

**DETROIT
FUTURE
CITY**

SOUTHWEST DETROIT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

2021

Exploring Opportunities for Equitable Development
in a Southwest Detroit Industrial District





[Southwest Detroit Business Association](#) has been serving the businesses and residents of Southwest Detroit for more than six decades. Although primarily known for its work with retail and services businesses located along commercial corridors, SDBA has also engaged with businesses more broadly throughout Southwest Detroit. In 2019, for example, SDBA helped launch the Michigan Hispanic Contractors Association to help more Hispanic contractors compete for millions of dollars in contracts related to infrastructure construction in the area. More recently, SDBA was awarded a grant to assist local contractors with obtaining the necessary certifications to address lead-paint hazards in residential housing.



[Detroit LISC](#) is the local office of the national LISC organization. Operating in 44 states, LISC is one of the country's largest Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI). LISC promotes a holistic approach to reinvestment in underserved communities, including support for affordable housing, commercial corridor revitalization, entrepreneurship, financial empowerment, and community well-being. More recently, LISC has supported strategies to redevelop aging industrial districts to create business and job opportunities for community residents. In 2019, Detroit LISC teamed up with DFC and Vanguard Community Development Corporation to conduct a similar study in the Milwaukee Junction neighborhood, resulting in an equitable development plan currently being implemented by Vanguard CDC.



[Detroit Future City](#) is a nonprofit organization founded to advance strategies recommended in the Detroit Strategic Framework, a 50-year vision for Detroit's revitalization developed through a two-year city-wide planning and engagement process. The Detroit Strategic Framework highlighted industrial and manufacturing districts, acknowledging their importance to the City's economy. DFC has identified the adaptive reuse of hundreds of vacant industrial parcels spread throughout the city as an important objective, and has developed research into alternative reuse strategies.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was initiated by the Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to develop a framework focused on equitable development in a predominantly industrial area of Southwest Detroit. LISC engaged a planning team led by Detroit Future City and including livingLAB to produce this report. Community engagement for this study was led by the Southwest Detroit Business Association with support from the DFC planning team. Thanks are due to the Southwest Detroit stakeholders who participated in the planning process and whose input and insights shaped the recommendations contained herein.

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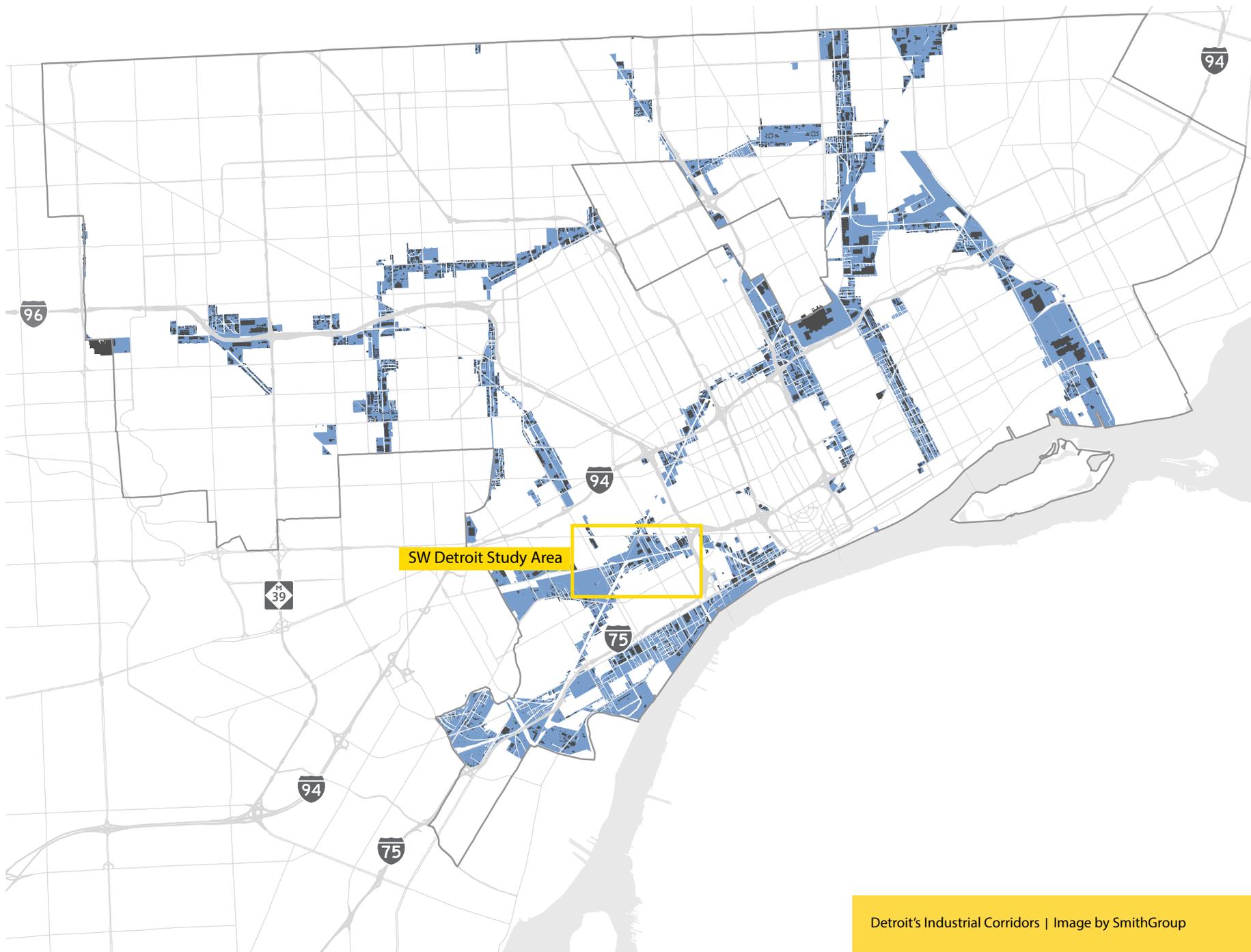
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Detroit's Industrial Corridors | Image by SmithGroup

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is the result of a mutual interest between the Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA), Detroit Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) and Detroit Future City (DFC) to explore how community-based organizations can better incorporate industrial districts within an overall strategy for equitable community development. The goal of the study is to develop recommendations for how SDBA and other community-based stakeholders can influence the future development of an industrial district in Southwest Detroit in order to support good jobs that are accessible to local residents while also promoting a healthier environment.

This study was launched in late 2020 and focuses on a cluster of industrial businesses in Southwest Detroit in the vicinity of Michigan Avenue and Clark Street. Its purpose is to identify strategies for attaining the following goals:

- Retain businesses that offer good jobs and help make those jobs more accessible to residents.
- Attract new businesses that offer good jobs that are accessible to local residents. Prioritize local ownership and businesses owned by women and people of color. Prioritize businesses that have minimal negative impact on the surrounding communities.
- Improve dialogue and communication between businesses and the surrounding community.
- Influence zoning and other public policies to promote a cleaner environment.
- Promote beautification of the industrial zones and surrounding areas.

This document describes a number of possible strategies and actions that SDBA could take to achieve these goals, derived from stakeholder input gathered

during the planning process, as well as research into best practices from other places. Some strategies are extensions of things SDBA is already doing and has the capacity to undertake. Most will require additional resources and collaboration with other partners.

At their core, the recommendations emphasize the traditional roles of a place-based community development organization—what Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution has described as “place maker, place manager, place marketer, entrepreneurial catalyst and people connector.” To this list we can also add “equitable development advocate.”

These roles require a long-term commitment to relationship-building with business, community, nonprofit, and governmental stakeholders, and must be adequately resourced if SDBA is to be successful in achieving its goals.

What Is Equitable Development?

The term “equitable development” generally refers to a range of approaches for creating healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities where residents of all incomes, races, and ethnicities have access to the opportunities, services, and amenities they need to thrive. Equitable development strategies stress the need for low-income and under-resourced communities to fully participate in and benefit from decisions that shape their neighborhoods and impact their quality of life.

Equitable development is a holistic approach to community development. Throughout the process of compiling this report, community stakeholders stressed that they supported economic growth, but not at the cost of negative impact on community health or economic displacement of longtime residents.

WHY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS?

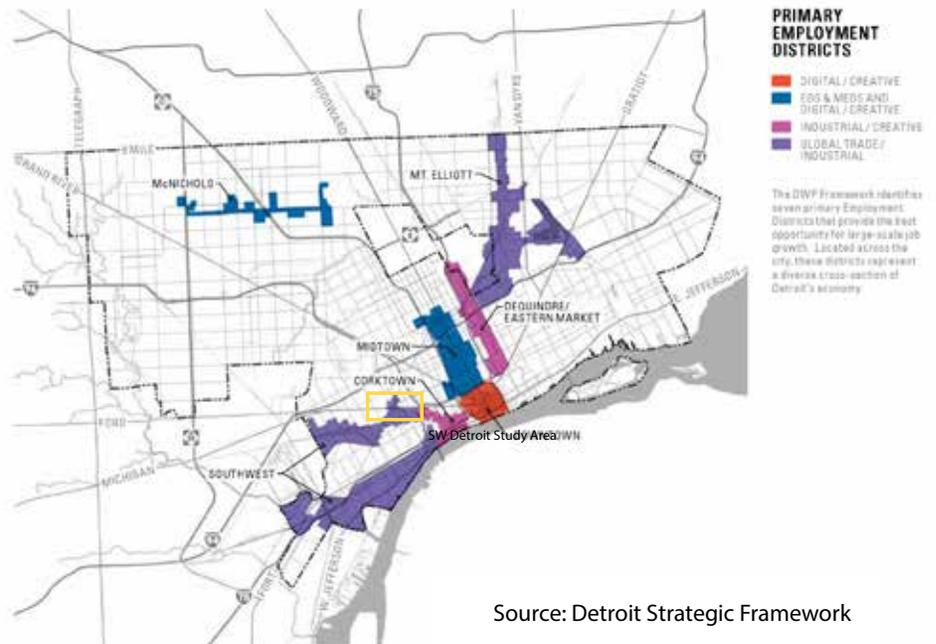
This study was undertaken to explore opportunities for equitable economic development centered on an industrial district within Southwest Detroit. It is premised on the belief that aging industrial districts can offer opportunities for redevelopment that foster beneficial economic growth and accessible, good-paying jobs for local residents.

Jobs in the industrial and manufacturing sectors are desirable because they generally pay better than jobs in the low-wage service sector and often do not require a college degree or other advanced training, which can be significant barriers to accessibility. According to the [Michigan Manufacturing Association](#), [manufacturing jobs pay, on average, 29%](#) more than service sector jobs. It is important to retain these sectors within the city where, they can contribute to the tax and job base, and where jobs are physically accessible to city residents.

The trend over several decades has been for industrial businesses to leave central cities for suburban, rural, or offshore locations. However, recent successes, such as the opening of a new automotive plant on Detroit's east side, demonstrate that manufacturing still has a critical role to play in the city's economy and can be a source of good-paying jobs for Detroit residents.

The City of Detroit is actively working to attract major manufacturers and other industrial businesses and has targeted certain areas of the city to assemble the large tracts of land needed. However, not all of the city's industrially zoned property lends itself to this type of large-scale industrial development, and alternative strategies are needed to ensure that vacant industrial land is used productively and contributes to the goals of equitable economic development and enhanced quality of life for all Detroiters.

Historically, industry in Detroit developed along the waterfront and adjacent to the network of railroad corridors that crisscross the city. This pattern of development is still evident today, and most of the city's industrial-zoned property is still located along these railroad corridors. As a result, industrial property can be found spread throughout the city and often in close proximity to residential neighborhoods. Much of this industrial property has become vacant and underutilized, negatively impacting the quality of life for nearby



Source: Detroit Strategic Framework

residents. Though industrial district development may offer important opportunities for economic growth, this growth must be balanced against the need of nearby residents to enjoy a safe and healthy environment.

It should be noted that the term “industrial” can be problematic when engaging with neighborhood stakeholders. “Industrial” is a catch-all term that includes manufacturing, fabrication, warehousing, logistics, refining, utilities, and many other uses. The City’s zoning code includes several zoning categories under the label of “industrial” that allow a wide range of uses. The term conjures up images of smokestacks and pollution, which need not always be the case. This study uses the term “industrial” in a broad sense but is focused on encouraging uses that minimize negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

Industry Clusters

A previous analysis conducted by Mass Economics for DFC’s Milwaukee Junction study identified eight industry clusters that should be prioritized for attraction efforts. By focusing on jobs that require relatively low educational attainment but still pay a living wage, there is greater likelihood that job creation efforts could benefit nearby residents.

<u>Cluster</u>	<u>Description</u>
Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL)	Moving materials, wholesaling, warehousing
Metals	Manufacturing of raw metals, metal parts, and finished metal goods
Construction: Contractors	Residential, commercial, and infrastructure building
Construction Materials Manufacturing	Manufacture of building materials, such as wood, concrete and plastic products
Food Processing and Manufacturing	Manufacture of food and beverages, including pet foods, specialty food products, bakeries and breweries
B2B Support Services	Facilities, recycling/waste, repair, and business support services
B2B Professional Services	Professional services to support businesses, such as real estate, accounting, property management and advertising
Paper Products and Paper Packaging Manufacturing	Manufacture of cardboard and stationary paper, paper packaging, and other paper products
Shared Workshop / Makerspace	Shared workshop/makerspace for industrial, design, and creative uses (e.g. firms, entrepreneurs, artists, residents)

2. BACKGROUND AND ENGAGEMENT

STUDY AREA

Taken as a whole, industrial properties in Southwest Detroit constitute one of the city's largest Primary Employment Districts, as identified in the [Detroit Future City Strategic Framework](#). However, these industrial properties are not all contiguous and include distinct sub-districts, such as Delray, the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal (DIFT), the Marathon Oil Refinery, and the Clark Street Technology Park.

This study is focused on the industrially zoned properties that include and surround the Clark Street Technology Park. The study area is roughly bounded by Michigan Avenue, Livernois, Vernor Highway and I-96/I-75. The industrial properties and their adjacent residential neighborhoods are primarily contained within four census tracts: 5213, 5231, 5255, and 5256 (2010 Census boundaries).

These four census tracts cover approximately 1.6 square miles. The industrial uses lie primarily along the two east-west rail corridors that span the area and cross at Junction Street. Residential neighborhoods surround the industrial properties on all sides. Approximately 5,300 people, including over 1,600 children under 18 years of age, live within these tracts in close proximity to the industrial uses.

The median household income within these four census tracts in 2018 was approximately \$35,000/year with 70% of all households earning less than \$50,000/year. Approximately one-third of residents live below the poverty line. Nonetheless, Southwest Detroit has a strong social fabric, a network of active community-based organizations, and a vibrant commercial district along Vernor

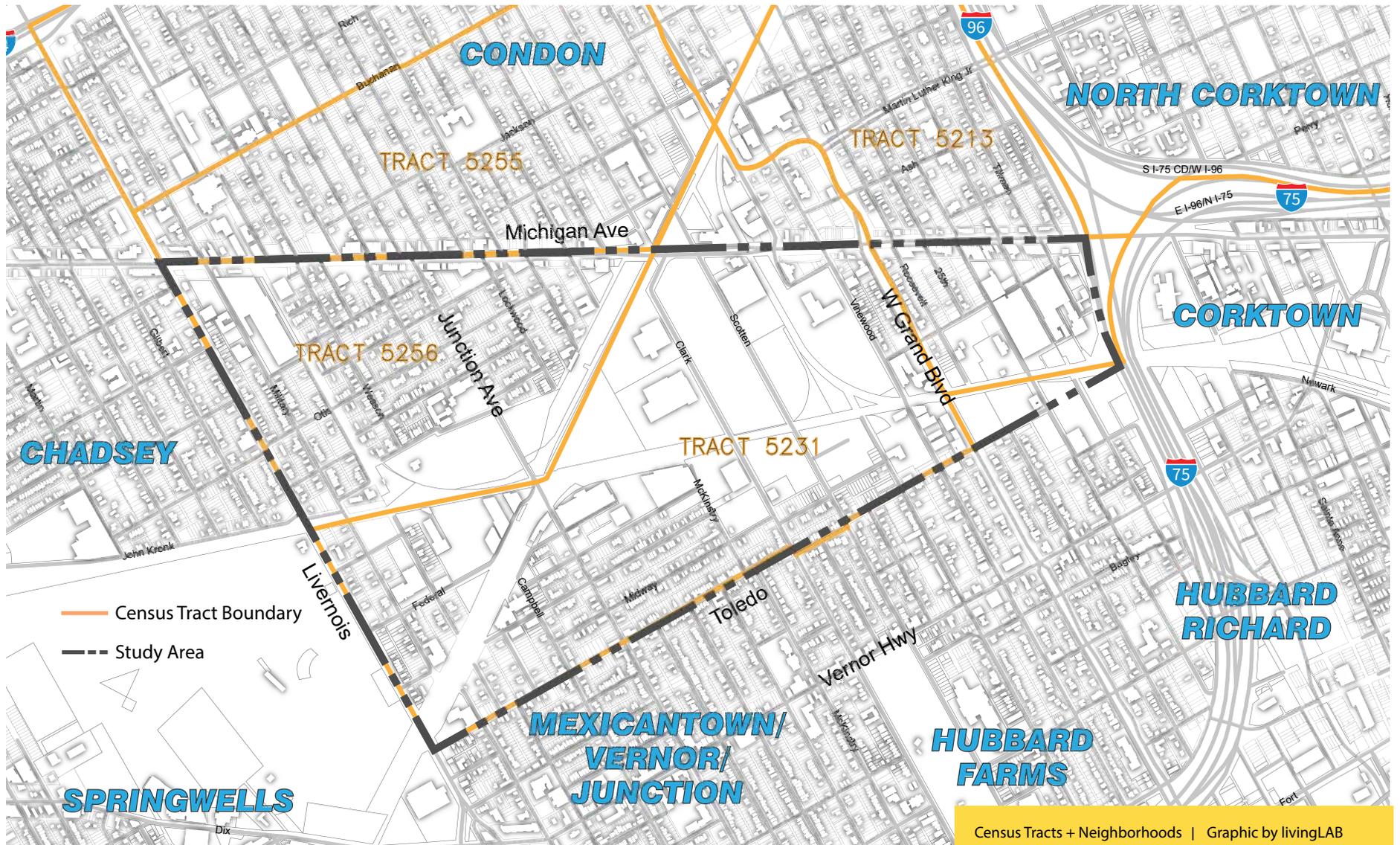
Highway. It has long been the center of Hispanic culture in Detroit, owing to its history as a primary destination for immigrants from Mexico and Latin America.

The district is approximately 3 miles west of the Central Business District across the I-96 Freeway from the Corktown neighborhood. Corktown is currently experiencing an influx of investment following Ford Motor Company's purchase of the long-vacant Michigan Central Station. Across Livernois to the west is the massive Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal (DIFT). To the southeast is the Ambassador Bridge and further south is the site of the planned Gordie Howe International Bridge (GHIB).

A map of Southwest Detroit neighborhoods provided by the Congress of Communities (by Data Driven Detroit) shows that the study area is primarily located within two neighborhoods – Mexicantown/Vernor/Junction and Condon, with a small portion within Hubbard Richard.

SDBA is only one of several active community-based organizations operating within these boundaries. Other active organizations include Congress of Communities, Chadsey Condon Community Organization, Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, Southwest Solutions, and others.

Industrial use of property in the study area dates to the late 1800s. From 1927 to the late 1980s, most of the property was occupied by a sprawling manufacturing complex that assembled Cadillac automobiles for General Motors Corporation. The plant was demolished in 1994, and a portion of the site was redeveloped as the Clark Street Technology Park. The property has



Census Tracts + Neighborhoods | Graphic by livingLAB

since been subdivided multiple times and houses a variety of industrial and manufacturing businesses.

About 35 businesses occupy the industrial properties within the district. (This figure does not include retail and service businesses along Michigan Avenue, Livernois, Junction or Toledo.) Business sectors represented include manufacturing, construction, steel fabrication, trucking and logistics, wholesaling, storage and warehousing, utility services, cannabis growing, and others. There are also a small number of office uses and a large automobile towing yard, a use commonly found in industrial areas, although not normally thought of as an industrial business.

There does not appear to be a strong sense among businesses or the community that the study area has a clear identity as a distinct industrial “district.” Although the study area is clearly perceived as part of a broader area known as Southwest Detroit, it does not have a generally recognized name unto itself. The boundaries of the area are not clearly defined and, in some places, industrial properties are intermixed with residential and other non-industrial uses. The railroad lines that bisect the area also separate the various industrial sub-areas from one another. The Clark Street Technology Park, which is identified with signage along Michigan Avenue, represents only a small portion of the overall area.

Nonetheless, the study area offers an opportunity to look at how an older industrial district might be revitalized through incremental, community-oriented development. Because it is also embedded within a residential community, the needs and concerns of nearby residents must also be considered within any redevelopment plans.

Partial List of Businesses in Study Area

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Type</u>
Chappell Steel	Manufacturing
C & J Steel	Manufacturing
DeWitt Products	Manufacturing
GAA Manufacturing and Supply Chain	Manufacturing
The Ideal Group	Manufacturing
Kautex	Manufacturing
Magni Coatings	Manufacturing
Motor City Pallets	Manufacturing
Olympic Steel	Manufacturing
Conrail	Railroad
CSX Intermodal Terminal	Railroad
CSX Rail	Railroad
Norfolk Southern	Railroad
Churchill Freight Services	Trucking & Logistics
U.S. Trucking/Crown Enterprises	Trucking & Logistics
Linc Crossdock	Trucking & Logistics
Universal Logistics	Trucking & Logistics
Illinois Transport of Michigan	Trucking & Logistics
VITEC-GAA	Trucking & Logistics
Brinker Group	Construction
Inacomp	Construction
Universal Glass and Metals	Construction
Agronomous	Cannabis Grower
Straight 8	Cannabis Grower
Porter Media Group	Marketing
Saga Marketing	Marketing
Javion and Sam’s Towing	Tow Yard
Trumbull and Boulevard Towing	Tow Yard
Borg Brothers Truck Repair	Truck Repair
Classic Detroit Storage	Warehouse
Detroit Industrial Warehousing	Warehouse
Tompkins Printing Equipment	Warehouse & Sales
Choctaw-Kaul Distribution Co.	Warehouse & Sales
Mahmood Development	Real Estate
Detroit Dirt	Composting
Inland Waters Pollution Control	Utility Service



Large Businesses in Area | Diagram by livingLAB

OTHER RELEVANT STUDIES

There have been many studies conducted in Southwest Detroit over the past several years that are important to reference and build upon, but not duplicate.

WEST VERNOR CORRIDOR NEIGHBORHOOD FRAMEWORK PLAN (2018)

In 2018, the City of Detroit Planning and Development Department published the [West Vernor Corridor Neighborhood Framework Plan](#) (West Vernor Framework). This plan covers a large portion of Southwest Detroit, including neighborhoods on either side of the West Vernor commercial corridor from Rosa Parks Boulevard to Wyoming. The West Vernor Framework planning area partially overlaps with the study area currently under consideration, and the Framework plan includes recommendations that are relevant to the current study area. Some of these recommendations are in the early stages of implementation.

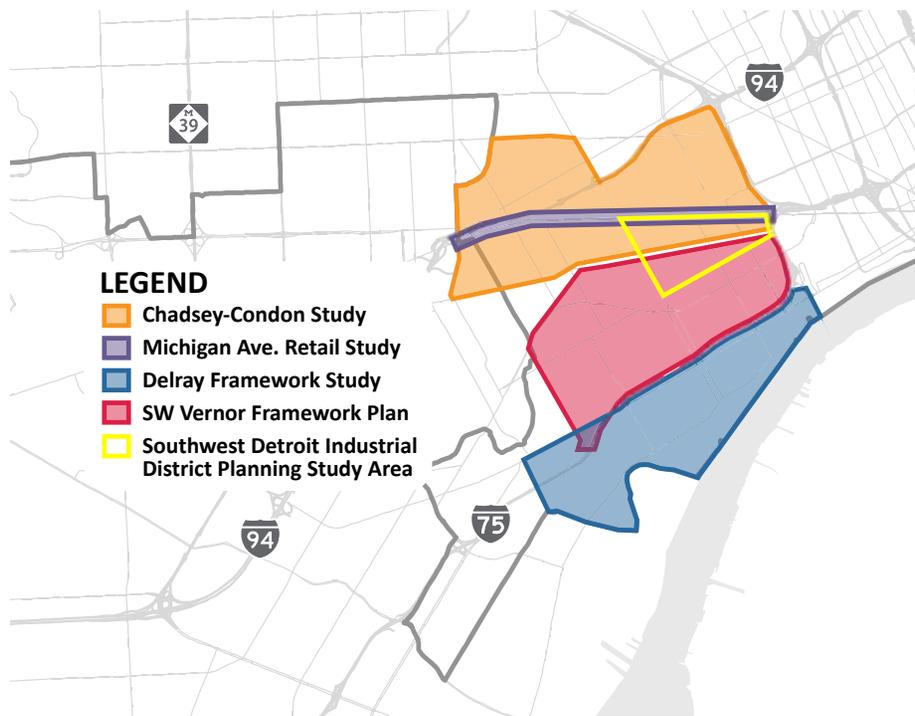


One of the chief concerns of Southwest Detroit residents, documented in the West Vernor Framework and other previous community-led initiatives, is the impact of semi-truck traffic on air quality and overall quality of life in the area. The presence of the Ambassador Bridge (the busiest international

trade crossing in the US), Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal (DIFT), the Port of Detroit, and an extensive network of interstate highways, generate a tremendous volume of truck traffic on a daily basis and attract numerous shipping and logistics businesses to the area. The construction of the planned Gordie Howe International Bridge will increase such traffic in the coming years. The West Vernor Framework recommended that a study be conducted to determine the best approach to managing truck traffic to reduce the negative impact on neighborhoods. (See Truck Route Study)

The West Vernor Framework also recommended a re-examination of zoning designations for industrial properties that abut residential neighborhoods. The plan recommends that properties currently zoned for intensive industrial uses be considered for downzoning to less intensive uses, including residential and mixed-use development. This recommendation has seen some progress. Detroit City Councilmember Raquel Castañeda-López has taken the lead on advocating for selective rezoning in the West Vernor Framework area. In early 2021, City Council unanimously approved a rezoning proposal that converted some Intensive Industrial (M4) zoning to a mix of Limited Industrial (M1), Medium Density Residential (R5), and Two-family Residential (R2) zoning.

The West Vernor Framework identified two specific properties within the scope of the current study as sites for potential redevelopment investment. The sites include the northeast corner of West Grand Boulevard and Toledo, and the northwest corner of Vernor and Livernois. The City of Detroit owned both properties at the time of the planning study, but the West Grand Boulevard site has since been sold to a private company.



LEGEND

- Chadsey-Condon Study
- Michigan Ave. Retail Study
- Delray Framework Study
- SW Vernor Framework Plan
- Southwest Detroit Industrial District Planning Study Area

Other Relevant Studies | Diagram by livingLAB

The West Grand Boulevard site was recommended for mixed use commercial and residential development. This site was recently rezoned to R5, Medium Density Residential. During the rezoning hearings, nearby residents argued in favor of residential use (and against mixed-use or industrial uses) for this site, in keeping with the residential character of West Grand Boulevard.

The Livernois/Vernor site has been a focus of attention for SDBA and others for many years. Formerly used by the City of Detroit Department of Public Works (DPW), the site has been blighted and contaminated for over a decade. The site is still owned by the City of Detroit and is located at a prominent intersection in the middle of the West Vernor Corridor. The West Vernor Framework recommended that short term development activities focus on other commercial nodes near West Grand Boulevard and Springwells, and that this site be developed later, as market conditions improved and development potential increased over time. A variety of ideas have been put forward for this site, including retail, small-scale manufacturing, residential and public space uses. The West Vernor Framework proposed a mix of uses, including 200 units of housing. However, the site's location adjacent to the noisy and dirty DIFT site makes housing development difficult and undesirable.

CHADSEY CONDON STUDY

Another study published in 2018 addressed the Chadsey Condon neighborhood. A portion of the Condon sub-neighborhood overlaps with the current study area but excludes most of the industrial property. The Chadsey Condon plan focused more specifically on improvements to residential blocks and the Michigan Avenue commercial corridor.

The Chadsey Condon plan includes a long list of potential actions organized around these themes:

- Children and Youth
- Safety and Security
- Commercial Corridors
- Community Cohesion
- Open Space
- Mobility Infrastructure
- Increasing Household Income
- Neighborhood Stabilization
- Decreasing Barriers to Access

The study's recommendations for residential area stabilization are useful for addressing the residential blocks within the current study area. Relevant actions include strategies to control truck traffic, connect residents to workforce



training opportunities, support resident entrepreneurship, help homeowners purchase DLBA side lots, and convert some vacant lots into community-oriented open space.

MICHIGAN AVENUE RETAIL STUDY

Another [recent study](#) looked at retail market potential along Michigan Avenue. The Michigan Avenue study was completed with the support of Councilmember Castañeda-López and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC.) This study covers the 3.5-mile length of Michigan Avenue between I-96 and Wyoming and recommends that redevelopment efforts focus on nodes of activity. Three of these nodes -- Livernois, Junction and West Grand Boulevard – are located within the current study area. While the retail corridor is not the focus of this study, the future development of Michigan Avenue will have an impact on the industrial district, which intersects Michigan Avenue at Clark Street and Scotten Street.

DELRAY FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Detroit Planning and Development Department is developing a [framework plan for the Delray neighborhood](#), which lies approximately one mile south of the current study area. The Delray neighborhood includes large areas of industrial property, including Detroit's remaining industrial waterfront. The U.S. portion of the GHIB and port of entry will be located in Delray, and will have a major impact on road and freeway configurations and truck and automobile traffic patterns. Some residential blocks will be preserved, as will Historic Fort Wayne. Larger sites and greater proximity to the GHIB may make the Delray

area more attractive for large-scale industrial and logistics uses, when compared to the study area for this report. The Delray plan will include recommendations for industrial buffering and large-scale tree planting to address soil and air contamination that could be a model for other industrial areas.

TRUCK ROUTE STUDY

As noted, resident concerns about semi-truck traffic in their neighborhoods prompted the City of Detroit to [commission a study](#) to recommend designated truck routes. The surface streets that currently handle high volumes of truck traffic were not built for that purpose. All contain some mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. In addition to engine emissions, trucks create noise, vibrations, and particulate matter, which cause damage to resident health and property.

In addition to designated truck routes, the study makes recommendations regarding truck route regulations and enforcement. Several community leaders provided input to the study but have expressed concern that the study does not adequately address health and air quality issues that impact the community. An alternative proposal has been put forward by a community advisory committee.

When the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal was first approved by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration, it was recommended that the truck entrance at Vernor and Dix be closed and that new entrances be established from Wyoming and John Kronk streets, along with other measures to mitigate the impact of truck traffic on the surrounding area. These measures have not been implemented. If

the original plan were to be implemented, it would greatly benefit nearby residential areas and improve the vitality of the Vernor commercial corridor.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Outreach and engagement for this study included both one-on-one interviews with area stakeholders and online community meetings. Informational interviews were held with a range of stakeholders in the area.

A virtual community meeting was held online on December 17, 2020 to introduce the project to stakeholders and solicit additional input into the process. Approximately 50 people attended this meeting, including many of the interviewees and other representatives of community organizations. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis exercise was conducted.

Outreach to industrial businesses within the district has proven to be a challenge. SDBA had limited pre-established relationships within this sector. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic made door-to-door canvassing and in-person public events impractical. Outreach efforts were conducted primarily through email, although email addresses and contact names were not always available for all businesses.

The SWOT analysis, summarized on page 15, reflects the input of attendees at the virtual community meeting. While a broad range of stakeholders were in attendance, businesses from the industrial were under-represented.

Attendees emphasized the vibrant sense of community and strong network of community-based organizations within the area and expressed a desire for more communication between residents and businesses. The Hispanic culture is a source of neighborhood vitality, but language barriers exist and must be bridged to provide full access to employment and educational opportunities. Community members expressed a clear desire for more jobs

and economic opportunity for area residents, but were equally clear that economic development should not come at the cost of resident health and or displacement of current neighborhood residents.

A second virtual meeting was held on March 23, 2021 geared specifically to area business owners. This meeting featured presentations from SDBA, LISC, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC), Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and SER Metro describing resources available to support small businesses. In addition to email invitations, fliers advertising this event were mailed via the US Postal Service to all businesses in the area. This outreach attracted a few additional businesses that had not been previously reached through other means.

In general, businesses interviewed expressed optimism about the area, particularly in light of nearby investments in Corktown and the new Gordie Howe International Bridge. Although outreach to additional area businesses is needed, a few common concerns were expressed by those businesses contacted.

Challenges with obtaining permits from city departments was mentioned, especially with regard to lengthy delays for approvals. This problem was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Utility issues were also stressed by multiple businesses. Interruptions due to electrical power outages or water main breaks can be very costly if even lasting only a day or two. Difficulty obtaining adequate communications infrastructure was also noted. Other concerns included the condition of area streets, the presence of blight and litter, and general concerns about crime and safety.

Outreach and engagement for this study included both one-on-one interviews with area stakeholders as well as online community meetings in late 2020 and early 2021. Informational interviews were held with a range of stakeholders in the areas.

Organizations Engaged During Study

Agronomous
Alternatives for Girls
Bridgewater Interiors
Chadsey Condon Community Association
Chocktaw-Kaul Distribution
Congress of Communities
Detroit at Work
Detroit Economic Growth Corporation
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
Detroit Land Bank Authority
Detroit Planning and Development Dept
Detroit Planning Commission
Economic Development Team, Mayor's Office
Elevate Energy
Ideal Group
Illinois Transport of Michigan
Invest Detroit
ISAIC
Latino Press
Michigan Economic Development Corp
New Economy Initiative
Office of Councilwoman Raquel Castañeda-López
ProsperUS
SER Metro
Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision
Southwest Economic Solutions
Southwest Housing Solutions
Straight 8

Regarding workforce issues, one business stated that its focus has been on retaining workers and keeping them safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another said that additional hiring is dependent on business growth. One mentioned the difficulty of finding qualified job applicants to fill a specific need for truck chassis mechanics.

The most engaged business throughout the study process was Ideal Group. This is not surprising given its history of community and civic engagement and its representation on the SDBA Board of Directors. Ideal Group officials met with the SDBA and DFC study team on more than one occasion, attended both virtual community meetings, and made introductions to other area businesses. Their participation would be critical to any attempts to organize businesses within the industrial district.

When asked which area businesses they relate to most closely, Ideal Group representatives mentioned Bridgewater Interiors and The James Group, both of which are located in Delray, outside of the immediate study area. This suggests that industrial business networks may rely more on industry sector or business size rather than physical proximity.



Due to COVID-19, door to door canvassing and in person meetings were not possible during development of this study. Postcards were direct mailed to businesses in the area. A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats exercise was conducted with participants at a December 2020 virtual meeting.

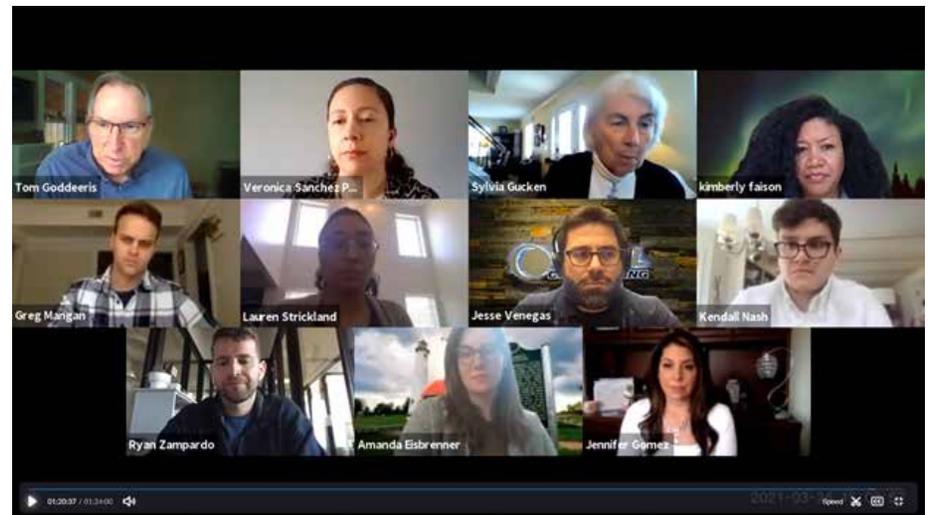
What Does Your Business Need to Succeed?

FREE WEBINAR
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24 2:00-3:30 PM

You are invited to attend a **FREE WEBINAR** sponsored by **Southwest Detroit Business Association** and **Detroit Future City**. Learn more about resources available to help your businesses succeed and grow in Southwest Detroit. Speakers will include representatives of:

- Detroit Economic Growth Corporation
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Southwest Economic Solutions
- SER Metro

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL:
info@detroitfuturecity.com



S

STRENGTHS

- A strong network of community-based organizations.
- Strong relationships between some businesses and the community.
- Engaged residents and elected officials.
- Different cultures, businesses, languages, perspectives, and age groups are represented in the area.
- Immigrant communities and the experiences, empathy, and skills they bring.
- Strong neighborhood identity: good entertainment, parks, small businesses, and restaurants.
- Large labor force.
- Walkable neighborhoods and proximity to businesses.
- Strong transportation infrastructure.
- Nearby development activity, including Michigan Central Station renovation and Gordie Howe International.

W

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of communication between businesses and residents.
- Digital divide makes communication more difficult with residents and some businesses; lack of translation services to bridge language barriers.
- High unemployment, especially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Low educational attainment and graduation rates.
- Difficult to quickly upskill residents who have limited education or language barriers.
- Challenges navigating city processes, especially those related to land use, permitting and code enforcement.
- Inconsistent zoning and improper land uses.
- Environmental challenges, including high levels of truck traffic in neighborhoods.
- Outdated utility and road infrastructure.
- Housing stock in need of repairs, lead abatement, and weatherization.

O

OPPORTUNITIES

- Strong ecosystem of organizations and businesses provides an opportunity to elevate SW Detroit.
- Further strengthen the relationships between businesses and residents and engage more businesses who have been less willing to work with the community in the past.
- Collaboration between businesses and residents to address environmental concerns, create buffer zones, and mitigate the impact of truck traffic.
- Integrate more immigrants into the education system and labor force.
- Leverage strong workforce programs supporting youth and adults.
- Perception that SW Detroit is becoming a cool place to be and attracting new investment.
- Investment in nearby areas create potential for spin-off development.
- Entrepreneurial spirit feeds innovation and creativity.
- Relationships with researchers and universities create opportunity to expand capacities of local organizations.

T

THREATS

- Industrialization may bring increased environmental concerns and unwanted activity close to residential areas.
- Increased development pressure can lead to gentrification, higher costs, and threat of displacement.
- Long-time residents and businesses will not benefit from development without inclusive policies and equitable practices.
- Structural racism and its impacts on education, housing, and policing.
- Immigration enforcement deeply affects the community, separates families, harms the neighborhood.
- Lack of engagement with young people.
- City unable to support developments with their infrastructure and resources.
- Brownfield areas without the proper funds to alleviate the environmental concerns.
- Failure to build out resiliency: the creation/perpetuation of systems that extract wealth rather than build wealth for the community.
- Rising costs of utilities -> specific example was the cost of water (drainage fees).

3. ZONING AND LAND USE

Zoning is an important regulatory tool that cities and communities can use to shape future land uses. Zoning classifications define which uses are allowed “by right,” which uses are prohibited, and which uses require conditional approval. Approvals often come with conditions intended to protect the interests of nearby property owners and the community at large.

Much of the industrial property within the study area is zoned as Intensive Industrial District (M4), which allows for a wide range of industrial uses. City Councilmember Raquel Castañeda-López has recently taken the initiative to re-examine industrial zoning designations in Southwest Detroit. Proposed zoning changes in the area south of the railroad between Livernois and I-96 were approved by City Council in early 2021. The revision changed some properties zoned as M4 to the less intensive Limited Industrial (M1) classification. Many uses allowed by right under M4 zoning are either prohibited or allowable only with specific approval in M1 zones. Where residential uses were located in areas zoned industrial, the zoning was also changed to reflect residential use.

The changes were made so that zoning conforms more closely to the Detroit Master Plan of Policies, which describes the City’s vision for preferred future land uses. The Councilmember’s office is looking into further downzoning proposals for property just west of Livernois outside the study area. Over time, additional downzoning efforts should be considered for the balance of the study area using similar criteria.

The current Master Plan was adopted in 2009. The Master Plan should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it accurately reflects the City’s and the community’s current vision for land use. The Zoning Ordinance should be used to implement

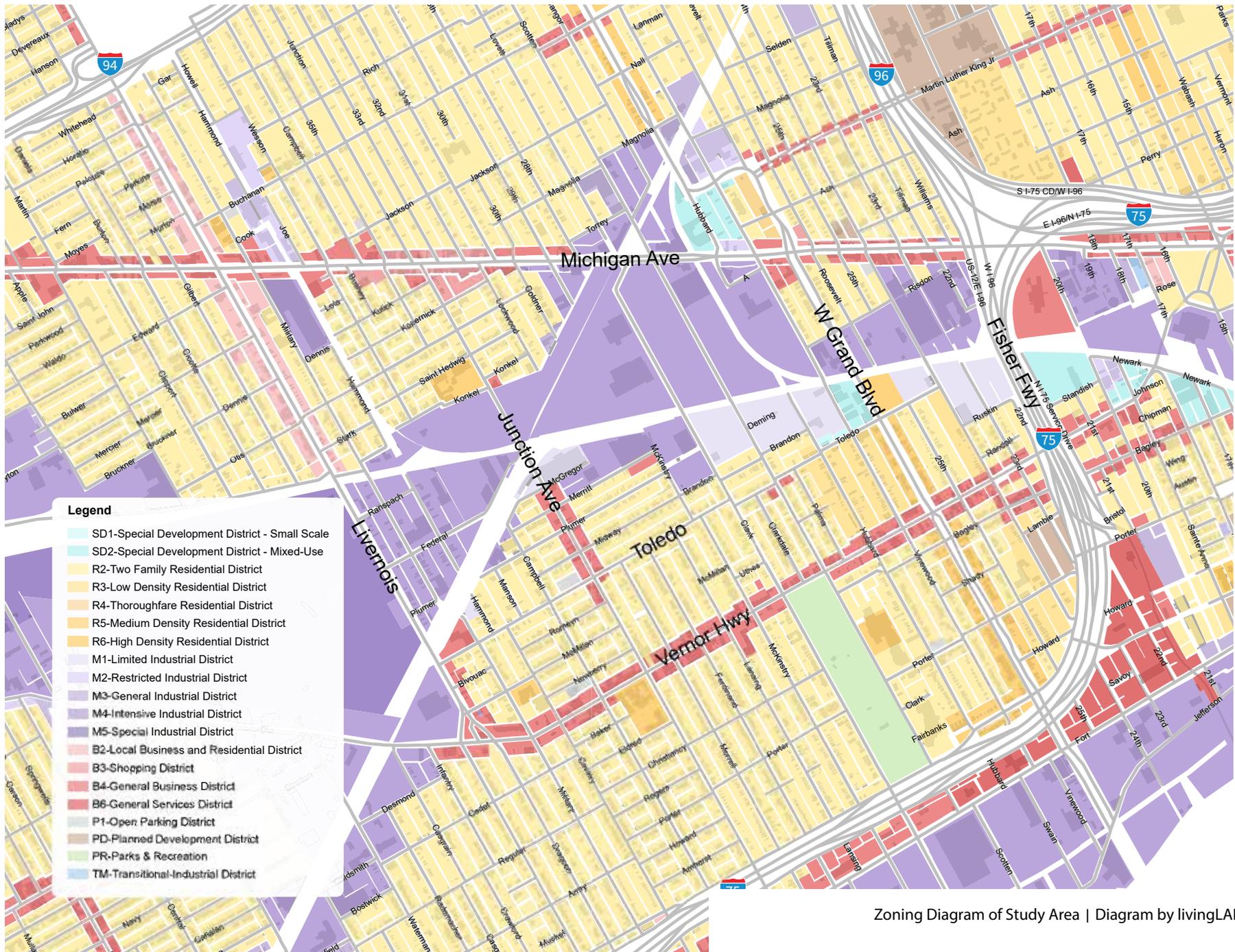
the Master Plan vision. However, current zoning is not always consistent with Master Plan designations.

The City Planning Commission is leading a major revision to the Zoning Ordinance with a new draft expected for public comment in late 2021. This revision will include updated district standards, use regulations, and development standards, but will not include a general revision to the zoning map. SDBA has advocated for stronger industrial buffering and property development standards and should push for their inclusion in the revised ordinance.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

The Master Plan projects that the industrial properties at the core of the study area should remain in general industrial use for the foreseeable future. These properties, centered around the Clark Street Technology Park, contain some of the most well-established companies, such as Ideal Group, GAA, VITEC, Kautex, and Universal Logistics. This area also has two of the largest vacant parcels in the area, located at 2751 Clark and 2995 Hubbard. Beyond this core, the Master Plan shows most other current M4 properties as future Light Industrial use. It may be difficult to downzone properties where there are active industrial businesses, but low-impact industrial uses should be encouraged even where more intensive uses are allowed.

Two of the larger parcels that were recently downzoned include properties owned by Boulevard and Trumbull Towing and U.S. Trucking/Crown Enterprises. The current uses of these properties as an auto service towing yard and trucking terminal are considered conditional within M1 zones. However, both uses create



Zoning Diagram of Study Area | Diagram by livingLAB

a nuisance for nearby residential neighborhoods. The long-term redevelopment of these sites for light manufacturing, office or housing uses would be more desirable.

Another cluster of industrial uses lie to the north of Michigan Avenue. These businesses tend to occupy a smaller footprint and are more interspersed with residential and other non-industrial uses. The larger businesses include Inland Waters Pollution Control, Choctaw-Kaul Distribution, Tompkins Printing Equipment, and Chappel Steel. The Master Plan indicates a mix of residential and industrial uses for this area. A portion of the area has been rezoned as 'Special District, Mixed Use (SD2)', allowing for a variety of uses. The area's mix of one- and two-story commercial buildings could lend themselves to small-scale manufacturing, office, or creative uses.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

There are several distinct pockets of single-family housing surrounding the industrial district core. Overall, the strongest of the residential areas, as indicated by lower vacancy, higher density, and higher property values, is the neighborhood just north of Vernor Highway. Bordering the vibrant Vernor commercial corridor, this residential area is included in the City's Strategic Neighborhood Fund initiative and the Vernor Corridor Framework Plan. Although housing quality is not uniform across all blocks, some of the area's highest value housing can be found in the vicinity of Vernor and West Grand Boulevard. The recent downzoning of some industrial property in this area is an important step to reduce the potential for negative impacts of future industrial development on the adjacent neighborhood. This area has the highest potential for infill housing development, and SDBA is

already developing La Joya Gardens, a 53-unit, mixed-use, mixed-income building at Vernor and Hubbard.

West Grand Boulevard connects Vernor to Michigan Avenue and is lined with large, historic homes. Though there are a few non-residential uses as well, continued residential use should be preserved and emphasized. The site at the northwest corner of Toledo and West Grand Boulevard has been rezoned for residential development as proposed in the Vernor Corridor Framework. Vacant industrial buildings on Vinewood and West Grand Boulevard, immediately north of Toledo, should be considered for multi-family or live-work uses, similar to the Grand Lofts development at 2624 Vinewood.

The residential areas north of Michigan Avenue, in the Condon neighborhood, are lower density with many vacant lots. To the west of Scotten, Southwest Housing Solutions (SWHS) is redeveloping the Newberry Homes housing project and creating home ownership opportunities for low-income residents. SWHS is planning additional infill development for this area and along Michigan Avenue. The residential areas closest to Corktown have drawn increased interest from private developers, including commercial property owners along Michigan Avenue, who have established the Old Western Market Commercial District Association for the area east of Vinewood.

In all of these residential areas, existing homeowners should be supported with home repair resources to improve neighborhood stability. There is also an opportunity to facilitate the purchase of Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA)-owned lots by homeowners for use as side lots or by community organizations to create neighborhood amenities.

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Though this study is not centered on the Michigan Avenue retail corridor, the future development of Michigan Avenue will have an impact on the industrial district development. A separate study of the retail market potential was recently completed with the support of Councilmember Castañeda-López and the Detroit Economic Development Corporation (DEGC), covering the length of Michigan Avenue between I-96 and Wyoming.

This study recommends an approach to redevelopment focused on nodes of activity along the 3.5-mile length of Michigan Avenue. Within the area of this study, nodes include Livernois, Junction and West Grand Boulevard.

Currently, Michigan Avenue within the study area (Livernois to I-96) is marked by high levels of vacancy, for both buildings and land. The industrial district intersects Michigan Avenue at Clark and Scotten. Two railroad bridges and one roadway bridge cross Michigan Avenue at Scotten. These bridges effectively divide Michigan Avenue as a retail corridor into east and west segments.

The eastern segment currently has high vacancy, including several vacant historic buildings within a two-block historic district. Two property owners in this area have established the Western Market Commercial District and have sought to include the area from I-96 to Vinewood in a Business Improvement Zone currently under consideration for the Corktown neighborhood. This area's proximity to Corktown gives it greater development potential but has also led to some speculation in vacant property. Little development is currently taking place, impacted in part by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The area between Clark Street and Livernois also has high vacancy, but there are some strong anchor businesses, such as Latino Press, Prince Valley Foods, Covenant Community Care, and El Barzon restaurant that represent assets to build on in this area. Southwest Housing Solutions, which already owns property in the area, would like to develop mixed-use housing and commercial space along Michigan Avenue in the future.

SDBA has recently absorbed the former Michigan Avenue Business Association and has begun reaching out to businesses along the Michigan Avenue corridor. SDBA is providing façade improvement grants to some small businesses on Michigan Avenue near the Livernois and Junction nodes.

[Another study is underway](#) looking at the 40-mile stretch of Michigan Avenue between Downtown Detroit and Downtown Ann Arbor. This study is being conducted by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Cavnu, a subsidiary of Alphabet, the parent company of Google. This study is focused on developing Michigan Avenue as a Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) corridor. Development of Michigan Avenue as a CAV corridor could have a significant impact on the area, but is currently a long-term prospect.

Junction and Livernois are also important commercial streets intersecting the study area. Both contain residential and commercial uses. Junction has several vacant parcels that have potential for mixed-use development. New residential development should be discouraged along Livernois.

VACANT AND PUBLICLY OWNED PROPERTIES

There are several vacant industrial parcels within the study area, although many are not currently being offered for sale or lease. A partial list of vacant properties is highlighted on the following pages to illustrate the range of properties that have potential for reuse or redevelopment. The increase in development activity in nearby Corktown, and the legalization of cannabis production (restricted to industrial zoned areas) has generated some property speculation in the study area and has contributed to rising costs. One business interviewed as part of this study mentioned high property costs as an obstacle to expansion. Environmental contamination from previous industrial uses, as well as building conditions for long-vacant structures also may pose significant challenges to redevelopment.

As illustrated on the Public Ownership Diagram, there are relatively few publicly owned commercial properties in the area, although one of the most prominent vacant sites at Vernor and Livernois is city-owned. Public sites often offer good development opportunities because public agencies are motivated to see vacant properties redeveloped and can set sale terms to encourage development deemed to be in the public interest. In addition to the Vernor/Livernois site, the city owns smaller clusters of property along Michigan Avenue, Junction, and Hubbard north of Michigan.

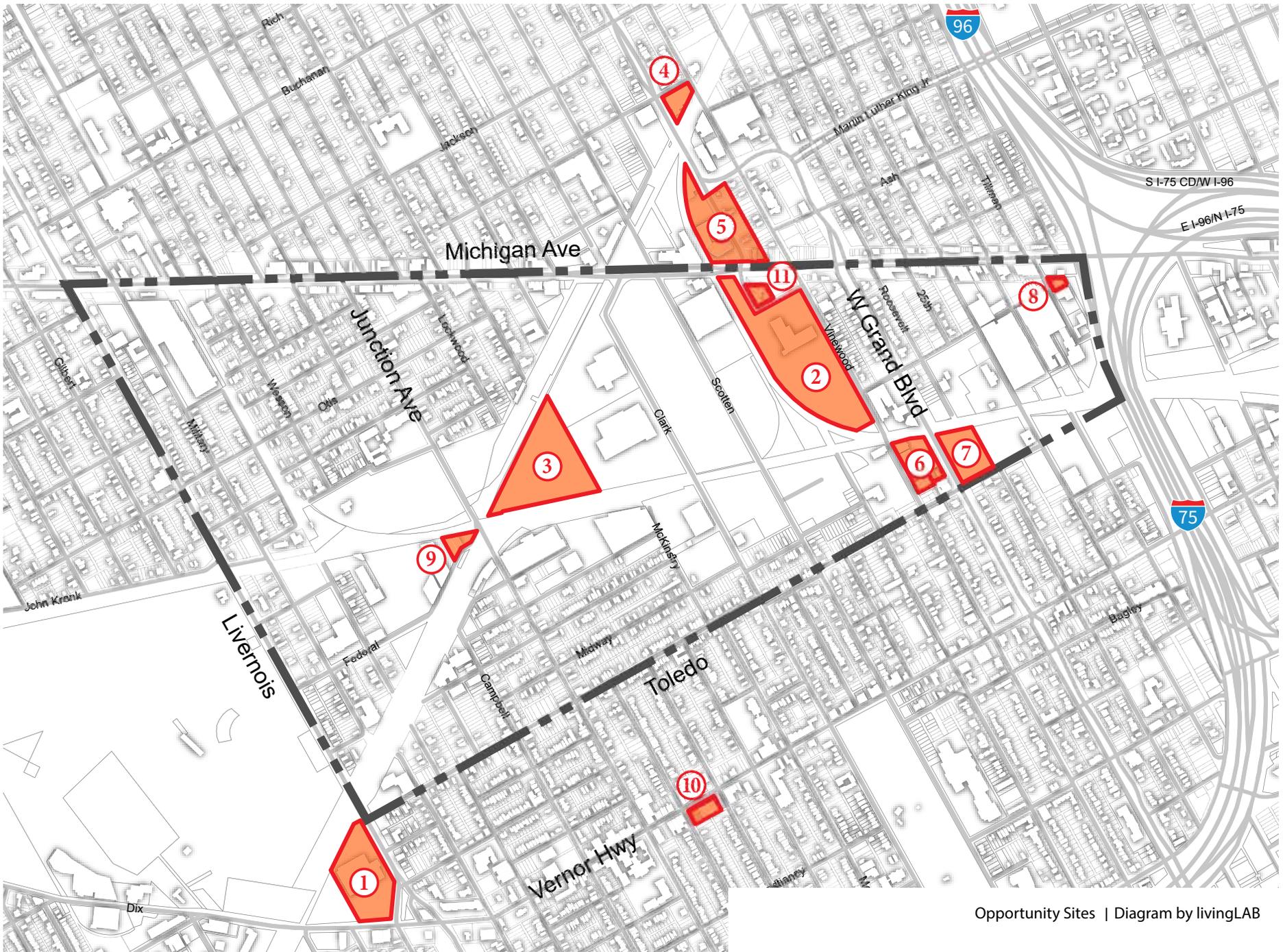
The City of Detroit and the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) also own many vacant residential lots. These lots are generally small and scattered throughout the area, although heavier concentrations can be found in the Condon

neighborhood. In general, the city has transferred ownership of vacant residential parcels to the DLBA. However, some residential property within the study area is zoned for industrial use. This anomaly was partially corrected with the recent rezoning approved by City Council (early 2021).

Vacant residential lots should be sold to adjacent homeowners as side lots, adopted by community organizations as neighborhood open space, developed for infill housing, or used to buffer industrial uses. In general, they should not be used to expand industrial or commercial uses.



Public Ownership Diagram of Study Area | Diagram by livingLAB



Opportunity Sites | Diagram by livingLAB



6370 W Vernor

1

The Southwest Detroit Business Association has taken a keen interest in this site over many years. Numerous studies have been undertaken to determine its best use and to attract interest from developers. It is prominently located at the intersection of Vernor and Livernois and at 5.5 acres, is the largest city-owned parcel in the study area. An adjacent 2.4-acre parcel located at 6408 W. Vernor is privately owned but could potentially be incorporated into a plan for overall site development. Some environmental remediation is currently underway, which could be a prelude to marketing the site for sale.



2995 Hubbard

2

This 16-acre parcel is the largest vacant site in the study area. It is owned by The Piston Group, an automotive supplier headquartered in Redford, Michigan. Although vacant, it is not currently being marketed for sale or lease. The owners could be approached about their intentions for the use of the site. The property is zoned for Intensive Industrial (M4) use but uses that intensify environmental impacts on surrounding neighborhoods should be discouraged.



2751 Clark

3

This triangular-shaped 10-acre site is part of the Clark Street Technology Park. It is zoned M4 and does not directly abut any residential blocks. It is currently used for truck storage but is being offered for sale for new development.



1130 W Grand Boulevard

4

This 40,000 square foot industrial building situated on a 1-acre site. The property is currently listed for sale for \$995,000. It is zoned M4, but its location adjacent to residential properties makes intensive industrial use undesirable. This building could be considered for multi-tenant use for small-scale manufacturing businesses. The property is being marketed as a potential location for cannabis production.



Hubbard St Properties 5

This area is comprised of multiple buildings and vacant lots of varied occupancy and ownership. Portions have been rezoned as Special District – Mixed Use (SD2), allowing for flexible redevelopment. The scale of the existing buildings and proximity to Michigan Avenue and Corktown suggest that a mixed-use district focused on small-scale manufacturing and creative businesses could be appropriate. An event space is currently under development within an old Fire Station on Vinewood Street within this area.



Vinewood St Properties 6

Two historic warehouse buildings sit vacant at 2410 and 2330 Vinewood. A vacant commercial building is on the same block at 615 W Grand Blvd. These properties were recently rezoned to SD2, which allows mixed use development. These buildings have the potential for redevelopment as loft style residential, office or manufacturing space. Although property conditions may pose a major obstacle to redevelopment. Another adjacent warehouse building has been converted to the Grand Lofts apartments at 2624 Vinewood.



3600 Toledo 7

This 3-acre site was highlighted in the West Vernor Framework Plan for housing redevelopment use and was recently rezoned to R5. A strengthening housing market in Southwest Detroit and rapidly rising values in nearby Corktown may make development of this site more feasible. The property is owned by Crown Enterprises, which has not yet announced any plans for development.



2600 22nd St 8

This 18,000 square foot warehouse building is located in an M4 zone and is listed for sale for \$1.5 million. Its zoning makes the property eligible for cannabis production and it is located on the same street as another cannabis growing business.



5620 Federal

9

This city-owned property is blighted and open to trespass. Aerial views indicate at least a partially collapsed roof. The property is located in an M4 zone at the intersection of Junction and two rail lines. The site's irregular shape and awkward location make it a challenging site for redevelopment and building demolition may be the best option. In the meantime, the building should be secured and the site better maintained.



4817 W Vernor

10

The former Brown's Bun Bakery complex is currently for sale on W Vernor. This 4-building complex totals 22,000 square feet on 2 acres and is zoned B4 for General Business. The bakery operated a production facility for many years with more than 40 employees. The asking price of \$2.4 million for these properties suggests that they may be repurposed for non-production uses. Although a commercial bakery or production facility could be an appropriate use on a retail corridor, ideally, the street frontage could be enlivened with retail or related uses.



3100 Hubbard

11

Built in 1896, this is one of the oldest surviving industrial buildings in the area. The building was occupied by Wayne Foundry and Stamping from 1939 to 2005 but has been vacant since. The building is approximately 18,000 SF on a 0.63-acre site in a M4 zone. The property is currently owned by Dennis Kefallinos, who owns many empty historic buildings throughout the city. Kefallinos owns Grand Lofts on Vinewood as well as vacant buildings at 3950 Michigan, 2410 Vinewood, and 901 W Grand Boulevard within the study area.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The Southwest Detroit Business Association plays a critical role in fostering economic development in Southwest Detroit. What follows is a description of how this role can be adapted and expanded for implementation within the industrial areas examined in this study.

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

Experience in other cities has shown that engaging and organizing businesses within an urban industrial district can lead to better outcomes for businesses and the surrounding community.

Place-based organizations are common in the community development sector, but less common in industrial districts. There are numerous community and business organizations based in residential neighborhoods and along commercial corridors in Detroit. These organizations provide an opportunity for stakeholders in a given geographic area to have a voice in shaping the future of their area and foster collaboration to address localized concerns.

Many place-based organizations are operating in Southwest Detroit, including SDBA. SDBA's service area covers a large portion of Southwest Detroit and includes some focus areas that receive concentrated attention. SDBA pioneered the use of the Business Improvement District (BID) as a tool for organizing businesses and generating annual income to fund commercial corridor improvements along the Vernor Corridor. SDBA has also obtained Main Street designation for portions of Vernor and Bagley. The Main Street methodology is a widely used place-based approach to improving commercial corridors and downtown districts.

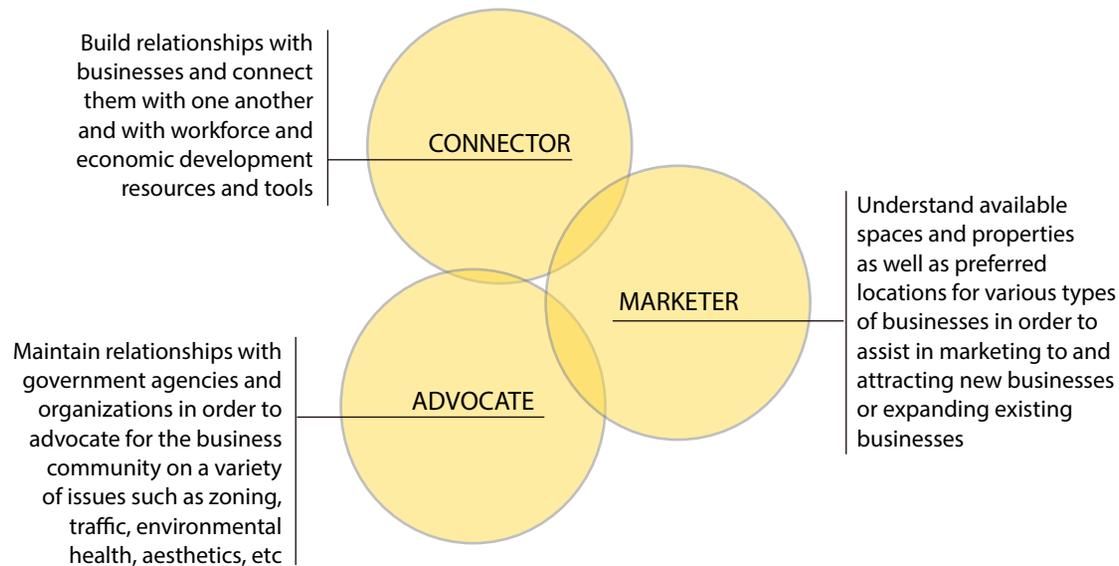
Perhaps the best-known example of a place-based organization operating in an industrial area in Detroit is the Eastern Market Corporation (EMC). EMC promotes the Eastern Market as a vibrant mixed-use district while preserving the character of the area as a working wholesale food industry hub.

Industrial district organizations have had demonstrated success in other cities. New York City, for example, has a well-established network of Business Industrial Zones, led by nonprofit district organizations. The City of Milwaukee has effectively used the Business Improvement District to organize and strengthen seven of its industrial districts.

LISC has supported an industrial district organizing strategy that has shown signs of success in the Milwaukee Junction neighborhood in Detroit and in various cities, including Indianapolis, Indiana, Jacksonville, Florida, and Duluth, Minnesota. The experience in the latter three cities is described in a report entitled [Industrial District Revitalization in Three Cities](#), produced by LISC. In the profiled cities, a combination of district management, locally owned small-scale manufacturing businesses, enhanced placemaking efforts, and intentional workforce development activities have helped foster equitable redevelopment in aging industrial districts.

To implement a district strategy will require a designated District Manager focused on building relationships with business and property owners within the target district, similar to the role of a Main Street Manager or BID Manager. Depending on funding availability and SDBA priorities, it may be possible to combine the role of Industrial District Manager with a Michigan Avenue District Manager in the near term.

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT



BUSINESS CONNECTOR

One of the most important functions of a District Manager is connecting businesses to each other and available resources. This is a role SDBA has played effectively throughout its history. SDBA should focus in the near term on continuing to build relationships with more industrial area businesses and incorporating them within its existing network and programs. As more business contacts are identified, names can be added to SDBA's email and social media lists. Online programming could be developed to appeal to industrial and manufacturing businesses that may help build these relationships over time.

There is already an existing ecosystem of workforce and economic development agencies that are anxious to support local businesses but lack the capacity to conduct the level of outreach required. It is likely that many of the businesses are not aware of the full range of services and assistance that may be available to them. Establishing a database of existing businesses and contact persons has been challenging thus far. Creating such a database would go a long way toward facilitating efficient outreach and information sharing.

A place-based district manager could also specialize in understanding the needs of industrial and manufacturing businesses across Southwest Detroit.

The Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) and Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) have staff members assigned to support industrial business retention. DEGC also employs a Business Liaison in each City Council District to help businesses navigate issues involving city government. SDBA could extend the reach of these organizations through local relationship building.

SDBA's connector role could also be enhanced by working more closely with workforce agencies to explicitly incorporate them into SDBA's business advocacy work. Three nonprofit agencies in Southwest Detroit are part of the network of LISC-sponsored Centers for Working Families and the City's Detroit at Work network. These organizations include SER Metro, Southwest Economic Solutions, and ACCESS. These agencies provide job readiness training to area residents and seek to connect those residents with real job opportunities. It is important, therefore, that these agencies understand current employer needs and future employment trends.

At times, the workforce agencies reach out to businesses and also respond to inquiries from businesses. As part of the Detroit at Work network, information regarding employers is kept in a central database. Few of the businesses in the study area are currently in the database, indicating that further outreach is needed. For large-scale employers, outreach efforts are led by the Mayor's office. Through extensive recruitment for the Stellantis plant on Detroit's east side, Detroit at Work has developed a large database of Detroiters seeking work who have been pre-screened for job readiness. This could be a valuable tool for businesses that are looking to hire.



The Greater Detroit Centers for Working Families (CWF) is a partnership between Detroit LISC and United Way for Southeastern Michigan (UWSEM) to advance the financial stability of families and individuals throughout the metro region. This partnership manages a network of seven nonprofit organizations that provide direct services to families.

CWF network members include three agencies in or near Southwest Detroit: SER Metro, Southwest Economic Solutions, and Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS). The CWF model combines employment services, financial education and coaching, and access to public and private benefits into one coordinated program. Each CWF client gets a coach who helps create a step-by-step plan to achieve personal financial goals.

Each CWF network organization also operates a career center connected to the Detroit at Work and Michigan Works! Workforce development systems. Detroit at Work is a Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation program and the Mayor's Workforce Development Board. In addition, each of the CWF offers a unique menu of additional programs that include job training for youth and adults, GED and certificate classes, and employer engagement initiatives.

There are other organizations that support the manufacturing sector that community-based organizations are often unaware of or overlook. University-based programs such as the Economic Growth Institute at the University of Michigan is one example. Other organizations include the [Michigan Manufacturing Association](#), [Manufacturing, USA](#), and [LIFT](#) (based in nearby Corktown). Becoming better connected to this ecosystem would be worthwhile if SDBA wishes to serve as a connector with manufacturing and industrial businesses at the neighborhood level.

The manufacturing sector is undergoing rapid change with innovations in technology, advances in automation, and the interconnectivity of machines and processes through the “internet of things.” Many small companies will need assistance to adapt to these changes to remain competitive, especially when they are part of the supply chains for larger, advanced manufacturing companies. There may be new opportunities in growing fields such as cybersecurity or with the use of new technologies such as 3D printing. Likewise, there will be a need for adaptations within the workforce development arena as employees will need to adapt to a changing workplace. Community-based organizations are generally not well informed about these trends and subsequently are left out of efforts to influence their impact on the communities they serve.

When community-based organizations have strong relationships with local businesses and business-supporting agencies, they are better equipped to influence business decisions that impact their community. To be effective, however, the business connector role requires dedicated staff time and corresponding resources.

BUSINESS MARKETER

Southwest Detroit Business Association currently plays an active role in marketing Southwest Detroit to attract residents, visitors, and businesses. Within industrial districts, marketing is generally focused on business attraction, but could also include marketing to business customers in some cases. Business attraction involves matching new or expanding businesses with vacant or underutilized properties. SDBA currently plays a role in business attraction through its Real Estate Advocate position.

SDBA is often called on to help identify potential sites for new businesses through ongoing relationships with economic development agencies within the city and state. Local knowledge of available real estate can play a critical role in successful attraction efforts.

City development agencies have indicated that the study area is not currently the focus of city-led land assembly efforts for industrial uses. Although there are some larger sites (10-17 acres), current city attraction efforts are focused on assembling sites of 20-30 acres. The Delray Framework Plan focused on the Delray neighborhood further south of the study area, is designed primarily around industrial business attraction in proximity to the new Gordie Howe International Bridge. The Delray area generally offers better opportunities for large-scale industrial site assembly in Southwest Detroit.

Ideally, new businesses moving to the study area would bring opportunities for good-paying jobs for residents and have little or no negative impact on the surrounding community. Locally owned Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women Business Enterprises (WBE) should also be prioritized for attraction efforts.



[Hacienda Mexican Foods](#) is a locally-owned and operated producer of tortillas and tortilla chips. The company was started in Southwest Detroit in 1994 and maintains a strong civic and community presence there. It employs approximately 100 people in three locations. SDBA has already been engaged with Hacienda to help it find a location to consolidate its operations and retain this iconic business within the community.

Helping home-grown manufacturing businesses like Hacienda stay and thrive is a valuable role that SDBA can play. There may also be an opportunity to think of manufacturing innovatively, incorporating retail and food serving functions within the same site, and highlighting the cultural significance of the company's products.

The vacant city-owned site at Vernor and Livernois, for example, could be an excellent location for a company like Hacienda, especially if the development could include a mix of uses, including a retail outlet that connected with the Vernor Corridor.

There are several vacant sites within the study area, though not all of them are currently being marketed for sale or lease. There are only a few city-owned sites. The City and DEGC often focus their attraction efforts on city-owned sites because they already control the disposition of these sites.

The largest and most important city-owned site is the former DPW yard at Vernor and Livernois, on the western edge of the planning area. This site has been the subject of several planning studies over the last decade. SDBA has played a leading role in proposing new uses for this site, and at one time considered serving as developer for the site. Some site remediation work is currently underway, and it is anticipated that the city may issue an RFP for developers in 2021.

Although past proposals have emphasized retail development, housing and public space, light manufacturing or food production should also be considered. Despite the property's current M4 zoning, heavy industrial and logistics uses should be strongly discouraged. These uses would clash with community visions for this site and would create additional traffic, pollution, and noise along this vibrant retail corridor. Rezoning this property to prevent intensive industrial use should occur before the city markets this property for sale.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVOCATE

To ensure that area development is equitable, community-based organizations like SDBA must be prepared to engage in advocacy on a wide variety of issues. For example, revisions to the City Zoning Ordinance or establishment of designated truck routes require input from residents and businesses and SDBA is well positioned to be both a community convener and content expert on the issues.

At times, SDBA must also be prepared to advocate for or against specific development proposals or to condition its support on changes that benefit the community at large. Most developments do not rise to the level that triggers the City's formal Community Benefits process, but that does not preclude engaging with developers to seek community benefits. Also, developments requiring public regulatory approvals allow community stakeholders to weigh in on development proposals.

Effective advocacy requires collaboration and engagement with a variety of stakeholders. Some communities have developed collaborative processes for working together and shared criteria against which they can evaluate specific development proposals. In Minneapolis, for example, a broad coalition of community-based organizations developed an [Equitable Development Scorecard](#) for evaluating and influencing development proposals. Locally, [Doing Development Differently in Detroit \(D4\)](#) and other nonprofit organizations are working on adapting this concept for Detroit, which could be a useful resource to SDBA.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT SCORECARD

The Twin Cities, Minnesota, created a downloadable Equity Scorecard to ensure that the principles and practices of equitable development, environmental justice, and affordability are applied in all communities. It's a tool that can be used when scoring a proposed development project, engaging residents, evaluating impacts of policy, making policy recommendations, etc.

Principles of Equitable Development

PUBLIC SUBSIDIES PROVIDED TO DEVELOPERS AND CORPORATIONS SHOULD RESULT IN CONCRETE AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY BENEFITS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AS DEFINED BY THEIR COMMUNITY.

EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT practices **involve the local community members most affected** in the development project (especially low-wealth people, people of color, neighborhood groups, community organizations, people living with disabilities, and new immigrants).

EQUITABLE LAND USE practices require that the overall vision, plan, and implementation **includes local communities' assets, aspirations, potential, and preferences.** They aim to keep current residents in the area and develop projects that promote people's health, well-being, and prosperity.

EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION practices **integrate transit into walkable, livable, and affordable** land use practices to enhance healthy living within low-income communities and communities of color.

EQUITABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT practices require evidence that policies and programs work to **prioritize community based financial intelligence, sustainable wealth creation, and high quality job opportunities** that prevent unwanted displacement of residents and small businesses from low-income communities and communities of color.

EQUITABLE HOUSING practices give families of all income levels access to housing that **costs no more than 30% of their household income.**



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SMALL-SCALE MANUFACTURING

Over the past decade, there has been a rise in the development of independent, small-scale manufacturing companies in urban areas. This has been fueled in part by changing consumer tastes favoring locally made high-quality goods rather than mass produced low-cost alternatives. These businesses often grow out of home-based businesses started by food entrepreneurs, artists, or artisans. In many cases, e-commerce has helped these businesses grow and expand their markets.

These small-scale manufacturing companies produce a wide range of products. Common business categories include apparel, food and beverage, woodworking, metalworking, jewelry and accessories, and personal care products. These types of businesses can provide wealth-building opportunities for local entrepreneurs as well as job opportunities for residents.

SDBA could play a role in nurturing locally-owned small-scale manufacturing businesses by partnering with entrepreneurship support programs such as ProsperUS, Build Institute, and Tech Town, and by helping small-scale manufacturers find appropriate space in Southwest Detroit.

In 2016, the [Urban Manufacturing Alliance \(UMA\)](#) published a study entitled [The State of Urban Manufacturing](#) which included a survey of 99 small-scale manufacturers in the metropolitan Detroit area. The study revealed that over half of businesses surveyed expected to grow and needed access to low-cost, flexible space to do so. [All About the Jobs](#), another UMA study published in 2019, included case studies of eight multi-tenant industrial buildings that have

helped to incubate local small-scale manufacturers in cities across the country. In Detroit, the original Ponyride development in Corktown was an example of a successful multi-tenant building that helped incubate several successful small-scale manufacturing and “maker” businesses that now employ dozens of people.

Developing and running a multi-tenant manufacturing space is a major undertaking and likely beyond SDBA’s current capacity. However, SDBA may be able to partner with or support other developers or organizations pursuing this strategy. Detroiters First, LLC, for example, is a socially motivated development company seeking to provide secure, affordable and sustainable space for small-scale manufacturing and construction companies owned by Detroiters. Their model also includes on-site training, business development and mentoring services. They are currently seeking a building to develop and nonprofit and philanthropic partners to help realize their vision.

Strengthening SDBA’s connections to the small-scale manufacturing ecosystem more generally could also result in long-term benefits. For example, building relationships with organizations such as the Industrial Sewing and Innovation Center (ISAIC) could position SDBA to attract and support new textile businesses in the future.

Some small-scale manufacturers also incorporate retail outlets within their production facilities. This approach can bring life to vacant industrial districts or increase the vibrancy of traditional commercial corridors. SDBA could incorporate this type of small manufacturer within its retail attraction strategies.



ISAIC, [the Industrial Sewing and Innovation Center](#), is a non-profit organization whose mission is to “advance innovation in sustainable apparel manufacturing and equitable talent force development.” ISAIC operates a training institute with national reach and a production facility located in Midtown Detroit. Whereas most clothing sold in the United States today is produced in countries where workers are paid very low wages, ISAIC’s production team is paid a living wage with benefits and has access to advanced training and upward mobility. ISAIC represents an approach to small-scale manufacturing that puts people first and has a long-term goal of helping to establish additional production facilities and worker-owned businesses. Building relationships now with ISAIC and other innovators in the small-manufacturing sector, could pay off later when these businesses are ready to grow and incubate new businesses.



Image: Detroit News

BUSINESS SUCCESSION

It is estimated that more than 6,000 industrial businesses in SE Michigan could change ownership in the coming years. In many cases, family-owned and privately held companies have owners nearing retirement age without a clear succession plan in place. Many of these businesses will be bought out by larger corporations operating on a national or global scale. When ownership transfers outside of the local area, these businesses are more vulnerable to closing, downsizing, or relocating.

An important emerging strategy is encouraging these business owners to consider selling their businesses to their employees through an Employee Stock Ownership Plan or establishing a worker-owned cooperative business. The [University of Michigan Economic Growth Institute](#) is currently implementing a project to identify businesses that are good candidates for transition to worker-ownership. Other organizations that are pursuing similar strategies include the Center for Community Based Enterprises and Community Wealth Fund.

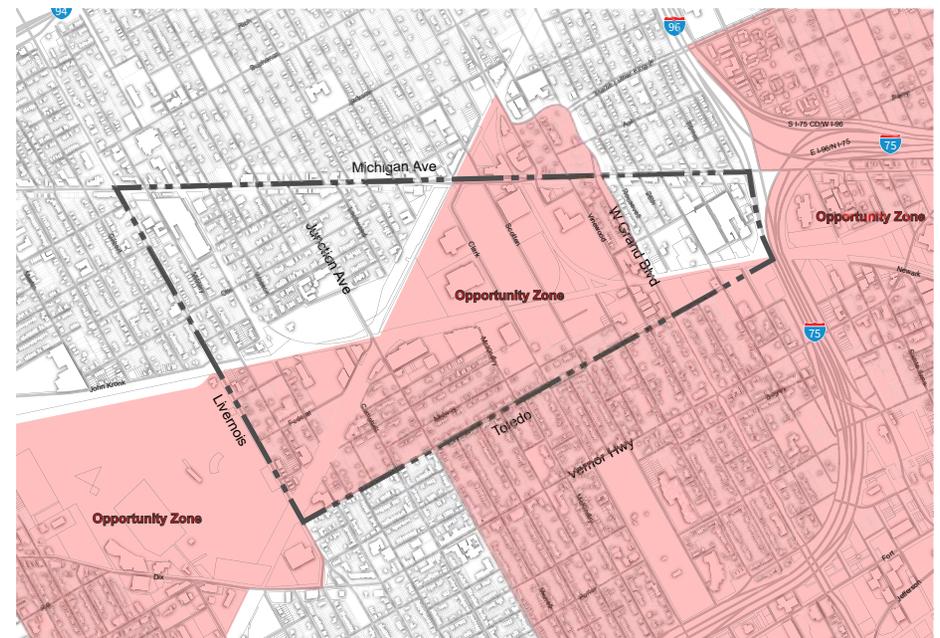
Business succession could also be an effective tool for increasing local, minority- and women-owned businesses. Purchasing a viable, existing business can be an effective way to become a business owner or expand an existing business. A Chicago-area nonprofit called [Re/Cast Advisors](#) works to identify business purchase opportunities in the manufacturing sector and match them with entrepreneurs of color.

SDBA should connect with these programs to understand how these strategies could be utilized should it become aware of business succession opportunities within Southwest Detroit.

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

The four census tracts that comprise the majority of the study area have been designated as [Opportunity Zones](#) by the State of Michigan. This designation has the potential to attract investment based on tax incentives. Opportunity Zone investments allow investors to shelter capital gains from taxation by investing in designated areas. Unlike Low Income Housing Tax Credits or New Markets Tax Credits, there is potentially no limit to the number of development projects that Opportunity Zone investments could fund. Projects can also vary widely, and equity investments can be made directly into businesses located in Opportunity Zones, in addition to investing in real estate developments.

In practice, Opportunity Zones are still relatively new, and few projects in Detroit have utilized Opportunity Zone investments thus far. They have also come under criticism nationally for how the zones were selected and whether the investments promote equitable development or fuel further gentrification. However, as currently constituted, Opportunity Zones are another potential tool to spur equitable development in the study area. National community development intermediaries such as LISC are working to utilize Opportunity Zone tax benefits to match impact investors with beneficial investment opportunities. Many business and property owners within the study area may be unaware of Opportunity Zones. Informational programming could be offered to raise awareness within the business community.



Detroit Opportunity Zones | Diagram by livingLAB

CANNABIS INDUSTRY

In 2018, voters in Michigan passed a ballot initiative legalizing the recreational use of cannabis. Since then, the cannabis industry has been growing within the State. In Detroit, growing and processing cannabis is restricted to industrially-zoned property and further restricted by spacing requirements and other limitations. At least two cannabis production facilities are open or plan to open within the study area. One facility on 22nd Street is already growing and processing marijuana plants and plans to open a retail dispensary on-site. This business has recently purchased an adjacent building and is expanding its operations. The other business is not yet open but has plans for a large facility that would include growing, processing, and retail sales.

These facilities utilize high-tech growing techniques, which require a substantial upfront investment. This industry has the potential to employ residents at living wages. One operator indicated his workforce earns between \$38,000 and \$60,000 per year with full benefits. Although retail dispensaries are controversial in many neighborhoods, production facilities located in industrial zones could provide good jobs without the same level of controversy.

The City of Detroit recently passed an ordinance giving licensing preference for marijuana facilities to “legacy Detroiters” who meet certain requirements related to historic residency in the City. The intent is to provide more opportunities to Detroit residents to benefit from the wealth creation potential associated with business ownership in the cannabis industry. This ordinance is currently under judicial review, and the issuance of new licenses is temporarily suspended.

SDBA should engage more directly with cannabis production businesses and with the community in general to foster a greater understanding of this industry and discern whether the community is supportive of its expansion in the area.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

While conducting this study, community stakeholders stressed that future economic development in Southwest Detroit should not come at the expense of community health and well-being. Southwest Detroit is already heavily impacted by industrial pollution, leading to high rates of asthma and other negative health consequences for residents, especially children. The following section describes strategies to mitigate the negative environmental impacts of development and support a transition to a cleaner, greener economy.

INDUSTRIAL BUFFERS

The current Detroit Zoning Ordinance lays out minimum development standards for industrial property that requires some buffering between industrial and non-industrial uses. Buffering refers to the using plantings or other edge treatments along the perimeter of industrial properties to improve area aesthetics and block unsightly views. In addition, buffering has the potential to dampen noise and improve air quality. The city is currently updating the Zoning Ordinance, which can provide an opportunity to strengthen buffering requirements.

Incorporating stronger buffering requirements into the Zoning Ordinance will give the community greater leverage when new industrial projects are proposed. Unless required to do so by city ordinance, industrial property owners are likely to be reluctant to invest in buffering because of the cost of installation and maintenance. SDBA could explore the concept of creating a grant program for industrial buffering, similar in design to its facade grant program for commercial storefront businesses. Buffering could also be installed on public property or in the public right-of-way when possible. The design of buffering solutions should

consider the operational needs of the industrial business as well as the desires of adjacent residential property owners. Getting input from residents can help ensure that the buffering strategy meets its intended outcome.



Potential Buffer Locations | Diagram by livingLAB

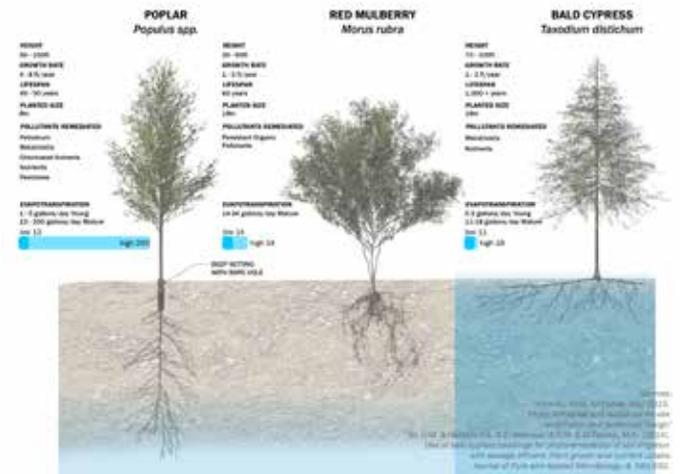
BUFFERING STRATEGIES

Strategies to buffer industrial properties from residential properties can vary from landscaped buffers, fencing, and art installations, to creating community greenspaces such as the Cadillac Gardens built on property owned by Ideal Group and managed by SDEV. Landscaping can also help with stormwater management and pollution reduction.

Image: Cadillac Gardens (Ideal and SDEV)



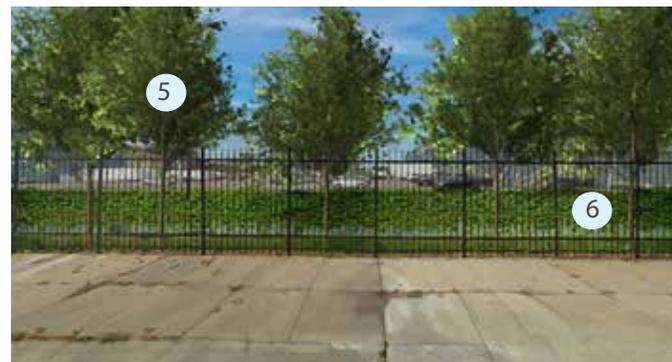
Image: Bishop Land Design | Delray Framework Plan



BEFORE - Industrial Property Adjacent to Residential



AFTER - Potential Screening/Buffering Practices



- 1 Coniferous trees and shrubs can assist in screening buildings.
- 2 Keeping a 'mowing path' along the fence edge allows for regular maintenance.
- 3 Dark fences visually recede and look less like a barrier. Pushing the fence a few feet back and planting between the sidewalk and fence is also an option to help soften the edges.
- 4 Complete and well-maintained sidewalks are important for both aesthetics and safety.
- 5 A variety of shade trees can help screen industrial buildings, provide shade and uptake stormwater. Species such as Poplar, Red Mulberry and Bald Cypress can also assist in re-mediating pollutants in the ground.
- 6 A well maintained hedge can assist in visually screening parking lots and storage areas. Depending on zoning, an opaque wall may be required to screen the parking area.

SOLAR ENERGY

The City of Detroit recently published the [Detroit Solar Toolkit](#) to assist Detroit property owners with evaluating the potential for generating on-site solar energy. Given the large rooftop areas of many industrial and manufacturing buildings, solar installations may be a good investment for many building owners.

Even if solar may not meet all the power needs of every business, it may be able to supplement DTE-supplied power and potentially reduce utility rates and costs for that business. It is also possible for business owners to enter into a Purchased Power Agreement (PPA) through which a third-party company would install the solar panels at no upfront cost to the building owner and sell the power back to the owner, resulting in long-term savings and greater controls of energy costs.

As the price of solar energy continues to fall, it will become an increasingly common and important alternative to fossil-fuel-generated energy. In addition to cost benefits, solar energy can help a business reduce its carbon footprint and contribute to a more sustainable environment. Most businesses are likely to be unaware of the benefits of going solar.



Image: Ford Motor Company/DTE Energy
Dearborn Deck 400 Solar Array



Image: Canton IKEA



Image: BCBS | J Ranck Electric

DETROIT SOLAR TOOLKIT

The City of Detroit Sustainability Action Agenda includes a goal to double the amount of energy generated from solar installations in Detroit by 2024. To assist property owners, the City conducted a solar feasibility assessment to investigate and determine the potential for solar energy generation at different scales in Detroit. The Detroit Solar Toolkit consists of five different tools to enable Detroiters to undertake the equitable deployment of solar energy as a path to a more sustainable future. The Toolkit includes an interactive online map (adjacent screen capture of the study area) that identifies the solar generation potential of all buildings and parcels in Detroit.

GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) charges all property owners a Drainage Fee based on the area of impermeable surfaces on their property. This fee is intended to support the cost of maintaining stormwater infrastructure. For large property owners, including many industrial and manufacturing businesses, these fees can be substantial.

Property owners can potentially reduce their Drainage Fees by installing Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI), which diverts or slows the discharge of stormwater into the City's combined sewer system. Property owners who install GSI may be eligible for Drainage Fee Credits from DWSD. GSI often utilizes planted areas such as rain gardens or bio-swales to capture rainwater on-site and allow it to seep into the ground. GSI can have benefits beyond stormwater handling, such as beautification, reduced heat island effect, and habitat creation, that make it superior to grey infrastructure. Although GSI installation offers the potential for Drainage Fee reductions, many property owners find the up-front costs prohibitive.

DFC and SDBA both have experience with designing and installing GSI projects. SDBA installed a GSI practice adjacent to its offices on Vernor. It has also explored alternative financing strategies for funding GSI installations to reduce business drainage fees and alleviate street and underpass flooding. A recent SDBA project (Assessment of Using Tax Increment Financing as a Tool for Green Stormwater Infrastructure in SW Detroit) investigated whether tax increment financing (TIF) could be a feasible strategy for financing GSI installations. The area around the intersection of Vernor and Dix (the "Bowtie District"), which includes the vacant

DPW yard, was identified as a potential location for a GSI-motivated TIF.

DFC coordinates the Land and Water Works Coalition (LWWC), which promotes public education about the benefits and methods of GSI implementation. Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision (SDEV), a community-based organization headquartered within the study area, is a member of the LWWC and is participating in the Coalition's Ambassador Program in 2021. This program supports public education and outreach to encourage GSI installation. This year, the focus is on outreach to small businesses, churches, and nonprofit organizations, with an emphasis on identifying cost effective opportunities for GSI implementation. DFC is currently working with one property owner within the study area to design and construct a "green parking lot" utilizing GSI practices to reduce drainage fees and create a rain garden amenity. SDEV also has a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to install GSI demonstration projects within the study area. SDBA could collaborate with SDEV and DFC to help local businesses understand the benefits of GSI and the process for applying for Drainage Fee Credits.

In 2018, the City of Detroit adopted a Post Construction Stormwater Ordinance, which requires new developments over one-half acre in size to incorporate GSI practices or other strategies for handling stormwater on-site or pay into a fund to support shared off-site GSI practices. Several sites within the study area are large enough that new development would require compliance with this ordinance. SDBA should monitor the development of these sites to ensure that the ordinance is being enforced and that any installations of GSI practices are designed to maximize benefits to the community.

GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Detroit Post Construction Stormwater Ordinance (2018) requires new developments over one-half acre in size to incorporate GSI practices. The City reports that 206 stormwater management projects have been completed (as of February 2021) managing 379 million gallons of stormwater. The most common practices thus far are disconnecting impervious sites from sewerage drains and physically disconnecting downspouts from sewerage drains. Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects can take on many forms, including porous pavement (rain water can infiltrate), green roofs, rain gardens, bio-swales, rain barrels, etc.

Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision (SDEV) is headquartered in the study area and is part of the Land and Water Works Coalition. In 2021, SDEV will be focused on outreach to small businesses, churches, and nonprofits to identify cost-effective opportunities for GSI implementation.



Disconnected Downspout
Image: City of Detroit



Grandmont Rosedale Porous Pavement
Image: livingLAB



TCF Center Green Roof
Image: Crains Detroit Business



Ford Rouge Plant
Image: William McDonough + Partners

GREEN JOBS

Broadly defined, “Green Jobs” are jobs that contribute to the transition to a more environmentally sustainable and resilient future. The impact of climate change, for example, will require a shift to clean, renewable energy sources, increased efforts to improve energy efficiency and conservation, and resilient infrastructure to handle more frequent and extreme weather events. Environmental sustainability also requires new ways to deal with transportation, waste handling, air and water pollution, food production, and many other aspects of everyday life.

Industrial buffering, green stormwater installation, and solar panel installation could all contribute to local job creation and wealth building, as well as improved environmental outcomes. [Evergreen Energy Solutions](#), for example, is a worker-owned cooperative business that installs solar panels and LED lighting in Cleveland, OH. It is a member of the [Evergreen Cooperatives](#), a connected group of worker-owned businesses started in 2008 as an alternative strategy for economic development in a low-income Cleveland community. Other Evergreen Co-ops include a commercial greenhouse that grows produce for a local hospital. In Detroit, social enterprises such as Ryter Cooperative Industries bring solar technologies to the city’s neighborhoods and offer job training and career opportunities to residents. Local landscape and construction companies could be supported to include green stormwater infrastructure installation and energy conservation practices into their business offerings.

There is a growing awareness in the nonprofit, for-profit, and governmental sectors of the need for a green economic transition, which also provides equitable, family-sustaining income for residents. A large-scale infrastructure investment

plan, currently under discussion at the national level, could provide a big boost for Green Jobs in the near future.

SDBA could apply a Green Jobs “lens” when deciding whether to support new development proposals or devise a business attraction strategy for the area. It could also look for ways to help current businesses decrease their carbon footprint and overall environmental impact.

The future of manufacturing and industrial districts need not be marked by pollution and environmental degradation. Innovative approaches to a factory and product design are increasingly being tried around the country as more companies look for ways to reduce their carbon footprint and support a cleaner environment. Even auto giants like Ford and General Motors are making bold commitments to reduce carbon emissions and are seeking similar commitments from their suppliers. Community-based organizations like SDBA can play an important role in forging a path toward cleaner and more equitable industrial development in the 21st century.

GREEN JOBS

In 2015, Method (a maker of biodegradable cleaning supplies) teamed up with Gotham Greens (a fresh food urban agriculture company) to build the country's first LEED Platinum manufacturing plant in the Pullman neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. The Chicago factory includes a wind turbine that generates half of the building's annual electrical needs. The 75,000 square foot rooftop greenhouse produces about 500 tons of greens annually, supplying the local retail and restaurant market.

Green City Growers Cooperative (GCGC) is a 3.25-acre, employee-owned, hydroponic food production enterprise that is revitalizing Cleveland's Central neighborhood while providing quality employment opportunities (42 jobs), building community wealth and assets, and promoting healthy food access both in the neighborhood and citywide.

METHOD & GOTHAM GREENS - CHICAGO



Image: William McDonough + Partners



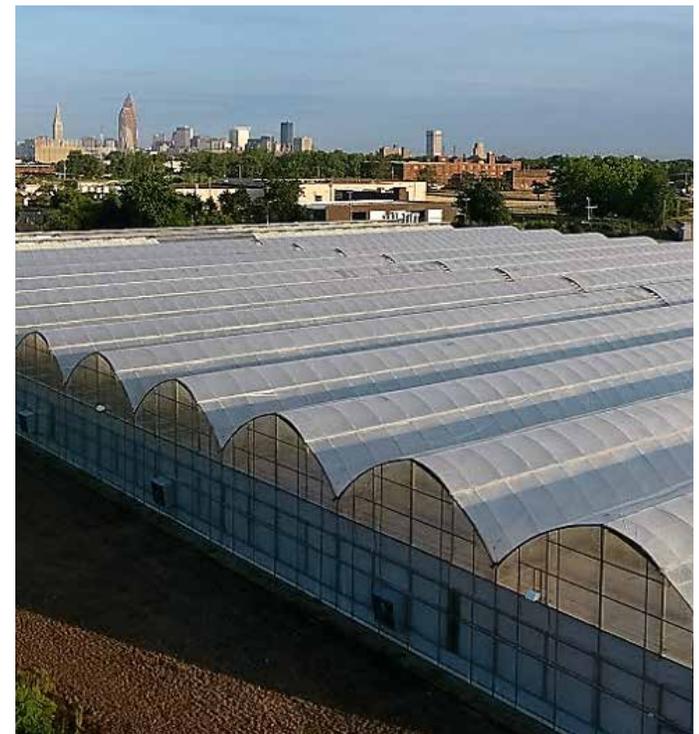
Image: PR Newswire



GREEN CITY GROWERS COOPERATIVE (GCGC) - CLEVELAND



Image: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel



6. CONCLUSION

Industrial and manufacturing businesses are an important part of Detroit's economic landscape and deserve the attention of community-based organizations such as SDBA. Detroit's historic prosperity was built on a strong manufacturing sector with blue-collar jobs that paid a living wage and fueled the growth of the city's middle class. These kinds of jobs can still offer an opportunity to present-day Detroit residents. In addition, opportunities exist for Detroiters to build wealth and economic prosperity through business ownership in the small-scale manufacturing and industrial sectors.

At the same time, some industrial uses can negatively impact the quality of life of nearby residents. Resident health and well-being cannot be sacrificed in the name of economic growth. Innovative approaches are needed to mitigate the negative impact of the industry in the short run, while laying the groundwork for a transition to a greener, less polluting, and more sustainable future.

In cities around the country, place-based organizations have begun to apply community development principles and strategies to industrial districts to help create jobs and foster equitable economic development that can benefit both the business community and the neighborhoods where they are located. SDBA's long history as an effective advocate for both businesses and residents makes it well-positioned to assume this role in Southwest Detroit.

Throughout this report, strategies are described for encouraging equitable and environmentally sustainable development within the identified study area. Some of these strategies are already being pursued at some level by SDBA. To

be truly effective, however, dedicated staff and adequate financial resources will be required. The following page summarizes several practical next steps that SDBA could take to begin implementing these strategies while seeking additional resources.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

1. Dedicate staff to continue outreach to businesses in the manufacturing and industrial sectors. Consider creating a new District Manager position to lead these efforts and play the roles of a business connector, district marketer and equitable development advocate within the study area. Depending on funding availability, this new District Manager could simultaneously serve a similar role for the Michigan Avenue commercial corridor. However, in the long-term, these may need to be two distinct positions.
2. Incorporate manufacturing and industrial sectors into SDBA's ongoing programming. Continue to develop a comprehensive contact list and incorporate those businesses into SDBA mailings and social media communications. Consider hosting workshops on topics that may appeal to these businesses such as workforce resources, trends in manufacturing, drainage fee reduction, succession planning, solar power, opportunity zones, etc.
3. Work with other stakeholders to influence policy related to industrial development and land use. Support efforts to downzone property where appropriate to restrict intensive industrial uses and protect resident interests. Support efforts to incorporate stronger industrial buffering requirements and property development standards into the City's Zoning Ordinance. Support efforts to regulate truck traffic that impacts local residents and businesses.
4. Develop a set of Equitable Development Principles that SDBA can use to guide its decision-making on policy issues and whether to support or oppose specific development proposals in Southwest Detroit. Work collaboratively with other community-based stakeholders to develop a common "Equitable Development Scorecard" or similar tool to guide collaborative action.
5. Partner with industrial businesses to improve edges and buffers where properties are adjacent to residential areas and commercial corridors. Consider developing an industrial buffering matching grant program to incentivize industrial property owners to make improvements.
6. Promote innovative use of vacant, developable sites, especially the City-owned site at Livernois and Vernor. SDBA has been an advocate for the development of the Livernois site for many years and continues to explore development options. Consider light manufacturing as part of a mix of uses for this and other sites.
7. Strengthen relationships with the workforce agencies that are part of the Centers for Working Families network, to help bridge the gap between workforce agencies, businesses, and residents seeking job opportunities.

REFERENCES

[All About the Jobs Report \(UMA\)](#)

[Delray Framework Plan](#)

[Detroit LISC](#)

[Detroit Future City](#)

[Detroit Future City Strategic Framework](#)

[Detroit Solar Toolkit](#)

[Detroit Truck Study](#)

[Economic Growth Institute](#)

[Evergreen Cooperatives](#)

[Evergreen Energy Solutions](#)

[Hacienda Mexican Foods](#)

[Industrial District Revitalization in Three Cities \(LISC\)](#)

[Industrial Sewing and Innovation Center](#)

[LIFT \(Corktown\)](#)

[Manufacturing, USA](#)

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2021

Exploring Opportunities for Equitable Development
in a Southwest Detroit Industrial District

