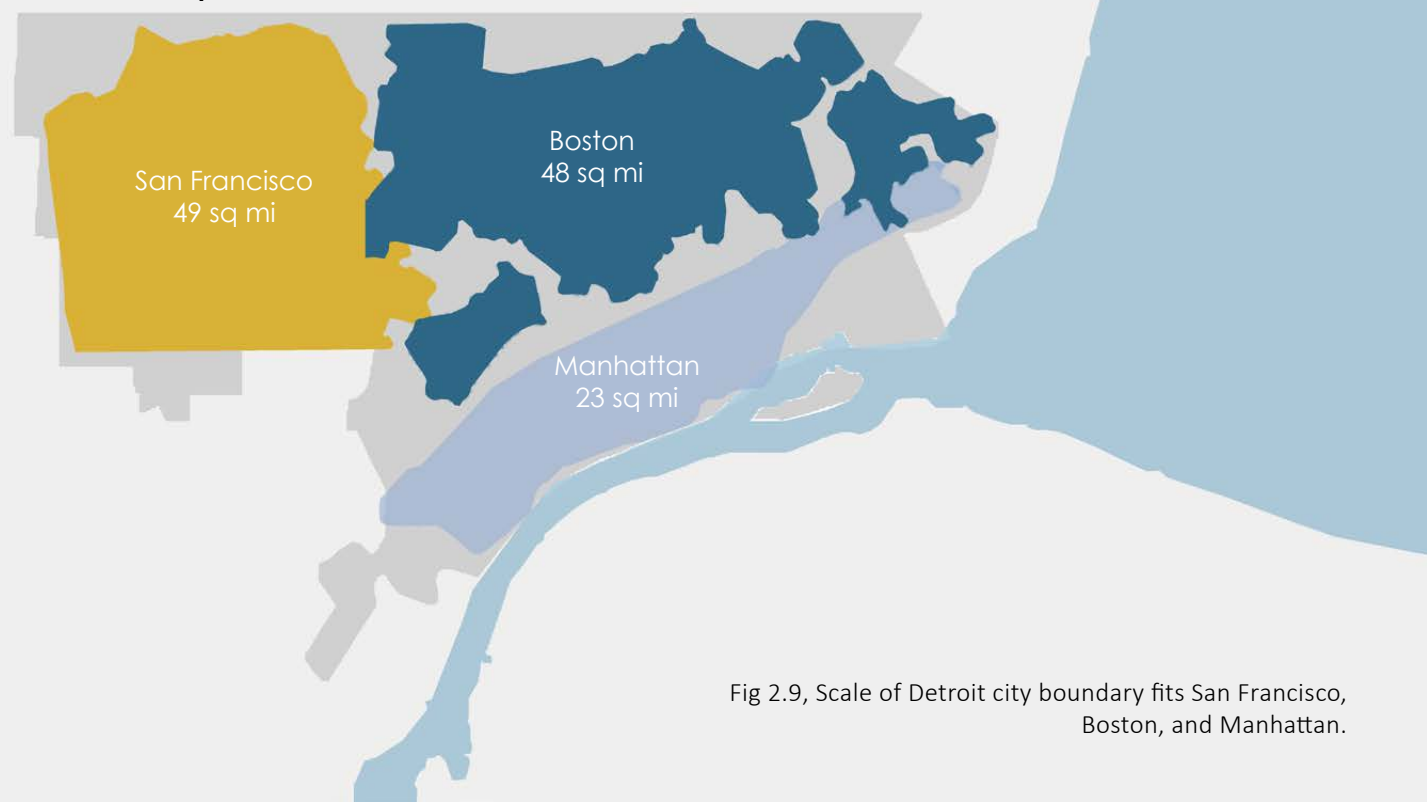


Fig 2.10, While Detroit's 20th-century development boom generated residential sprawl, the city remained fixed to a traditional urban grid, unlike suburban development. Areas like East Warren Cadieux were built around automobility and adhered to strict zoning separating residential and commercial land uses.

## Detroit: 139 sq mi





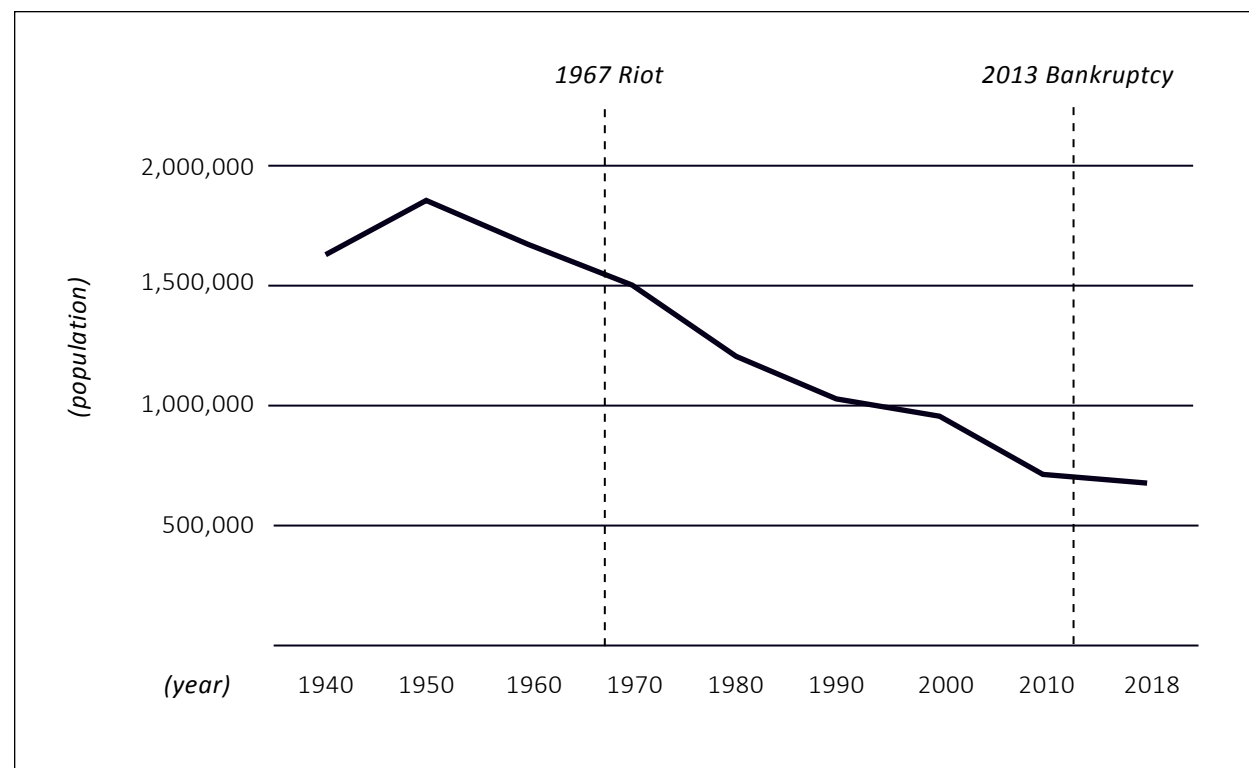


Fig 2.11, Detroit population: mid-20th century peak and its subsequent decline. Information for graphic obtained from U.S. Census.

## THE CITY'S DECLINE

A long period of decline swept over Detroit beginning in the 1950s. With the closing of the Packard and Jefferson Plant in the mid-1950s and 1960s, largely as a result of increased automation and the transition of the automotive market from having a domestic focus to an international one, East Detroit experienced a significant loss in industrial jobs.<sup>19</sup> This trend would parallel much of the rest of the city, and the damage was felt deeply in neighborhoods across the city. Deeply instilled feelings of racism had been commonplace in Detroit as many Southern African Americans fled domestic terrorism in the Reconstruction-Era South, in the hopes of finding steady work and solace among others engaging in the Great Migration. The draw of industrial jobs also brought many Southern whites to the city, soon cementing racial animosity and segregation commonplace throughout Detroit. By the middle of the 20th century, this racial tension would spark, perhaps most notably during events such as the 12th Street Uprising in 1967. These notorious events punctuated a longer moment of industrial shifts, large-scale white flight to the suburbs, and discriminatory housing and urban development policies, further damaging the economy and community fabric of Detroit proper.

From 1950 to 2011, Detroit experienced nearly a 90% loss in industrial jobs, making it difficult for residents to support commercial corridors such as E Warren Ave.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, Detroit's housing market began to plateau throughout the 1980s and 90s, with the average home price at nearly \$84,000 by 2000. The housing crisis of 2009 took a significant toll on this market, decreasing the average home price to nearly \$12,000.<sup>21</sup> The Eastside neighborhoods of Cornerstone, EEV and Morningside were hit particularly hard, ranking 22nd nationwide among areas hit hardest by the crisis with 402 total filings for foreclosure.<sup>22</sup>

Due largely to a loss of manufacturing jobs, the mismanagement of city funds, legacies of racial discrimination, and the continued draining of Detroit's population to the suburbs, the city found itself nearly \$10 billion in debt. In July 2013, Detroit filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy – the largest municipal default in the country.<sup>23</sup> The effects of the decades long downturn of Detroit's economy left very visible scars on the once vibrant E Warren corridor (as with many other parts of the city). It has only been through relatively recent grassroots efforts discussed in later sections of this report that these scars have begun to heal.



Fig 2.12, The deindustrialization of Detroit. Packard Automotive Plant, closed in the 1950s. Source: Hemmings Motors News.



Fig 2.13, (right) Detroit Riot of 1967. "A policeman stands guard on a Detroit street as buildings smoke behind him". Source: Getty images.

Fig 2.14, (bottom), "Hastings Street in the Black Bottom/Paradise Valley neighborhood during the 1950s, and then in the 1960s after construction of the I-75/I-375 highways". Source: Detroit Historical Society.





■ SITE CONTEXT

COMMERCIAL VITALITY ON THE E WARREN AVE CORRIDOR

The commercial corridor of East Warren-Cadieux reflects the history of development throughout Detroit. E Warren Ave was born out of the automobile, acting as an arterial thoroughfare to downtown Detroit, connected to the city’s residential neighborhoods and suburban sprawl. Along the corridor, commercial and mixed-use buildings were constructed predominantly between the 1920s and 1960s as development inched further towards the present day boundaries of Detroit proper.<sup>24</sup> On either side of E Warren Ave is the residential development adhering to a strict grid, born from the era of Euclidean zoning.

We chose to focus our analysis of commercial development on the mid-20th century—the height of Detroit’s growth, and the time in which all four of our case study sites (discussed in Part IV Response of this report) were occupied. To understand the overall commercial typology of the corridor, we investigated the Polk City Directories at the Detroit Public Library, concentrating on the businesses and uses existing on E Warren during 1957, 1967, 1974, and 1997 to document change through the decades (a surviving copy of a Polk Guide from the 1980s was not available during our site visit, and thus leaves a substantial gap in the corridor’s timeline. However, it can be inferred from secondary sources that E Warren’s commercial decline continued during this period).



E Warren remained relatively active from the 1950s through the 1970s, with very little vacancy in terms of storefronts, whole buildings, or vacant lots. The predominant use on the corridor was professional services, including medicine, law, finance, and real estate. Throughout this time also remained a steady supply of general retail and home-goods shops; a notable feature, however, was the increase in available restaurants and bars in the 1970s, which reflected a general change in lifestyle within the U.S. as eating out became more of a norm. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, the E Warren corridor saw a sharp decline in commercial activity, as seen in Fig 2.16. While vacancy rates rose, the number of professional practices took a sharp dive. This accounts for much of the high vacancy rates seen today on E Warren—storefronts once occupied by accountants, dentists, real-estate companies, and so forth are businesses no longer surviving. At its height in the 1960s, the commercial corridor saw approximately 200 working professionals and businesses in operation. By 2019, only approximately 40 businesses were in active use within the study area—and approximately 70 buildings were entirely vacant.

Fig 2.15, View of E Warren Ave at the corner of Outer Dr, year unknown. Source: Detroit Historical Society.

ACTIVE BUSINESSES ON E WARREN AVE

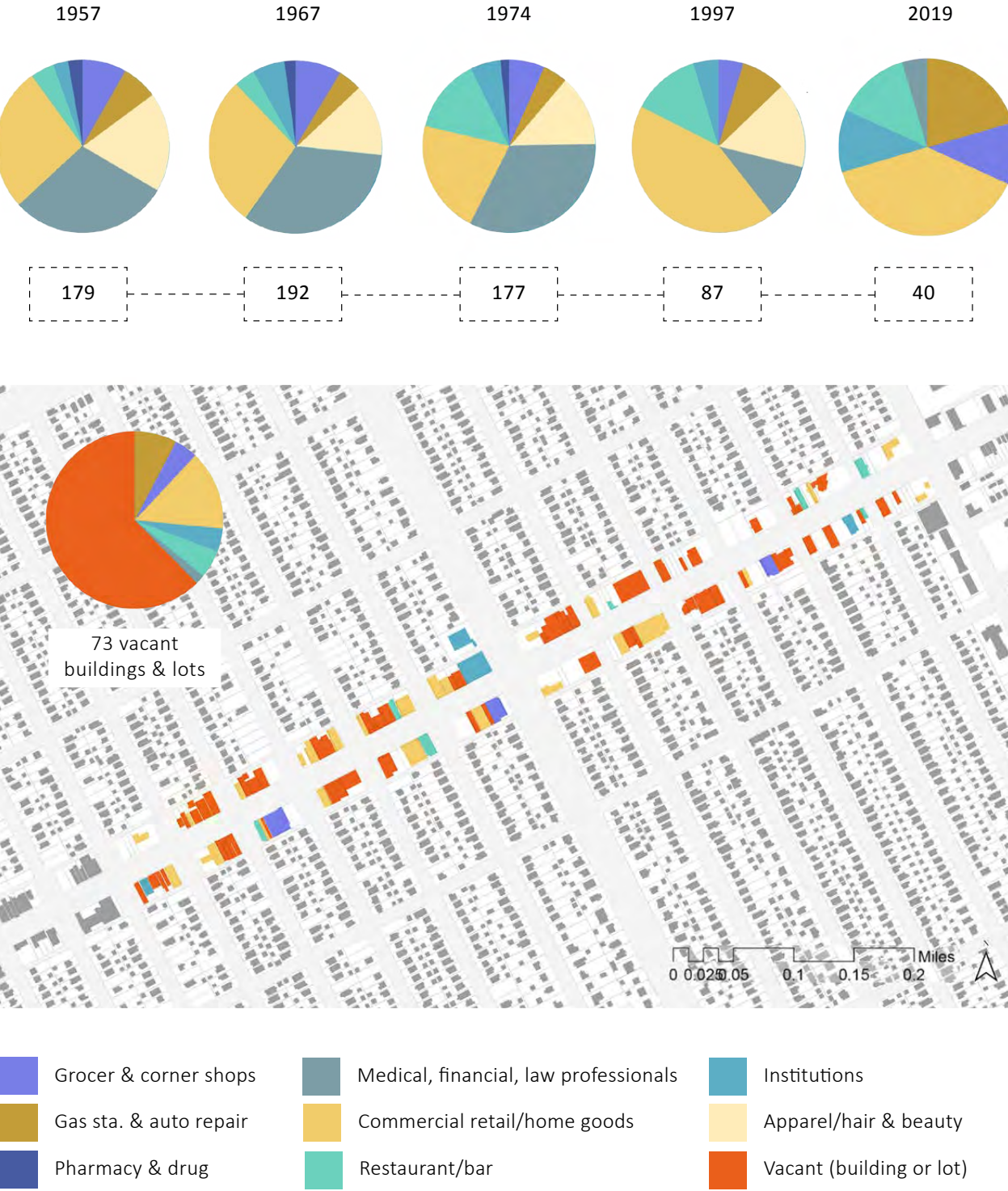


Fig 2.16, Approximate number of businesses active on E Warren Ave between Haverhill St and Cadieux Rd. Information accessed through Polk Detroit City Directories (1957, 1967, 1974, and 1997) at the Detroit Public Library, Sept 2019. Active businesses and vacancy for 2019 mapped during a field survey conducted by UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.





Fig 2.17, Existing signage on E Warren Ave for both active and previously open businesses. UPenn HSPV, Sept-Oct 2019.

### COMMERCIAL CHARACTER

In September 2019, we conducted a walking survey of the study area to assess the commercial character of the corridor (or rather the building typologies available). The characteristics noted played a significant factor in targeting parcels most viable for tactical preservation. The ultimate goal in understanding the commercial character of the corridor also aided the narrative of E Warren Ave and its potential for interpretation and reuse.

The typical commercial architecture along E Warren Ave consists of one- and two-story buildings ranging in construction from the 1920's to the 1970's. They have setbacks maintained at the sidewalk, though some later construction are setback further to accommodate additional front and side parking lots. The architectural styles include Art Moderne, Mid-Century Modern, Arts and Crafts Influence, Art Deco, Neo Classic Revival, and commercial vernacular, among others. Together, the landscape of low-rise commercial storefronts highlights the horizontality and expanse of the corridor.

A notable feature along E Warren is the remaining commercial signage in place, both painted ghost signs and metal signs either hanging from or mounted onto the building. Some are blank, others hark back to businesses that once were active on E Warren. Not only do these signs play as a character defining feature for each building, but also aid in the narrative of the E Warren commercial corridor as a whole.

The buildings themselves, however, are predominantly boarded up or appear abandoned, severing the engagement between storefront and sidewalk activity found on highly engaged commercial corridors. However, even active buildings with operating businesses remain camouflaged next to their vacant neighbors. Storefronts and windows infilled with cinder and glass masonry blocks, security gates placed on the exterior, windows blacked out, and so on appear to be a commonality shared between both occupied and empty space, making it difficult to discern from the streetscape the viable commercial spaces that already exist.

It should be noted that residents of the surrounding communities interact with and participate in this existing commercial life. Majority vacancy as we have noted in our previous analysis does not equate with total vacancy, and thus we have been mindful and aware in our research and analysis of E Warren Ave of the resiliency that is still prevalent in the community and its built environment.



Fig 2.18, Typical commercial architecture. Compilation of buildings currently sitting vacant. Google Street View, Nov. 2019.

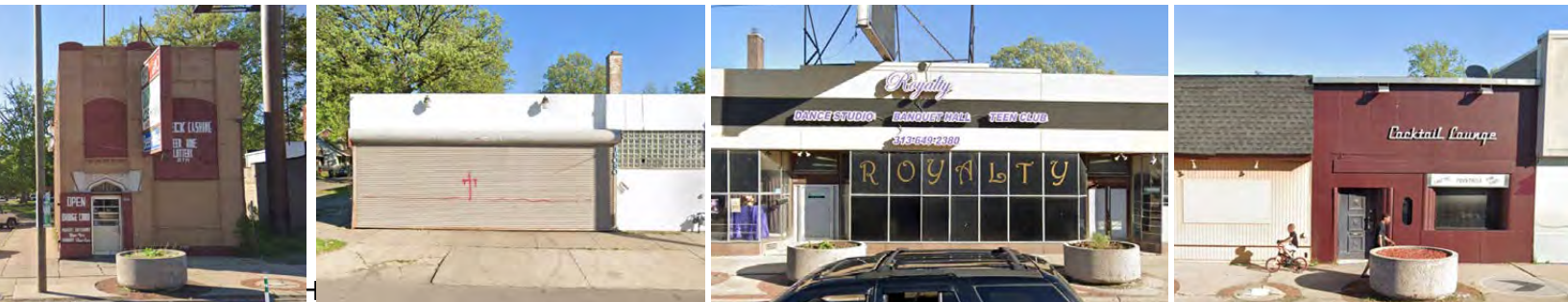


Fig 2.19, Typical commercial architecture. Compilation of buildings that currently house a an operating business. Google Street View, Nov. 2019.



MULTI-MODAL CHANGES & PARKING  
ALONG THE CORRIDOR

A common theme expressed throughout Detroit is the city’s dependency on the car, a factor which is prevalent in its expansive urban landscape. E Warren Ave is largely dependent upon this narrative, and it is visible in its wide lanes which intersects with Gratiot Ave--a radial gateway thoroughfare that leads directly into the heart of Detroit’s downtown business district.

The need for parking accommodations along the corridor in order to support revitalization and growing commercial-use efforts is consistent in conversation. As part of the corridor’s original planning, commercial buildings along E Warren Ave were set back from street corners in order to maintain the road verge (the grassy part between the street and the sidewalk) that is seen along the residential streets behind the corridor, and also to maintain the setback line of the side face of commercial buildings and the front face of residential buildings. Referencing historical aerial photographs, it is determined that at some point during the 1950s or 1960s, select corner road verges were converted to diagonal parking likely to meet the demands of a growing commercial corridor.

Recently, the city has added bike-designated lanes to E Warren Ave, reducing traffic flow from two-lanes eastward/two-lanes westward, to just a single-lane running in each direction while keeping the central turn lane and parking on both sides of the street. As a next step in this initiative, we recommend for the remaining road verges and converted parking lots to be surveyed and determined if additional parking may be need for future efforts.



Fig 2.20 & Fig 2.21, (above) Historic aerials of the intersection at E Warren Ave and Bedford Rd. 1951 image shows maintained corner road verge; 1967 image shows conversion to diagonal parking. Images accessed on Historic Aerials, NETRonline, Feb. 2020.

Fig 2.22, (below) Parking conditions diagram.

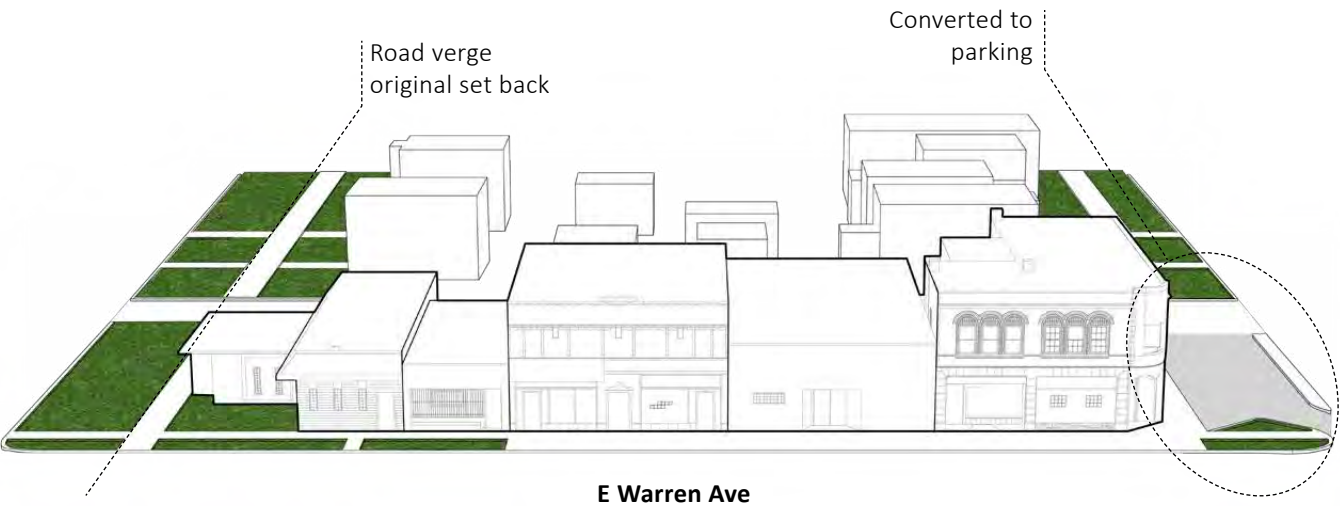


Fig 2.23, View of East Warren Ave at the corner of Outer Drive, year unknown. Detroit Historical Society.

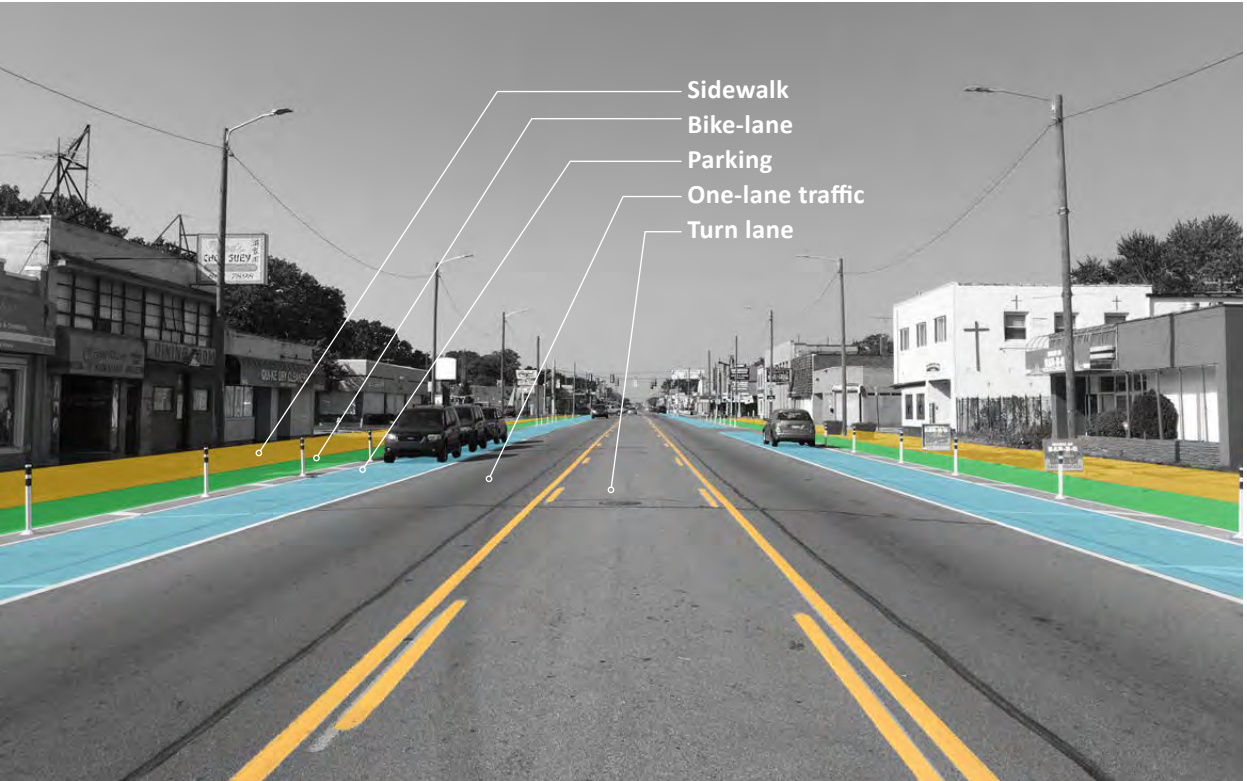


Fig 2.24, Present-day multi-modal uses of E Warren Ave. Google Street View, 2019.





Fig 2.25, Four residential buildings in East English Village.  
Source: Google Street View, Oct. 2019.

Fig 2.26, Four blighted properties in East English Village.  
Source: Google Street View, Oct. 2019.



Fig 2.27, Four residential buildings in Morningside.  
Source: Google Street View, Oct. 2019.

Fig 2.28, Four blighted properties in Morningside.  
Source: Google Street View, Oct. 2019.

## RESIDENTIAL TYPOLOGIES

Morningside and East English Village host similar styles in residential architecture, including Tudor Revival, Fresh Colonial, and Bungalows. Both neighborhoods began developing in the 1920's.<sup>25</sup> In Morningside, the housing stock tends toward smaller houses on smaller lots and maintains consistency in style, whereas in East English Village, the houses are more varied in their sizes and architectural features. Overall, EEV houses have more grandeur and detail as many were custom built by a hired architect and builder.

While the architecture in both neighborhoods is eclectic in style, of wood frame and masonry construction, it all follows the dominant pattern of single-family, middle-class 20th-century development. Patterns of vacancy, abandonment, demolition and deterioration in each neighborhood contrasts tremendously. Conditions in Morningside seem markedly more severe, with higher rates of demolition and still-standing blighted structures visibly in decay. East English Village has seen comparatively few structures demolished; those buildings that are abandoned seem generally in sound condition.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographics of Morningside and East English Village also vary noticeably, despite the neighborhoods abutting each other and using much of the same resources.<sup>26</sup> Both Morningside and East English Village are predominantly black neighborhoods, which reflects Detroit's greater demographic makeup. The two neighborhood diverge from city-wide trends, however, by both having above average median income levels and property values.

Nevertheless, Morningside and EEV have a divide that is not only reflected in its residential built landscape, but also the demographics of the residents as well. Morningside has a lower median income, lower property value, and a higher percentage of renters. EEV has a drastically higher median income and property value, with a significantly larger percentage of home-ownership.

Fig 2.29, (below) How Morningside and East English Village compare to each other, and Detroit proper.

Population	13,612	8,588	672,662
	<i>Morningside</i>	<i>East English Village</i>	<i>Detroit proper</i>
Median Income	\$36,495	\$60,008	\$26,249
Median Property Value	\$48,860	\$60,223	\$35,383
Median Rent	\$947	\$1,049	\$1076
Home-Owners	59%	68%	69%
Renters	41%	32%	31%
Demographics			



## ■ CITY-WIDE CONTEXT

After the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008, Detroit as a city has worked hard to recover. Through a variety of factors including new local political leaders, innovative initiatives in the Planning Department, engagement of foundations, and creation of NGOs and the recent boom in downtown real estate development, the city is regaining its footing. However, investment in new development and subsequent increase in population may not be equitably serving the individuals and communities who stuck out the dark period of the late 1960s through the financial crisis.<sup>27</sup> As a result, the familiar story of displacement and neighborhood change ringing from urban centers around the country is beginning to affect Detroit as well. These socio-political dynamics and legacies set the stage for thoughtful preservation as a way of investing in existing social infrastructure and local business potential in the extant historic fabric around the city.

In 2013, Detroit hit its deepest low during the financial crisis. At that point, control over the city and its money was taken over by the state government.<sup>28</sup> It took until 2018 for the city to regain full control of its finances.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, in the political sphere Mayor Mike Duggan was re-elected in 2017. Maurice Cox was hired as the Director of the City Planning Department in 2015 to strengthen the city's neighborhoods and policies.<sup>30</sup> During his four years at Detroit Planning & Development, Cox increased the staff from 6 to 36 and worked to invest in Detroit's neighborhood and housing infrastructure, strengthen a range of neighborhoods outside the downtown core, and encourage long term residency.

The term "20-minute neighborhoods" was coined to drive an initiative to have residents be able to access any asset or amenity in their neighborhoods within a 20-minute walk.<sup>31</sup> The neighborhood plans and tactical preservation are parts of this strategy. The DPD under Cox began fostering a culture that supports biking, public transit or walking as alternatives to the deeply rooted automotive dependency. While this model may be effective in the more densely populated downtown, it proves difficult to implement in neighborhoods further from Downtown Detroit that have less public infrastructure.

Over the past five years development in Downtown Detroit has taken off. With developers like Bedrock (led by Dan Gilbert) and Broder and Sachse investing

in new construction and adaptive reuse projects, economic activity is on the upswing and many new, young professionals are moving into the city.<sup>32</sup> Although the rise in population and economic growth are positive impacts on the city's stability as a whole, Downtown is only 7.2 square miles of the 134.8 total that make up the city of Detroit.<sup>33</sup> Heavy investment in that condensed area and Detroit's "opportunity zones" has left many native Detroiters living beyond those limits without benefit of such focused reactivation initiatives. Additionally, recent development catalyzed an increase in the White population in a city that has been majority Black since the 1980s.

With an increase in population, market rate housing construction is congruently on the rise. In a city that historically had high rates of homeownership, the new development downtown sets a precedent for disinvestment in attempts to restore or reuse over 50,000 vacant homes, most lost to foreclosure during the financial crisis. Instead, many of these homes are demolished leaving swaths of open land. In many cases individuals or developers are buying vacant or occupied foreclosed houses in bulk and attempting to rent them back to their original owners. In some cases the original owners are ultimately evicted.<sup>34</sup> "Homeownership also hasn't recovered, with fewer young people buying homes and many of those who lost homes not recovering enough to buy again. There are more renters in the U.S. than in any period since 1965".<sup>35</sup> With less home ownership, and a large push in the rental market what types of new development, if any, will occur in these areas with high levels of blight and vacancy? In the commercial corridors of outlying neighborhoods such as EWC, it may create an opportunity for modest numbers of apartments in small, mixed-use buildings over the Main Street shops.

In an attempt to expand the areas of investment and development, the City of Detroit in partnership with Invest Detroit, residents, banks, and community development corporations developed the Strategic Neighborhood Fund (SNF) to initiate revitalization efforts within selected neighborhoods and corresponding commercial corridors. Although, as discussed previously, the program has generated substantial funding to reinvest in the ten selected communities, there are concerns of gentrification—similar to that being experienced downtown—and potential displacement of local residents.

From the interviews conducted in East Warren-Cadieux and elsewhere in Detroit, the general consensus around the city is that locals are upset when they hear their neighborhood has been chosen for SNF. Many residents in both neighborhoods have been living there for a long time and the imposition of government-based planning in lieu of new people moving into the area and an increasing number of renters brings threat of development that will not reflect the existing population. Of course, other owners and residents welcome the investment, but it seems to engender a mix of opinions.

In response to the rapid change in Detroit, initiatives such as Live6 (spearheaded by a member of the City Planning Commission, Lauren Hood, among others) set a precedent for equitable, community-based development. The Live6 alliance is a planning and development nonprofit that is investing the social and commercial activity surrounding the McNichols and Livernois commercial corridors in Northwest Detroit.<sup>36</sup> Development initiatives build off of existing assets and culturally significant neighborhood fabric to invest in housing, businesses, safety, and population retention. Live6 is an impactful example of reactivation in the context of both preservation and new development and the shifting demographics of a dynamic community. The initiative focuses on the

culture of the many deeply rooted residents with a strong sense of loyalty to their neighborhoods and the city of Detroit. It serves as an inspiration on how preservation is necessary to enhance what already exists, instead of inventing what doesn't.

To navigate the context of growth and economic development in the city, the role of preservation in EWC as a part of SNF must be mindful of these current, contentious, citywide issues and rapid change. Leaders in the EWC community seem well aware of the trajectory of the whole city are already laying the groundwork for ground-up local, entrepreneurial reactivation to get ahead of the potential ramifications of SNF. Our plans to use tactical preservation intend to enhance these objectives.

Fig 2.30, Michigan Ave, Detroit MI. 1937. Image accessed at [//twitter.com/DetroitStreetVu](https://twitter.com/DetroitStreetVu)





■ AREA-WIDE TOOLS

When engaging in tactical preservation there are several area-wide and city-wide policies, tools and institutions that set the stage for individual projects and in fact can be used to enhance the outcome of specific projects. Below are four kinds of resources that our team researched and felt are pertinent to the challenges of EWC. They should be considered when approaching any type of development project, but are particularly beneficial when working with extant fabric and communities.

ZONING AND BUILDING CODES

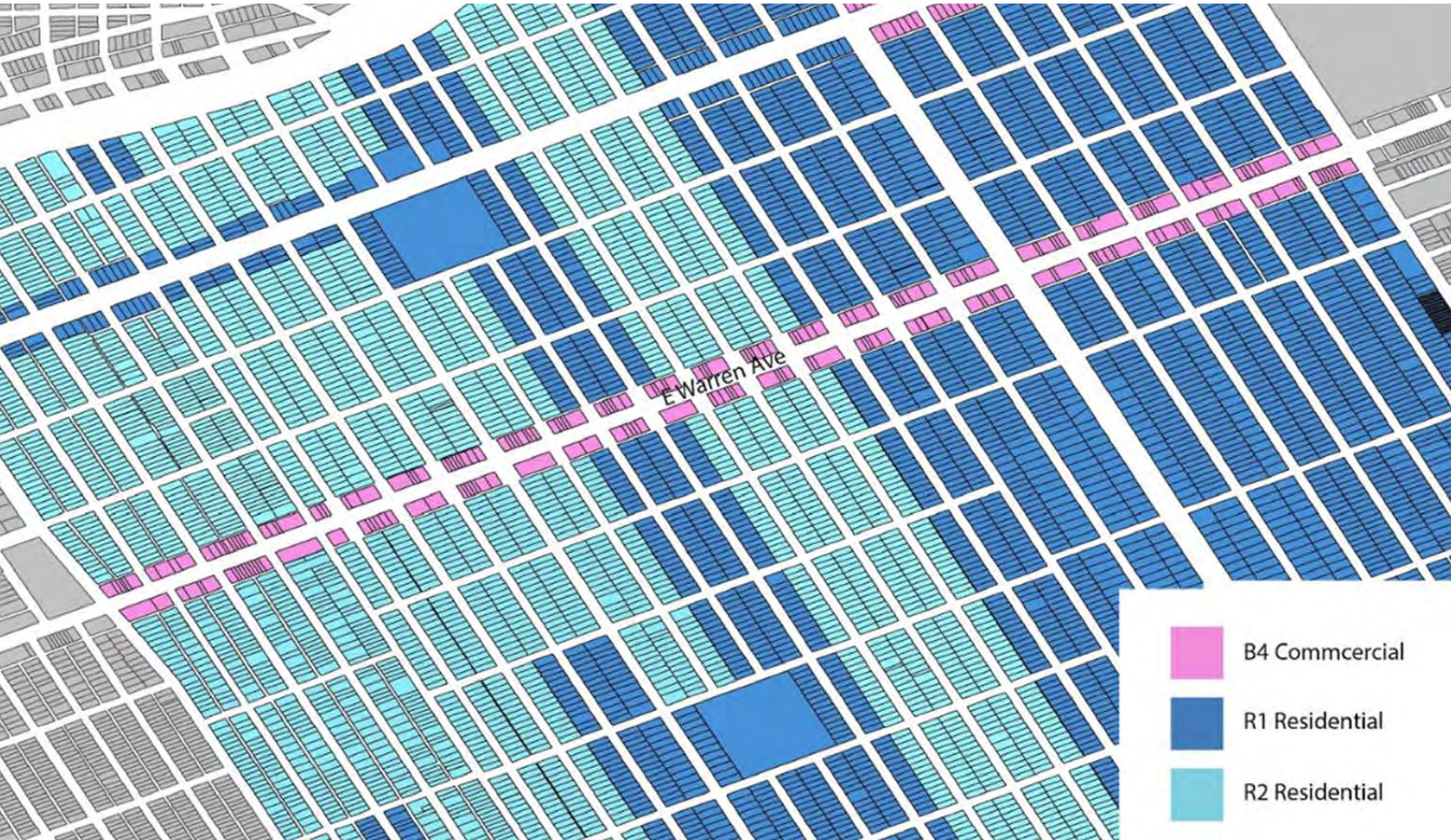
Existing Zoning and Building Codes are important to factor into any development project, especially when working with older buildings. Often, buildings built before a certain point in the 20th century were constructed before modern building codes and may need retrofitting. Additionally, these codes put limitations on use, or dictate certain amenities that need to be added based on location and square footage. Understanding the nuances of the codes in Detroit will help developers and building owners understand their limitations and how to apply for variances if necessary. Standard building and zoning

codes sometimes present extra challenges for tactical preservation projects. Creativity in the application of codes is often needed to enable partial, temporary uses of compromised buildings—as alternatives to making entire structures fully code compliant. The City of Detroit has already begun to trouble-shoot this aspect of project design and implementation.

East Warren-Cadieux developed during a time when zoning took a strong hold on cities and began to dictate new construction and uses. This is apparent in the strict-grid development of commercial in contrast to residential. All commercial uses are allocated to a main corridor that is highly trafficked, while all residential remains on the surrounding blocks.

All commercial buildings on E Warren Ave within the defined study area fall under B4 General Business (2019 Detroit City Code, Part IV – Detroit City Code, Chapter 50 – Zoning, Division 5 – General Business District). Division 5 within the 2019 Detroit City Code lays out the by-right and conditional uses allotted to B4. Surrounding the commercial corridor is primarily R1 and R2 residential zoning. The clear spatial divide of land use can be seen Fig 2.31 below.

Fig 2.31, Zoning map. Data sourced from City of Detroit, Open Data.



CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Creative Placemaking is a tool used in urban areas to reactivate space with short term, art-based interventions in attempt to catalyze further regeneration of a city, town, or neighborhood. Placemaking is challenging to define as it is a unique process that involves the cooperation of multiple organizations and individuals. But it’s core goals of brining visibility and activity to underutilized spaces can give an important boost and even proof-of-concept tool for tactical preservation efforts.

The key factor in creative placemaking is partnerships. Creative Placemaking is most successful when implemented by a diverse range of people within a given community. Some examples of those involved in the collaborative placemaking process are:

- Established community organizations (CDCs or Non-Profits)
- Community leaders
- City Agencies
- Politicians
- Art, Design and Planning Professionals
- Community members
- Other stakeholders

Placemaking is initiated by existing organizations and community members who then use external resources which are usually local government or non-profit funders who have designated grant programs. It is important to note that creative placemaking

is site specific. Projects are created in response to physical and social contexts and are most successful when planned and implemented by members of the surrounding community.<sup>37</sup> Sites range in scale and can be as small as a single gazebo in the middle of a public park or as large as a new master-plan for an entire neighborhood or district. The “creative” aspect of placemaking implies that the intervention should involve some sort of artistic solution. Possibilities include visual arts (murals, sculpture etc.), performing arts (theatre, dance, music), festivals, interactive installations, master plans and architecture, greening space, and many more.

The primary organization which initiates the placemaking project is dependent on the location and desired programming of the space. Creative placemaking is most commonly a ground-up initiative that provides an opportunity to rethink space and the means by which communities can contribute to change. It takes advantage of the energy and ideas from artists, local and distant. The placemaking process not only serves as a tool to reactivate, enhance or create change within a specific space, but also the relationships between all those involved. To make placemaking possible there are several organizations that give specific grants. These organizations are used as tools for inspiration and are sources of funding for placemaking initiatives that are well organized, community oriented, responsive to site specific needs, and have clear trajectory of social impact.



Fig 2.32, Activating Vacancy placemaking initiative in Dallas, Texas. led by BC Workshop to reactivate vacant land around the city. Source: <http://www.bcwork-shop.org/activating-vacancy>



IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING

Following the widespread involvement of external funds in Detroit’s recovery from bankruptcy, many of them continued to be involved in setting up funding opportunities for new businesses and housing in the city. First among these is the Strategic Neighborhood Fund (SNF), a funding source drawing from philanthropic contributions and public subsidies designed to improve Detroit neighborhoods. The SNF, which started its efforts with \$42 million focused on three neighborhoods, raised an additional \$130 million and expanded its scope to seven additional neighborhoods, “all with the goal of improving streetscapes and walkability, kick starting local business and adding or preserving affordable housing.”<sup>38</sup> Its component partners are: City of Detroit, Invest Detroit, and Neighborhood residents Corporate donors.

Other funding and technical assistance sources potentially available and relevant for tactical preservation in neighborhood commercial districts include:

**Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF)**<sup>39</sup>

Created by P.A. 270 of 1984, MSF has broad authority to promote economic development and create jobs. Its activities include:

- Approving grants and loans under the Michigan Business Development Program;
- Approving grants and loans under the Michigan Community Revitalization Program;
- Approving the use of Private Activity Revenue Bonds;
- Authorizing the submittal by local units of government of Community Development Block Grant applications;
- Recommending to the State Administrative Board Agricultural Processing, Renewable Energy and Forest Products Processing Renaissance Zone designations;
- Approving Tool and Die Renaissance Recovery Zones; and
- Acting as the fiduciary agent with respect to the 21st Century Jobs Fund investments;
- Pursuant to statute, the Chief Compliance Officer provides advice and guidance in regard to the 21st Century Jobs Fund.

**Invest Detroit**<sup>40</sup>

A mission driven and nonprofit lender, investor, and partner that supports business and real estate projects in a way that is strategic and inclusive. It has three areas of focus: Real Estate, Small Business and Industrial, and Venture Capital.

**Capital Impact Partners**<sup>41</sup>

A nonprofit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), it has deployed over \$2.7 billion to serve 5 million people and create more than 38,000 jobs in sectors critical to building equitable communities. Capital Impact helps people build communities of opportunity that break barriers to success.

**Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)**<sup>42</sup>

In collaboration with more than 100 economic development partners, MEDC markets Michigan as the place to do business, assists businesses in their growth strategies and fosters the growth of vibrant communities across the state.

**Detroit Affordable Housing Leverage Fund (AHLF)**<sup>43</sup>

A partnership organized to provide affordable housing developers and owners with streamlined access to financial tools that are specifically designed to address housing challenges in Detroit neighborhoods. AHLF encourages the preservation of regulated and naturally occurring affordable housing throughout the City of Detroit and the development of new mixed income and affordable housing in targeted multi-family housing areas. AHLF partners are:

- Local Initiatives Support Corp Detroit (LISC)
- City Housing & Revitalization Department (HRD)
- State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)

**Motor City Match**<sup>44</sup>

MCM brings businesses and buildings together using two tracks:

- The Building Owner Track is for Detroit building owners looking to lease vacant commercial space to our awarded businesses.
- The Business Track is for entrepreneurs looking for a building in which to start or expand in Detroit.

**Motor City Re-Store**<sup>45</sup>

Motor City Re- Store gives Detroit’s neighborhood businesses a boost in curb appeal through matching grants that improve their storefronts, making our commercial corridors more walkable, more attractive, and better for business.

Both Motor City Match and Motor City Re-Store are partnership of the following Organizations:  
City of Detroit  
Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC)  
Economic Development Corporation of the City of Detroit (EDC)  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

**Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC)**<sup>46</sup>

Considered a critical citywide tool in deploying both place- based and job creation strategies, DEGC works to support existing businesses and bring new companies and investments to the city. From identifying potential development sites and negotiating development agreements, to managing construction projects and eliminating obstacles to growth, DEGC is dedicated to being an advocate for businesses large and small. It is Detroit’s economic development expert and a one- stop shop for both emerging and expanding businesses.

**Detroit Development Fund (DDF)**<sup>47</sup>

Provides loans and technical assistance to small business owners, developers, building owners, contractors, and subcontractors who cannot get all of the capital they need from traditional financing sources. It delivers its products and services with the goals of revitalizing businesses and neighborhoods in Detroit, creating economic equity, and promoting a healthy environment. DDF manages The Entrepreneurs of Color Fund, and is a partner in the Detroit Community Loan Fund. DDF is a partnership of ten banks and foundations.

**Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSM)**<sup>48</sup>

Helps donors make the most of their charitable contributions and fulfill their philanthropic goals. It is a multifaceted, full-service philanthropic organization leading the way to positive change. It initiates, protects, nurtures and creates philanthropic efforts focused on everlasting positive impact in our community.

**Main Street America**<sup>49</sup>

Main Street America could be a key partner for technical assistance, support of ongoing community planning efforts, and connection to larger networks of funders and investors. The organization has been working nationally to help revitalize older and historic commercial districts for more than 35 years. Today it is a network of more than 1600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Michigan Main Street**<sup>50</sup>

The Michigan Main Street Program is housed under the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Its primary focus, falling in line with other Main Street programs across the country, is to promote and support economic development, with an emphasis on preservation. Although there are several programs listed as Main Street partners in the greater Detroit area, only one currently exists within the city limits. That program is the Mexicantown-Hubbard Communities Main Street Program just south of downtown Detroit.

The Main Street Program has the potential to encourage equitable development within the community, offer funding sources for individual projects as well as for the training of community members in methods of community planning and engagement which foster sustainability. The placemaking tactic referred by Main Street as the “Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Approach could prove to be particularly beneficial to the East Warren Corridor in that this tactic focuses on small and incremental interventions within the built environment which are designed to spark positive change. The East Warren-Cadieux Commercial Corridor, exhibits many of the factors which is expected of applicants to the Main Street Program, including a strongly invested community, high degree of historic building stock, and strong leadership.



■ COMMUNITY DYNAMICS  
& RESOURCES

In interviews with community leaders and other residents, we came to understand that Morningside residents have less financial resources than residents in EEV and many have a strong distrust in the local government. Complementary with the distrust of government, many Morningside residents are skeptical of the concept of catalytic growth – that investment nearby their homes and blocks will actually yield benefits for them. If residents see the “yellow line” showing the scope of the community planning project on the map provided by the Strategic Neighborhood Fund (SNF), they would argue that it should extend further West into Morningside, so it literally includes more of their territory (refer to Fig 2.33). If a majority of the revitalization efforts take place in EEV, in other words, Morningside residents are going to say, “what about us?” We heard similar feelings from EEV residents.

As equitable redevelopment is the goal of this study, it is important to acknowledge a very effective local initiative directly encouraging such catalytic investment and community strengthening: Restorin’ East Warren. This effort, led by Joe Rashid and colleagues, is an extension of his master’s thesis from the program in community development at UD Mercy. He and other students crafted a full report outlining the history of the neighborhood, current demographics, and revitalization plans and goals, e.g. 100% commercial occupancy by 2023. Their report served as a catalyst for Rashid’s continued efforts to reactive commercial activity along E Warren. He is adamant about rehabilitating space in a way that reflects the people in the community, which is reflected in his progressive strategy to “gain site control” from the bottom up. Rashid encourages neighborhood residents to buy up the commercial property along E Warren and start their own businesses that reflect the needs and desires of the community. The objective is to get ahead of the city’s interventions using the SNF, so later improvement will build momentum for local owners and local businesses. Developing from the community level may mitigate some of the potential negative effects of gentrification and preserve fabric as well as local culture and identity.

The Alger Theater is perhaps the most visible and prominent architectural and cultural asset in the community, and one shared by Morningside and EEV (refer to the cover image of this report). Built in 1932, the Alger was a neighborhood hub for social activity

and entertainment. After it closed in the 1980s and remained vacant, a group of community members came together to purchase the Alger in 2011 and initiate restoration. The Friends of the Alger Theatre is as a non-profit organization devoted to the rehabilitation and reactivation of the building and programming. They have been rehabilitating in phases, starting with the recent completion of the storefront commercial spaces embedded into the southern facade of the Alger fronting E. Warren. One of the commercial bays recently hosted a Detroit Design139 meeting space and a number of community events (Detroit Design139 is a citywide organization that fosters design-based solutions for planning in many neighborhoods). A recently completed roof deck sits above the commercial spaces and provides another programming space. The next phase of rehabilitation includes the construction of an elevator and to get running water in the building; ultimately the roof needs major work. The major challenge in moving forward is generating funding. Community leader Jackie Grant says that most of the money used for the first phases of rehabilitation came from their “angels” -- philanthropic board members of the Friends of the Alger or other community stakeholders.

The E Warren Tool Library opened in July 2019 and has quickly become a thriving asset in the community. Owned by the private landscaping and contracting group Motor City Grounds Crew, the Tool Library rents its space at 16006 E Warren and benefits from grant funds as well as memberships. The Tool Library loans tools to the community and provide instruction on the skills needed to use them. It is a member-based organization with income-based fees. Members can join as individuals or as an organization or non-profit. Along with an inventory of over 1,100 tools they also host workshops for home-maintenance or practical skills like bench building. Josh Arntson is the one full-time employee along with two part-time employees. They hope to add sports equipment to their inventory as well as DIY books to increase the diversity of lendable resources, and intend to offer more programming and workshops in the future. Currently they have 102 members, most of whom are from the surrounding community, as well as several organizations and non-profits.

Along E Warren there are several recently opened businesses that are starting to attract local patronage. Cultural Collective is an art-based co-working space that opened in August 2019. The owner, Denise Moore, owns a few properties in the area and as an artist is excited to expand the art scene along E Warren. Zab



Fig 2.33, E Warren Ave commercial corridor study area for East Warren-Cadieux Strategic Neighborhood Plan. <https://theneighborhoods.org/story/130m-investments-coming-seven-detroit-neighborhoods>

Cultural Collective has co-working desks in the front of the space and a large room for meetings and events in the back. Currently, most of the members are walk-ins and are in the process of organizing more art centric events. Detroit Pepper Company opened in a small storefront near the Cornerstone neighborhood. Flamz is a pizza place that opened in Summer 2019 and has quickly become a neighborhood spot, but they are trying to get the word out to drum up more business. Hammertime Hardware re-opened in Summer 2019 under new management, after having been closed for two years; community members are thrilled to regain the resource. There are also 2 bars that have opened within the past 5-10 years. By the time our report is complete, we expect a few others to have opened their doors.

While many new businesses have opened in the past

year on East Warren, throughout our conversations there was constant mention of a few particular shops that have been in the works but are slow moving to open. Specifically, a coffee shop and bakery are expected to open soon, but trouble generating funding and other factors have delayed the process.



■ ENDNOTES

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<sup>12</sup> “Industrial Detroit (1860-1900).” Timeline of Detroit. Detroit Historical Society.

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<sup>22</sup> Rashid, Joe. Interview by Kathie Brill. On Phone. Detroit MI, September 2019.

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<sup>24</sup> Reference Detroit Sanborn Maps to track development trends and approximate dates of construction. Accessed at the Detroit Public Library, Sept 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Demographic information for Morningside and East English Village accessed through Statistical Atlas. Demographic information for Detroit proper accessed through 2010 U.S. Census, freep.com, and Detroit Property Assessment.

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3

ANALYSIS

Fig 3.1, Vacant building on E Warren Ave. Source: UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.



■ OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMUNITY & ITS CONTEXT

After doing extensive preliminary and background research on the city of Detroit and the E. Warren commercial corridor, as well as visiting the site and getting to know local leaders, the group gained a deep appreciation and general understanding of the dynamics of the study area. It is clear that E. Warren and the surrounding neighborhoods are places of community minded people who have set the stage for equitable redevelopment.

In the face of the Strategic Neighborhood Fund and other citywide changes that are bringing in new populations there is clear skepticism for any form of intervention that may disrupt the social and communal fabric of a place. However, it is also clear that there is a desire for improved infrastructure and an increase in businesses. The challenge is to figure out how to use existing fabric to enhance an already existing community instead of drawing in an entirely new one. Based off our site visits the group had a chance to learn about the opportunities and growth the residents are looking to see in their neighborhood.

Interviews conducted with community stakeholders targeted the types of assets local residents want to see around the corridor. Out of a plethora of suggestions there was an overwhelming response to see more restaurants. Darnell Adams and Allen Penniman from the Detroit Department of Planning joked about the creation of “restaurant town.” However, it may be an effective pitch in the continued efforts to re-activate spaces along the corridor. Other suggestions included coffee shops, bars, ice cream, and children’s programming. Some ideas were very niche including an alkaline water store which is a popular commodity in the Black health community. Despite a report that came out on retail in suburbs like Grosse Pointe stipulating that neighborhoods like EWC have too many restaurants.

Feedback from the community was generally positive but it was clear that there are several points of view surrounding the reactivation of E. Warren. On one hand many people demonstrated excitement, hope, proactivity, and an analytical perspective. However, most of those people were people who had a stake of power within the community. On the other hand, many other residents and business owners expressed ambivalence, confusion and general distrust in local government. We have to be mindful that we only

spoke to a handful of people most of whom are distinct leaders in the surrounding communities or who work for the city. Although they may be trusted residents, and we as a team may be well-intentioned in our preservation efforts, we can’t make people trust the government or believe in the idea of catalytic growth. Change is coming to E. Warren and there are going to be a lot of people who aren’t happy with the outcome and we can’t change that. We can only do our best to come up with proposals that reflect the needs and desires of the community.

Additionally, there is a mentality around parking in Detroit, and within the neighborhood, that “there isn’t enough parking” available to support an increase in commercial activity. Many people feel that if they can’t park right in front of the place they are going, that there is a parking problem. It is not realistic to completely change people’s perception of necessary parking. It will be a challenge to integrate implementation of Maurice Cox’s 20-minute neighborhood walkability initiative with the heavily politicized parking culture in Detroit. Zoning code should be changed to not require large amounts of parking, given the ample supply on the street and in the small parking ramps at many of the E. Warren intersections. Potential solutions as suggested by Joe Rashid may include activating empty lots into “flex” spaces that can be used as parking along with other socially and recreationally oriented programmatic functions.

To overcome doubt and use tactical preservation to address all of the local and city-wide contexts in respect to the study area, a synthesis of research led to an analysis of value, integrity and then a trajectory of goals and strategies.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The **East Warren-Cadieux** study area typifies the development and decline of 20th-century Detroit. The neighborhood took shape during the industrial boom of the 1920s and 30s; wide swaths of single-family residential blocks served by continuous retail strips along arterial roads. During the past two decades, the city’s troubles were mirrored in the period of decline marked by extreme rates of foreclosure and resulting in **high vacancy**—both residential and commercial buildings—which inflicted tangible and intangible scars on the built landscape.

The two principal neighborhoods in our study area, **Morningside** and **East English Village**, vary in demographics and scale, but the East Warren Avenue commercial corridor links the two neighborhoods and is poised to reclaim the area’s vitality. The “Main Street” corridor hosts a variety of extant commercial building stock possessing architectural value, reflecting honored neighborhood histories, and offering fairly high levels of integrity and functionality. The corridor once supported a vibrant commercial scene supporting the surrounding communities; the legacy of development and resurgent spirit of resiliency along East Warren are foundations on which the future prosperity of this part of the East Side is being is being painstakingly rebuilt. Our proposals for tactical preservation are meant to advance this work.

■ SWOT ANALYSIS

As part of our study of the values and integrity of E Warren Ave and its surrounding community contexts, we devised a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of tangible and intangible traits of East Warren-Cadieux, aiding in its narrative economically, socially, culturally, and architecturally. We focused on previous research conducted on EWC and conducted interviews with people, both at the local level with residents in the community, and city level with Detroit officials. This information allowed us to construct an understanding of community dynamics and needs of the neighborhoods surrounding the E Warren commercial corridor. During the initial SWOT brainstorm session, we identified 24 factors of varying significance to the problem at hand, yet aided in telling the current situation of EWC.

We broke down factors identified as tangible (traits directly related to the built environment, such as existing commercial building stock, road infrastructure, housing, current businesses and uses in place, and economic capital) and intangible traits (attitudes, beliefs, and opinions of EWC’s residents and the city at large) and then devised a list of potential future burdens or benefits that could impact the long-term development and vitality of the E Warren Commercial corridor.



TANGIBLE FACTORS OF EWC

- Parking accessibility—there is abundant, free on-street parking on East Warren Avenue, and on perpendicular residential streets;
- Under-utilized/unused buildings—many buildings on the Corridor and vacant, leading to a sense of neglect;
- Traffic—the Corridor is a major vehicular traffic artery, providing potential customers from outside adjacent neighborhood easy access to Corridor businesses;
- Clear architectural styles—some buildings on the Corridor are built in recognizable architectural styles (principally 1920s-30s commercial) addition to the character of the neighborhood;
- Bike lane—the city recently installed bike lanes on either side of East Warren Avenue, providing safe access for Detroiters using bicycles;
- The Tool Library—a recently-opened non-profit, this provides tools to members for a modest fee, encouraging upkeep of the residential zones bordering the Corridor;
- Street scale for auto-culture—Detroit is a city build on the automobile, so buildings are distant from one another, hindering pedestrian traffic along the Corridor, and making businesses in nearby neighborhoods competitively close;
- Retail leakage—local residents shop in nearby commercial corridors, rather than on the Corridor;
- Intact fabric and infrastructure—most buildings on the Corridor are intact (although many are unoccupied). This prevents the feeling of desolation that occurs on streets where many buildings have been demolished, and provides many sites for future businesses;
- Low-density residential areas—some parts of adjacent residential neighborhoods contain vacant lots, resulting in fewer customers for businesses in the Corridor, and sense of decay in the neighborhood;
- Lack of capital/delay in business openings—there were some reports of businesses which had trouble obtaining capital, leading to a sense of unease among other potential business owners;
- Some existing businesses—customers going to functioning businesses provide foot and vehicular traffic on the Corridor, and provide potential members of a Main Street organization;
- Safety/police response time—police response time is seen as slow, leading to concerns about personal safety.

INTANGIBLE FACTORS OF EWC

- Government distrust—the Government’s exclusion of residents in decision-making and imposition of “improvement projects” in the past have left residents with suspicion of current activities which could hamper revitalization efforts;
- Car-centric attitudes/parking expectations—Detroiters expect to be able to park near their destination; having to walk more than half a block from a parked car to a business is seen as “too far”;
- Restaurant consensus—there is a general consensus among interviewees that the Corridor needs more restaurants, implying also that they would frequent these restaurants;
- Active community members and groups—both East English Village and Morningside have strong, active neighborhood associations. In addition, an all-volunteer non-profit organization focused on a neighborhood landmark, the Alger Theater, provides a visible center for the corridor;
- Divisions between three neighborhoods—Morningside, East English Village and Cornerstone Village have distinct characters, and some friction exists between them;
- Outsider distrust—Detroit is a city of neighborhoods, and individuals from other neighborhoods as well as from other cities are viewed with distrust. This could hamper revitalization efforts;
- Potential competition between business owners—there might not be enough of a customer base to support many similar businesses;
- Racism/segregation—Detroit has a long unhappy history of segregation and racism, both by the government and by individuals, leaving current African-American residents suspicious of whites. This could hamper revitalization efforts;
- Economic support exists in the neighborhood—the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor provide a potential customer base for new businesses;
- Neighborhood diversity—the Corridor and its adjacent residential neighborhoods are somewhat diverse in terms of age, race, social-economic levels, etc;
- Strong sense of place—the Corridor is seen as a distinct place with a proud history—providing a foundation for revitalization efforts.

POTENTIAL FUTURE POSITIVE IMPACTS

- Increasing density (buildings and people)—as businesses open and grow, surrounding residential neighborhoods will become more attractive and will repopulate;
- Local high school population—the East English Village Preparatory Academy near the corner of East Warren and Cadieux provides a teenage customer base which may support appropriate businesses;
- Vacant land for parks and recreation—nearby vacant lots provide an ample supply of land for new parks and recreational facilities;
- Many city-owned buildings—the city’s streamlined process allows entrepreneurs to purchase buildings from the city fairly easily;
- Strengthening neighborhood identity—efforts by “Restorin’ East Warren”, The Alger Theater, and the neighborhood associations may lead to a stronger sense of place and belonging among residents;
- Branding: comeback—city government has developed strong branding and promotion about the City’s rejuvenation;
- Continuing outside funding—if current economic growth continues, outside funding sources will be encouraged to continue their support;
- Local job creation (living wages)—if businesses in the corridor offer adequate wages to employees it will support the community and provide customers for businesses;
- Lots of room for business startups—the many vacant building on the Corridor provide a good supply of locations for new businesses;

- Thoughtful planning—inclusive/equitable future—the city’s current planning process encourages community involvement which should provide better chance of success for projects;
- Clear need for retail—some types of retail (e.g. restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream) are absent from the corridor, providing an opportunity for entrepreneurs in the future.

POTENTIAL FUTURE NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- Gentrification/noninclusive atmosphere—if Corridor rejuvenation is successful it could lead to gentrification of adjacent residential neighborhoods. This could lead to social disquiet and handicap the commercial success;
- Demolition—the condition of some buildings on the Corridor may lead to their demolition rather than restoration;
- Real parking problem—there are no parking lots or structures on the Corridor, so successful Corridor rejuvenation beyond a certain could be handicapped by inadequate parking;
- Retail chain threat—if the Corridor becomes successful, chains could move in, displacing local entrepreneur-owned stores;
- Strategic Neighborhood Fund dries up—the SNF and other funding sources could lose outside financial support;
- Competition from other neighborhoods—residents could potentially go to Grosse Pointe and other commercial corridors to shop, instead of shopping on the Corridor.





From these four lists, we analyzed which factors would have the strongest effect on the future of East Warren-Cadieux as either a strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat posed to tactical preservation initiatives along the commercial corridor. With the final product of this brainstorm session, we developed a SWOT analysis that was used to further develop individual projects expanded upon in Part IV Response within this report.

### ■ VALUES & INTEGRITY

The SWOT analysis enabled us to characterize the current situation of the neighborhood, which informed our strategies for preservation and reactivation of the EWC corridor.

We also analyzed the built fabric of the corridor to understand more carefully the values and integrity of the buildings and blocks. The values relate to the most prominent qualities of the fabric (historical, architectural, cultural, economic); integrity is defined as the extent to which values are reflected in the fabric and ongoing functions of the EWC corridor.

Using sources such as the Burra Charter process for planning, conserving and managing places of cultural significance, the identification of values and integrity stem from a broader understanding of the site and its context based upon preliminary and secondary research and time spent on the East-Warren Cadieux commercial corridor.

Fig 3.2, Aerial view of E Warren Ave study area. Source: ArcGIS.

S

#### Strengths

- Active community members and groups
- Strong sense of place
- Existing businesses
- Economic support from neighborhood

W

#### Weaknesses

- Distrust of Government
- Racism/Segregation
- Distrust of outsiders
- Cleavage of neighborhoods
- Unused/under-used buildings
- Lack of capital
- Delay of business openings

O

#### Opportunities

- Thoughtful planning for a more equitable future
- Local job creation (living wages)
- Many city-owned buildings
- Continuing outside funding
- Increasing density, both with building stock and population

T

#### Threats

- Gentrification
- Noninclusive atmosphere
- Displacement
- Demolition
- Poor community buy-in



### Historical Value

#### Farming culture and lasting geographic orientation from ribbon farms:

The corridor developed on land that was once organized into ribbon farms, a pattern originated by French settlers. This historic land use is reflected today in the geographic layout of long, linear blocks running perpendicular to the Detroit River. The one remaining 19th century farmhouse on the eastern edge of East English Village still sits on a long narrow lot, a remnant of this system.

#### History of commercial vitality and community centered activity:

East Warren Avenue began developing in the 1920s as the commercial corridor for the newly-platted residential neighborhoods. Following the zoning patterns of that era, commercial districts were strictly separated from residential lots, and plenty of space was devoted to automobiles. East Warren Avenue reached its commercial peak in the 1950's, and despite the legacy of decline remains a local commercial hub.

Fig 3.3, The Alger Theater. Source: Friends of the Alger Theater.



### Architectural Value

#### Commercial architecture:

The corridor possesses a rich collection of commercial architectural styles including Art Deco, Arts & Crafts influence, Mid-Century Modern, Art Moderne and other typical commercial styles and typologies from the mid-to-late 20th century.

#### Mid-Century Signage:

Many buildings along the corridor include a variety of exterior signage structures and styles typical of the 1950's and reflecting popular commercial styles from the heyday of the automobile era. These colorful, now "retro" signs protrude beyond the buildings facades and roofs, contributing to the overall character of the neighborhood and commemorating a legacy of the corridor's era of peak activity.

Fig 3.4, Building condition along E Warren Ave. UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.





## Cultural Value

### Legacy of commercial activity and corresponding communal memory:

Commercial activity on the corridor provides shared memories for long-term residents.

### Automotive culture:

Detroit's automotive culture is seen in E Warren's wide streets, numerous parking spots, and abundance of auto service businesses. However, it also means that Detroiters expect to be able to park very close to their destination; more than half a block's walk is seen as "no parking close by."

### Strong sense of community:

Block clubs, neighborhood associations, and CDCs present in the communities surrounding E Warren Ave reflect residents' connection to one another and their respective neighborhoods. Furthermore, each community's internal support provides a foundation of broader support for the commercial corridor.

Fig 3.5, Vacant building along E Warren Ave. UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.



## Economic Value

### Commercial vitality, past and present:

The Corridor was a lively and prosperous commercial scene and is expected to be again in the future.

### Residential base to support current and future commercial activity along E Warren:

Adjacent residential neighborhoods provide a customer base adequate to support current and future commercial activity along E Warren Ave.

### Highly trafficked corridor:

The Corridor is a major East-West thoroughfare, providing drive by business for stores and restaurants.

Fig 3.6, Signage building along E Warren Ave. UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.

## Architectural Integrity

The architectural integrity of the commercial corridor on East Warren Avenue between Cadieux Road and Haverhill Road, can be considered to be fair. 73 of the 113 buildings (65%) are vacant. While many of those appear to be in good shape during a windshield survey, closer inspection reveals indicators of structural damage (e.g. bulging walls, water damage, missing roofs). Until a more thorough analysis is done, it is difficult to classify the overall neighborhood. The architectural styles of the neighborhood reflects its history. All are one or two stories high, most have one or two bays, although there are exceptions. The oldest buildings date from the late 1920s and display typical detailing of the period (e.g. crenelation, turrets at 16014-16, 16131, 16301, 16348). Newer buildings are less ornate and tend to be in a vernacular style, although there are several exceptions (e.g. International style at 16621). There are multiple parking lots.

Fig 3.7, Building conditions along E Warren Ave. UPenn HSPV, Sept 2019.



## Historical Integrity

Due to Detroit's seismic demographic changes in the 1960s and 1970s, few if any residents or descendants of residents remain from those who built the neighborhood in the 1930 and 1940s. "Old" residents in neighborhood arrived during that demographic shift, and consequently inherited the neighborhood fully built. Due to our limited data collection, the average longevity in the neighborhood is uncertain.

Oral history gathered from current residents during creative-placemaking activities can be used to fill in these historical gaps and document a more recent shared cultural history.

## Socio-economic Integrity

The Corridor has maintained its place as the commercial hub of the neighborhood, albeit in a weakened state, since the 1920s.

Fig 3.8, View of E Warren Ave at the corner of Outer Dr, year unknown. Source: Detroit Historical Society.





4

## RESPONSE



■ PRESERVATION APPROACH

In response to the historical narrative of East-Warren Cadieux’s storied history followed by a legacy of vacancy, tactical preservation is well-suited to advancing revitalization of the commercial corridor that serves both neighborhoods. In particular, tactical preservation builds on the existing architectural and urban fabric that remains, while injecting new uses based on incremental investments – tuned to the relatively weak market demand that exists at the moment and meant to build momentum to gradually reverse the profound disinvestment and neglect that became a common theme for Detroit neighborhoods. Tactical Preservation itself can employ an array of strategies and uses implemented through incremental changes to the built landscape, acknowledging the values of the place and its buildings and directly engaging community involvement in the process. The end goal of tactical preservation seeks to provide a framework – short-term activation and medium-term feasibility – for long-term occupancy of vacant sites.

The tactical preservation methodology was developed into 2-month, 2-year, and 10-year plans to help hone in incremental work that would need to fully realize a building’s rehabilitation and reactivation. This time-frame for reactivation was granted leeway dependent upon the unique characteristics and conditions of individual sites (for example, using 2-month, 1-year, 5-year instead).

We selected four sites along the corridor, each of which involve a monumental undertaking in terms of its physical integrity and/or long-term activation plans, which will be achieved through the tactical preservation methods put forth that are unique to each case study. The array of sites convey various building types which play in part to the larger narrative of East Warren Avenue’s development as a major commercial corridor during the mid- to late-20th century. The sites vary in condition, scale, and age in order to provide a broader scope and narrative of how tactical preservation can be used to help combat problems of high vacancy within our urban settings.

GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR SITE SELECTION

As part of our tactical preservation response for the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the study area, it in turn informed our decision of site selections to develop individual case studies. As part of the criterion for site selection, we evaluated several distinct features we believed would aid us in using tactical preservation along the E Warren corridor:

- Historical significance
- Vacancy
- Cooperative owners (open to flexibility in the adaptation of their sites)
- Potential for incremental restoration and reuse, benefits of clustering projects
- Spanning both neighborhoods (EEV/Morningside)
- Mix of typical and distinguished buildings within context of corridor

While this criterion was used for site selection, we furthered our response by devising goals for each site selection to meet in order to develop a cohesive narrative of tactical preservation along E Warren Ave as a means of revitalization.

Goals and implementation strategies:

- 1

**Use tactical preservation to encourage equitable and inclusive development along E Warren Ave.**

**Strategy:** Base project choices and subsequent proposals on documentary research, field data collection, and community input.
- 2

**Reactivate vacant commercial spaces to initiate catalytic growth along the corridor.**

**Strategy:** Base tactical preservation on the architectural and cultural significance of EWC; conduct tactical preservation within a focused, study area; develop preservation strategies for both short- and long-term.
- 3

**Rehabilitate space in a way that is informed by and responds to current commercial activity.**

**Strategy:** Base site selection and methods of preservation on data and narrative information about the existing businesses; find a middle ground between walkability and Detroit’s auto culture.
- 4

**Activate space in a way that reflects the cultural identities and values of East English Village and Morningside.**

**Strategy:** Choose buildings that fall within both Morningside and East English Village to ensure both communities are involved; actively communicate with community members to learn how to best meet their interests; ensure that project proposals reflect community feedback.





■ TACTICAL PRESERVATION CASE STUDIES



16319-21-23 E Warren Ave.



16131 E Warren Ave.



16621 E Warren Ave



16014-16 E Warren Ave

# 16319-21-23 E Warren Ave

Gabriel Harper, MSHP '20

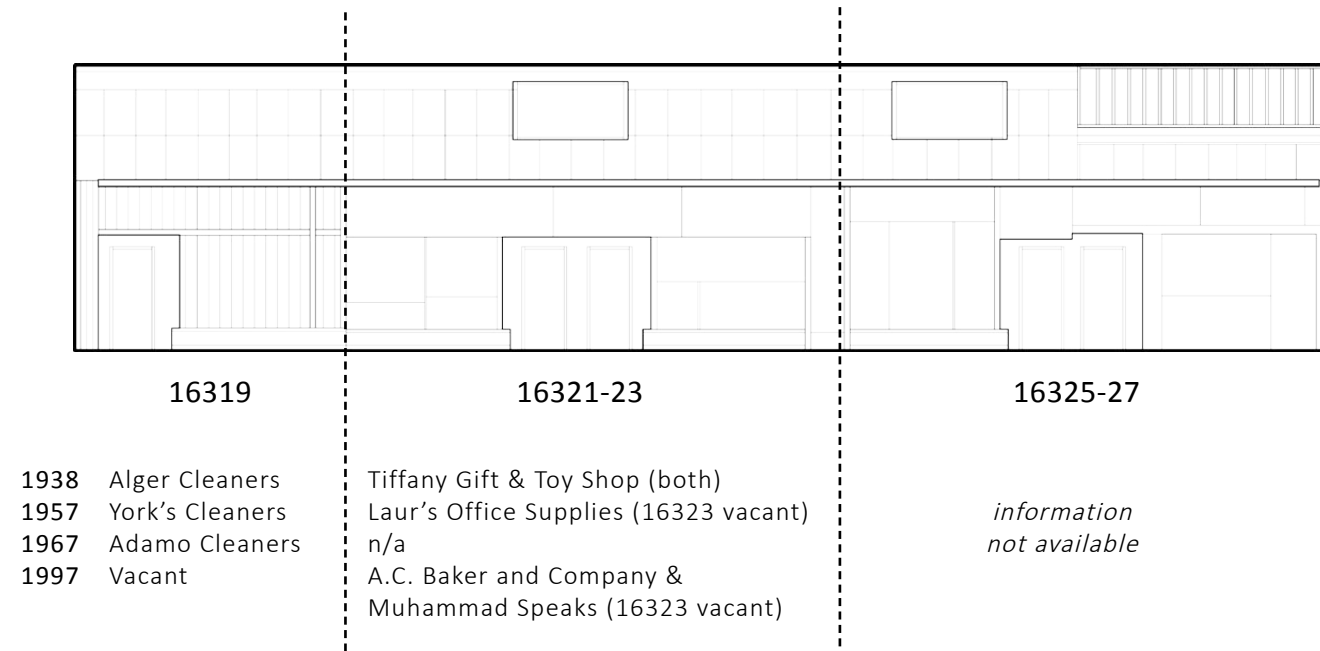
## BUILDING CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

The structure located at 16319-16321-16323 E Warren Ave is far from extraordinary. In fact, it stands as an example of one of the most typical building types and in one of the most typical building styles as those that can be found along the corridor. However, by analyzing a structure which exemplifies the most typical building stock, and developing an incremental plan for its reactivation, a deeper understanding of the corridor's developmental history can be reached, and remedies to the existing issues along the corridor can be more widely distributed.

This is not to say that the building located at 16319-21-23 does not separate itself from others along the corridor, and that it should not play a unique role in the future revival of E Warren Ave. It certainly does

and should. However, by engaging with the most typical of building stock and proving that reactivation is possible within that building stock, the door opens to positive community change that has the potential to be executed throughout the corridor, and within a quicker time frame. It then becomes paramount that the programming which is incorporated within structures such as 16319-21-23 be both economically and socially sustainable.





### Building Tenants Timeline

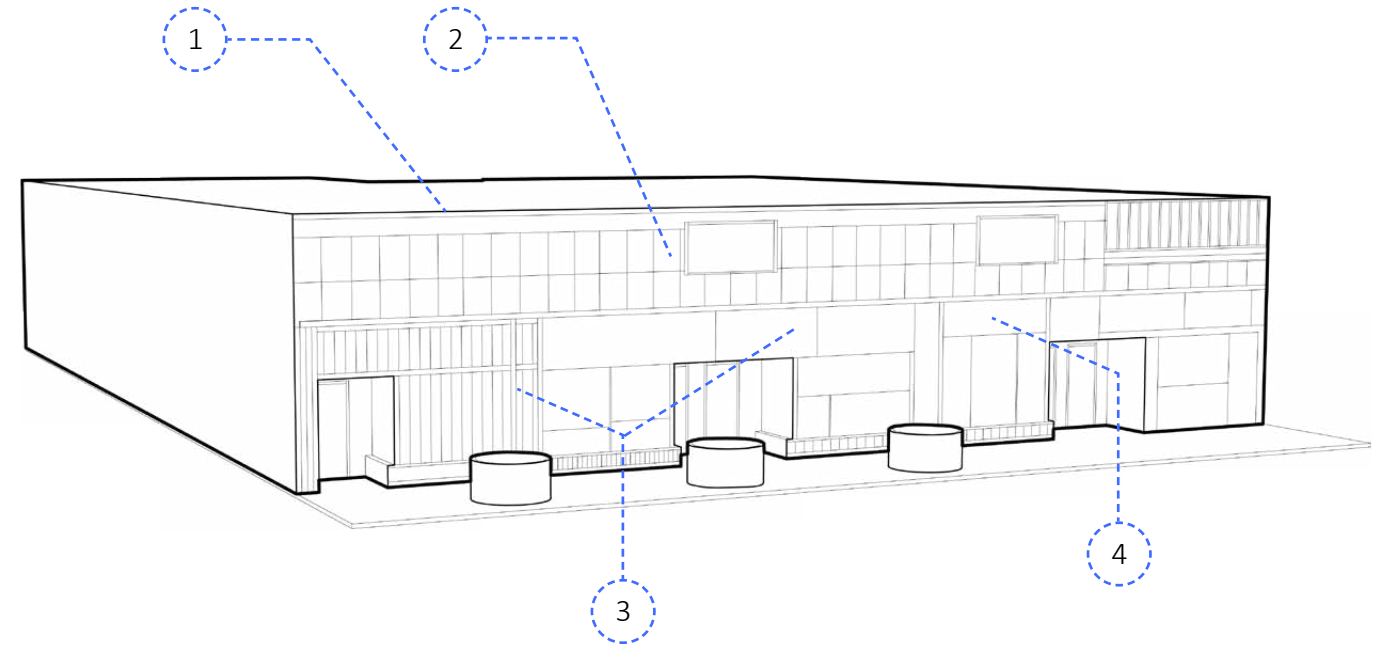
Business names acquired through Polk's Detroit City Directories, accessed at the Detroit Public Library October 2019.

### HISTORY OF OCCUPANCY

The first mention of businesses occupying 16319-21-23 E Warren Ave within the Detroit Polk Guides is in 1938. The first bay (16319) served as a cleaners into the 1960s. Although it is unclear what type of business occupied the first bay in the 1970s and 1980s, the space was recorded as being vacant by 1997. In 1938, the second and third bays (16321-16323) hosted Tiffany's Toy Shop. However, by 1957, the third bay (16323) was listed as being vacant. The second bay (16321) hosted Laure's Office Supplies in 1957 and A.C. Baker and Co. / Muhammad Speaks by 1997. Today all five bays of the structure are vacant, the remaining fourth and fifth bays not mentioned in the archival information have been damaged by fire, limiting the scope of this proposal to the first three bays. These businesses largely reflect the overall commercial narrative of the corridor, providing very basic services to a wide range of both working class and professional residents.

### SITE PROPOSAL

The basis for the three proposals made in this section of the report are focused on providing both economic and ecological sustainability for the E. Warren community. As it is essential that the community be at the head of all design processes which affect the built environment in which they live, this proposal relied heavily on community input received during our team's site visits to Detroit. The early efforts of this proposal are designed to re-engage the community with the structure, reclaiming the history that the building offers which was seemingly taken away and hidden from them through decades of economic decline along the corridor. The long-term effort of this proposal is designed to provide the community with opportunities to engage in long term environmentally and economically sustainable efforts, centered on urban agriculture, and the nurturing of new businesses within the structure.



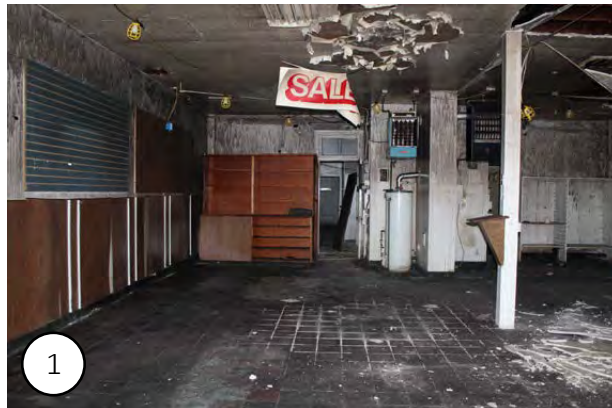
## DESIGN CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS

The 16319 building exemplifies many of the design characteristics defined by the Art Moderne, including smooth wall surfaces, horizontal grooves and lines in both the walls and balustrade, a flat roof with small coping, and an asymmetrical facade. This architectural movement paralleled the early expansion of cities to the suburbs, and was largely centered on a growing attitude within the American public of personal independence from the dense urban landscapes of the past. It was believed that the future lay beyond the bounds of older cities, and the only way to get there was by car. Commercial buildings were largely designed to be "streamlined," emphasizing the transportation revival occurring in cities like Detroit in the 1930s. In a sense, the 16319 building is a symbolic example of many in Detroit embracing their new-found independence with the relatively wide-spread availability of the automobile, and the subsequent embracing of the early modernist styles which, at the time, seemed to reflect that independence.

Currently, the Art Moderne facade of the 16319 building is entombed in plywood and paint. Upon investigating what lay beneath the plywood layers during a field visit this past October, it was discovered that what was most likely the original green enamel paneling was still there. This "hidden facade" will play a major role in the proposals discussed later in this section of the report. The structure recently had its roof replaced, protecting it from potential water damage, and the interior spaces appeared to be in relatively good shape. Upon brief investigation of the interiors of the three bays, there were no signs of structural damage. The majority of damage amounted to cosmetic repairs, certainly giving this structure a leg up in terms of its potential for future use.

- [1] Flat roof, with small ledge (coping) at roof line.
- [2] Smooth wall surface.
- [3] Asymmetrical facade.
- [4] Horizontal emphasis through balustrade/detail elements.

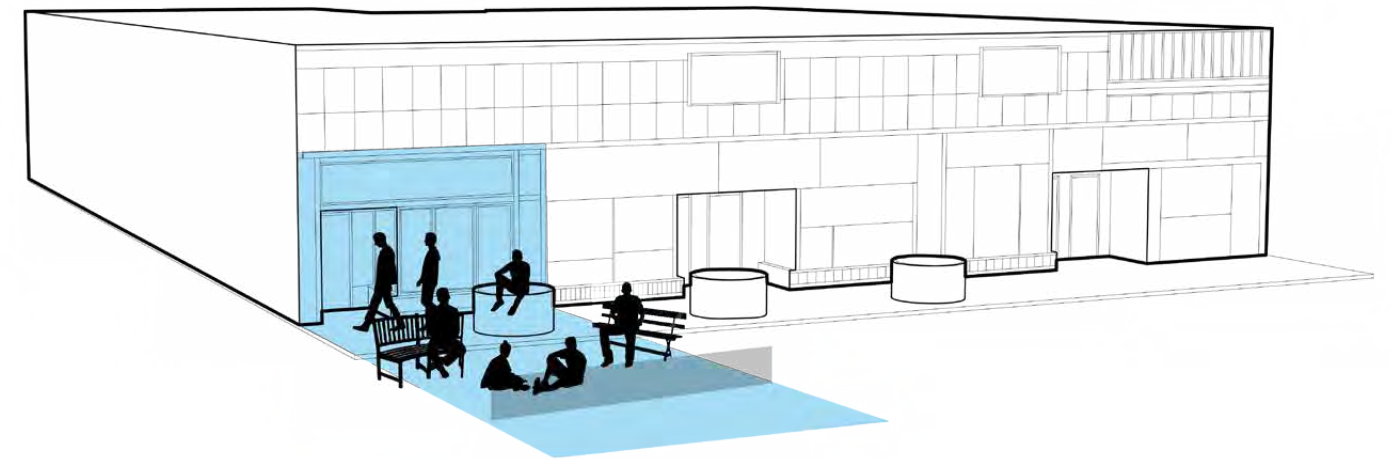
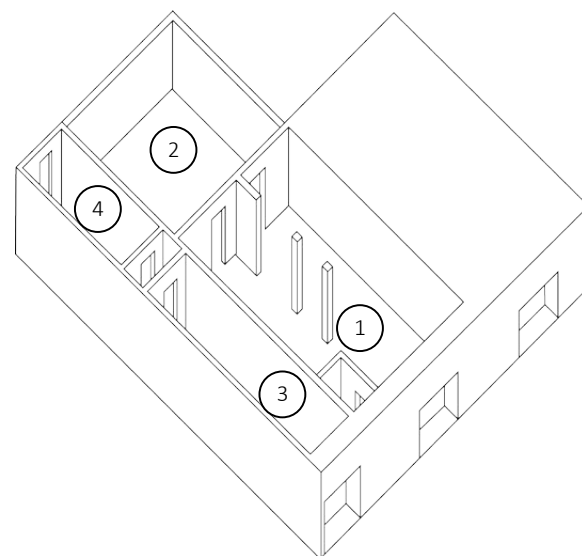




## PRESERVATION PLAN

A proposal for a sustainable future through tactical preservation, with focus on community and environmental resiliency and sustainability: By placing the needs of the community at the head of the design process with regard to the reactivation of vacant structures, the result of said process has a far better chance at success through long-term, sustainable use within the community. Along with 16319-16321-16323 becoming a sustainable economic asset for the E. Warren community, it is the hope of this proposal that it can also serve as a tool for the teaching of environmentally sustainable practices such as engaging in small-scale agriculture.

Combined, these elements will provide fresh food options within the corridor, begin to reconnect the corridor with their land with the 16319-21-23 building serving as a catalyst for this reconnection, as well as restore a sense of ownership through urban agriculture and reclaiming the corridor's commercial history through facade restoration and the reactivation of the interior spaces of 16319-21-23.



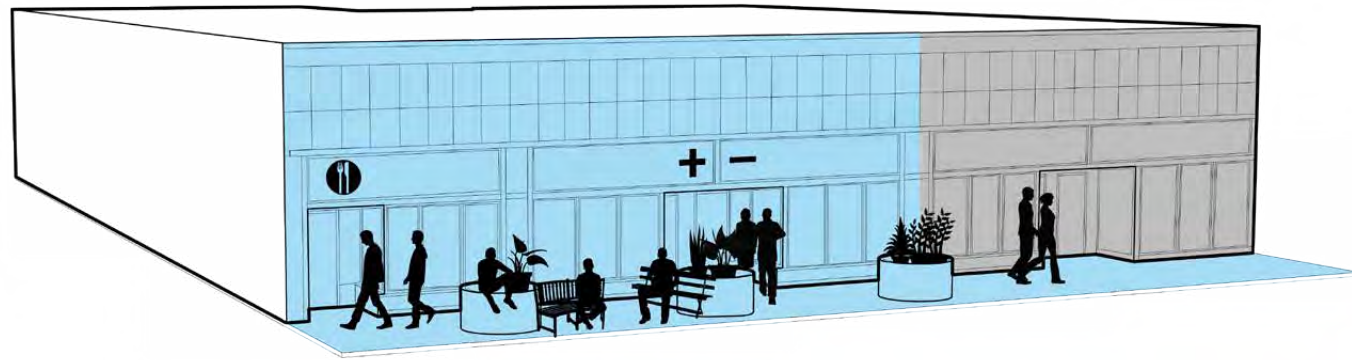
## 2-MONTH PLAN SOWING SEEDS OF SUSTAINABILITY

The 2-month proposal for the reactivation of the 16319 building includes utilizing the facade and sidewalk space in front of the structure to draw attention from the community. This can be accomplished through the stripping of the layers of plywood and paint from the first bay, exposing what is believed to be original historic fabric to the public. It is recommended that this be cleaned and repaired as needed. The act of stripping these exterior layers from the facade also serves as a symbolic gesture, granting access to the public to a portion of the corridor's history which had previously been hidden from them.

In addition, it is recommended that the sidewalk space in front the first bay (16319) be used for regular "Parking Day" events. Officially, "Parking Day" events are held every September, but the concept of utilizing sidewalk space as a make-shift and temporary sitting area could be implemented several times a month. This includes building movable furniture and art installation pieces from everyday objects (perhaps

using the large concrete planters in front of the building as temporary tables by placing a piece of wood over them for example), and supplementing the space with potted plants. Furthermore, the addition of live music or coffee could help to draw people to the site. This option would require a minimal amount of financial investment, and has the potential to provide a temporary space for community gathering.

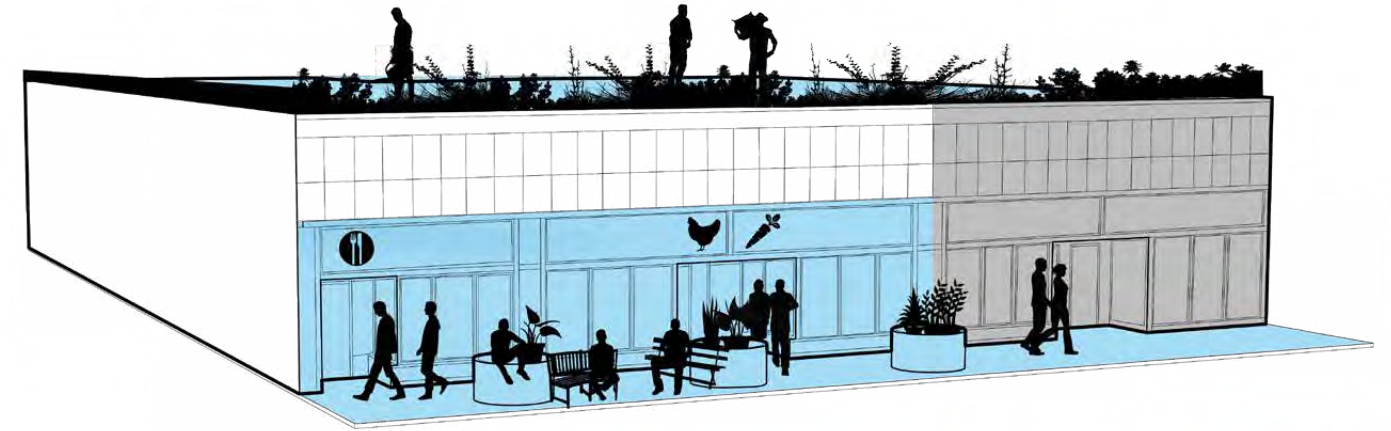




## 5-YEAR PLAN CARING FOR SPROUTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Ultimately the goal for this phase of the proposal is to expand on previous efforts to reconnect the community with the history of the structure and to reintroduce the public to the interior of the building. It is recommended that the remaining plywood and paint layers be removed from the facade of the other four bays. Again, cleaning and repair efforts to the facade should be completed as needed. The “Parking Day” events should likewise be expanded to include the sidewalk space in front of the remaining bays.

At this point in the proposal it is recommended that utilities be restored to the first bay, allowing for the space to be rented and occupied by a tenant at the completion of the 5-year time frame. Similarly, it is also recommended that the front section of the second and third bays be cleaned and utilized as a “flex space”. As the term would suggest, the bays could be used for a range of activities, including a place for community meetings or for small concerts, to name a few possibilities. This would require the renting of at least one porta-potty for those using the space; a temporary but necessary measure until working plumbing could be restored to the bays.



## 10-YEAR PROPOSAL A SUSTAINABLE HARVEST

The goal for this final phase of the proposal is to provide the E. Warren community with opportunities to engage in urban agriculture and to interact with or perhaps operate new businesses at the site fulfilling the original goal of utilizing extant historic fabric for both the economic and ecological, long-term benefit of the community. It is recommended that by the ten-year mark, utilities be restored to the second and third bays, allowing for a tenant to occupy them.

Additionally, it is recommended that the existing roof be retrofitted to accommodate roof-top gardening efforts. This has the potential to include the production of fresh produce for the community as well as opportunities for community members to learn techniques related to growing produce within the smaller available footprints of their own homes. The large planters in front of the building could be

used as “demonstration plots” for showcasing the types of vegetables being grown at the site. Given the possibility that the rear additions of the structure are to be torn down, this additional space could be used for the installation of permeable pavement for parking, or perhaps overflow space for gardening efforts.

It is important to note that this type of roof-top operation would require the installation of a utility elevator to transport people and goods between the roof and the ground level. However, the long-term benefits of reconnecting people with their land and fostering a sense of ownership brought on by engaging in urban agriculture, would far outweigh the initial financial investment.





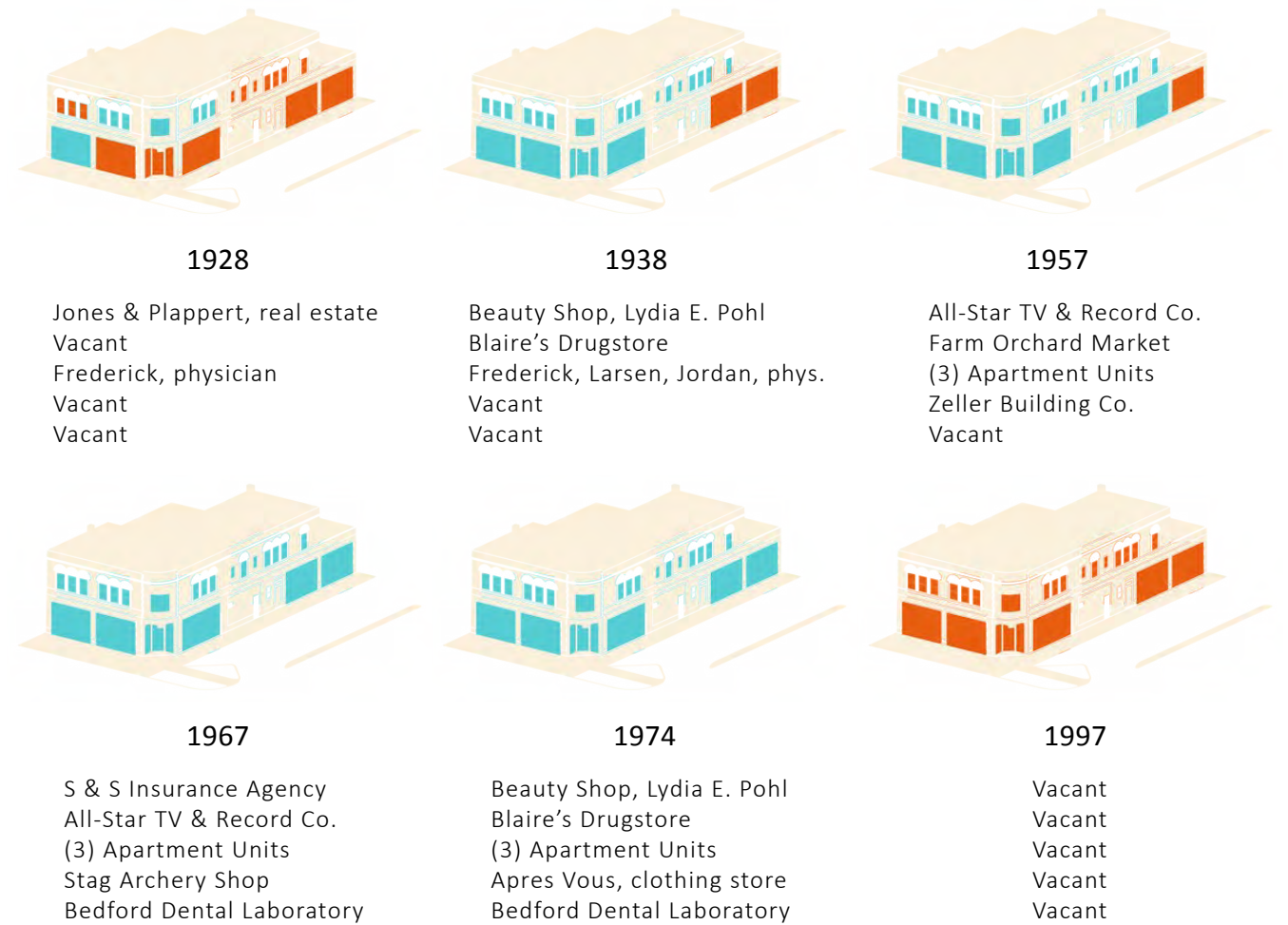
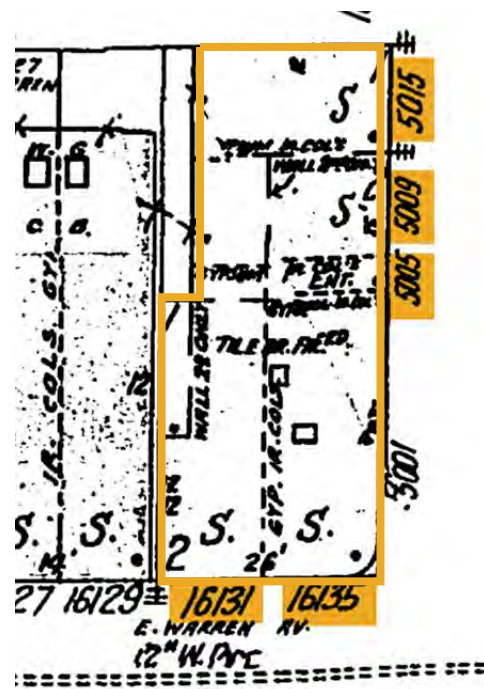
## 16131 E Warren Ave

Maggie Sollmann, MSHP '20

### BUILDING CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

It is important to recognize the parameters set in place by not only blight, but also those imposed on the existing physical environment of East Warren-Cadieux by its storied vacancy. The surviving building stock of EWC is relatively sound. Though some buildings are clearly nearing the end of their lifetimes without immediate intervention, EWC presents a wealth of opportunity with the fabric it has managed to hold onto.

While there is no documentation in terms of historical photographs, first-hand accounts and research into its functionality through city directories and newspaper ads reveal that 16131 E Warren remained relatively at full capacity throughout the first two-thirds of its life. By the end of the 20th century, 16131 and its four storefronts and three apartment units were entirely vacant; and within several years, the property was foreclosed.

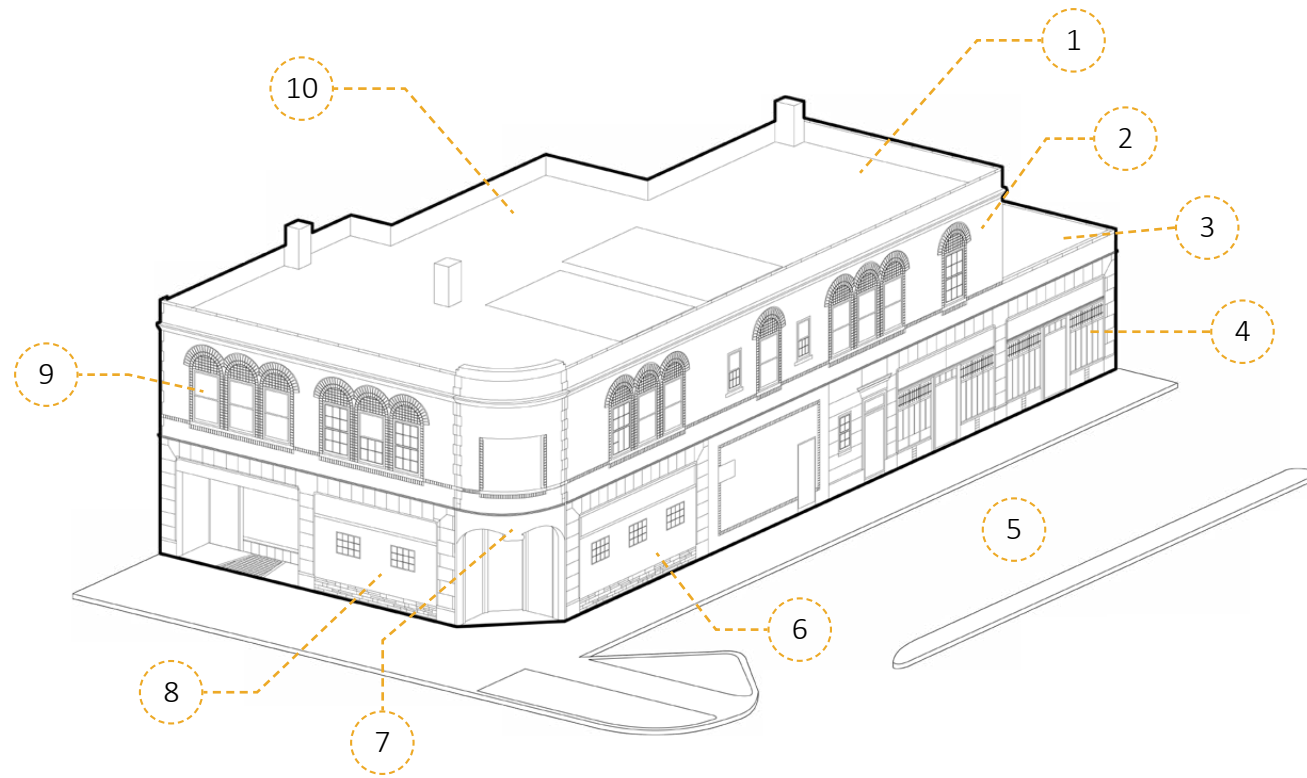


### HISTORY OF OCCUPANCY

Constructed in 1927, 16131 E Warren played host to a variety un-extraordinary functions—beauty shop, drug store, record shop, dental lab—programs that operated as an anchor to the utilitarian development of E Warren Ave. One of the only notable changes in use is the transformation of its second level, originally accommodating office space for medical professions, finding itself by mid-century reused as apartment units. Otherwise, this building of moderate architectural integrity humbly fared whatever activity or vacancy its multi-storefront contrived during its (inferred) seven-decade use.

16131's commercial evolution reflects that of the E Warren corridor, the building sustaining the ebb and flow of commercial use and disuse, much in the same with corridor at large. And while its disuse became its anthem in recent decades, much in the same with the corridor at large, the existing state of 16131 gives way for opportunity to explore an untapped narrative in how un-extraordinary histories of use and neglect can pave way for a building's opportunity to regain its footing—figuratively and literally.





## EXISTING CONDITIONS

It is unknown at what point 16131 crossed the line of restorable and entered the realm of only salvageable. The building has been fully compromised by exposure to the outside elements for an undetermined amount of time. Without immediate action, 16131 is at risk of tipping the scale from salvageable to need of demolition by necessity.

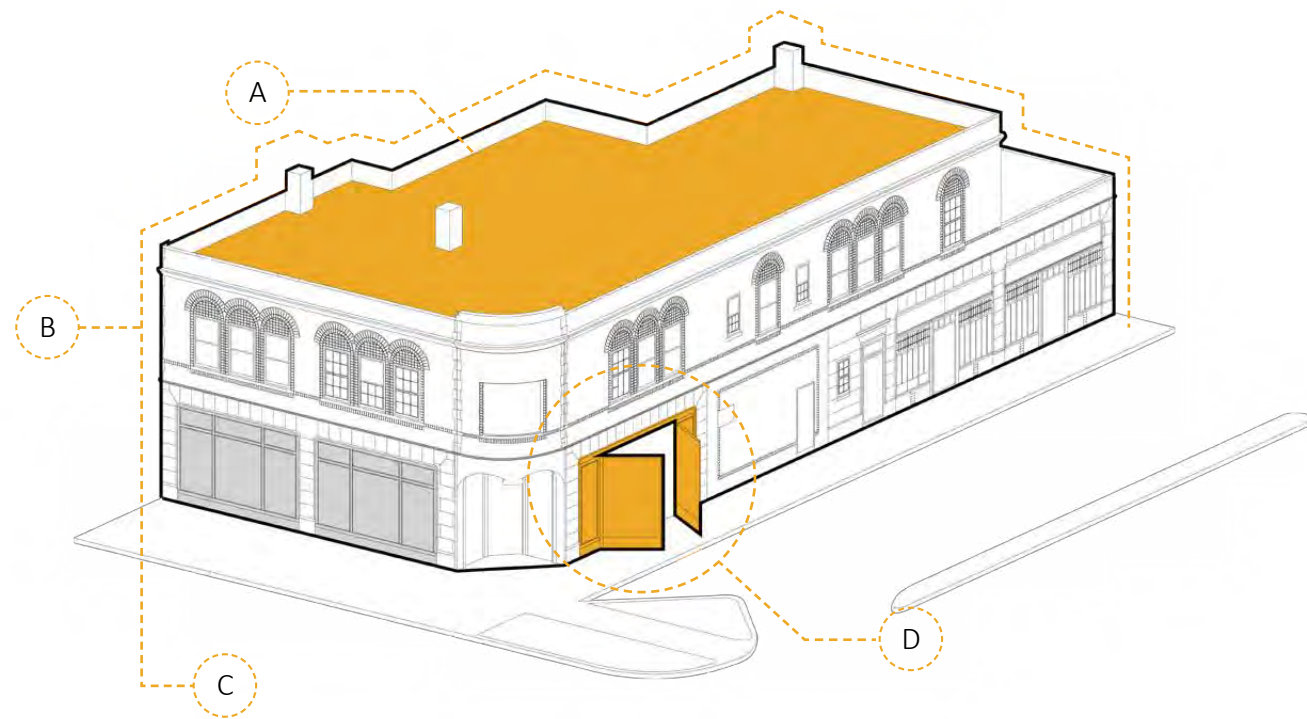
The physical transformation from life to blight is not a unique narrative for 16131 E Warren. It is a common theme found not only along E Warren

Ave, or throughout Detroit proper, but within every distressed urban community whose historic resources are cut short because of a lack of urgency on the city's behalf to save narratives created by un-extraordinary histories. Buildings like 16131 rely upon the agency of individuals who hold a vision, and communities that have a stake in seeing through the transformation of their historic assets from blight to life. The existing conditions of 16131 thus play an active role in the first incremental steps of its activation.

- [1] Interior exposed to elements; rotting/collapsed wood roof; steel framing at risk of becoming compromised.
- [2] Missing mortar and stepped cracks in masonry throughout.
- [3] Collapsed roof on back one-story portion of building.
- [4] Storefronts boarded up.
- [5] Existing paved parking.
- [6] Prolonged standing water in basement from leaking pipe(s).
- [7] 1927 date-stone detached from building, summer 2019.
- [8] Storefronts infilled with CMU and glass block masonry.
- [9] Original wood windows deteriorating.
- [10] Compromised roof.





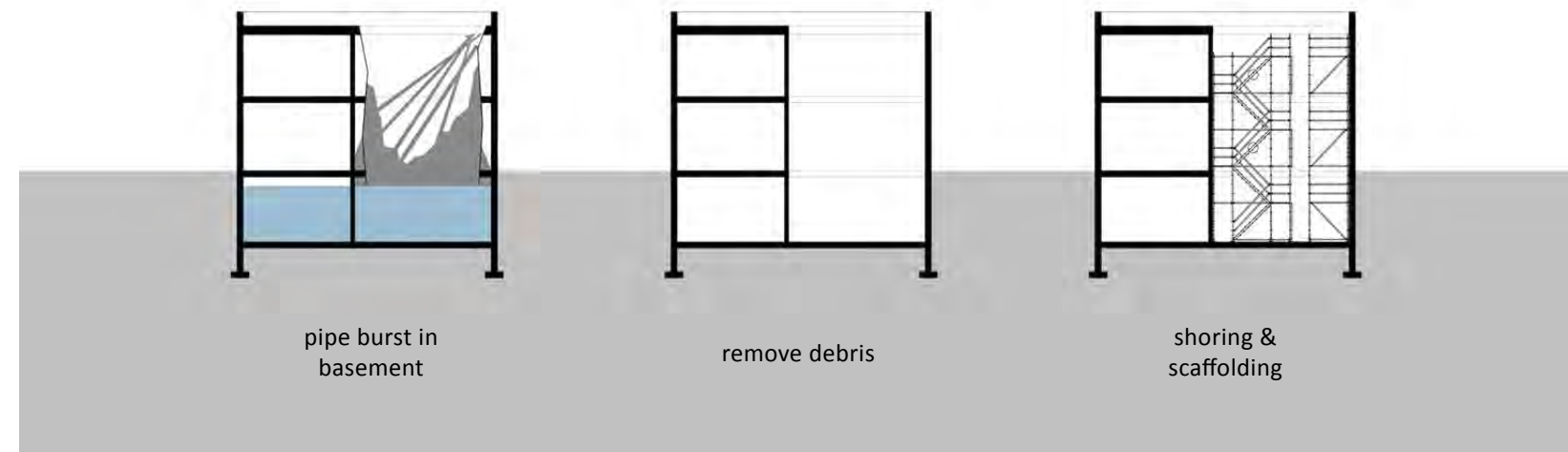
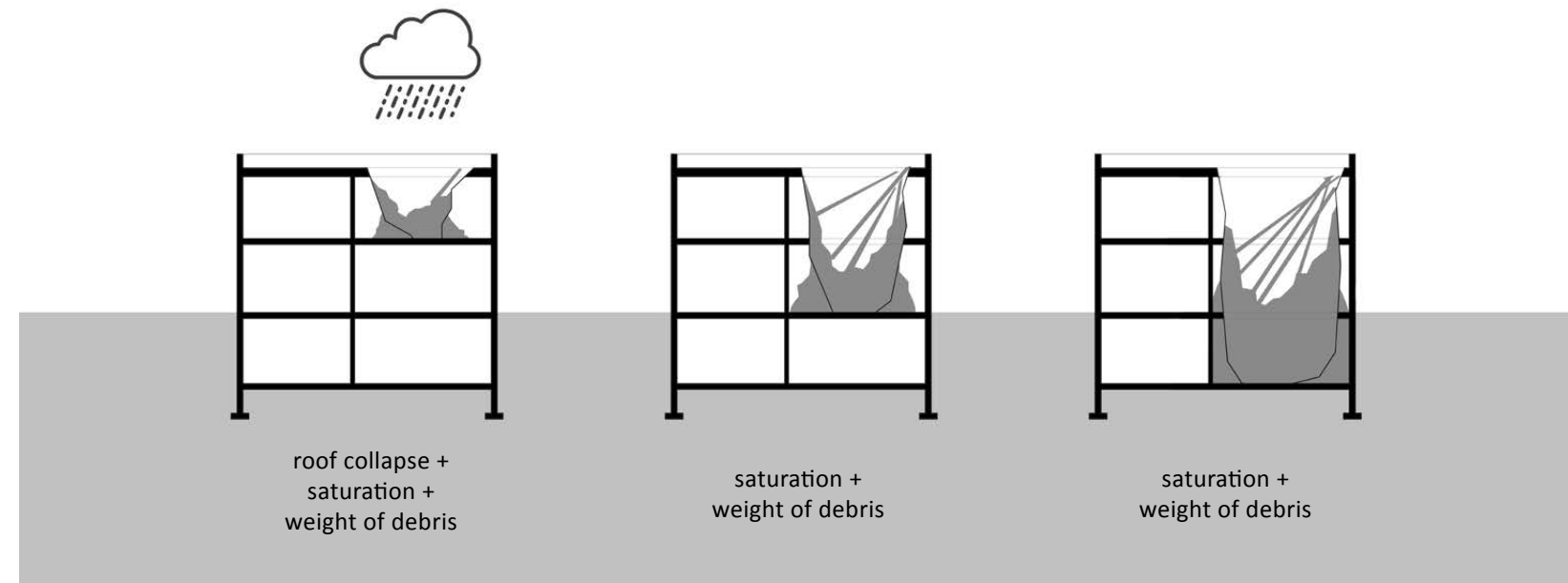


## 6-MONTH PLAN FIELD ASSESSMENT AND WEATHER-PROOFING

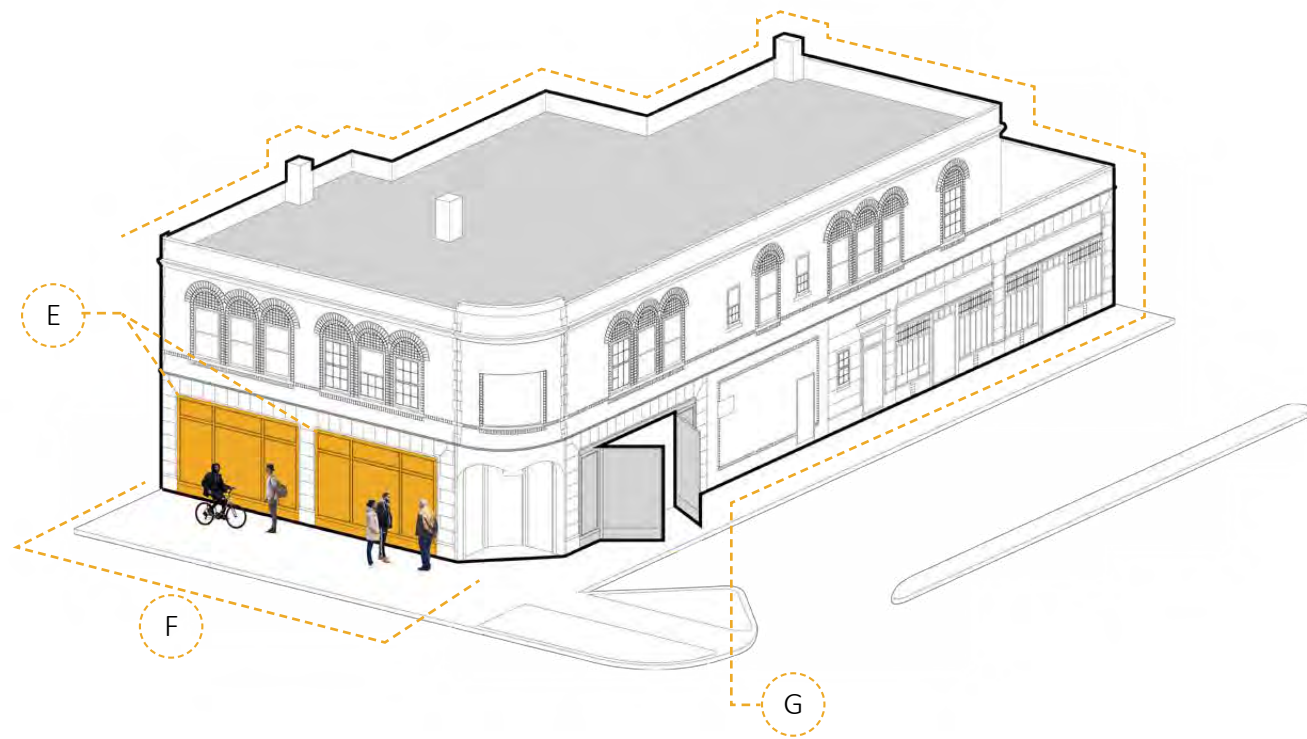
A monumental first step to undergo the rehabilitation of 16131 E Warren is to first focus efforts on installing a new roof to help mitigate the rate of deterioration the building is currently undergoing with its fully compromised skin and interior. It is recommended that the southern most storefront on the east facade should be replaced with operable doors. Due to the extensive demolition the interior will experience, a large enough opening should be provided in order to easily extract debris from the interior as the building undergoes its phased rehab.

While every building on this block of E Warren is currently sitting vacant, the first phase of rehabilitation gives ample opportunity to activate the sidewalk and surrounding area of 16131.

- [A] Install new roof.
- [B] Conduct conditions assessment on interior and exterior.
- [C] Remove major debris; shoring and scaffolding on interior.
- [D] Remove infill; install operable storefront to be used for removing interior debris.







## 6-MONTH PLAN ACTIVATE SIDEWALK

From the exterior, 16131 looks no worse for wear. Aside from the infilled storefronts and boarded up windows, the building looks much the same as every other vacant property along EWC—an empty building, but a building with potential nonetheless. While every building along EWC may not be in as dire of condition as 16131, it can be assumed 16131’s conditions can be found elsewhere. The trouble, however, lies in the fact that its current state of disrepair remains unseen by the surrounding community. This plays to a larger narrative of frustration felt by the residents of Morningside and East English Village—over why there is anger felt towards the slow drip of development that seemingly is always talked of but never experienced.

The public is not informed—verbally, but specifically visibly—of how dire of a state many of these buildings are in. Thus, as a proposed 2-month incremental

plan for 16131 E Warren, this state of frustration, confusion, and anger, can partially be addressed (not solved) by opening the interior to the streets.

By removing the infill on the storefronts along E Warren, and replacing glass block masonry and cinder blocks with transparent contemporary storefronts that expose the interior, 16131 can easily convey to the community why projects such as this type take time, take patience. This allows for an immediate small change to activate the sidewalk directly in front of the building, with pedestrians taking the time, even if just for a few seconds, to peer in, ponder, and move on. This acts as a stepping-stone for inclusive participation from the community in its change.

[E] Remove infill; install contemporary/temporary glass storefront.

[F] Activate sidewalk on E Warren Ave.

[G] Begin interior demolition.

E Warren Ave elevation in its existing condition, 2019.



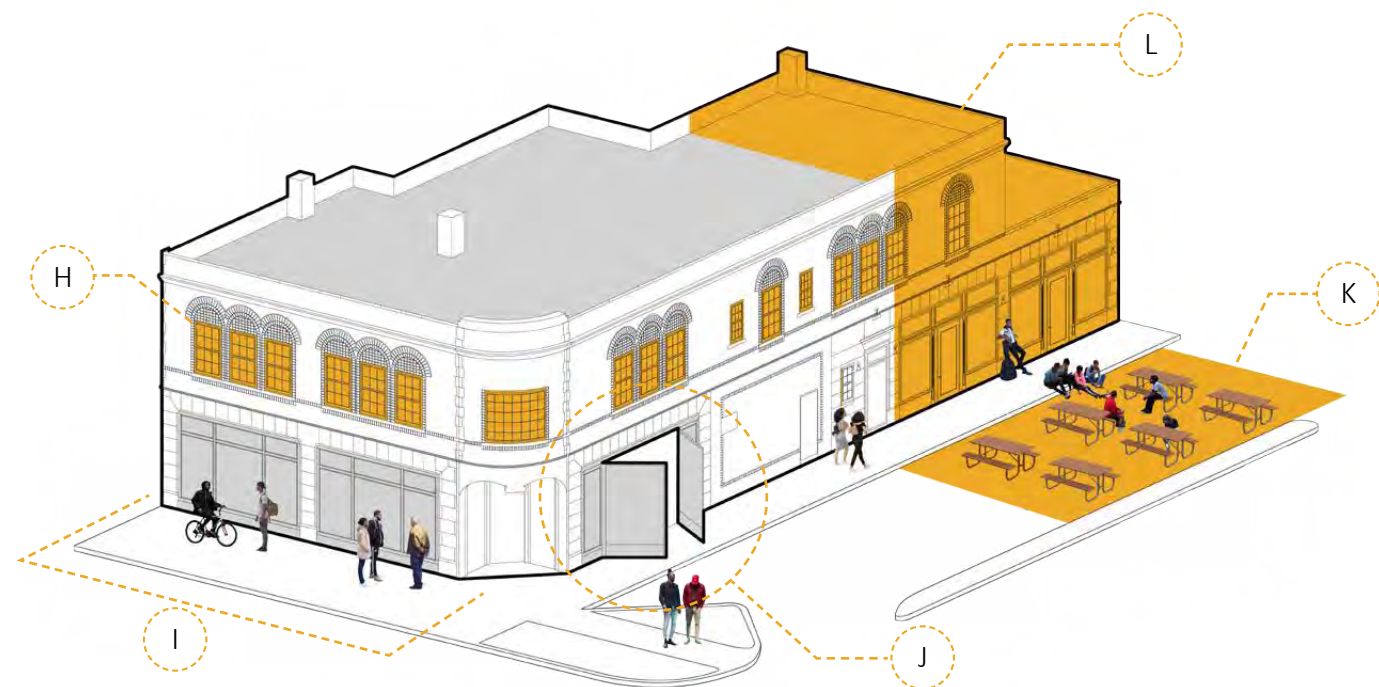
E Warren Ave elevation proposed modification in line with 6-month plan to activate the sidewalk in front of the building.



E Warren Ave elevation proposed modification with security gates placed on interior as per the Detroit Main Street Overlay guidelines.







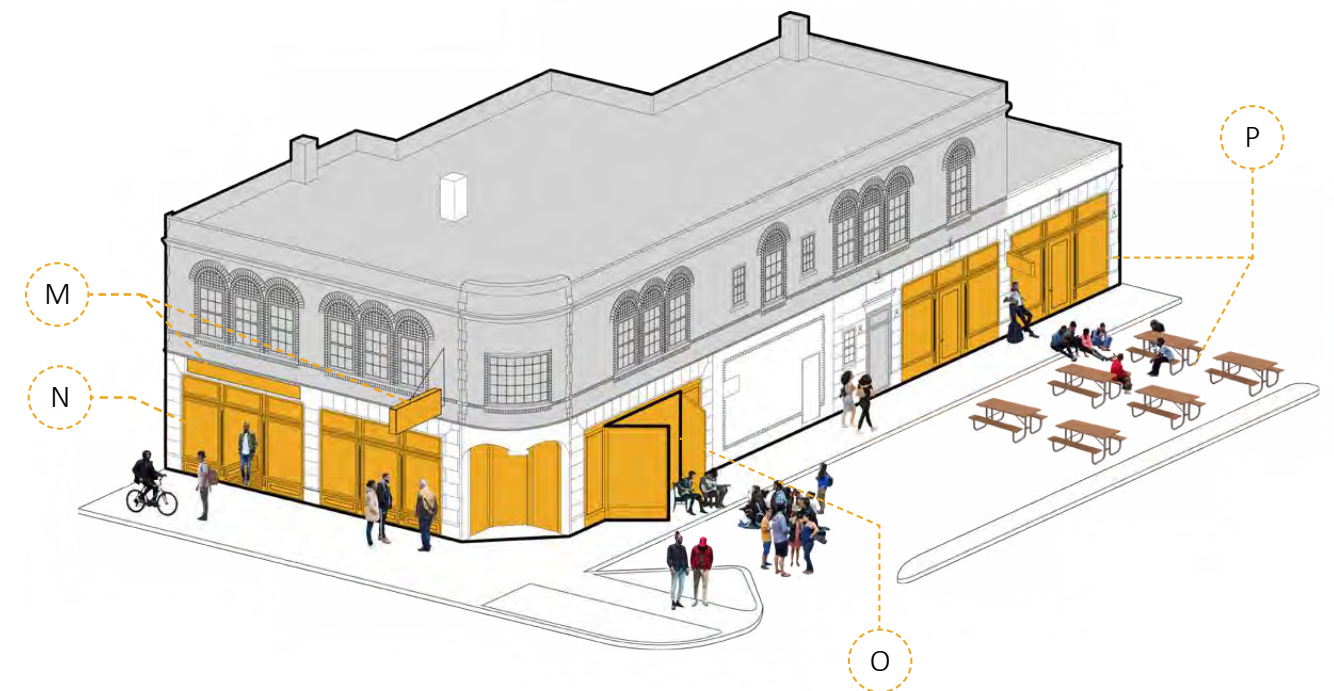
## 2-YEAR PLAN INTRODUCE NEW PROGRAMMATIC USE

As interior demolition continues, a proposed second incremental move would be to stabilize and rehabilitate the back end of the building in order to bring programmatic use to the space.

A proposed function would be to develop a community food hall in which residents can contribute family or favorite recipes to be served. This idea developed out of Detroit's tradition of food stands that pop up along empty lots found along major trafficked corridors. Since the back storefront's roof has already collapsed, preserving this moment and keeping it open air not only memorializes the history of neglect this building has endured, but

also plays homage to the tradition of the food stand culture in Detroit existing within an outdoor space. The community-provided recipes for the proposed function also gives community members stake in the building's rehabilitation and success. The parking lot shall also be activated by providing seating for the community food hall and develop a public space along the corridor.

- [H] Restore original wood windows (replace where necessary).
- [I] Maintain storefronts on E Warren Ave.
- [J] Maintain use of operable storefront to begin front end rehabilitation.
- [K] Activate parking lot as flex-public space.
- [L] Stabilize back end of building; remove infill and install new storefronts and develop new programmatic use in space.



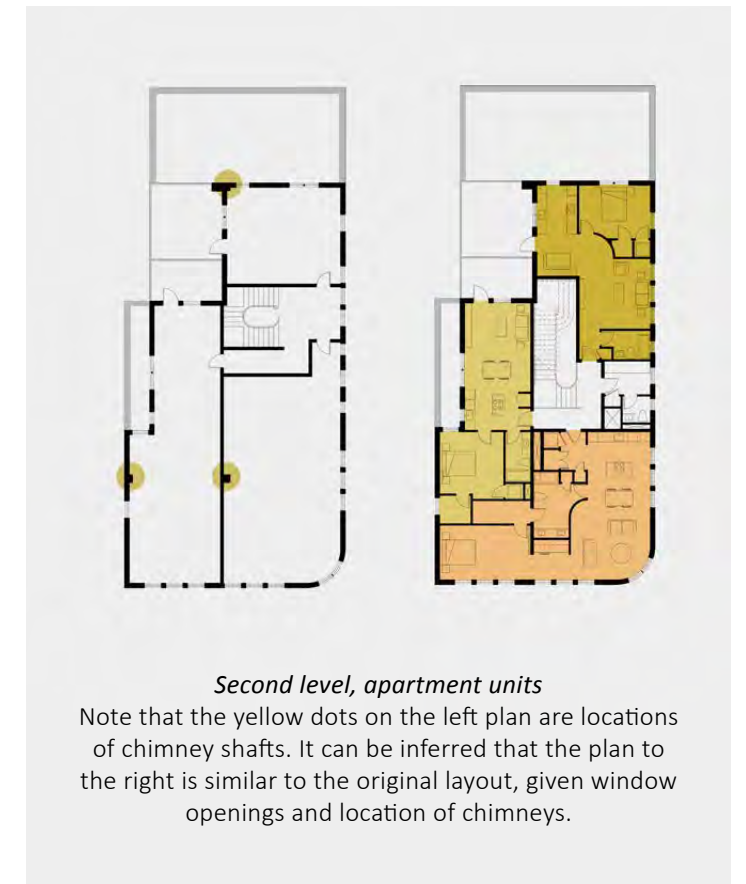
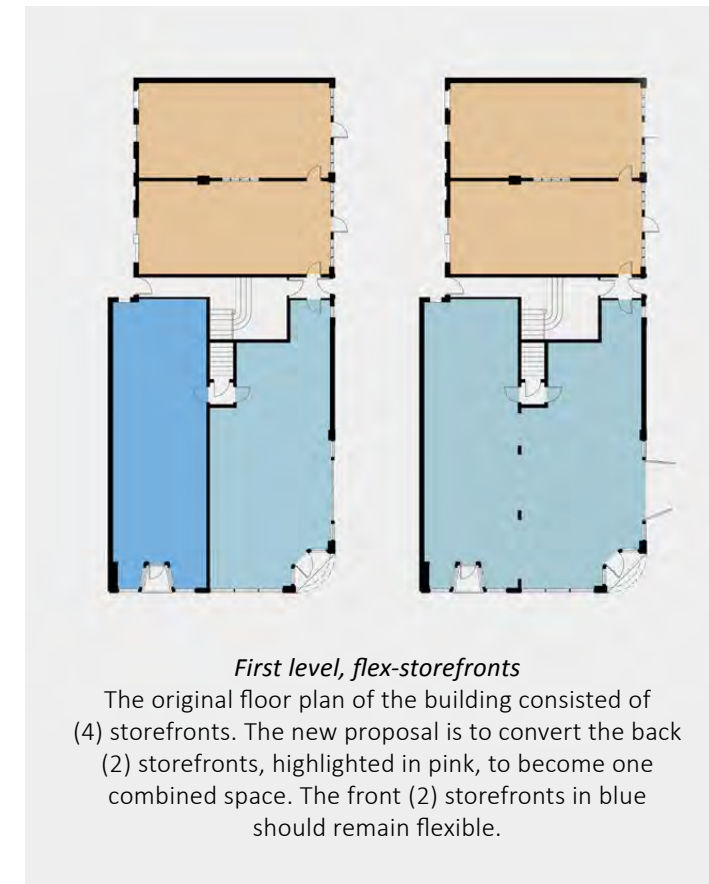
## 5-YEAR PLAN ACTIVATE 1ST LEVEL STOREFRONTS

Within five years, 16131 has undergone an extensive and full rehabilitation of its fabric. While the back two storefronts of the building still play host to a permanent neighborhood food hall, the first floor plan remains relatively flexible in order to commemorate the ebb and flow of activity and vacancy the building saw in its prior lifetime. If one fiscal year calls for two active storefronts, there are two storefronts. If another year calls for a grander space with an open floor plan, the building has the ability to adapt.

A proposed first function to be introduced to the space, however, should be something that attracts both community and surrounding neighborhoods to participate in. Thus, an after-school creative space for musical programming is suggested. Noise generated would carry-on the tradition of sidewalk goers peering in as they did several years prior when the same blocked in storefront finally were opened up.

- [M] Install new signage.
- [N] Replication historic storefronts for flex-space at front end of building.
- [O] Maintain operable storefront to become port between interior and exterior space to memorialize the building's drastic rehabilitation.
- [P] Develop permanent food hall and maintain exterior flex-space.





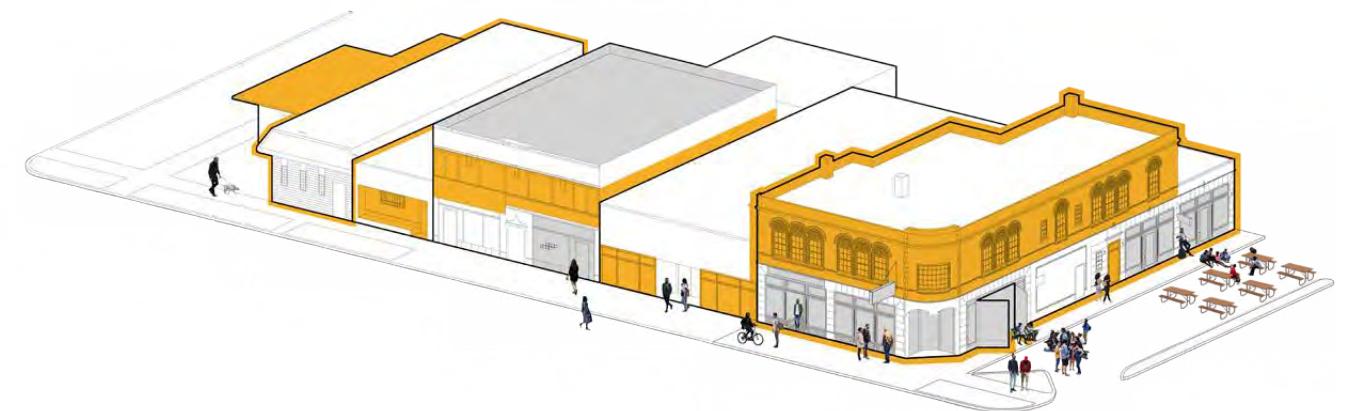
## 5-YEAR PLAN ACTIVATE 2ND LEVEL APARTMENT UNITS

The second part of this plan is to activate the second level and reinstate the original (inferred) floor plan of three offices converted to apartment units. Providing apartment units in 16131 will fill a currently vacancy of what types of properties are available to rent, rather than own, and most rental properties in the East Warren-Cadieux area are houses which requires extra upkeep for the renter, and can be burdensome for those seeking to live on their own.

Note: the second level apartment unit layout is a drawing provided by the current building owner.

- [Q] Create (3) rental apartment units on the 2nd level.  
[R] Complete rehabilitation of building.

## 10-YEAR PLAN CATALYTIC AFFECT ON THE CORRIDOR



The ultimate goal of this tactical preservation approach of 16131 E Warren is to spur similar types of revitalization approaches to other buildings currently sitting vacant along E Warren's commercial corridor. With buildings in various stages of rehabilitation and partial- to full-use, it will compose of a more functional and compelling development narrative for EWC in the coming years.





# 16221 E Warren Ave

Kathie Brill, MSHP ‘20

## BUILDING CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

16621 E Warren Ave, commonly known to residents as “The Yorkshire Building” is a mid-century international style commercial building constructed in 1952. The building’s height combined with bulky mass, large footprint and distinct architectural characteristics visually distinguishes the structure among the diverse typologies of low-rise 20th century architecture on the commercial corridor. Along E Warren Ave, the range of commercial architectural styles and current conditions illustrates a narrative of Detroit’s growth, activity, and decline over the past 100 years.

As the most recent neighborhood added to the Strategic Neighborhood Fund, organizations and residents in East-Warren Cadeiux are taking advantage of the potential energy along E Warren Ave. to

reactivate storefronts and jump-start local businesses from the ground up. Economic success and urban growth are not always approached in tandem with community and historical value within cities and the re-use of 16621 E Warren Ave poses an opportunity to bridge that gap. The building is centrally located within the study area along the corridor and is also the only building in the project located in the East English Village Neighborhood. 16621 E Warren can exist as a commercial hub or nuclei that will foster community gatherings and enhance the neighborly activity experienced in the surrounding residential areas.

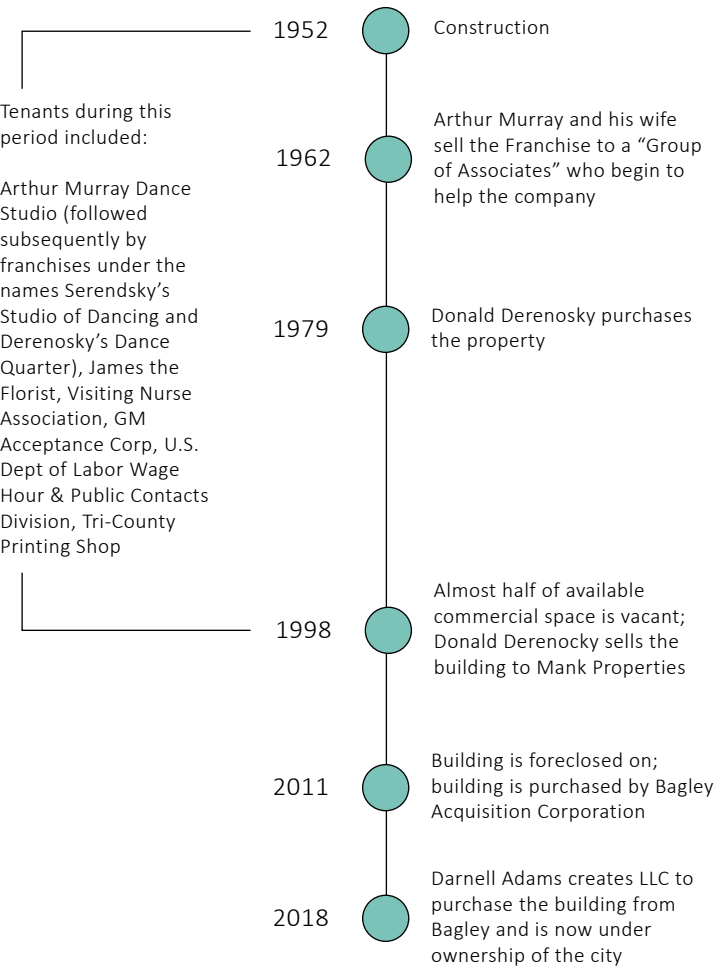
## HISTORY OF OCCUPANCY

When the Yorkshire Building opened, it was home to the Arthur Murray Dance Studio as well as several other local businesses. Arthur Murray was a New York based social dancer who capitalized on his studio by creating a franchise. He is known for introducing dances such as “The Big Apple” and the “Lam-beth Walk”. The introduction of the Big Apple was a catalyst for turning his studio into the largest dance studio chain in the world today. He ran the studio with his wife Kathryn. In the early 1940’s they decided to franchise the studio and by 1946 there were 72 opened franchised dance studios grossing \$20 million a year.<sup>46</sup>

In 1964 Arthur and Kathryn retired and sold the studio to a group of associates. “Under the leadership of Philip S. Masters, George B. Theiss and Samuel A. Costello, the company began to re-invent itself.” Since 1970 Arthur Murray Dance Studios has become an international company with 260 dance studios in 21 countries around the world. The company still has an emphasis on Social Dance teaching styles such as: Bolero, Cha Cha, Foxtrot, Hustle, Merengue, Quickstep, Rumba, Salsa, Samba, Swing, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Waltz, Mambo, Country Western.

16621 E Warren was one location of many Arthur Murray Studios in the City of Detroit and around the state of Michigan. The original studio in the Statler Hotel in downtown Detroit was the first franchise studio opened outside of New York City. It was managed by Doris Eaton Travis who one of the original Ziegfeld Follies Girls. She went on to own 18 other franchises around the Detroit and Michigan and became a prominent figure in the Arthur Murray community. Today, there are three Arthur Murray franchises just outside of Detroit in Royal Oak, Sterling Heights, and Northville.

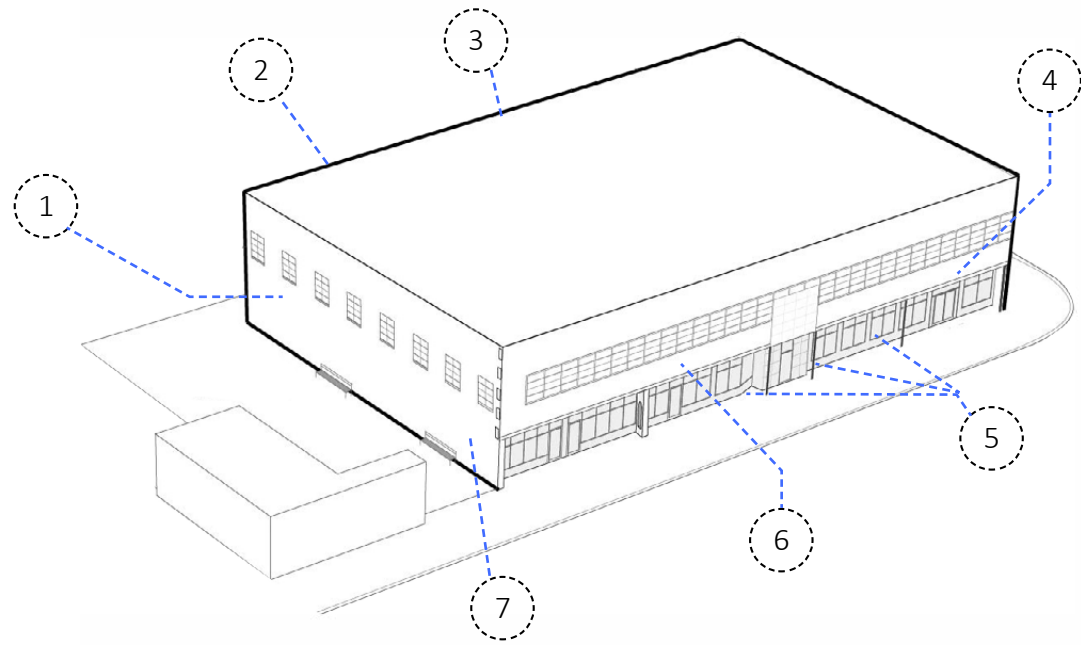
Unfortunately, it has proved to be difficult to find any of the locations of other Arthur Murray Studios that existed in Detroit. For this reason it can-not be determined if other studio locations matched the architectural character of the Yorkshire Building on E Warren Ave. If the location of these studios are eventually located,



conclusions might be drawn as to whether there may have been any correlation between the construction and layout design of the building and an Arthur Murray Franchise as one of the original tenants.

Most prominently known as the home of an Arthur Murray Dance Studio franchise, the Yorkshire building hosted several other businesses from the time of its construction until the early 2000’s when it was purchased by a developer who sat on the vacant property. Other longstanding businesses in the building included James the Florist, The Visiting Nurse Association, General Motors Acceptance Corp. U.S. Department of Labor Wage Hour and Public Contracts Division, and the Tri-County Printing Shop. In 2018, after East Warren-Cadeiux was chosen for the strategic neighborhood fund, the building was purchased by the City of Detroit in hopes of reactivation.





## EXISTING CONDITIONS

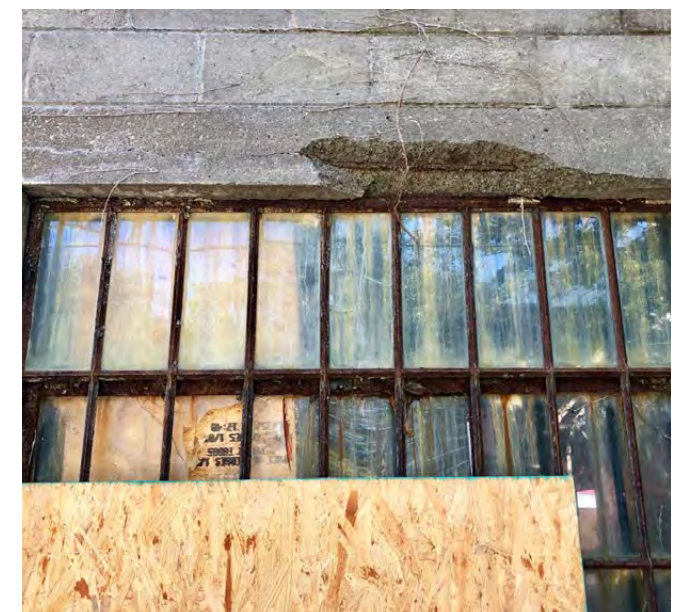
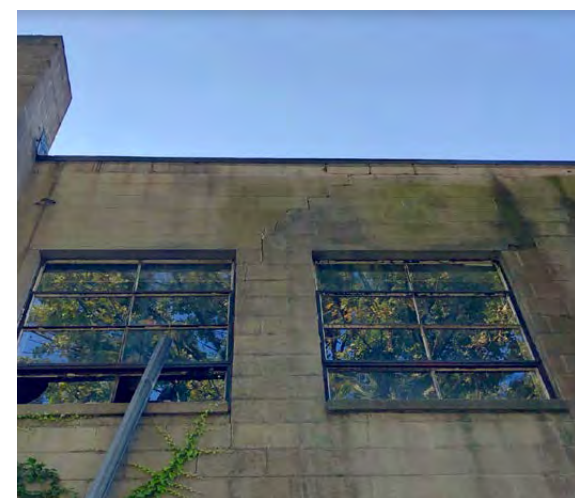
The Yorkshire Building is in generally good condition, but has experienced water infiltration that is causing cracking in bulging of the brick facade as well as interior decay. On the rear facade there is a disconnected downspout which is evidence that there is not adequate drainage. There is also cracked concrete that is exposing metal reinforcement to the elements and a bunch of plant growth in the CMU units. On the front facade, many windows and doors are missing and have been boarded up, additionally the window panes of the ribbon window and dirty and rusting in some areas. Of less concern, the limestone

paneling around the front entrance as well as the brick on the front facade are very dirty and have water and metal stains.

Above the third piloti from the right of the facade is a major crack in the brick which is causing bulging and displacement of the window pane above. The crack may be caused by the condition of the piloti that is supporting that section of facade. Another large crack runs along down from the roof on the eastern facade. On the interior, water damage has caused ceiling and floor collapse as well as a significant amount of black mold in the first floor commercial bays.

When looking at an areal view of the building there appears to be evidence of a metal sign post that may have once supported hanging side perpendicular to the facade. Discoloration and along the section of wall and window below the location of the sign bracket indicate that the sign may have been attached to facade. The remnants of the sign bracket cannot be viewed from the sidewalk and should be investigated as the remnants of the metal fixture could be causing some of the water damage on the facade.

- [1] Collapsed sections of floors and ceiling on interior.
- [2] Plant growth on rear facade.
- [3] Defunct drainage system & detached downspout on rear facade.
- [4] Cracking and bulging of brick facade.
- [5] Missing and boarded windows and doors.
- [6] Water stains and discoloration on upper facade beneath window panes.
- [7] Black mold on interior.



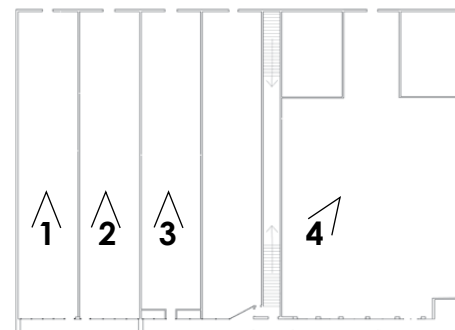




## CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

Architecturally significant features of the building include red brick, laid in a common bond on the upper facade and light brown random coursed masonry cladding on the lower facade, full facade ribbon windows on the second story, limestone paneling around the central entrance, and metal piloti supporting a small second story overhang. Other

character defining features are the free-standing corner lot placement of the building, an open and flexible floor plan, and the culturally significant dance studio room on the second story with original disco ceiling light. The first floor has five commercial bays; four narrow spaces on the west side of building and one large open space on the east side. The second floor is defined by a central corridor that runs the depth of the building with several interconnecting rooms on each side.



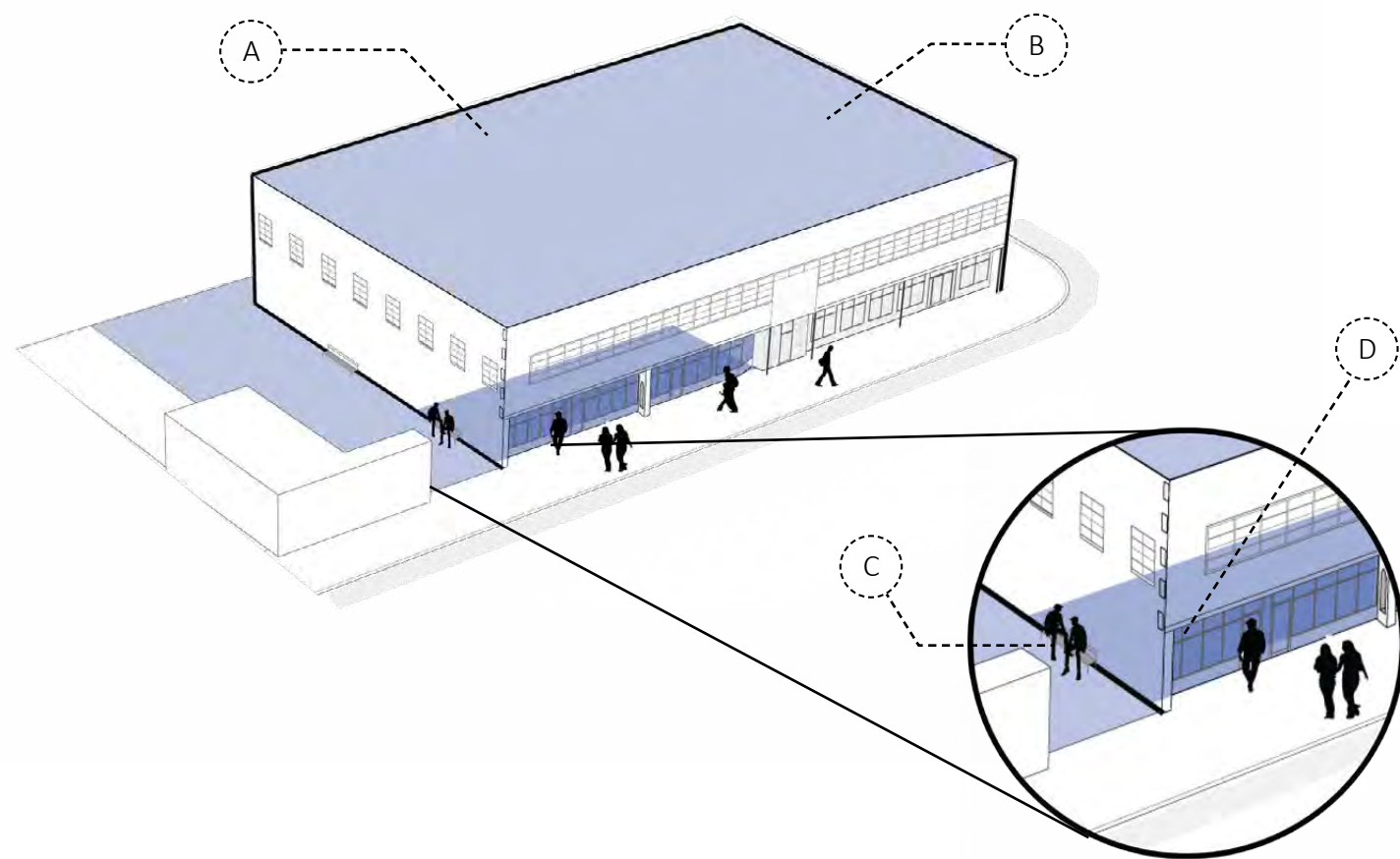
## PRESERVATION PLAN

In tackling the tactical preservation and reactivation of this space, the following plan strategically maps the trajectory of the short to long term tactical preservation and programming goals for the Yorkshire building in 2 month - 6 month, 2 year, and 5 year phases. Immediate intervention should begin with the assessment and restoration of the drainage system and structural stability of the building.

When approaching restoration, the building should be preserved to its original appearance. Decay and blight is a fairly recent occurrence and not a significant part of the physical narrative of the York-shire Building's individual existence. The story of blight should be interpreted in other ways that look more broadly at the rise and fall of the city and congruently, the neighborhood





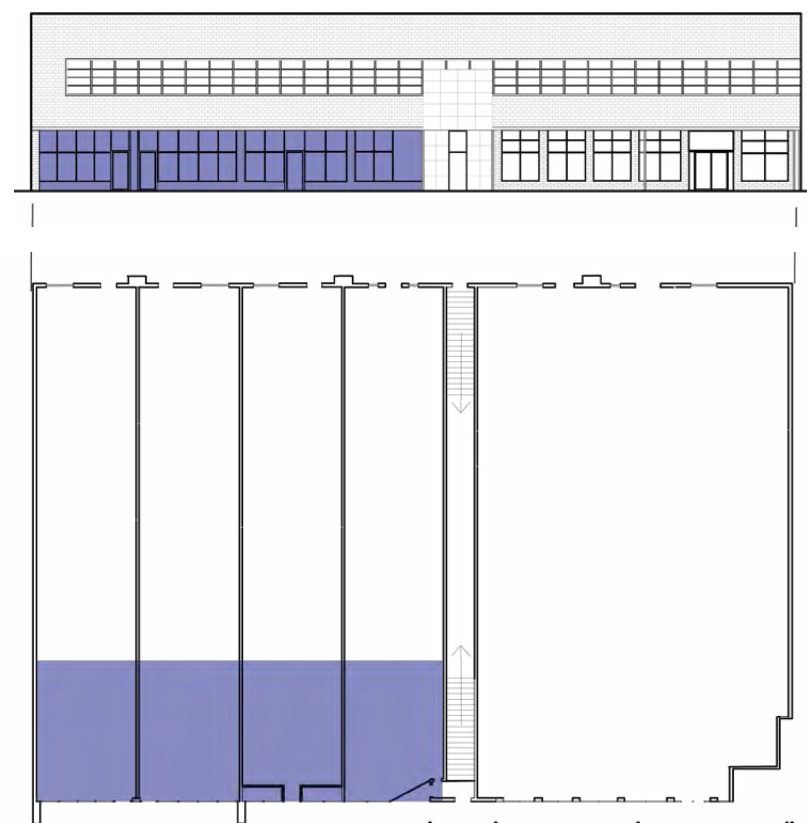


## 2 TO 6-MONTH PLAN

The Yorkshire Buildings appears to be in mostly stable condition but has experienced severe water infiltration. Large water stains on the rear facade of the building, cracking and bulging in several areas of the brick facade, collapsed parts of the ceilings and floors on the interior and a detached down spout on the rear facade all indicate that a significant amount of water is entering the building. To assure that the building is properly repaired and stabilized, the first priority of action is to hire a structural engineer to assess the construction of the building and figure out how the drainage system and other systems (HVAC, plumbing, electric, etc.) are set up in the building. Once the extent of the water damage and other potential structural issues are identified they need to be repaired ASAP. Congruently, all environmental hazards should be eradicated from the building, which include large amounts of black mold and other potential hazards that are currently unknown.

In terms of preservation, the exterior of the building should be restored to its original appearance with little or no alteration to the architectural character defining features. Window pains need to be added, or replaced and the metal window pains on the second story ribbon window should be cleaned and repaired. As the Yorkshire Building is the only example of the international style along E Warren Ave, it is important to maintain the aesthetic as a lasting example of this popular style of mid-century architecture. Additionally, the design of the building is functional for its original purpose as a commercial space and the plans for reuse are intended to return it to that use. In response, no alterations need to be made to the design of the building, including any of the portals.

- [A] Assess drainage systems, stabilize and make building watertight
- [B] Eradicate environmental hazards (black mold).
- [C] Activate side lot with seating.
- [D] Activate white box incubator spaces in front portion of first (4) commercial bays.



Elevation and plan indicating spaces utilized in 2 to 6-month plan.

Once the building is stabilized and safe for limited use, all rear portals should be reopened as points of rear access to the building. All of the original doorways except for one which was cemented in are still functional. Reopening all original doorways will increase circulation, allow for deliveries through the back alley and provide the option to break up the internal space so that certain units that may not prioritize street front access can be entered from the back.

As the restoration process begins, within the first 6 months, the front half of the first three or four bays of the building (Figure) should be white-boxed and used for temporary or incubator spaces for commercial activity. When planning the layout and programming for the first floor it should be noted and taken into consideration that the first commercial bay already has existing bathroom fixtures in the rear section of the space and the adjacent bay to the right has existing kitchen fixtures and systems. Because of these existing utilities, programming should be implemented into this part of the building first to take advantage of extant plumbing and avoid uncomfortable or inconvenient temporary situations like porta potties.

Visual elements including signs and/or art-work should be used on the windows and in the area outside the building to signify that something is happening in the space. By drawing the attention of local residents, foot traffic to the building will potentially increase and community members will be made aware of the full reactivation of the building that is to come. Simultaneously, work should begin to renovate and retrofit the second floor for residential units. To enhance the pop-up activity on the first floor, the empty lot adjacent to the building on the west side should be activated with landscaping and seating elements that can be used in conjunction with the commercial space in the building.



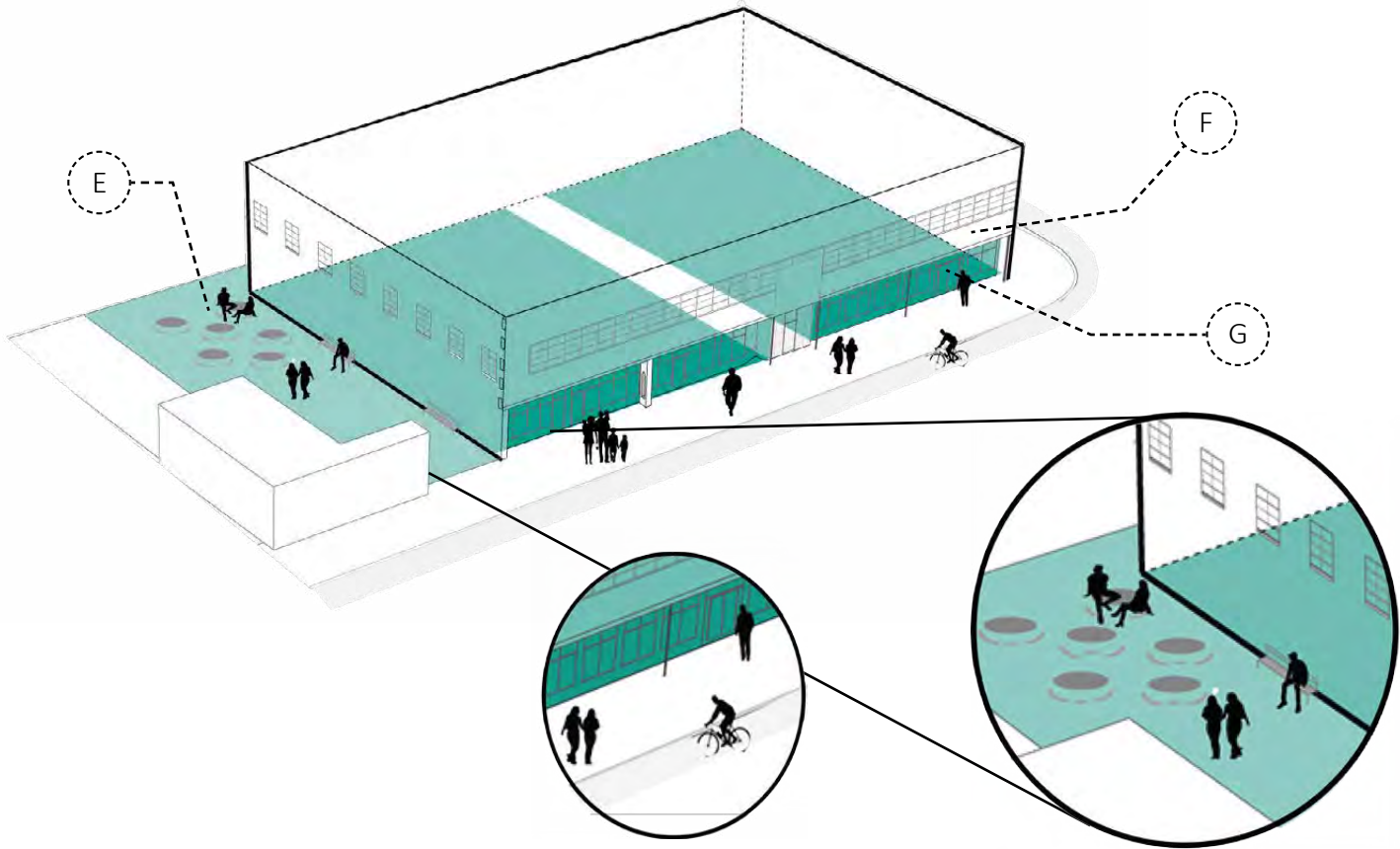
CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

One consideration is to initiate a creative placemaking project that will use some form of visual art, landscape design, or planning initiative to activate the space in the adjacent lot. A placemaking project could be particularly effective in this space as it will draw on members of the community, established organizations, and local government to collaborate. These collaborations can attempt to get all stake-holders in the same place and to build relationships that may help remedy some of the distrust that exists surrounding SNF. They can also foster community dynamics that will ultimately make the future commercial activity reach its full potential and continue to fuel the inclinations of growth and activity along E Warren.

The key to creative placemaking is to focus on the process, as well as the outcome. The collaboration gives community members ownership over the transformation of the space. Artistic decision, especially surrounding some type of painted mural will be

thought of by the participating community members and be representative of their relationship with the neighborhood. I.e. mural of the farmhouse. (Figure) These visual elements may not serve more than an aesthetic function upon their completion but throughout the process, communities play a significant role in the reactivation of the space in the ideas, planning, and implementation of the project. For instance, Creative Placemaking could activate the side lot by:

- A mural or painted signs for the commercial spaces on the western facade
- Additional landscaping including grass and/or flower beds
- Creative seating arrangements or painted concrete reminiscent of the Fitzgerald Park project and Live 6



2-YEAR PLAN

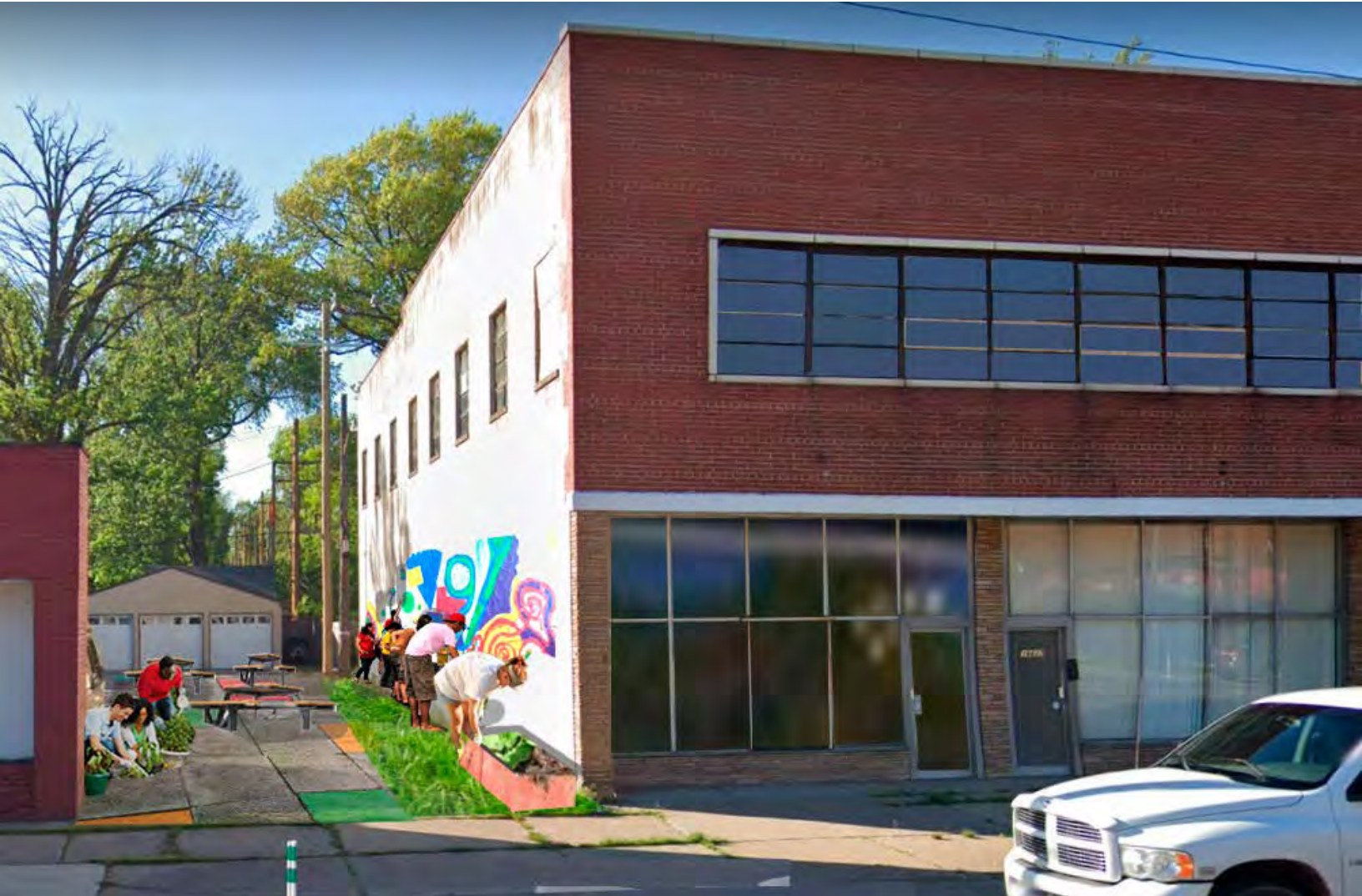
By the two year mark, all the ground commercial bays should be set up and open for business. Simultaneously the second floor residential construction should be well underway, on target to be completed by year 3 of the project. To make the residential units accessible to an older population, it should be considered to add an elevator. Elevator installation will require the construction of a bulkhead.

When figuring out the programming for the commercial space, the key point that should be considered is spatial flexibility. Based on conversations with people at the Planning Dept. and unknown factors about which businesses will take interest in the space or the plans the winner of the RFP will have, I will make recommendations about programming based on the engagement process and size of the building, but will emphasize that no definite program-ming should be prescribed until

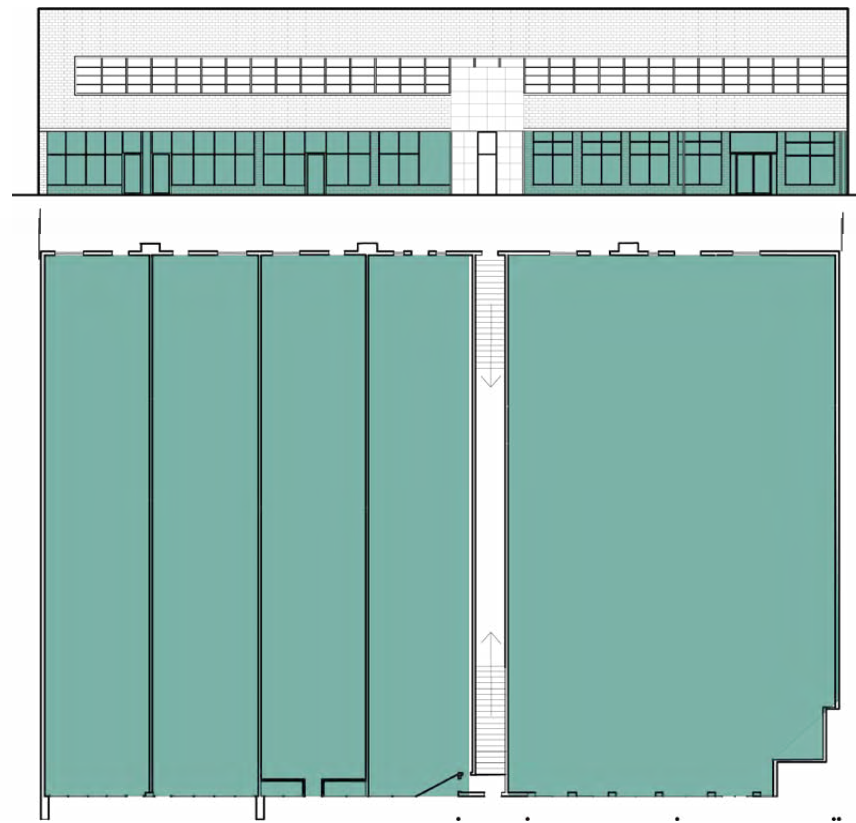
the RFP process an establishment of a new owner is complete. The large floor plan and non-load bearing partition walls create the opportunity to organize and divide the space as necessary. Ability to carve and slice the interior spaces will allow for diversity of business types and optimal square footage for interested ten-ants. For example: some businesses do not need a lot of space and if programming is preemptively established with certain sizes some businesses may be set up for failure as the layout is too big to accommodate a smaller targeted market.

Extant utilities and systems should also be taken into consideration when creating the layout and designating programming. For example, a pragmatic location for a restaurant would be the furthest left commercial bays of the building which has existing bathroom and kitchen systems. Restoring the existing utilities will save money and time that would be used

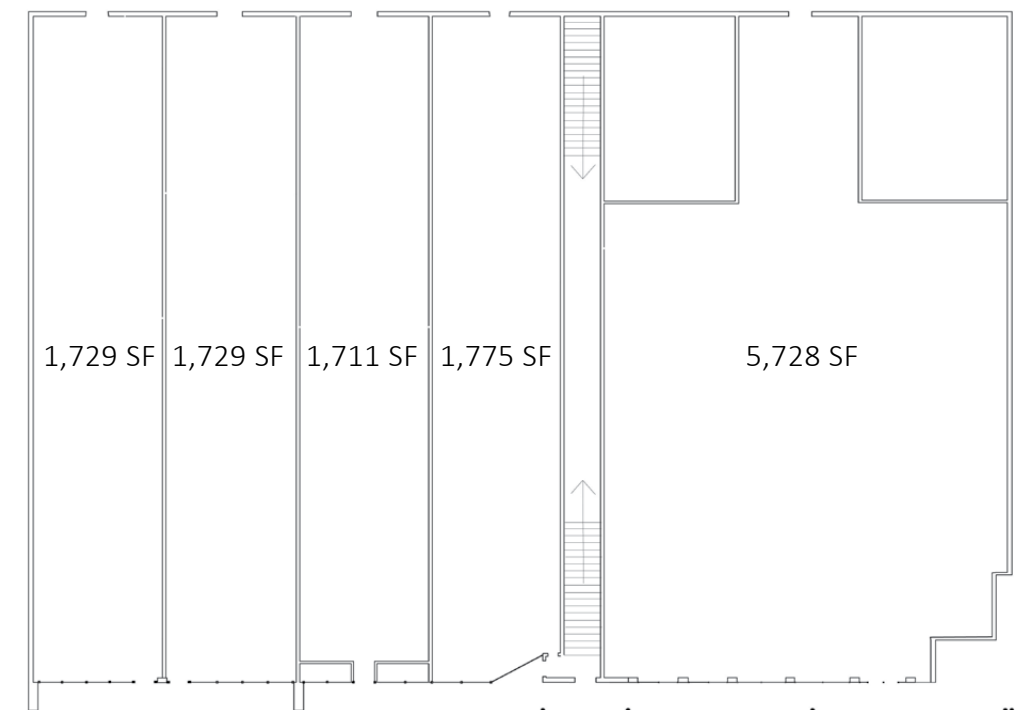
- [E] Initiate creative placemaking project to further activate.
- [F] Complete restoration and preservation of facade.
- [G] Activate all commercial bays on first floor.







Elevation and plan indicating spaces utilized in 2-year plan.



Note: square footages are approximate.

to retrofit another part of the building.

In response, the floor plan and space allocation may develop once a developer or owner has time to find interested business owners. The diagrams below indicate multiple options of space division that could cater to different types of commercial tenants. Recommendations for potential programming based on the community feedback include:

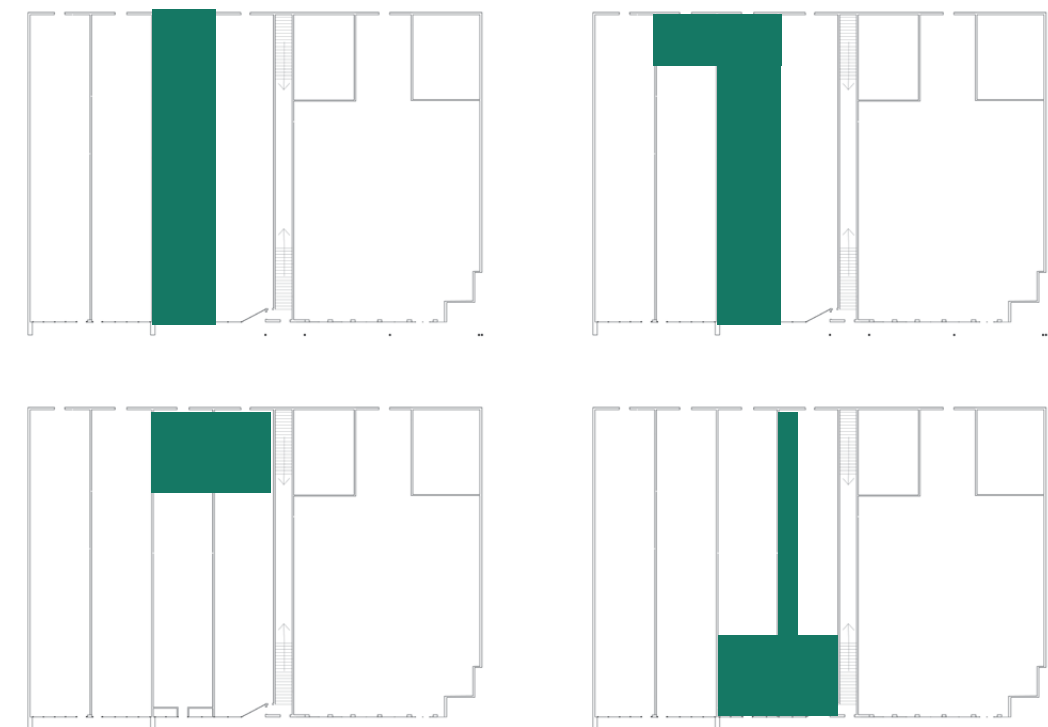
- A restaurant
- A coffee shop/cafe
- Artist workshop space (rear section of building)
- Second hand shop (clothing or furniture)
- Ice cream shop
- Open format market or a for profit food co-op that builds off the urban farming scene in Detroit (large commercial bay on eastern side of building)

The open format market or for-profit food coop is one concept for the large, 5,000 ft. sq. commercial bay. It was mentioned by Maureen Dritsen and Bill Bartlage, the leaders of the EEV neighborhood association that a weekend food coop used to run out of one of the parking lots along E Warren but closed down in the early 2010's. Food Co-ops are strong community

building institutions. The creation of a private food co-op with vendors drawn from local urban farms, artisans, and businesses owners is a positive use for the space that would produce profit while simultaneously creating a local, community minded environment. Additionally, the market would be able to run all year long as it is indoors.

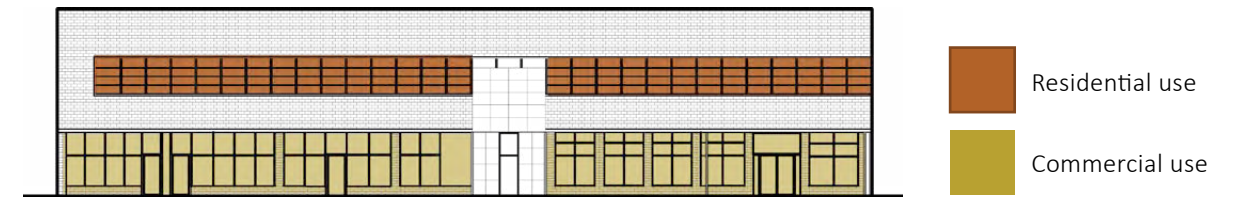
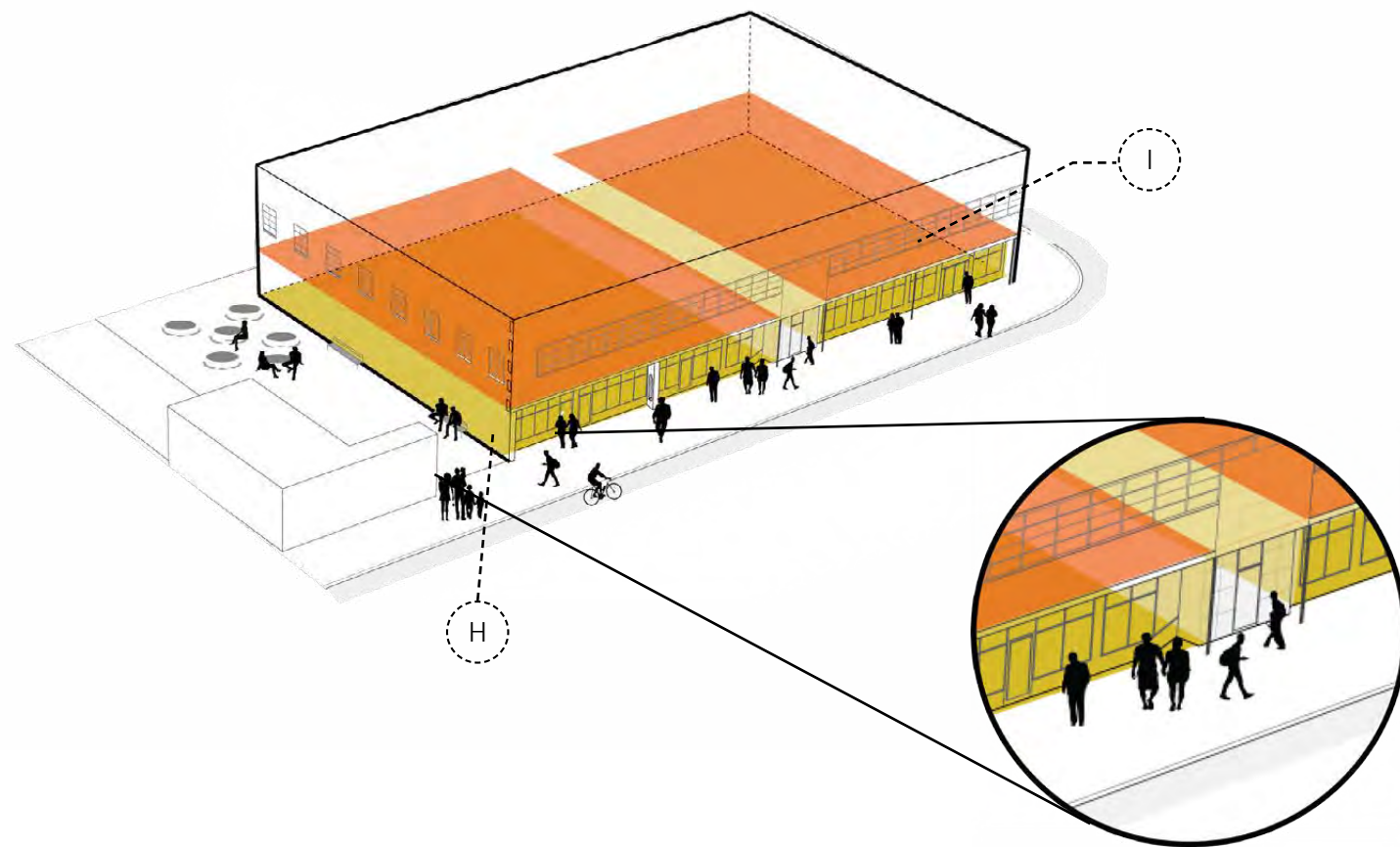
The Yorkshire building is enormous. With about 12,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space it provides a unique opportunity to host a more businesses and larger businesses than the rest of the buildings on the corridor. Working with this exception, use of the high volume of space will enhance the potential energy rumbling along E Warren Ave. Starting by fitting in as many small businesses or vendors as is optimal for the first two ground floor bays, which will give more entrepreneurs a chance to get their feet off the ground with less expense.

According to Darnell Adams, Joe Rashid and others, there are a lot of ideas for the future of the corridor and a fair amount of people who want to implement them from the ground-up. 16621 E Warren provides the rare opportunity to provide manageable amounts of space



**FLEXIBILITY DIAGRAM**





## 5-YEAR PLAN

The choice to create a five year timeline for the completion of restoration work and activation is intended to achieve the most optimal social and commercial impact. As the Yorkshire building is going up for RFP a shorter timeline on completion will be appealing to developers and is also the most feasible for generating economic activity to create a reasonable rate of return. Were the project proposal to drag out for 10 years the desired effect of the building as a social and commercial nuclei and catalyst would not be as successful.

At the five year mark, the building should be entirely activated. The second story residential should be rented and all commercial bays should be filled, or ready for turnover. The activation of the adjacent lot should be functional and any creative placemaking initiatives should be fully implemented and drawing in foot traffic to the building. As such a large space,

[H] Complete activation of building & establishment of commercial tenants with intent to begin to receive financial return

[I] Complete construction of residential units and begin to fill with tenants.

the condensed collection of new commercial assets in the Yorkshire Building are intended to serve as a major catalyst for the rest of the corridor. It will serve as a selling point for new businesses that may occupy spaces on the same or adjacent blocks and in the short term, just get some people out into the neighborhood to spend time together in a common space.

Each of the buildings chosen within the scope of this project for activation along E Warren Ave represent the narrative of the corridor as a place of commercial business, supplying surrounding communities with daily needs and social infrastructure. By realizing new or improved function through previous existence, we are attempting to restore a sense of normalcy and convenience and increasing access to amenities that were lost along the way. To make the Yorkshire Building and the other buildings reach their full potential to serve the community, other area wide recommendations in the following section are meant to encourage an overall increase in activity along E Warren. Ideally, these localized activations will lead to positive change, social impact, and perpetual growth to reinstate the once thriving commercial scene.





## 16014-16 E Warren Ave

Adrian Trevisan, MSHP '20

### BUILDING CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE

East Warren/Cadieux is a relatively young neighborhood, with the oldest buildings being built in the late 1920s and early 1930s. It is a working class neighborhood, featuring modest residential and commercial buildings, with 16014-16 being one of the oldest. Restoring life to 16014-16 will provide a link to the neighborhood's past while enabling the development of its future.

### HISTORY OF OCCUPATION

The history of the building is modest. According to the Polk Guides, 16014 (the right half of the building) housed the "Warren Shoppe Women's Furnishings" in 1938, the Katchadoorian family (probably upstairs) in 1957 and 1963, followed by Iretha Tompkins in 1997. 16016 housed William G. Henne upstairs in 1938, a chiropractor named Morrell W. Mason in 1940, and Emil J. Ineichen's shoe repair shop in 1957. Mr. Ineichen put the shop up for sale in 1961, and Polk Guide lists it run by Joseph A. Winter two years later. Mr. Winter still occupied the store in 1967, but by 1970 it was vacant. In 1997 the ground floor store was occupied by a store selling The Invisible Watchman, an early anti-carjacking device invented by a Detroit entrepreneur.



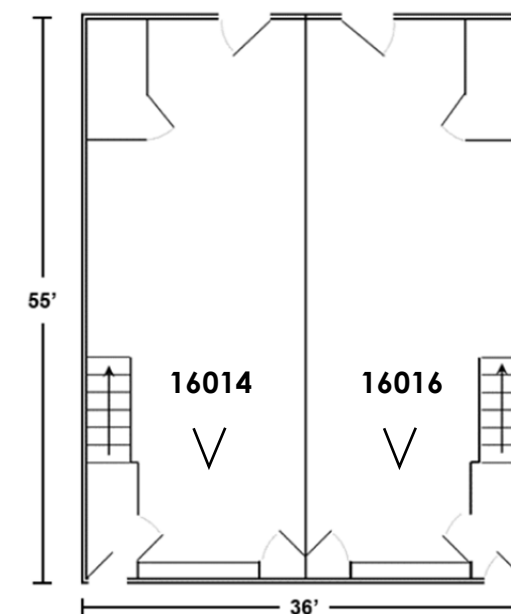
### 16014

1938	William G. Henne
1940	Morrell W. Mason, Chiropractor
1957	Emil J. Ineichen, Shoe Repair
1961	Shoe Repair Shop
1963	Joseph A. Winter, Shoe Repair
1967	Winter Shoe Service
1970	No Response
1997	The Invisible Watchman

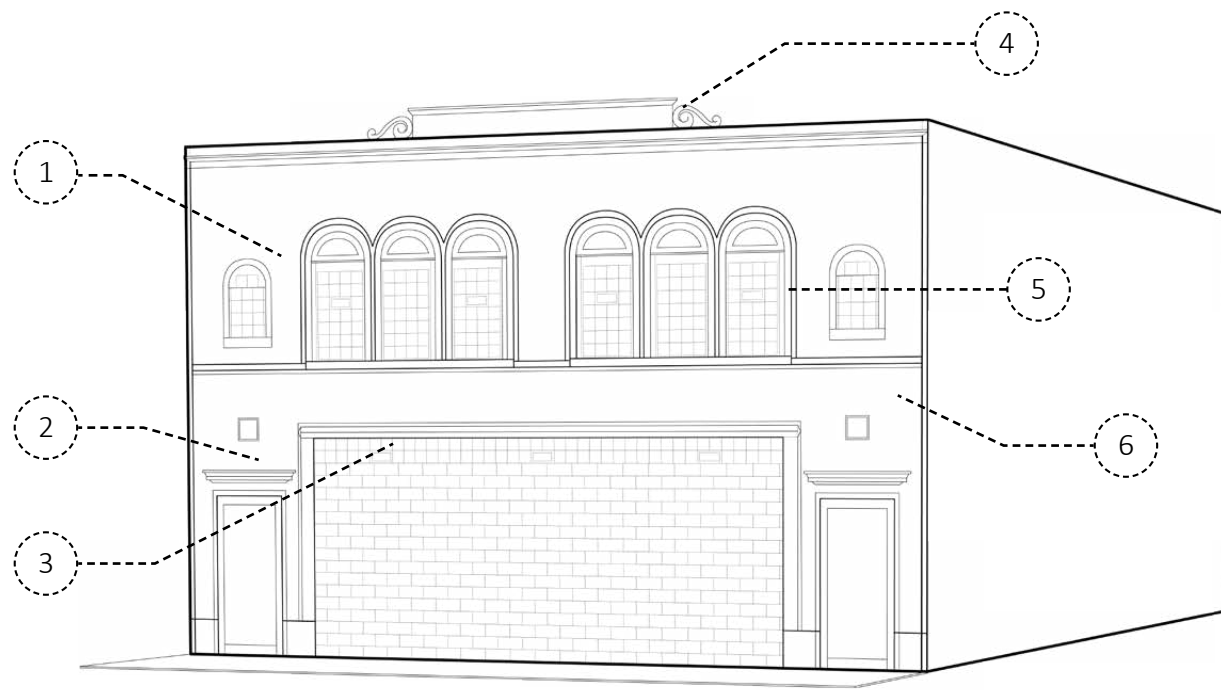


### 16016

1938	Warren Shoppe Women's Furnishings
1940	n/a
1957	Harry Katchadoorian
1961	n/a
1963	Mrs. Christine Katchadoorian
1967	Vacant
1970	Vacant
1997	Iretha Tompkins







## EXISTING CONDITIONS

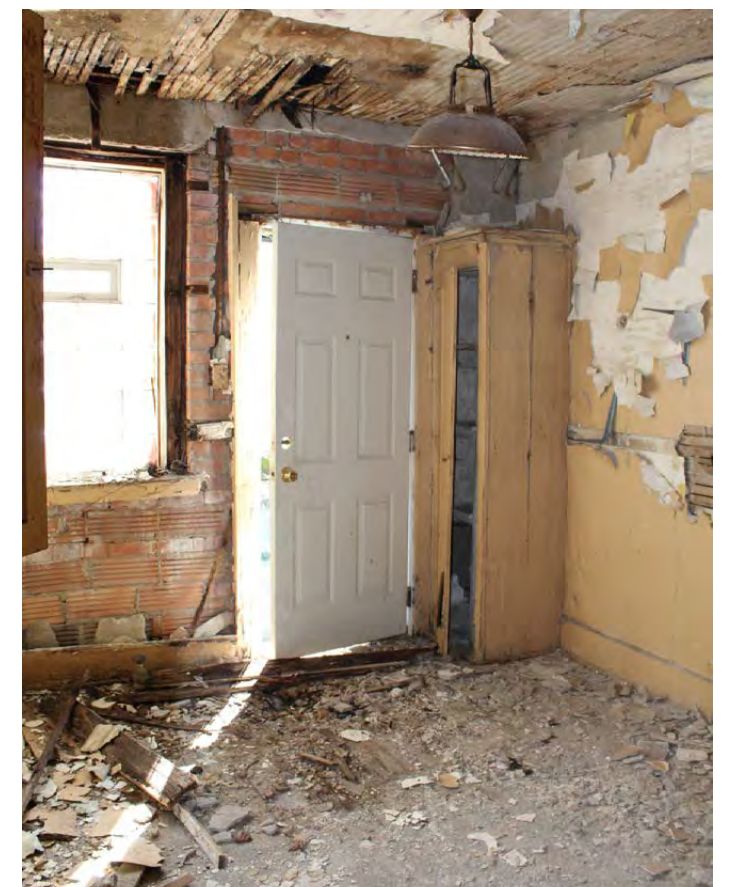
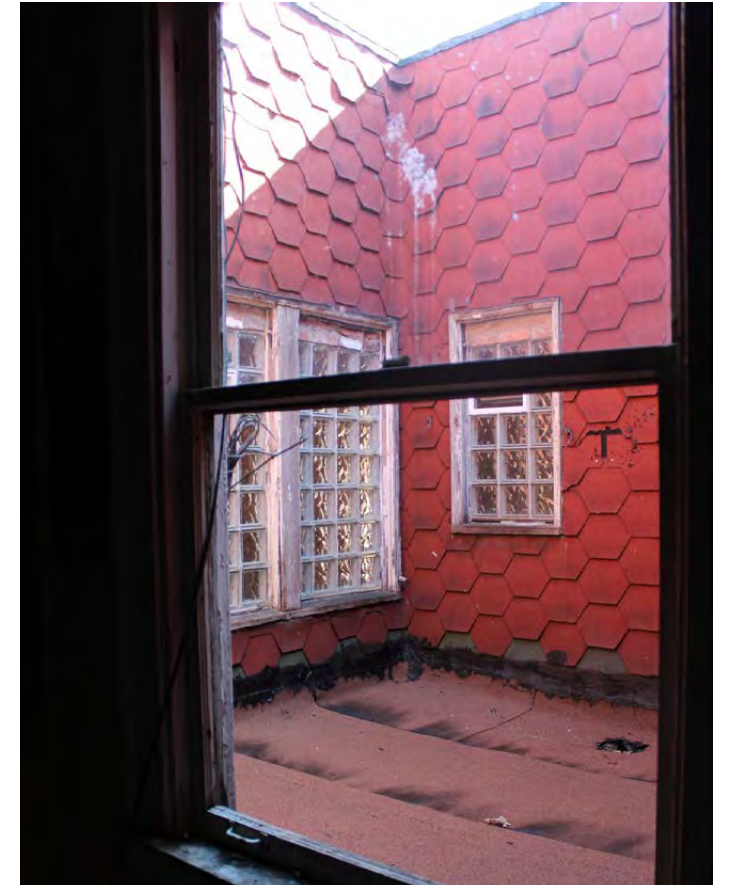
16014-16 East Warren Avenue is a two-story, two-part commercial block, dating from approximately 1928. It consists of four units, with a ground floor store below and an apartment above on each side. It is of steel-frame, masonry construction, with two street doors, each surmounted by limestone medallion and decorative lintel. Although now replaced with concrete masonry units, the building originally had two store fronts, each with a display window and entrance door, surmounted by copper weather molding spanning both storefronts. The stores retain their original decorative pressed tin ceilings and moldings, and are each one open space from the street to the rear of the building, containing a bathroom at the outside corner.

The second floor apartments each have two sets of street windows, three possibly one-over-one double-

hung windows, each surmounted by a limestone half-moon, and one smaller arched window with iron balconette. The entire building is surmounted by a limestone blocking course flanked by scrolls above a limestone cornice. Each apartment features a front room overlooking the street, a storage room, a central light well, and a bathroom, kitchen and bedroom in the rear, with arched doorways leading to a hall connecting the rooms.

There is some water damage in the rear of the building, resulting from leaks in the roof. The current owners have repaired the roof, and have begun work on repairing the walls and floor in the rear. Details on the severity of the damage or the progress of the repairs is not available, but they will need to be completed in order for the full project to occur.

- [1] Steel-frame masonry construction.
- [2] Doors surmounted by decorative lintel and limestone medallion.
- [3] Building storefront surmounted by copper weather molding.
- [4] Limestone blocking course flanked by scrolls above a limestone cornice.
- [5] Windows infilled with brick and glass masonry blocks.
- [6] Cracks on facade throughout.







## 2-MONTH PLAN

As noted in the neighborhood analysis above, the number one request is for restaurants preferably serving food not already available on the Corridor. We propose answering this demand with “The East Warren Showcase Restaurant”. This concept would partner with the culinary arts programs of the four local community colleges to provide a rotating menu, arrived at in discussion with local residents. In order to open quickly, the restaurant would start by serving meals which have been prepared in the facilities on the college’s campus and require minimal on-site preparation. Local residents would fill permanent staff positions at the restaurant, providing continuity at the facility and connection to the neighborhood.

Two options have been identified if the community colleges were not interested in participating in the project:

- (1) A restaurateur could be found through Motor City Match
- (2) The full kitchen could be installed quickly, and the site set up as a “kitchen incubator” (a certified, fully equipped commercial kitchen that food entrepreneurs

can rent on an hourly basis to produce their goods) with seating and staffing following the community college model.

Depending on the status of repairs, customer seating and food preparation could initially occur in a white space at the front of the building. Once repairs are complete the entire first floor (including renovated bathrooms) could be used. As part of the renovation, the central wall could be opened up to the degree necessary for the dining space and kitchen space. Preliminary thoughts would have one or two five-foot openings in the dining areas to divide the space gracefully and maintain appropriate noise levels. The wall could be replaced by pillars in the kitchen area to allow the most efficient use of the space.



## 1-YEAR PLAN

Renovate the second-floor apartments as rental units as quickly as funding can be obtained. Again, this is contingent on completing repairs made necessary by water damage.

## 2-YEAR PLAN

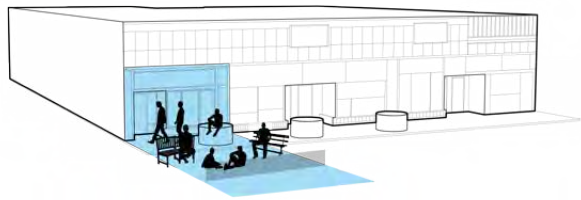
After the restaurant concept has proved itself, and additional funding was obtained, a full kitchen would be installed allowing all food preparation to be done on site. The Community Colleges can continue their involvement, or a full-time restaurateur can be engaged.

## FUNDING

The best source of funding for this project seems to be Invest Detroit’s Detroit Neighborhood Fund. This \$30 million partnership with J.P. Morgan Chase is run by Capital Impact Partners (a Community Development Financial Institution/CDFI), with the objective of: providing financing (loans) for multi-family residential properties, mixed-use real estate, community health centers, charter schools, and grocery stores that offer fresh, healthy foods in areas where those options are limited. Invest Detroit supports developers on projects that will catalyze growth in the surrounding area with a focus on commercial and multi-use buildings. It also supports retail and small business projects in an effort to retain and create jobs for Detroit residents. Funding ranges from \$50,000 to \$2.5 million.



■ CASE STUDY MATRICES



2-MONTH

**[PURPOSE]**  
Generate public interest in the site

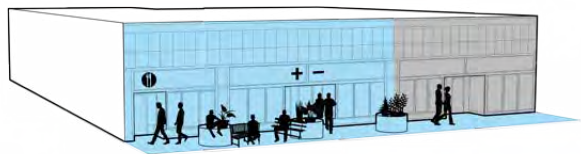
**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**  
Activate sidewalk space and begin restoration of facade (first bay)



6-MONTH

**[PURPOSE]**  
Showcase legacy of blight

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**  
Conduct conditions assessment of interior and exterior;  
Shoring & scaffolding on interior, install new roof;  
Remove infill from (2) storefronts on E Warren Ave, install contemporary glass storefront to allow community visual of typical vacant building conditions;  
Install operable storefront doors on Bedford Rd for removal of interior debris;  
Begin interior demolition.



2-YEAR

**[PURPOSE]**  
Reconnect the public with the history of the building (restored facade) and interior spaces

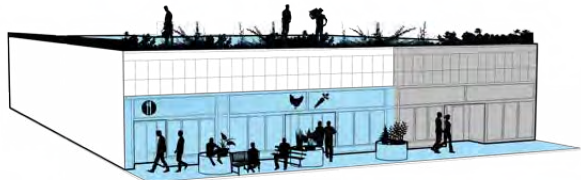
**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**  
Expand sidewalk activation;  
Restore facade;  
Begin renting the first bay and using the second and third bays as flexible spaces.



2-YEAR

**[PURPOSE]**  
Community contribution

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**  
Remove hazardous materials;  
Stabilize back end of building;  
Replicate storefront on Bedford Rd, create Community Food Hall in back end of building and install temporary kitchen equipment & restrooms;  
Activate side parking lot;  
Restore/replicate original wood windows;  
Continue building rehabilitation.



10-YEAR

**[PURPOSE]**  
Provide the corridor with fresh food, opportunities to engage in urban agriculture, and with new businesses

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**  
Rent out all three bays;  
Retrofit roof for small scale agriculture;  
Utilize rear area as additional green space.



5-YEAR

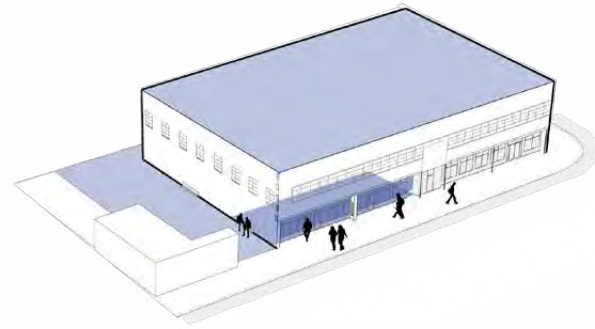
**[PURPOSE]**  
Community resilience

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**  
Activate flex-storefront space on E Warren Ave;  
Develop permanent Community Food Hall and maintain parking lot as flexible public space;  
Maintain operable storefront to become port between interior and exterior;  
Create (3) apartment units on second level.

16319-21-23 E Warren Ave

16131 E Warren Ave





**2-MONTH**

**[PURPOSE]**

Stabilize and exhibit initial activation

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**

Assess drainage systems, stabilize and make building watertight;  
Eradicate environmental hazards (black mold);  
Activate white box incubator spaces in front portion of first 4 commercial bays;  
Activate side lot with seating;  
Hire consultant to create National Register Nomination.



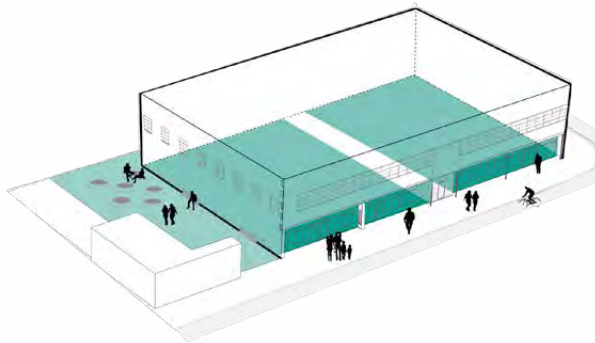
**2-MONTH**

**[PURPOSE]**

Activate storefront.

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**

Prepare food at college campus;  
Prep and serve on site (~30 min drive);  
Create menus based on community input.



**2-YEAR**

**[PURPOSE]**

Establish sense of place and commercial uses

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**

Initiate creative placemaking project to further activate side lot;  
Complete restoration and preservation of facade;  
Select commercial tenants and completely activate all first floor bays;  
Nominate building for local historic designation.



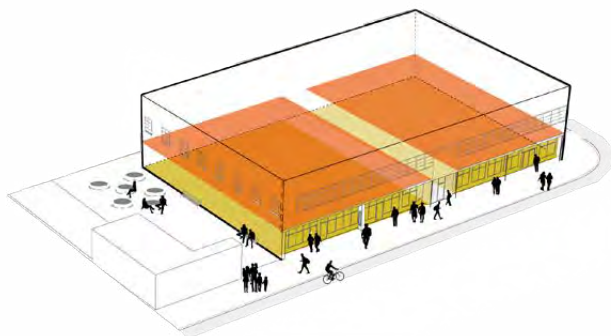
**1-YEAR**

**[PURPOSE]**

Activate whole building.

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**

Renovate and rent second-floor apartments;  
Repair and reconfigure rear of building to ensure safety and efficiency of restaurant.



**5-YEAR**

**[PURPOSE]**

Integration into community and catalytic neighborhood growth

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**

Complete activation of building & establishment of commercial tenants with intent to begin to receive financial return;  
Complete second floor conversion to rental units.



**2-YEAR**

**[PURPOSE]**

Establish long-term programming for site.

**[ACTIONS REQUIRED]**

Install full kitchen on site;  
Include training for individuals returning to society after prison.

**16221 E Warren Ave**

**16-14-16 E Warren Ave**





5

CONCLUSION

Fig 5.1, The Alger Theater. Source: Friends of the Alger Theater.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The disbursement of vacancy along the entirety of East Warren Ave remains clustered, however, this can be utilized as a positive. Clustering of vacancy means clustering of potential new activity. However, with a relatively high rate of vacancy, though a wealth of opportunity still exists, it can be difficult to find programs that will stick for the long-term while the corridor undergoes an aggressive rehabilitation to ensure the continuation of its narrative in post-bankruptcy Detroit. This can be exemplified when a building of relatively great potential is flanked by vacant structures on either of its sides. Thus, it can be inferred that incremental interventions—both in the singularity of a building and the greater corridor—can ensure what changes are made have a greater likelihood of being integrated and accepted into the physical and social fabric of the surrounding communities.

AREA-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Beyond focusing on individual activation of the corridor through strategic planning and tactical preservation of its existing building stock, we devised several outside area-wide recommendations to further ensure of East Warren Ave’s reactivation and current-, continued-, and future-use. Though we were not able to study these contexts in great detail, we believe that sympathetic policy and strategy moves in these areas are essential to the success of the site.

Alger Theater

The Alger Theater is seen as the center of the East Warren Commercial Corridor, due to its age, history and prominence. To this end we recommend supporting the Friends of the Alger Theater in their efforts to revitalize the theater.

Commercial Development Corporations

Three CDCs, Restorin’ East Warren, U-Snap-Bac, and MECCA (Morningside, East English Village, Cornerstone Community Association) are active on the corridor. We recommend supporting all three in their efforts to revitalize the Corridor. Once the Corridor regains an adequate measure of economic vitality we recommend creation and funding of a

Main Street program to accompany the Main Street Zoning Overlay expected to be approved by Council in January. This will foster a shared purpose and direction for the Corridor. Since a strong, experienced administrator who is skilled in obtaining enthusiastic participation in the program from business owners is key to success, we encourage taking ample time to find the right person for the job. The three CDCs must be involved in the Main Street program in order to coordinate efforts, and avoid conflict.

Creative Placemaking

We recommend the use of creative placemaking activities on the corridor in order to encourage foot traffic and raise the visibility of revitalization efforts.

Public Library

The Thomas Jefferson Branch of the Detroit Public Library is currently closed for renovation. We strongly recommend that the renovation be completed as soon as possible.

[As of fall 2019, there was a proposed Main Street Overlay by the City of Detroit. If this overlay is not approved we propose the following:]

Design Guidelines

While we recognize the need to preserve the character of the commercial corridor, it is concerned that imposing design guidelines could both inhibit the development process by scaring away interested businesses that would be burdened with the cost of adhering to strict guidelines for rehabilitation and design. Therefore the group recommends that design guidelines be postponed until the economic health of the corridor is more robust.

Parking

While parking on East Warren Ave is adequate for existing businesses at the current level of activity, it will likely become inadequate once the corridor is revitalized and adhering to present-day city code. To this end, we recommend that the city consider using vacant residential lots adjacent to businesses on East Warren Ave as parking lots, and to do a field survey of converted diagonal parking lots and remaining existing road verges as mentioned on page 22 in the Part II Research portion of this report.

Interpretation

The East Warren commercial corridor has been the center of the three adjoining residential neighborhoods since its founding in the early 1920s. While this had not made for headline-worthy events it has developed a robust history of intangible heritage worthy of preservation. Aspects, such as ghost signage that remains from past businesses, should be considered to be preserved in place, and creative placemaking activities should reflect the oral histories of long-term residents. It is also recommended to reach out to the community to acquire any historical photographs taken along the commercial corridor that could potentially be posted along E Warren as a commemorative feature for the before-and-after narrative in East Warren’s decline and revitalization.

CONCLUSION

East Warren Ave holds significant opportunity for tactical preservation interventions to take root along the corridor, and is determined to be the best practice to navigate the difficulties that are associated with long-term vacancy and disuse. While the four site case study proposals are meant to reflect ways in which tactical preservation can be used, they are not the foundation for how it can be achieved. It is important to recognize the state of deterioration and viable active space associated with each building will in turn devise a unique tactical preservation narrative for each site. There is no one correct way to implement tactical preservation, which conveys the versatile use of this strategy for a revitalization and reactivation methodology.

We conclude that the tactical preservation interventions proposed, coupled with the Area-Wide Recommendations, will ensure long-term vitality for the East Warren commercial corridor. This report devises what is essentially a stepping stone for what can achieve catalytic growth not only for East Warren-Cadieux, but in similar neighborhoods throughout the city of Detroit.