Expanding the Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink: 
Connecting Southwest Neighbors

Healthy Environments Partnership
Brightmoor Community Center
Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
Friends of Parkside
Henry Ford Health System
Rebuilding Communities Inc.
University of Michigan School of Public Health
and
Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Corktown and Mexicantown region is one focal point for revitalization of the Detroit metropolitan area. New housing is being built, historic structures are being preserved, and commercial areas are becoming vibrant and active. The vision of non-motorized connectivity across these two neighborhoods, to the Detroit River, and to other areas of the city, is gaining momentum and support. This report focuses on that connectivity by analyzing current greenway efforts and making suggestions for enhancing that vision. Furthermore, it suggests ways that the built environment can be used and embraced by neighborhood residents, particularly for health-enhancing outcomes.

Southwest Detroit (Figure 1) is one of three Healthy Environments Partnership study areas. The Healthy Environments Partnership (HEP) is a community-based participatory research project designed to examine and address aspects of the social and physical environment that contribute to racial and socioeconomic disparities in risk of cardiovascular disease.

Figure 1. Healthy Environments Partnership study area in southwest Detroit.
Through the "Lean and Green in Motown" (LGM) project, HEP is working to better understand relationships between the built environment, physical activity and dietary practices, and to assess the potential for interventions that include environmental change efforts to increase physical activity and promote healthy diets. HEP aims to:

1. Assess residents’ use of green spaces in selected neighborhoods to understand the relationship of the built environment to obesity.
2. Develop and implement an intervention that includes modifications to the built environment along with social and behavioral approaches to promote physical activity.
3. Conduct evaluations to determine the impact of the intervention.
4. Disseminate findings broadly throughout Detroit and elsewhere.

Three neighborhoods were chosen as LGM study sites—Southwest, Northwest, and Eastside Detroit. Each neighborhood is developing a greenway corridor for non-motorized transportation, recreation, community revitalization, and environmental improvement.

As part of objective #2, above, greenway reports were developed for each study area. These reports analyze the greenway routes being implemented, make recommendations for future development phases of the greenways, and outline ways that the greenway routes can be programmed to attract maximum use by area residents. The first LGM greenway study was produced in 2006 for Southeast Detroit by a team of Master’s of Urban and Regional Planning students at the University of Michigan.¹

II. HISTORY OF SOUTHWEST DETROIT NEIGHBORHOODS

The physical landscape, both natural and built, and its different inhabitants can tell us a great deal about the history of a region and a community. Noticeable landscape changes help us understand the development of a city and explain why it looks as it does.

In its early history, Detroit was a relatively flat, natural prairie with wetlands, streams and creeks. Algonquin and Iroquois indigenous people, who depended on the Detroit River and the surrounding waterways for daily life, inhabited the region. Imprints of these people remain apparent today. For example, Michigan Avenue was laid over an old Native American trail used as a trading route for furs and artifacts.

With the arrival of the French in 1701, the region experienced enduring landscape change. Villages were established, and surrounding land was cleared for farming, granaries and sawmills. Subdivision of land for farming occurred not in the cardinal directions, but instead oriented to the Detroit River. Nineteenth century maps of the region show the layout of early French farms, called “ribbon farms,” which stretched out perpendicular to the river.

Detroit’s City Grid

Today’s Detroit shows imprints of four distinct settlements throughout its history.

Native American Imprints: Many of the Detroit major roads, in particular Michigan Avenue, follow old Native American fur and trading routes.

French grid: Early French farms, called “arpents” (ribbon) farms were laid out perpendicular to the river. Land was divided into three miles lengths from the river with 200 to 400 ft. river frontage, so that a greater number of families could benefit from the river. Once farms began to be subdivided for development, streets were plotted following the farm lines, with a NW-SE direction following the course of the river. Later when properties were further subdivided, property owners chose locations of secondary EW streets; an example of this is Vernor Highway and Charlevoix, where the streets do not always line up.

Woodward (DC grid): “After the historic fire of 1805, Judge Augustus Woodward surveyed the ruins of Detroit,” and based on plans similar to Paris and Washington DC, “foretold a destiny of greatness for the city.” (Michigan at Trumbull: Turning the Corners: 2000 University of Michigan Design Charrette) Woodward’s grid was laid on top of the French property grid, although only in the central portions of the town. The current plans for Detroit continue to reflect the monumental scale and ambitious aspirations of the city.

US survey: Once US gained control of Michigan, US government began to survey Northwest Territories, preparing for the eventual sale of the territorial lands. Thus all property not already divided by French grid - approximately 70% of the city – reflects a US north-south grid.


3 Ibid
As the population of the area increased, the farms and villages were annexed, becoming part of the rapidly developing city of Detroit. The ribbon farms served as a structure in the layout of the city grid. Early villages such as Springwells and Riverside occupied the area now called Southwest Detroit. In fact, Springwells, today part of Hubbard-Richard and Vernor-Springwells neighborhoods, is possibly one of the oldest villages of 19th century Detroit, laid out in 1847 along several of Detroit’s ribbon farms.4

With the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, Detroit became a destination. The city grew into an important manufacturing town attracting thousands of settlers, businessmen and adventurers from across the Atlantic to the piers of Detroit.5 Many of these immigrants settled in the southwest area of the city. Furthermore, the opening of the Ford Rouge plant in 1903, with its $5/day wage, brought large numbers of newcomers from Europe, South America, and southern states to work in Detroit. Areas of Southwest Detroit, mostly today’s Springwells-Vernor neighborhood, were chosen for the city’s heaviest manufacturing – factories building trains, ships, steel, stoves, cars, and trucks.6 As a result, the city’s southwest neighborhoods of today are surrounded to the west and south by heavy and light industry. Early development in the Southwest neighborhoods in large part reflects the immigrants who first settled there. “Due to the characteristic of its demographic, immigrant-working class, its architecture blends small wood worker’s cottages, built cheaply in the late 1800’s, followed by brick row houses and larger two-story homes constructed in the 1910’s and 1920’s.”7 Additionally, “the extensive system of trolley lines that once linked Southwest neighborhoods to the rest of Detroit made the neighborhoods attractive to the newcomers who worked in the automobile industry across town.”8

The city’s population increased from 265,000 to over 1.5 million between 1900 and 1930. “Once known as the ‘Paris of the Midwest’ for its tree-shaded avenues, the city took on a more blue-collar appearance as its riverfront became lined with factories and grain silos.”9 The substantial population growth within the city resulted in a depletion of the green and open areas for its citizens. In the 1920’s, the City Park Commissioner fought for increased open space, adding substantial parks to the city. Detroit ranked third in the nation for the most acreage exclusively devoted to parks.10 Clark Park, one of the city’s most prominent parks,11 located in Southwest Detroit, was half donated and half purchased by the city. It was a 24-acre tract of heavily timbered land.12 Today, Clark Park serves as the main open space/green area for much of the city’s southwest residents.

As with most cities in the United States, the automobile had a dramatic effect on the landscape of the city of Detroit, particularly the city’s Southwest neighborhoods. The Ambassador Bridge, completed in 1929, originates in the center of the once densely populated Hubbard-Richard neighborhood. Today the bridge carries more than 10,000 commercial vehicles on a typical weekday; the

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4 Scott, Gene. Detroit Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods. Detroit Retired City Employers Association (DRCEA), September 2001
6 Scott, Detroit Beginnings
10 Campbell et al., 2005.
12 Ross, Robert B. Landmarks of Detroit: A History of the City. Evening News Association, 1898
enormous volume of truck traffic is a continuing source of neighborhood concern.\textsuperscript{13}

Postwar federal highway building and urban redevelopment projects had a devastating effect on Detroit’s urban neighborhoods. In the 1950’s, with the passing of the Federal Highway Act, Detroit began construction of its massive system of freeways to increase access to and from the City’s rapidly growing suburbs. The incoming freeways negatively affected the city’s older neighborhoods, where the majority of poor, working class, and racial minority residents lived. Aerial photographs of Southwest Detroit from the 1950’s through 1970’s show the destruction of whole communities that lay along the new freeway paths, as well as the physical and symbolic divide the freeways brought to the area. Additionally, these redevelopment projects, such as Corktown’s industrial redevelopment project of the 1950’s, resulted in the vacating and abandonment of many residential neighborhoods throughout the city. “The irony has been that as Detroit has relocated existing residents to accommodate industries and institutions, it has simultaneously aggravated its problems of population loss and neighborhood decline.”\textsuperscript{14}

Images from 1949, 1952, and 1997 (Figures 2-4) show the transformation of southwest Detroit from connected neighborhoods into isolated enclaves physically separated by the I-75 Fisher Freeway and the M-10 Lodge Freeway.\textsuperscript{15}

The 1952 aerial image (Figure 4) depicts entire neighborhood swaths that were bulldozed to make way for the current M-10 (John C. Lodge) Freeway.\textsuperscript{16}

N. Corktown/Briggs, Corktown, Hubbard-Richard and Vernor-Junction neighborhoods each endured changes as they were bisected and separated from each other by the developing freeway system. For example, the Fisher Freeway fully divided the Hubbard-Richard neighborhood. In addition, with the construction of the Fisher Freeway, the N. Corktown/Briggs neighborhood was physically alienated from the vital retail corridor along Michigan Avenue, further accelerating the decline of its residential population and thus its housing stock.

Furthermore, during these years, major corridors, such as Rosa Parks Boulevard, and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, were widened. This resulted in loss of pedestrian sidewalk space, which greatly discouraged pedestrian movement and decreased safety along the streets. Today, only a few streets and freeway overpasses form connections between the once complete and connected neighborhoods.


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid
Figure 2. Aerial image of Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods from 1949, showing neighborhood connections before freeway development in Detroit.
Figure 3. Aerial image of the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods from 1952, showing urban area that was cleared for the Lodge Freeway.
Figure 4. Aerial image depicting barriers created between Corktown, N. Corktown/Briggs and Mexicantown neighborhoods after construction of Detroit freeways.
As a result of industrial changes, highway construction and urban redevelopment projects, Detroit endured a painful population decline in the early 1960’s. After peaking at 1.85 million residents, the city’s population plummeted. Large numbers of commercial buildings and homes were abandoned in the southwest neighborhoods. Aerial images show a consistent vacating of land over the years, resulting in large blocks of abandoned land within these once thriving and dense residential neighborhoods. In addition, aerial photographs reveal industrial facilities coming in next to homes. This is especially apparent during the 1960’s, where the southern Corktown neighborhood experienced industrial redevelopment projects demolishing several blocks of housing.
III. HISTORY AND RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTED SOUTHWEST DETROIT NEIGHBORHOODS

Throughout history, Detroit’s southwest neighborhoods grew together as a prominent blue-collar district. Nevertheless, each neighborhood has individual characteristics and development patterns that have influenced present forms. Although the boundaries of various organizations’ service areas are clear, and in some cases particular neighborhoods are clearly bounded, the perception of neighborhood differentiation is sometimes not so precise. Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution of neighborhoods, and in some cases how they overlap.

All of these neighborhoods are part of what’s known as Southwest Detroit. Although the Core City neighborhoods, Delray, and other areas are part of the HEP study area, the focus of this report is mainly on Corktown, N. Corktown/Briggs, and Hubbard-Richard (including Mexicantown, Bagley Housing, and Hubbard Farms Historic District).

Corktown

One of Detroit’s oldest surviving neighborhoods, Corktown’s history goes back to the 1820's.

The City’s first Irish families established the neighborhood around the Most Holy Trinity Church, which was moved from its location downtown to its current site in 1849.

In the late 19th century another wave of Irish families came, expanding the neighborhood westward.17 In the 1920’s, Maltese and Latino families began to move into Corktown, adding another layer to the formation of the neighborhood. Its modest but diverse architectural styles are representative of working class housing from the late 1840's to the 1900's, including duplexes, row houses and terrace buildings. Its “combination of land uses typifies development of a 19th century walking city.”

In the late 1950’s, urban redevelopment projects demolished 700 homes and displaced hundreds of families, specifically in areas west of Trumbull and south of Porter.19 These houses represented over 70% of Corktown’s housing stock, mostly occupied by African Americans. This was followed by construction of the Fisher Freeway, “completing a nearly 75% annihilation of the Corktown area”.20

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17 Scott, Gene. Detroit Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods. Detroit Retired City Employers Association (DRCEA), September 2001


20 Scott, Gene. Detroit Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods. Detroit Retired City Employers Association (DRCEA), September 2001
Figure 5. Neighborhood identification in the Corktown and Mexicantown region.
Corktown was designated an historic district in 1984 by the Detroit City Council (one of 85 in the city). Today many new houses are being built, permitting the area to return to its historic mixed-use and dense character. Some early 20th century factory buildings are being converted to loft housing. A nineteenth-century workers’ row housing complex is being rehabilitated as a museum, partly through grant funding from Michigan’s Cool Cities initiative. The neighborhood tends to attract people interested in biking, walking, and gardening. Some walking groups are already active. The population is a mix of African-American, Caucasian, and Latino residents, with a median household income in the historic district of $23,897. The median age of the housing stock is nearly seventy years.  

Starting in the 1940’s the area’s demographics changed to include a mix of lower-income African Americans and Southern whites who came north to work in the growing automobile industry and defense factories. They lived in modest rental homes and apartment buildings close to commercial areas, public transportation and Tiger Stadium. In the 1960s through 1980s, Detroit lacked momentum for pulling the declining neighborhood together. An alarming number of houses were abandoned and burned. Currently the median income is $16,000 and 41% of houses were built before 1939.  

Legendary Tiger Stadium was situated at “The Corner” (Michigan and Trumbull), where baseball was played from 1890 until 1999, largely influencing the southern portion of the neighborhood. For example, as baseball became a profitable sport, the land around Tiger Stadium became more valuable and surrounding property owners capitalized on the need for game parking by tearing down houses and selling property for parking lots. At one point, 60-70 house fires occurred in a 40 day period, some spurred by parking entrepreneurs who thought the new Tiger Stadium would be built near the old stadium. One sign on a house read “Tom and Bo Buy Here,” attempting to lure Tom Monahan and Bo Schembechler (former Detroit Tigers owner and manager, respectively) to purchase land. Additionally, urban redevelopment and freeway construction projects caused dramatic changes to the neighborhood. The N. Corktown/Briggs neighborhood once housed 25,000 people and five zip codes; today it is a single zip code serving 2,500 residents.  

Despite this bleak history, North Corktown’s renewal has begun. Dozens of new housing units have been built over the past few years. Seventy to one hundred more new homes will be completed by 2008.
Figure 7. New housing in North Corktown, completed by Greater Corktown Development Corporation.

A framework plan has been completed, which builds on the neighborhood’s existing grid of small streets, incorporating infill housing on small 30’ lots between Temple and Trumbull. The plan calls for a Western Market at Michigan Avenue and 20th, near the former market site demolished for freeway construction. Infill development would bring a dense urban fabric to the area. Its many vacant lots present both a challenge to the area, but more importantly, an incredible opportunity for innovative community design.

Hubbard-Richard—Including Hubbard Farms, Mexicantown, Bagley Housing

The Hubbard-Richard area is bounded by Clark St, Vernor, 16th St, and Fort St. Within it lies both Hubbard Farms and Mexicantown, as well as part of the Bagley Housing area. This neighborhood’s history goes back to the 1700’s. It was originally part of a Pottawatomie Indian village, but with the arrival of the French became part of the village of Springwells, today one of the oldest villages of 19th century Detroit. In the mid-1800’s, the surrounding French farms were purchased by the Hubbard family, which was influential in the development of the city. Other ribbon farms became the estates of wealthy doctors, merchants, and industrialists whose distinguished homes still exist today.

As in adjacent neighborhoods, the architectural styles reflect the waves of immigration to Detroit throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, that brought northern Germans, Irish, eastern Europeans, and most recently a large Latino community. The area lost nearly a quarter of its population and almost 30% of its housing units with the city’s freeway and urban redevelopment projects. Today Hubbard Richard is a point of convergence for transportation, with the Ambassador Bridge, Fisher Freeway and major truck routes dividing the area. Throughout its history, Hubbard-Richard has maintained its strong and vibrant commercial corridor along Vernor and in the past decade has experienced substantial infill housing construction.

Figure 8. View down Bagley Street in Hubbard Richard area, near Mexicantown.

Hubbard Farms, one area within Hubbard-Richard is bounded by Clark Park, Toledo, West Grand Boulevard, and Scotten. It is one of the most stable neighborhoods in the city. Hubbard Farms includes parts of five ribbon farms from the early 19th century. Its historic architecture spans the period of 1870 to 1930,

26 Scott, Gene. Detroit Beginnings: Early Villages and Old Neighborhoods. Detroit Retired City Employers Association (DRCEA), September 2001
27 Ibid

30 Ibid
with Victorian, Italianate, Romanesque, Tudor Revival, Beaux Arts, and Colonial Revival styles. It was designated an historic district in 1993. Today, the neighborhood has a strong cultural identification with the Latino community and Mexicantown.

Many people think of Mexicantown as the popular restaurant district. Its image is commercial rather than residential for people living outside it (unlike Corktown) Much of the population is of Latino ethnicity, primarily originating in Mexico. There are many young families, and over half of the population is at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (median household income is $28,333). About half of the homes are owner occupied and the median age of the housing stock is over 60 years.

The Bagley Housing Association improves housing stock for low to moderate income families within the Hubbard-Richard and Hubbard Farms areas. One focus of its work is an area, generally called Bagley Housing, anchored by St. Anne’s Catholic Church at St. Anne’s Street and Howard Street. The goals of Bagley Housing are “…to complement other efforts in the area to build a thriving, ethnically and economically diverse, residential/business urban environment in an area that has a wealth of opportunities at hand.”

Many new housing units have been developed in that area over the past decade. Bagley Housing Association currently has eight affordable homes under construction and will begin building 15 more in early spring 2007. Eight more market-rate homes will be built just north of the recently-completed Ste. Anne’s Gate condominiums.

Today, the southwest neighborhoods are experiencing substantial redevelopment. Nevertheless, this redevelopment is disproportionate. While infill housing and historic preservation in being done to increase the housing availability within Corktown and Hubbard-Richard neighborhoods, some areas, such as the N. Corktown/Briggs neighborhood, remain relatively isolated and abandoned. Hopefully, initiatives that span the Southwest neighborhoods, such as the Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink initiative, will reconnect and enhance individual neighborhoods.

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31 Hubbard Farms Historic District www.ci.detroit.mi.us/historic/districts/hubbard_farms.pdf

33 Bagley Housing Association, http://www.bagleyhousing.com/
IV. CORKTOWN–MEXICANTOWN GREENLINK

The Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink is one part of a much larger effort toward greenway planning in the Detroit region. A greenway network for the seven-county Detroit metropolitan area was planned in the mid-1990s. Subsequently, the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan became a ‘home’ for the regional greenways vision, providing a funding mechanism for specific projects. Many corridors in the region have been completed and more are now being funded and built. For the City of Detroit, the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods are a logical focus for greenway design, given the historical and cultural importance of the area.

The Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink is a vision for a non-motorized transportation route in Southwest Detroit (Figure 11). Its focus is the Corktown and Mexicantown communities, fronting on the Detroit River, and bounded by West Grand Boulevard on the West, Martin Luther King Boulevard on the North, and the Lodge Freeway on the east. “The core of the Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink proposal calls for the development of a series of bike lanes, off-road paths and signed and stamped bike routes, as well as pedestrian pathways that will link the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods to each other and the proposed West Riverfront Promenade.”34 The 13.8 mile Greenlink will link to the planned southwest Detroit greenway that connects parks and cultural institutions, and to the cultural center north of downtown Detroit.

The Greenlink focuses on several key ‘hubs’ of activity: Corktown’s historic district; the future Mexicantown Welcome Center and Mercado; and the residential development occurring in the Hubbard Richard and Hubbard Farms neighborhoods. The hope is to make these areas more easily accessed from the riverfront. Other potential linkages include neighborhood destinations such as Roosevelt Park, Dean Savage Park, Muliett Park, the newly refurbished Stanton Park, the Michigan Avenue entertainment and retail district, numerous community gardens and greenspaces, housing development occurring in the North Corktown area, and the Westside Industrial area.

The Greenlink will provide an important connection north to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and the Midtown Loop. Planning of the Corktown-Mexicantown GreenLink has been coordinated with the Riverfront Promenade and the Downtown Detroit Bicycle Improvement Project, all of which run alongside and provide access to the Detroit River.

In 2003 the Greater Corktown Development Corporation was awarded a $50,000 technical assistance grant for Greenlink planning from the Community Foundation of Southeastern Michigan through its GreenWays Initiative program. The process was supported by three participatory design charrettes, conducted in 2004.35 Participants helped develop priority routes and priority sites for linkage. Those sessions revealed a desire for more connections on a large scale – i.e. by bicycle transportation. They also illustrated participants desires for public art, pedestrian bridges (for instance over the areas’ freeways), and natural landscaped settings.

35 Charrettes were conducted by the architecture firm COLAB.
Construction documents were completed in 2005 and construction is now fully funded. Two-thirds of construction funds are provided by the Michigan Department of Transportation and the remaining third by the GreenWays Initiative, which awarded a $333,000 construction grant. Construction is due to start in fall 2007 and be completed by fall 2008.

Over the past five years, the Greater Corktown Development Corporation has sponsored the 38-mile Tour de Troit to promote biking transportation and to raise awareness and enthusiasm for the Greenlink. Proceeds go toward completing and maintaining the Greenlink.

It should be noted that the Greenlink is not a ‘green’ project per se, but rather a non-motorized transportation and signed route showing points of interest. The emphasis is on bike lanes, with some pedestrian improvements. It encourages bike travel for transportation efficiency, recreation, and social equity, and is motivated by the fact that nearly one-third of all families in Detroit do not own a car.

The Greenlink plan specifies five types of routes: greenways linking parks and other features, linear parks, off-road paths within parks, on-road bike lanes, and signed bike routes. It assumes that, in areas with considerable open space such as North
Corktown, very dense housing development will eventually be completed.

There are two main important connective corridors for the Greenlink. The first is Michigan Avenue, a vast, seven-lane thoroughfare (plus parking lanes) stretching from the Detroit/Dearborn border almost to downtown Detroit (about five miles) (Figure 12). It separates what many consider to be Southwest Detroit from the West side neighborhoods. This segment is, of course, only one small part of the historic Highway 12 route from Detroit to Chicago.

Traffic is very sparse on the huge roadway; efforts are underway to narrow and enhance the corridor. Federal Tea-21 transportation enhancement funds are being used to rebuild Michigan Avenue. Sidewalks will be widened, trees are being planted, and the roadbed will be reduced from seven to five lanes. A section of Michigan Avenue from Wyoming to Livernois is now completed, and Michigan Avenue is slated to be totally redone by 2010 or 2011. Similar changes will take place along Rosa Parks (12th St) and 14th St, reverting them to two-way routes from the current one-way streets.

In addition, there is a strong focus on a non-motorized transportation plan for the city, particularly along Michigan Avenue from downtown Detroit to the Dearborn border. The Michigan Avenue Business Association is intimately involved in those plans. Michigan Avenue is also a Main Street project, where 1.5 miles of Michigan Avenue through Corktown will be rebuilt.

The second important Greenlink connection is the Southwest Detroit Greenway and Riverside Park, which is planned to connect to Clark Park and the Mexicantown area (Figures 13 & 14). Connecting it further to the Corktown neighborhood is a bigger challenge, given that only one overpass bridges the Fisher Freeway (on Vernor).

However, the Greenlink proposes a pedestrian bridge at Bagley, which is scheduled to be built within two years. This link will enhance the Mercado and Visitor Center area, where $40 million has been allocated for a cultural

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36 “The Main Street Approach is a community-driven, comprehensive methodology used to revitalize older, traditional business districts throughout the United States. It is a common-sense way to address the variety of issues and problems that face traditional business districts. The underlying premise of the Main Street approach is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation in ways appropriate to today's marketplace. The Main Street Approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of traditional commercial districts based on their unique assets: distinctive architecture, a pedestrian-friendly environment, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community.”

http://www.mainstreet.org/content
district in this location. It is estimated that a million people per year will visit the Mercado. Similarly a bridge over the Fisher Freeway at West Grand Boulevard toward the south will link Mexicantown and Hubbard Farms with Riverside Park.

Figure 14. Riverside Park Launching Ramp.

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37 Mexicantown Community Development Corporation
V. NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

The economic and social trends in the Southwest Detroit neighborhoods are promising. These neighborhoods have strong commercial corridors and active business groups. However, between 1990 and 2000, the overall population in the southwest HEP area declined by 16%.

Demographic Factors

Historically, the Southwest Detroit neighborhoods have been one of the most ethnically diverse and densely populated areas in the city. The area has continued to attract immigrants, mostly Latino families, and has maintained a strong sense of community and commercial vitality.

The HEP southwest study area includes 12 US Census tracts and parts of the Corktown, Hubbard-Richard, Millennium Village, N. Corktown/Briggs, Southwest Detroit and Westside Industrial neighborhoods. For the most part, housing and commercial buildings are over a half-century old. According to the 2000 US Census, 75% of the housing stock in this area was built prior to 1950.

The median household income was $24,956.00 in 2000. As shown in Figure 15, income levels are highest in the west part of Corktown and Mexicantown on both sides of Clark Park.

Figure 15. Median household income in Corktown-Mexicantown neighborhoods.
Figure 16 depicts the population numbers, by census block group for the HEP study area. The areas in the lightest color have very low population due to industrial land uses. The areas with the highest population are in the far north and west of the study area. Historic Corktown and the primary Mexicantown area are in the mid-range.

Latinos comprise 60%, non-Latino Whites represent 21%, and non-Latino Blacks represent 16% of the population within the HEP study area. As shown in Figures 17 and 18, high percentages of African Americans reside in the N. Corktown/Briggs neighborhood, whereas Latino residents live mainly in the greater Hubbard Richard region. The older area of Corktown is made up of a mixture of Latino, African American and Caucasian residents. (It is important to reference Figure 16 in interpreting these maps. Some of the areas that are depicted with high percentages of a particular racial group have very low total numbers of residents.)

As shown in Figures 19 and 20, the greatest percentage of older residents live in the Corktown neighborhoods, whereas the highest percentage of children reside in the Hubbard Richard and Mexicantown regions.
Figure 17. African-American residents, by percentage.

Figure 18. Latino residents, by percentage.
Figure 19. Percentage of residents 65 years and over.

Figure 20. Percentage of residents ages 5-17 years.
Community Assets

A wide range of factors contribute to a community’s sense of cohesion, health, and vibrancy. The National Association of County and City Health Officials defines community assets as “contributions made by individuals, citizen associations, and local institutions that individually and/or collectively build the community’s capacity to assure the health, well-being, and quality of life for the community and all its members.” By that standard, the Corktown-Mexicantown area of Detroit has abundant community assets to draw from.

In some cases, community assets are tangible places—institutions or other public places that comprise important destinations for traveling through one’s neighborhood and for receiving needed services. They are the hubs that greenways should connect to. For instance, school and churches are community hubs that link people together and help form sense of community.

In other cases, community assets are less visible; they are not destinations in themselves, but are important and influential in the community. For instance, the business organizations and community development corporations are vital to Detroit’s neighborhood revitalization. These organizations create the social capital for neighborhood change. They are often responsible for the many events that enliven a neighborhood and foster sense of place. For a listing of the main annual events in the Corktown-Mexicantown area, please see Appendix F.

This study identified several main categories of community assets: educational resources (schools and libraries); churches; parks and recreation centers (including public gardens and open space); community and business organizations; arts and cultural destinations; and commercial hubs.

These assets were documented by conducting site visits, interviewing staff of key organizations, and referencing existing maps. Several of the community assets were mapped using a geographic information system (GIS).

Educational Resources

Schools are neighborhood anchors. They are critical elements to a walkable neighborhood—as destinations and as programming opportunities. Furthermore, schools often include important greenspaces that can connect to more linear greenways along streets. Schools provide extensive grounds where a variety of outdoor programs can take shape and students are logical participants for the types of activities and programs that can occur on greenway routes. The HEP Southwest study area includes eighteen educational institutions (Figure 21), including preschools, public schools (elementary, middle schools and high schools), charter schools, private schools, and higher educational institutions. Appendix A includes a full list of educational resources.

The study area’s three libraries are also shown in Figure 21. Although one of them is at the edge of the study region, the other two are in the heart of the Hubbard Richard neighborhood of Southwest Detroit.

Social and Health Service Organizations

Appendix E lists a wide array of social service and health providers in the Corktown-Mexicantown region.

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38 National Association of City and County Health Officials
Shopping/Commercial Areas
Southwest Detroit contains several of Detroit’s most vibrant commercial areas outside the downtown area, including Mexicantown, Michigan Avenue, Vernor-Junction, and the new Mercado and Michigan Welcome Center. Each of these corridors is an economic and cultural asset for Southwest Detroit.

Mexicantown is known for its many Mexican restaurants and its ethnic flavor—small family-owned taquerias, ethnic grocery stores, tortilla factories and bakeries. It attracts more than a million visitors annually, including a large number of suburban and Canadian tourists. Mexicantown Community Development Corporation is working with Bagley Housing and Southwest Detroit Housing Corporation on the commercial revitalization of Mexicantown’s restaurant, retail, and cultural district. The groups are organizing businesses and residents to make improvements on Bagley and West Vernor. A particular challenge is posed by the stark dissection of Mexicantown, which has a freeway and two vast vacant blocks of land in its center.

Michigan Avenue through Corktown is an active commercial and entertainment district. It is being revitalized through a number of initiatives, discussed above. Vernor is important for its commercial development, but also for other community assets, including churches and schools. The commercial area, particularly centered at Vernor and Junction is the heart of the Latino neighborhood and caters to the needs of the local population.

A newer heart of the region is the Mexicantown International Welcome Center and Mercado at the base of Ambassador Bridge and in the heart of Mexicantown. This $14 million project broke ground in October 2003. The Welcome Center building is
separate from the Mercado, which is a public market that will include cultural and arts programming, retail and office space, and a public plaza.

Figure 22. Mercado during construction in late 2006.

**Arts and Cultural Destinations**

Arts and cultural destinations present valuable opportunities to enrich a neighborhood, connect its residents, and create hubs of activity. Like schools, they can be focal points where walking routes come together and where innovative greenway programming can coalesce. Arts institutions are potential partners in programming for greenway use.

In some cases, historic destinations still exist, and hold great potential, but are not presently functional. For instance, the Michigan Central Train Station is one of Michigan’s most remarkable structures, but stands abandoned and decaying. It could someday be one of the most important hubs in a greenway network for Southwest Detroit.

Figure 23. The abandoned Michigan Central train station, built in 1913.

Bagley is a spine of cultural activity for the Corktown-Mexicantown area. Many of the commercial and cultural attractions of the region are aligned along this street. Mexicantown’s restaurant corridor along Bagley is only one of several cultural destinations for the Corktown-Mexicantown area. Others include the Matrix Theatre within Mexicantown (2730 Bagley St), which “uses the transformative power of original theatre to change lives, build community, and foster social justice. It creates opportunities for children, youth, adults and elders, especially those in isolated or challenged communities, to become creators, producers, and audience of original theatre.”

The Roberto Clemente Recreation Center (2631 Bagley) attracts local residents for basketball, badminton, volleyball, and weight room activities. It also offers programs for seniors and for youth and teens, including a summer lunch program.

The Bagley Housing Community Art Gallery (2715 Bagley) promotes Latino cultures through a range of art forms. It tries to instill pride of heritage and encourages residents to use their artistic talents.

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39 Matrix Theatre mission statement. [http://www.matrixtheatre.org/AboutUs.htm](http://www.matrixtheatre.org/AboutUs.htm)
An historic three-unit row house on Sixth Street between Porter and Labrosse is a unique cultural site for the Corktown neighborhood and for Detroit as a whole. The site is a restoration, preservation, and museum project developed by the Greater Corktown Development Corporation.

The row house, dating from the 1840s, is believed to be among the oldest residences remaining in the city. “As restoration progresses, the history that this building represents will be experienced in many ways. From street and sidewalk, descriptive placards in front of the house will tell the story of the row house and those who lived there, as the landscape and outbuildings further reflect the era. Interiors will be opened to the public on designated days, and by arrangements for special events. Current plans include both self-guided and audio tours of the building and its displays, as well as the oral history and photography archives.”40

**Churches**
Churches, like schools, are primary anchors for communities. In Southwest Detroit, many places of worship are spread across the neighborhoods. Four historic churches are particularly noteworthy as destination points, as shown in Figure 26. St. Anne’s Catholic Church is one of Detroit’s most beautiful landmarks, situated in front of the Ambassador Bridge. The new Bagley Housing developments have been built in the Church’s immediate neighborhood.

Corktown has one of the largest concentrations of social programs in Detroit, supported largely by its two historic churches—St. Anne’s and Most Holy Trinity. Most Holy Trinity Church, Detroit’s oldest Catholic church, has a health clinic and an after-school program. It has also offered night classes and many other programs for Corktown residents. St. Peter’s Episcopal Church has a daily soup kitchen, Meals on Wheels, and programs for teenagers. (See Appendix E for a list of social and health service organizations)

**Organized Labor Institutions**
There are an unusual number of organized labor institutions in the Corktown-Mexicantown area (see list in Appendix C). These organizations could be important partners in improving the neighborhoods’ built environment.

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40 Greater Corktown Development Corporation
http://www.corktowndetroit.org/2005/history.html
Figure 26. Places of worship in HEP study area, including historic churches.

**Parks.**
The HEP study area has a wealth of park and open space resources, spread fairly evenly across the neighborhoods (Figure 27). Seventeen city parks are located within the area, or on its boundaries. Clark Park is the largest and most heavily used. It is an iconic landscape for Southwest Detroit and will be a primary hub for any greenway development.

Many of the smaller parks provide important greenspace and outdoor play space for local residents. They are important linkages for pedestrian routes within and through the neighborhoods. However, some parks have become sites for illicit activity. Reclaiming these sites will be critical to local residents as they use and move through these spaces.

Community gardens are not shown on Figure 27, but are vital greenspaces for the neighborhoods. These include:

- Hope Takes Root Community Garden and Temporary Tree Nursery
- Bagley Housing Association’s Artist-in-Residence Community Garden and Sculpture Park
- Bagley and Hubbard Community Garden
- Hubbard Farms Community Garden
- Bagley Housing Association Greenspace
- West Grand Boulevard & Lafayette Greenspace
Community Development and Business Organizations
Appendix G lists the main community and business organizations that operate in the Corktown-Mexicantown region. These entities provide housing, encourage tourism and business, and offer a range of services to local residents. They build the social capital that attacks urban problems and grows local solutions.

Grocery Stores
Many residents walk to buy food; these locations are important sites for greenway connectivity. There are several small and a few larger tiendas that sell healthy food in the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods.

Figure 27. Parks and Recreation Center in the Corktown-Mexicantown neighborhoods.

Figure 28. The Honey Bee, one of very few places to buy fresh groceries in the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods.
Transportation

Public transportation is essential in Southwest Detroit, particularly since many families do not own an automobile. Bus transportation is particularly important in those areas with high concentrations of elderly and children. However, in 2000 Detroit was rated last in reliable public transportation among the largest cities in the U.S.

Figure 29 illustrates the bus lines that are in operation across the HEP study area. Most of the main arterials are serviced by buses, including Michigan Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr Blvd, Bagley, Vernor, West Grand Boulevard, and others. A greenway route will logically connect to stops along these routes so that residents who walk or bike can take advantage of public transportation over longer distances.

Figure 29. Detroit bus lines in the HEP study area.
VI. THE STREET AS GREENWAY

Narrowing the Geographic Focus

Historic resources are vital assets for the Mexicantown and Corktown neighborhoods. Mexicantown’s history is embedded in a cultural story of immigration and community-building. For Corktown and Hubbard Farms, historic identity is more formalized through designated historic districts. Unfortunately, both historic districts seem somewhat like remnant islands.

Their small-scale grid of historic homes and narrow streets are found within a matrix of large-scale, auto-dependent development, including industrial uses, Tiger Stadium, Michigan Avenue, large thoroughfares (such as Rosa Parks), and freeways. Bridging those obstacles is the main challenge – finding ways to safely traverse between neighborhoods and reduce the industrial and transportation infrastructure barriers. Emphasis of this project is on connectivity across the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods. Therefore, we have chosen a smaller part of the overall HEP study for analyzing greenway enhancements. (see Figure 30).

Figure 30. Area selected for enhanced greenway development, connecting the Corktown and Mexicantown neighborhoods. The observation route line depicts the streets where the walking environment is being studied over time as part of the HEP study.
This area includes many community assets. This area of concern focuses on the east-west connection between Corktown and Mexicantown.

Hubs, Sites, and Links

A useful way to understand a landscape from a connectivity standpoint is shown in Figure 31. Although depicted in a more rural context in this illustration, this simple scheme places open landscapes in relationship to each other and to people, based on a system of hubs, sites, and links at a regional scale. This way of viewing open space has profound implications for how the landscape is studied, planned and developed. It can be applied at a range of scales, can address a gradient of naturalness, and can incorporate varied land-use contexts.

![Figure 31. Scheme of hubs, sites and links for a greenway network.](image)

To apply this model to the Mexicantown-Corktown area, Clark Park, Tiger Stadium or the Mexicantown restaurant row would be hubs. Sites are smaller, but plentiful. They include St. Anne’s Church, various public schools, and Corktown’s historic worker rowhouses. Existing links are Michigan Avenue or the overpass above the railroad tracks on Bagley. The goal is to create additional links to physically connect the hubs and sites identified in the inventory of community assets. In an urban context, streets are those links.

Complete the Streets

Greenways are linear open spaces along natural or human-made features such as rivers, ridgelines, railroads, canals or roads. They are planned, designed and managed to connect and protect ecological, scenic, recreational, and cultural resources. They usually contain trails and a significant natural, or ‘green,’ component—river corridor, forested land, or other environmental feature. The focus is often on the natural resource and making places for people to travel through it, learn from it, and help protect it.

In Southwest Detroit, the focus of a greenway effort is very different. It is focused primarily on people — connecting them, helping provide healthy habitats and habits, and celebrating the rich human history of the city. This distinction is subtle, but powerful. We need to approach urban greenways in central city cores, particularly when those cores have disintegrated as Detroit’s has, in a very different way than a greenway along the Kalamazoo River, for instance. The focus is on streets and the social institutions they connect — neighborhoods, churches, and schools. This is precisely what the Greenlink sets out to do, but its goals go only part of the way.

Some cities have defined urban street revitalization projects as greenways in urban contexts. For example, Vancouver’s greenway system is almost entirely focused on city streets.⁴¹ Vancouver’s two-tiered system starts with a network of City Greenways, fourteen corridors totaling about 87 miles. About 50% of this system will use street rights-of-way. When done, a city greenway will be no more than a 25-minute walk or 10-minute bike ride from every residence. City

greenways are distinct from bikeways, of which Vancouver has an extensive network, although objectives sometimes overlap. The second tier in the system, Neighborhood Greenways, creates smaller-scale connections with ideas initiated by local residents. These projects are smaller in scope, with shorter routes that are maintained by the community once completed. They connect local community amenities such as parks, schools, libraries, community centers, or shopping streets. They are also meant to highlight places of special meaning, such as a group of heritage houses, an interesting street, or a corner store.

In many cities, a Complete the Streets strategy is taking shape, complementing greenway initiatives. Complete the Streets initiatives show how streets can accommodate far more than only car-drivers. “Complete Streets are designed to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities can safely move along and across a complete street.”

Southwest Residents Voice Desires for the Built Environment

For Southwest Detroit, and many other areas of the city, a Complete the Streets focus may be effective—not replacing, but supplementing the greenways vision. These assets would be compatible with the expressed desires of Southwest neighborhood residents.

Four focus groups were conducted in the Southwest HEP study area in 2006-- in both English and Spanish for men and women. The focus groups suggest that other amenities, not only bike lanes, are desired by the community for encouraging exercise outdoors. People want smooth places to walk and bike, free from debris, rubbish and crime. They also reported that trees, lighting, signage, police visibility, crosswalks, benches, playgrounds, emergency phones, art, water fountains, and universal access would influence them to use pathways for walking. The highest recommendations were for programming to get people out on pathways together and patrol units to maintain safety.

Subsequently, Town Hall meetings were held in October 2006. The following discussion points from those sessions are particularly relevant to designing the greenlink:

- Involve churches in both physical activity and food access issues.
- Make the urban environment safer for people. Gangs and street violence came up frequently.
- Improve childrens’ lives and overall quality of life.
- Install more traffic lights to cross streets safely, as well as more lighting within parks for safety.
- Provide gym or other facilities for exercise and public transit to get to them.
- Create physical activities that are designed to bring families together.
- Provide pavement for rollerblading.
- Train local residents to work on improving infrastructure to make the neighborhoods more conducive to physical activity, or to lead exercise groups. Consider grants to train neighborhood residents; in addition, many of them already have valuable skills that could be tapped.

42 Complete the Streets. www.completestreets.org
43 For an overview of transportation and streetscape improvements focused on the North Corktown area, see the North Corktown Design Handbook, which outlines suggested improvements to 14th Street, Rosa Parks Boulevard, and Temple Street. It also suggests a pedestrian bridge to relink Corktown and North Corktown.

Elements of Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhoods

The focus on the car is strong in Mexicantown and Corktown, as in the larger Detroit region. By observing the neighborhood streets and
from existing data from residents’ meetings, it is clear that there is not much reliance on walking and biking to move around a neighborhood, much less between neighborhoods. This is clearly the case along the heavily-used traffic corridors (Rosa Parks, Vernor, etc), but also seems true along smaller, quieter streets. There are many reasons—including safety issues, lack of destinations, poor conditions of travel corridors, and few aesthetic amenities—impeding pedestrian and bike travel in these neighborhoods.

Safety in Numbers

First, fear about personal safety is nearly a tangible presence in many Detroit areas, including these Southwest neighborhoods. The fear of criminal activity keeps people off the sidewalks, which in turn makes sparsely-used sidewalks even more risky. Safety is not assured by the presence of many residents out on the sidewalks, but it makes for a far more secure and stable environment.

Aside from crime, the other aspect of personal safety is fear of the automobile. Traffic calming has been proven to slow traffic and create more pedestrian-friendly experience. “Traffic calming is based on the fact that the way a street is designed tells drivers what to do. Wide, straight and flat expanses of asphalt say to drivers, “It’s ok to go fast.” When driving lanes and streets are narrow, or when the areas where people on foot cross the street are raised; or when streets are made curvy by adding trees, lights, and benches, drivers get the message, “slow down! This is a shared space.”

The presence of people out on the sidewalks has also been shown to reduce traffic speeds. Motorists slow down in response to intrigue and uncertainty. The presence of children on the sidewalks, for instance, increases both. As walking increases, the chance that a given walker will be struck by a driver actually decreases. As drivers become more used to seeing people walking on the sidewalks, they become more attentive.

Going Somewhere

When people are walking for exercise, or just to get outdoors, a destination is not always needed. A loop around a block or several blocks suffices. But many people would walk more if there was somewhere to go. With a destination, people can reap the benefits of physical exercise while also accomplishing an errand or visiting a neighborhood gathering place. That destination can be as simple as a grocery store or library. In some cases destinations are lacking for the Corktown-Mexicantown area. In other cases, the destination exists—public school or park—but there is no easy, attractive way to walk there.

Connectivity is key. In many cases, the connections are more important than having the perfect continuous park setting. Loop routes are more inviting than out-and-back routes that do not loop. They give people far more choice and provide more interest for people walking for exercise.

Path of Least Resistance

Streets that will be used by people, not just by cars, need to be deliberately designed to accommodate the needs of pedestrians, bikes, wheelchairs, and other non-motorized transit. For the Mexicantown and Corktown neighborhoods, the streets lack amenities for walking. The only facilities are sidewalks and small stretches of paths within area parks.

Many sidewalks are in poor condition. In some areas there is a lack of consistency and continuity in the pedestrian experience—sidewalks exist in one block and then absent in the next. Wide tree lawns buffer the pedestrian from busy traffic for a few blocks and then narrow to little or nothing in other sections. (Tree lawns are the green space, often with street trees, that separate the street

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45 www.lesstraffic.com
from the sidewalk). Crosswalks and other pedestrian safety features are spotty and in disrepair. Benches and water fountains are absent. In short, many streets fail the Complete the Streets test.

Visual Interest

It is difficult to talk about pleasant views enticing residents to walk outdoors when they fear criminals, tripping on trash or glass, or crossing dangerous streets. But lack of beauty probably keeps people from taking to the streets just as much as fear. People turn away from a landscape of crumbling industrial plants, paved parking lots, and blighted housing.

At the scale of the pedestrian, a small amount of aesthetic upgrade can make a huge difference. This is the scale where individual street trees change the entire experience, or where a tree lawn separating the street from the sidewalk makes walking seem safe. There is growing evidence that trees not only clean the air but that they are effective traffic-calming devises. Trees and street amenities signal drivers to slow down; the result is fewer accidents involving pedestrians.

Beauty can be achieved in other ways and can involve the local community. For instance, the Mexican town neighborhood prides itself on its many murals. This is an example of public art that brings neighborhood pride and encourages people to walk the streets.

Pedestrian Audit

Several segments of the area shown in Figure 30 contain elements of pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. Positive examples are shown in Figures 32-38.

![Figure 32. Clark Park. Pedestrian access around and through the park is excellent. Although there are safety concerns at the park, it is heavily used as a walking route and has many desireable features--from programmed activity to aesthetically-pleasing spaces.](image1)

![Figure 33. West Grand River Boulevard. The wide boulevard along West Grand River provides a green, linear park. Although pedestrians do not typically walk on the boulevard itself, it improves pedestrian experience on the sidewalks on both sides.](image2)
Figure 34. Western International High School on Scotten Street across from Clark Park. The relationship of these two community assets is very positive. Good sidewalks and fairly wide tree lawns line the street. (Tree lawns are the green space, often with street trees, that separate the street from the sidewalk).

Figure 35. The plaza outside St. Anne's Catholic Church. An excellent example of a pedestrian-friendly environment. It provides seating, trees, and a view of the church. Its brick surface adds texture and interest.

Figure 36. Overpass on Bagley above the rail line. Although stark and empty, at least the bridge has a wide sidewalk that is in fairly good repair.

Figure 37. Corktown scene along Bagley near Trumbull. Narrow street provides great pedestrian scale. Street trees help create a sense of protection, as does the tree lawn separating the street and sidewalk.

Figure 38. Bagley street entering Corktown. Walkable neighborhood scale with good sidewalks in front of newer housing. On-street parking is considered a positive feature for more walkable streets.

Other street segments need extensive work to make them conducive to pedestrian travel. Figures 39-46 show some of the problematic features that deter residents from venturing outside on foot or bicycle. These negative features are compounded by the lack of destinations and fears about personal safety.

The sidewalk infrastructure is in various stages of disrepair. Many streets need to be repaved and sidewalks are crumbling, with vegetation growing from large sidewalk cracks. Tree lawns are inconsistent—15’ wide in places and then dwindling to 3’ in the next
block and then to nothing still further down the same street.

Figure 39. Porter Street near Clark Park and Western International High School. Note the lack of a tree lawn and degraded condition of sidewalk.

Figure 40. Gap on Bagley. Photo taken looking east at one end of Bagley. Mexicantown's west side is behind the photographer and its east side on the other side of the Fisher freeway. This lack of connectivity is a major issue for the Greenlink.

Figure 41. Vernor near 24th St. No separation between the pedestrian and busy traffic. Poor condition of sidewalk.

Figure 42. View looking east on Vernor. Note lack of tree lawn in the foreground and transition to a narrow one in the next block.

Figure 43. Abandoned warehouse at Bagley and Vermont.

Figure 44. Labrosse and Trumbull, facing south. Heavy traffic and few crosswalks or other amenities make walking dangerous.
Figure 45. Brooklyn dead-ends at Porter. This site will be converted to an FBI facility. The new development is an excellent opportunity to reconnect the street toward the south in Corktown.

Figure 46. The industrial nature of this area in Corktown does not present a safe, appealing environment for pedestrians, even though the building at the far end is a warehouse converted to lofts.
VII. Enhancing and Expanding the Greenlink Route

The Greenlink will be a far more complete plan if it incorporates walking routes for pedestrian travel within and between communities. To implement such a plan, the project would need to be phased over time, tackling the most glaring inadequacies first and then slowly adding more amenities over time. The plan shown below breaks the task into two main parts at the outset.

A route needs to be established that takes advantage of existing community assets and that gives the highest degree of safety and enjoyment. Improvements along that route need to be addressed at a finer scale, to ‘Complete the Street.’

Primary Spine: The Blue Route

The design of walking routes was done in a two-part scheme, with two layers forming an overall network for phasing pedestrian improvements. First, a route is depicted in Figure 47 (in blue) that provides the primary framework for walking within and between the two neighborhoods.

Figure 47. Primary walking route (in blue) and secondary neighborhood walking routes.
The Blue Route follows larger streets and is suggested for covering greater distances in areas of high visibility (visibility in this case being a trade-off for more traffic noise). It follows a portion of the proposed Greenlink bike route, as well as main bus routes. This part of the plan is based on major streets that are most likely to be improved through other transportation projects, where pedestrian amenities could be included.

This scheme forms a long, thin triangle made up of Bagley Street, Vernor Highway, and Michigan Avenue. Three connectors (14th, Rosa Parks Boulevard, and Trumbull) provide loops making shorter walking loops. W. Grand Boulevard is included because it is a pleasant street with existing amenities for walkers, and since it is slated for connection to the Southwest Detroit Riverfront Greenway.

Bagley is the heart of this system (and in fact the heart of the more detailed walking network that follows). The main terminus is Clark Park, as shown in Figure 48.

This route connects a wide range of community assets. Major hubs, in addition to Clark Park, are Tiger Stadium, the Roberto Clemente Recreation Center, the new Mercado and Welcome Center, Roosevelt Park, and the Michigan Central Train Station.

Important sites include two libraries, the Honey Bee Market, Clemente Park, Matrix Theater, and the Bagley Art Gallery. This main route also connects to existing linear features—Michigan Avenue commercial area and the Southwest Detroit Riverfront Greenway. This route runs through the heart of the Corktown Historic District and the border of the Hubbard Farms Historic District.

With the limited resources available, an effort should be launched to “Complete the Streets” for these main thoroughfares. Planning for the bike lanes should be done in tandem with pedestrian improvements as the streets are renovated or repaired. This is already taking place along the Michigan Avenue segment.

Street improvements will vary widely from Bagley to Vernor to Michigan Avenue. Michigan Avenue has a tremendous amount of real estate from which to craft a more pedestrian-friendly environment, with its underused seven lanes of traffic and two parking lanes. On the other hand, improvements on Bagley will be tighter, where the roadbed consists of one lane in each direction, plus parking lanes. Vernor is yet another scenario, with two lanes of traffic, but wider lanes and higher speeds. The street has a faster, more commercial feel.

For all three streets, consistent separation should be created between pedestrians and cars, through the use of tree lawns, bollards, street trees, and crosswalks. The quality of the walking surface needs to be uniformly improved—not only flat and wide enough, but consistent in curb cuts, tree lawn widths, and crossings.

In designing the new pedestrian bridge at Bagley, transportation engineers should consider
materials that invite and encourage pedestrian use. Exposed reinforced concrete and cyclone fencing used on the bridge near Tiger Stadium over the Fisher Freeway are cold and uninviting.

Three Neighborhood Networks

A second layer in the pedestrian plan is also shown in Figure 47. It includes three neighborhood-oriented loops that weave through housing, smaller streets, and quieter settings. These three pedestrian schemes connect to even more of the community assets shown in Chapter 5. They are laid out as a series of loops that connect to the larger ‘blue’ spine.

Historic Hubbard Farms-Clark Park Route

Clark Park is a major hub of the entire region. It is at the heart of the Historic Hubbard Farms–Clark Park Route. It digresses from the busy Mexicantown commercial area (‘blue route’) and utilizes streets and sidewalks that are already in good repair (such as Scotten and some parts of Porter). Shady Lane and Vinewood are pleasant, tree-lined streets with a good pedestrian scale.

St. Anne’s Route

The main hub of the St. Anne’s route is St. Anne’s Church, including its wonderful outdoor plaza. This pleasant walking route passes new housing in Bagley Housing and connects to a range of community sites along Bagley at its northern edge.

Historic Corktown Route

Labrosse Street is a pleasant walking route through the historic Corktown neighborhood. It is already used by walking groups, perhaps because of its human scale and tree-lined historic character. The spine of the Historic Corktown Route is Bagley (on the blue route), with several streets to the north and south of it used for looping through the historic district. Brooklyn Street dead-ends at Porter but should be built to continue through when the FBI facility is built.

Complete the Corktown-Mexicantown Neighborhood Streets

At the finer scale of the neighborhood greenway networks, the focus should be on three types of improvement: aesthetic, safety, and function. They are, of course interrelated. Some additions, like street trees, good walkable surfaces, and signs will result in improvements in all three categories. These multi-objective amenities should be the first to be implemented. Subsequent stages can incorporate benches, flowers, grass, art, and other amenities.

Aesthetic Improvements

One desire among residents of Corktown and Mexicantown is for a more attractive urban environment. People will respond to a cleaner and more beautiful streetscape. Make these improvements look deliberate and appealing. One important strategy is to incorporate art. The murals of Mexicantown are already a recognized and appreciated part of the heritage of that area. Build on it. Murals are a fascinating phenomenon in the public realm, as they are very seldom vandalized by graffiti and other damage.

Plantings are the other obvious effort toward beautification. Street trees provide many urban services: they are the main key to improving the pedestrian experience. Other vegetation should also be included. Tree lawns that separate pedestrians from traffic should be a primary focus as streets, sidewalks, and/or curbs are renovated. Garden planters, flower beds and other vegetative improvements are a later stage in the streetscape evolution. For all planting schemes along the greenway, adaptability to the urban environment should be a key selection criterion. Plants that provide shade, flowers, fall color can be prioritized, as well as those that attract birds.
Safety Improvements

Several big streets along the Greenlink route may be daunting. Traffic calming techniques have been proven to slow traffic and lower pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

The list of traffic calming options is long; and each street will have a subset that is appropriate and feasible. A partial list of traffic calming devises is shown below.46

- **Diagonal parking**: The narrowed street encourages drivers to slow down. Adds up to 40% more parking space than parallel parking and is a good use for streets that are currently wide and underused, such as Michigan Avenue.

- **Raised medians**: A median in the center of a divided street slows down traffic because the street seems narrower.

- **Pedestrian refuge island**: A raised island located along the center of the street provides a safe place for people waiting to cross the street. It can be nicely landscaped and bollards can be placed at its ends to further protect pedestrians.

- **Signal timing**: Leading pedestrian intervals are used to give people on foot a head start when the light turns green for turning traffic. It allows pedestrians to get about half way across the intersection before drivers start turning. This technique has been shown to reduce pedestrian injuries by 26% in New York City.47 It is especially helpful to children and the elderly.

- **Curb extensions, bumpouts, corner bulges**: These are horizontal extensions of the sidewalk into the street at an intersection that reduces the crossing distance. They increase space for people on foot, reduce the space for dangerous driving, and slow turning drivers. (They can only be used on streets that include on-street parking, but work well to accommodate bus stops).

Figure 50. A corner bulge that incorporates other amenities to make a pedestrian node: lighting, benches, art, bicycle lane, vegetation.


47 Ibid.
Bicycle lanes: Bike lanes, already planned for the Greenlink, narrow the driving lanes and encourage slower driving. Colored asphalt draws more attention to the lane.

Wider sidewalks/narrower streets: Driving lanes are typically wider than needed, and should be narrowed to 10 feet in many places. The reduction slows drivers by 2-5 mph per foot. Adding trees, bollards, benches, lighting and other tall streetscape furniture further discourages speeding by visually narrowing the street.

Redesigned intersections: Sometimes a complete redesign of an intersection is needed to slow drivers down, provide better sight lines, and reduce crossing time for people on foot. A common realignment converts a Y intersection to a T, which are far safer for pedestrians (shorter crossing distances and slower automobile turning).

Different paving colors/textures at pedestrian crossings: A change in paving color or texture registers with drivers as a place to slow down. The crosswalk, ideally raised in profile, can be colored differently to signify to drivers that this is a slow zone.

Functional Improvements

The main functional improvement for the pedestrian aspect of the Greenlink is sidewalk surfacing. Other than areas within parks, the pedestrian plan follows sidewalks along streets. As the pedestrian audit shows, some sidewalks are in good repair and some are dangerous and crumbling. In other areas, there is no sidewalk or it is narrow. (Concrete sidewalks should be a minimum of five feet wide.)

Sidewalks are expensive. However, sidewalk surfaces should be improved for uniformity, accessibility, adequate width, and separation from traffic. A careful, block-by-block inventory would be needed to assess priority projects, costs, and timeline for sidewalk improvement.

Other functional amenities will add to the streetscape for the Corktown-Mexicantown area. Street furniture includes lighting, benches, trash bins, water fountains, and bike racks. This report does not show actual locations or designs for these features, but they should be prescribed in subsequent streetscaping plans.

49 Concrete sidewalks should be a minimum of 5’ wide, should typically be set back 5’ from the curb, and have a minimum of 8’ vertical clearance.
One way to think about these amenities is to consider activity nodes where multiple features can come together. Activity nodes are places that people are encouraged to linger, gather or rest. For the Corktown and Mexicantown areas, they are most logically the important hubs and sites identified as community assets. Clustering amenities at these nodes will give more bang for the buck, since construction is concentrated for several features within one area. The visual impact is greater as well, as shown in Figure 49, where an outdoor room has been created for non-motorized travel.

Activity nodes can also be at particular street corners, outside businesses, or bus stops. It can be as simple as a large rock for kids to climb on, interactive sculptures, or community notice boards. Encouraging use of the greenways through such activities can promote residents’ use of the space for outdoor social and physical activities.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a concept that describes how physical design elements can increase perceptions of safety. Elements include the type and location of lighting, planting, signage, and maintenance. CPTED’s main idea is that good design can lead to a reduction not only of the fear of crime, but of actual incidences of crime.

Applying CPTED to the Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink would entail creating active places with ‘eyes on the street.’ Resident’s input has focused strongly on the fear of crime. Activity nodes would be structured around existing community assets, like schools, libraries and parks. The opportunity for criminal activity is hindered by using designs that encourage appropriate users and discourage non-intended users.

CPTED precepts emphasize designing open spaces through the use of three major principles for deterring criminal activity and making residents feel assured about their urban surroundings:

1. Natural surveillance, limits on the opportunity for crime through the use of lighting and visibility. Eyes on the street.
2. Natural access control, limits on the opportunity for crime by using landscaping, fencing and signage to clearly mark public spaces.
3. Natural territoriality reinforcement, limits on the opportunity for crime through local investment and a sense of neighborhood ownership.

Lighting is a primary mechanism for safer streets. It typically has three overlapping purposes: orientation to reveal important features of one’s surroundings; identification of critical intersections, signs and buildings; and safety from personal and property damage by another person. Before a final routing for the Corktown-Mexicantown Greenlink is completed, a lighting assessment should be completed to indicate the location, intensity and type of lights that are needed for safety. Please see the Conner Creek Greenway report for a good overview of lighting guidelines in this urban context.

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50 The remainder of this chapter has been adapted from sections of the Southeast Detroit greenway study, “Planning Detroit’s Conner Creek Greenway: Attracting Eastside Neighbors,” by Regina Ann Campbell, Jasmin Marie Casas, Lindsay-Jean Hard, Jenifer Huestis, Howard Karp, and Mitchell Wimbish. 2006.
One central objective of the Greenlink project and a goal of the HEP project is to improve residents' health through increased activity outdoors. Once the Greenlink is in place—bike lanes are constructed, sidewalks repaired, signs installed—there are no assurances that the routes will be used. Many factors go into individual decisions regarding transportation, recreation, and health options. This section suggests ways not only to get residents out onto the Greenlink routes, but to foster ownership and care.

**Target Programs for Both the General Public and Particular Age Groups**

A wide range of community events are already bringing residents together, often outdoors, as shown in Appendix F. Some are currently being organized to promote the Greenlink project. The Tour de Troit bike ride is a prime example. It involves bikers of all ages participating in an organized ride to raise funds for the Greenlink and celebrate Detroit neighborhoods. It uses Roosevelt Park as a starting and ending point. Other runs and walkathons could be developed in a similar manner.

Walking groups can be organized, either tailored to certain segments of the population or for all residents. HEP is currently helping to organize walking groups in southwest Detroit, and these groups’ feedback to the routes proposed here will be quite valuable.

As the Greenlink is developed, other programs could focus on particular age groups—especially children and older adults. Various programs have been developed for school age children. Those shown below are simply a sampling; many other programs have been used successfully.

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**Walking School Bus.**

A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. It can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school or as structured as a route with meeting points, a timetable, and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers. Another variant of the Walking School Bus is the Walking Train in which adults supervise children as they ride their bikes to school. The Walking School Bus organization gives advice on how to start, including picking a route and taking test walks. Organizing such a pilot ‘bus’ would be a good way to field test the routes proposed in the report, for instance for bringing children to Earhart Middle School, Maybury Elementary, Webster Elementary, West Side Multicultural Academy, or Most Holy Trinity School.

**WOW – Walk- n- Wave on Wednesday.**

Walk-n-Wave on Wednesday is a project stimulated by the desire to slow traffic and let drivers know that they share the streets with pedestrians. It is based on the notion that waving at drivers slows them down, while angry signals or shouts just speed them up. Children walking to school on Wednesdays are given large foam hands for waving to drivers. Motorists are educated by news stories telling them that every time they see a child with a foam hand, it is a reminder to slow down and make streets safer for children. Parent volunteers help organize the Wednesday walks.

**Block Parties and Street Games**

The city and/or other organizations can sponsor block parties and street-game competitions to celebrate Greenlink routes. It is important NOT to close the street for these events, as the important message is that

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51 [www.walkingschoolbus.org](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org)
pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists CAN share the street.

Use **Building** The Greenlink as A Means of Engaging the Community

An important method for encouraging use and ownership of the Greenlink route is for residents to help design and build it. Residents that mobilize to help construct these routes develop the investment and ownership that fosters long-term care. The neighborhood greenway program in Vancouver, BC has found that the small greenway projects that residents propose, plan, and help construct are some of the most successful and lasting.

Gardening along the greenway is a primary focus of resident involvement. Demonstration gardens, community gardens, floral displays and other activities are wonderful ways to get the community engaged and to encourage safe, well-used walking routes. Residents could also help spray paint the greenway name or logo on the sidewalk to help make it ‘real.’

**Focus on the Nodes**

Building activity, information, and comfortable amenities at and near activity nodes will help make the connection between walking and destinations. People are enticed to walk a few blocks to areas where things are happening, and where it may be easier to just walk (and simultaneously get some exercise) than to drive, park, and perhaps walk just as far.

**Address Safely Directly and First**

For central city locations where the fear of crime is tangible, **programming** for the greenway should address safety directly. Some planners recommend calling walking routes “Safewalks” rather than greenways.

“Creating a safewalk is 75% community and 25% land, design and money. Inner city residents know the land, people, socializing patterns, buildings, and vacant lots better than anyone. They also are the ones with the daily vigilance to make sure it is maintained. They can be the ones to pick the final route, choose the benches, select the garbage cans, and even buy the flowers.”

Again, this calls for active involvement of the community to reclaim these spaces. Businesses could put stickers in their windows indicating that their establishment is part of the Safewalk corridor.

**Work with Many Organizations: Fund Less Apparent Partners**

A range of partners could help assure that the Greenlink becomes a reality. Beyond that, they can help program its use. Adopt a greenway-segments could be chosen by different groups or businesses, to help maintain the routes and to host activities and events along the corridors. Church congregations are obvious collaborators. Less obvious perhaps, the headquarters of a number of labor organizations are located in Southwest Detroit. Perhaps they would be willing to adopt parts of the Greenlink and help with programming.

The Greenlink could also be one feature within the proposed Automobile National Heritage Area. One of about two dozen such areas around the county, the Auto Heritage Area was added to the Department of Interior list of heritage areas by the U.S. Congress in 1998. It is laid out around six corridors of automotive history: 1) the Detroit River, 2) Michigan Avenue/U.S. 12, 3) Rouge River, 4) Woodward Avenue, 5) Flint, and 6) Lansing. The mission is to focus on raising awareness and understanding about the impact of the automobile on the Detroit region, with emphasis on increasing tourism, expanding education, and encouraging revitalization. The Greenlink connects to two of the Heritage Area’s physical locations (Detroit River, Michigan Avenue) and to many of its objectives.

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Momentum is building for connections across Southwest Detroit neighborhoods, which have fascinating histories and abundant community assets. The Greenlink project is a wonderful starting point for better non-motorized transportation across Corktown and Mexicantown.

This report provides background for urban greenway solutions that can connect the built environment to healthy outcomes while also linking the physical urban landscapes of Corktown and Mexicantown. Many decades ago, freeway development and other factors ruptured the southwest Detroit neighborhoods. The Greenlink is one means for reconnecting them. Hopefully, similar approaches can help bond other fractured Detroit neighborhoods.

It is sometimes daunting to know how to apply greenway concepts in inner-city neighborhoods. Greenways are mainly suburban and rural landscape features. This report questions what greenway planning means in highly urban places. The answer offered here is that greenways are improved streets - ‘Complete Streets’. One concept from more suburban contexts can be used effectively here: a network of hubs, sites and links can form the structure for planning pedestrian improvements.

Since the Greenlink project has already achieved a plan and funding for improving the biking environment, the recommendations from this work focus primarily on improving the experience for pedestrians. It also focuses geographically on the southern part of the HEP study area, since this is where a range of community assets are located and where the greatest potential for neighborhood reconnections exists.

Pedestrian linkage may be thought about in a phased manner, addressing certain streets first and then building the program to complete auxiliary loops through neighborhoods. This report recommends a primary route along major streets that physically connects Corktown and Mexicantown, using Bagley as the spine of the entire system. Michigan Avenue and Vernor form the other legs of an elongated triangle.

More intimate neighborhood walking routes are then mapped to loop through the historic Corktown neighborhood, the Bagley Housing area around St. Anne’s Catholic Church, and the region surrounding Clark Park and the Hubbard Farms neighborhood.

A good place to begin is with walking groups that are organized for outdoor exercise. These groups will be invaluable for assessing current conditions, for suggesting pedestrian improvements, and for identifying important nodes where street amenities can be clustered. This report advocates concentrating on pedestrian nodes where seating, lighting, signage, art, and other amenities come together to make a safe and comfortable destination. Walking groups can eventually help monitor and care for these nodes and the links between them.

Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods give residents the ability to walk to a community destination, relative safety from crime and traffic, passable surfaces for all levels of mobility, and pleasant visual surroundings. The quick audit done for this study identifies places where these factors are intact, and a few places where they all come together. Most streets, however, are badly in need of improvement to make them pedestrian-friendly.

Pedestrian improvements for the Greenlink can be broken down into three types: aesthetic, safety, and functional. Some amenities, like street trees, provide benefits in all three
categories. They should be added in early phases of the project. However, a piecemeal approach to completing the streets will be more costly in the long run. In an urban context, trees are part of a larger infrastructure that includes underground utilities, curbs, gutters, tree lawns, intersections and other street features. For the streets highlighted here, more holistic plans should be done that integrate traffic calming, street trees, and other amenities for Complete Streets.

This report briefly addresses programming options to help engage local residents in using the streets for improved health. In addition to walking groups, other programs can target particular ages. For instance, there are a range of programs being developed nation-wide to enable and encourage children to safely walk or ride bikes to school. For children, and all residents, safety should be addressed foremost. The more people out on the streets, the safer residents will be, including children.

Naming projects and places is often powerful. Programs for naming, building, monitoring and using the Greenlink should start now, before it is ‘built.’ In fact, this report urges an approach that uses ‘building’ the Greenlink as a way to engage the community. It is true that large infrastructure projects (street narrowing, cross-walks, etc) must be completed by the City. But there are also elements that can be planned and implemented by residents, including planting, painting route markers on pavement, and trash removal. This helps ‘name’ the Greenlink as a place and builds support for continued improvement.

Finally, a successful Greenlink effort will include many partners in the community. This report identifies only a couple of the business sectors and heritage projects to which the Greenlink could connect. There are many others. A coalition of interests will eventually help reconnect Corktown and Mexicantown for multiple objectives. There is no more profound motivation than human health and well-being.
# APPENDIX A: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

## Institutions of Higher Education

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<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Archdiocese of Detroit - Sacred Heart Major Seminary</td>
<td>1234 Washington Blvd.</td>
<td>48226</td>
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<tr>
<td>SER Casa Environmental &amp; Technological Academy</td>
<td>2635 Howard St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Detroit Mercy - Riverfront Campus, School of Law</td>
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<td>University of Windsor</td>
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<td>Wayne County Community College, Downtown Campus</td>
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Institutions of higher education found at: [http://www.superpages.com](http://www.superpages.com)

## Public Schools

### ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS

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<td>840 Waterman</td>
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HIGH SCHOOLS

Detroit City High School 3500 McGraw St. 9-12, PK, K 48208-1453
Murray-Wright High School* 2001 W. Warren Ave. 9-12 48208-2216
Northwestern High School 2200 W. Grand Blvd. 9-12 48208-1178
Southwestern High School 6921 W. Fort St. 9-12 48209-2912
West Side Academy Alternative Education 1851 W. Grand Blvd. 9-12, Alt 48208-1005
Western International High School* 1500 Scotten St. 9-12 48209-2139

Charter Schools

Blanche Kelso Bruce Academy 1326 St. Antoine 5-12 48226
Blanche Kelso Bruce Academy 4151 Seminole 5-12 48226
Casa Richard Academy* 2635 Howard 9-12 48216
Cesar Chavez Academy 8126 W. Vernor Hwy. K-5 48209
Cesar Chavez Academy 6782 Goldsmith 6-8 48209
Cesar Chavez Academy 1761 Waterman 9-12 48209
Covenant House Life Skills Center West* 5668 Baker 9-12, Alt 48209
Covenant House Life Skills Center Central* 2959 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. 9-12, Alt 48208
George Crockett Academy* 1250 Rosa Parks Blvd. 9-12 48216
George Crockett Academy* 4851 14th St. K-8 48208
Hope of Detroit Academy* 1250 Rosa Parks Blvd. 9-12 48216

Note: Schools scheduled to be closed in 2007 by Detroit Public Schools as of April 4, 2007, have not been included.
Life Skills Center of Metropolitan Detroit 3100 E. Jefferson 48226
Voyageur Academy* 1250 Rosa Parks Blvd. 48216


### Private Schools

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<tr>
<td>St. Casimir Elementary School*</td>
<td>3361 23rd St.</td>
<td>48208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent De Paul Middle School</td>
<td>2020 14th St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Preschools & Nurseries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childs Place*</td>
<td>1055 Trumbull St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's World Learning Center McNamara Federal Building</td>
<td>477 Michigan Ave., Rm 110</td>
<td>48226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Kings &amp; Queens Childcare</td>
<td>8428 Thaddeus St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metrometrics Human Services</td>
<td>1235 Lawndale St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine Community School*</td>
<td>1519 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd</td>
<td>48208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vistas Nuevas Head Start*</td>
<td>3950 Toledo St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vistas Nuevas Head Start</td>
<td>8500 W. Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vistas Nuevas Head Start*</td>
<td>1711 Junction St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preschools found at: [http://www.superpages.com](http://www.superpages.com)

### Public Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Public Library*</td>
<td>5671 W. Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>313-297-9984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Public Library</td>
<td>1004 Woodward Ave.</td>
<td>48226</td>
<td>313-224-3885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Public Library</td>
<td>121 Gratiot Ave.</td>
<td>48226</td>
<td>313-628-2851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Public Library Branch Location, Bowen*</td>
<td>3648 W. Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>313-297-9381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Public Library Branch Location, Duffield</td>
<td>2507 W. Grand Blvd.</td>
<td>48208</td>
<td>313-224-6456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Public Library Branch Location, Frederick Douglass*</td>
<td>3666 Grand River Ave.</td>
<td>48208</td>
<td>313-833-9714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detroit Public Library | 5671 W. Vernor Hwy. | 48209 | 313-297-9984 
Detroit Public Library | 1004 Woodward Ave. | 48226 | 313-224-3885 
Detroit Public Library | 121 Gratiot Ave. | 48226 | 313-628-2851 
Detroit Public Library Branch Location, Bowen* | 3648 W. Vernor Hwy. | 48216 | 313-297-9381 
Detroit Public Library Branch Location, Duffield | 2507 W. Grand Blvd. | 48208 | 313-224-6456 
Detroit Public Library Branch Location, Frederick Douglass* | 3666 Grand River Ave. | 48208 | 313-833-9714 

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Public libraries found at: http://www.superpages.com
- Wayne County Community College
### APPENDIX B: HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CLINICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital/Service</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covenant Community Care</td>
<td>559 W. Grand Blvd.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansoor Medical Center Walk-in Clinic</td>
<td>5705 W. Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Education Project</td>
<td>1450 Howard St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Volunteer Community</td>
<td>1633 Leverette St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sobriety House</td>
<td>2081 W. Grand Blvd.</td>
<td>48208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Community Hospital</td>
<td>2401 20th St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hospitals and health clinics found at: [http://www.superpages.com](http://www.superpages.com)
APPENDIX C: ORGANIZED LABOR INSTITUTIONS IN THE CORKTOWN–MEXICANTOWN AREA

- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #58
- Michigan Teamsters Joint Council No. 43
- Michigan Conference of Teamsters Welfare Fund
- Teamsters Credit Union
- Greater Detroit Building Trades Council
- National Association of Letter Carriers
- Roofers Local #149
- The Building Tradesmen
- Elevator Constructors Local #36
- U Nite Chicago & Central State Joint Board
APPENDIX E: COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Corktown Recycles, 3rd Sat of every month. Corner of Michigan Ave and 14th St.
- Annual Corktown Races, Sunday before St. Patrick’s Day, Corner of Michigan Ave and Trumbull Ave.
- St. Patrick’s Parade, Sunday before St. Patrick’s Day, Michigan Ave, 3rd-14th St.
- Corktown Pub Crawl, First Sunday in June, Corktown Historic District
- Uncork the Possibilities Picnic, Third Saturday in June, Roosevelt Park
- Annual Fall Festival of Lanterns, Sunday before Halloween, Murphy Play Lot
- Corktown Holiday Potluck, First Tuesday of December, Rotating location/
- Corktown Holiday Caroling, Second Sunday of December, Corktown CDC office.
- Corktown Annual Home and Garden Tour, First Sunday in June, Corktown Historic District. Brings in $100K for Historic Corktown.
- Cinco de Mayo parade on Vernor
- Mercados on Bagley in the summertime are put on by Mexicantown Community Development Corporation and celebrate different aspects of Mexican culture in the community as well as bring vendors, food, and festivities to the neighborhood.
- Several Flea Markets in Southwest Detroit from Friday to Sunday, the most popular being Nation Flea Market on Vernor at Livernois
- Mexicantown Community Development Corporation hosts annual Dia de los Muertos event in November.
- Irish Mexican Festival is held at Gaelic League.
## APPENDIX F: BUSINESS, SOCIAL SERVICE, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

### Business and Community Development Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bagley Housing Association</td>
<td>2715 Bagley</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 964-5942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation</td>
<td>1211 Trumbull</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 967-4880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Business Alliance</td>
<td>1434 Michigan Ave.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 965-6512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin Americans for Social &amp; Economic Development (LASED)</td>
<td>4138 West Vernor</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 554-2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexicantown Community Development Corporation</td>
<td>2835 Bagley Ave.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 967-9898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Detroit Business Association</td>
<td>7752 West Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 842-0986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision</td>
<td>1450 McKinstry</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 842-1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Housing Corporation</td>
<td>3627 West Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Corktown Development Corporation (GCDC)*</td>
<td>1438 Michigan Ave.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 965-5853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core City Neighborhoods</td>
<td>3301 23rd St.</td>
<td>48208</td>
<td>(313) 894-8431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delray United Action Council</td>
<td>7914 West Jefferson</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 842-8620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubbard-Richard Citizen Detroit Council</td>
<td>2669 Bagley</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 964-2888</td>
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### Service Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peoples Community Services</td>
<td>412 West Grand Blvd.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 554-3111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Solutions (Southwest Counseling and Southwest Housing Solutions)</td>
<td>1700 Waterman St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>313-841-8900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Detroit Community Recreation League</td>
<td>7824 Fort</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 443-5927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Villa Senior Center</td>
<td>5886 West Fort St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 843-0402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pablo Davis Elder Living Center</td>
<td>9200 West Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greening of Detroit</td>
<td>1418 Michigan Ave.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 237-8733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino Family Services</td>
<td>3815 West Fort St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Health and Social Services Center (CHASS)</td>
<td>5635 West Fort St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 849-3920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternatives For Girls</td>
<td>903 West Grand Blvd.</td>
<td>48208</td>
<td>(313) 361-4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASED Youth Center</td>
<td>7150 West Vernor</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 841-1430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Saints Neighborhood Center</td>
<td>8300 Longworth</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 841-4447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa Maria</td>
<td>1500 Trumbull St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 962-4230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Education Project</td>
<td>1450 Howard St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 963-5881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YO! Youth Opportunity</td>
<td>1641 Porter St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 965-9080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Detroit Youth Net</td>
<td>3648 West Vernor</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 438-2132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom House</td>
<td>2630 West Lafayette</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 964-4320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vistas Nuevas Head Start</td>
<td>2051 Rosa Parks Blvd.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 962-5255</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino Cultural Education Foundation</td>
<td>2020 14th</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 962-8491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SER Metro Detroit</td>
<td>9301 Michigan</td>
<td>48210</td>
<td>(313) 579-4900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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---

* Corktown Business Association and Tiger Stadium Conservancy are under GCDC
**Art and Cultural Destinations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bohemian National House</td>
<td>3009 Tillman St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrix Theatre Company</td>
<td>2730 Bagley St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 967-0999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa Unidad</td>
<td>8740 West Vernor Hwy.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 841-4652</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto Clemente Recreation Center</td>
<td>2631 Bagley Detroit</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 224-0228</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagley Art Gallery</td>
<td>2715 Bagley</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td>(313) 964-5942</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexicantown Restaurant District</td>
<td>Bagley St Between 25th St. and I-75</td>
<td>48209</td>
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<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexicantown International Welcome Center / Mercado</td>
<td>Bagley and 21st St.</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workers Row House Museum</td>
<td>6th St. and Labrosse St.</td>
<td>48216</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton Recreation Center</td>
<td>2301 Woodmere</td>
<td>48209</td>
<td>(313) 628-2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX D: PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks, Playgrounds, and Other Green Space

15th-Butternut* Playlot
16th-Forest* Playlot
25th-Toledo* Playlot
Bloomfield* Playlot
Boyer Playground
Clark* Park
Clemente* Playground
Downey* Playlot
Kozdron (Dewitt Products)* Playlot
Military-Regular* Playground
Mulliet* Playlot
Nagel* Playground
No Name* Unknown
Roosevelt* Park
Savage Park
Scripps* Park
Vermont-Alexandrine* Playlot

City of Detroit Department of Planning and Development

Recreation Centers

Barden Entertainment Inc 163 Madison St. 48226
Boll Family YMCA 1401 Broadway St. 48226
Campus Martius Park Skating Rink 800 Woodward Ave. 48226
Detroit Football Classics 277 Gratiot Ave. 48226
Detroit Racquet Club 626 Woodbridge St. 48226
Fitness USA of Clinton Twp 39333 Van Dyke 48226
Lifelong Fitness, Inc. 3020 Wreford St. 48208
Roberto Clemente Recreation Center* 2631 Bagley 48216
Delray Community Center 420 Leigh 48209-2614
Patton Community Center 2301 Woodmere 48209

Available at: http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/recreation/
Other recreation centers found at: http://www.superpages.com
RECOMMENDED WEB SITES

Bagley Housing.  www.bagleyhousing.com
Cityscape Detroit.  www.cityscapedetroit.org
Complete the Streets.  www.completestreets.org
Creative Communities International.  www.lesstraffic.com
Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion.  www.dethealth.org
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation.  www.dhdc1.org
Greater Corktown Development Corporation.  www.corktowndetroit.org
Healthy Environments Partnership.  www.hep detroit.org
Hubbard Farms Historic District.  www.ci.detroit.mi.us/historic/districts/hubbard_farms.pdf
Main Street Program.  www.mainstreet.org
Matrix Theatre.  www.matrixtheatre.org
Mexicantown Community Development Corporation.  www.mexicantown.org
Traffic Busters.  www.trafficbusters.org/program/wow.htm
Transportation Alternatives.  www.transalt.org
Walkable Communities.  www.walkablecommunities.org
Walking School Bus.  www.walkingschoolbus.org
Wayne State University aerial photographs.  www.culma.wayne.edu/aerial_photos