

How We Live

**A Critical Analysis On Revitalization
Gentrification, and the Single Family Home
From the Lens of Detroit's Culture
Spirit, and Historical Context**

**A Thesis By Joseph M. White
M. Arch, University of Detroit Mercy**





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Abstract

How We Live

This thesis seeks to deconstruct the complexity and shortcomings of affordable residential development in Detroit. In turn, this thesis fleshes out a proposal for a framework for equitable single family housing under these circumstances through the use of efficient, modern renovation and construction and policies derived from Community Land Trusts.

The historical context of Detroit is complex, and changes depending on your perspective, but it can be assumed that it is met within an intersection between the “rise and fall” narrative and the culture of its inhabitants. Where the narrative of Detroit became stigmatized in ruin, there still existed an incumbent population that experienced Detroit as their home. It is for those people in which this thesis caters to.

To deconstruct urban renewal to its essence, one must determine its general intentions, how it benefits the incumbent community, and how it might damage it. What explicitly are the causes of gentrification, and how has urban renewal in other cities coped with this issue? What places would benefit most from new equitable developments? And is there an intervention that can be applied in Detroit that gives people ownership over their property that’s competitive with modern renting?

Mapping and site studies as well as a study of Detroit’s housing vernacular inform the ideals of this thesis to see if equitable housing is feasible according to the current standard of rent housing. The site chosen to stage an intervention was Mt Olivet, West of the Mt Olivet Cemetery.

The equitable prospects of a community land trust in tandem with proposals for salvaged homes and new developments can be competitive in terms of cost to prospective owners and protect the value of the surrounding area. This proposal could provide a framework to transition a renting population to one of ownership and generational wealth.

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Thesis Advisor: Wladek Fuchs
External Thesis Advisor: Bryan Shishakly
Thesis Coordinator: Claudia Bernasconi
University of Detroit Mercy:
School of Architecture and Community Development

This Thesis goes out to those who have been afflicted by parasitic systems of inequity: Whether it be from race, income, age, sex, gender, and ideology; Whose voices inspired my thinking and my desire to act.

Additional thanks to 1930s US city planners, for without their shortcomings, Architects wouldn't have as much to write about.

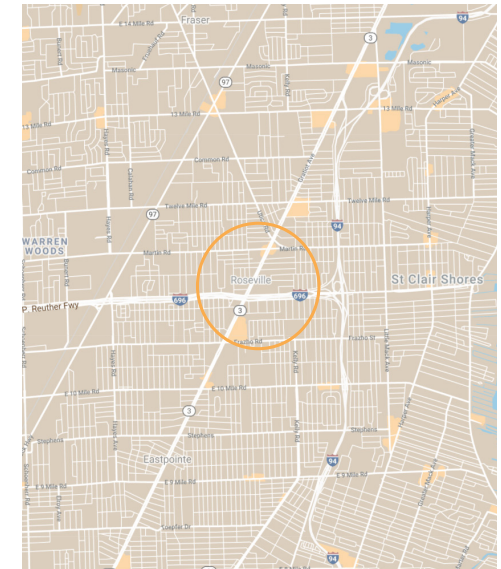
Preface

On Roseville

I am from Roseville, Michigan. Famous for nothing, and located on a forgettable 4 x 3 mile area of land sandwiched between Warren, Fraser, St. Clair Shores and Eastpointe. Some call it "Pretty much Eastpointe" or "Pretty much Warren" or even "Pretty much Detroit" (if you've lived in neither), and most forget it even exists, usually mistaking it for one city or another. But for all 26 years of my life so far, I call it home.

Roseville, like any Detroit east-side suburb, has all the standard amenities: Housing, places to buy food, a "downtown", shopping centers, crime, a so-so school district, and a mix between new and pre-established communities. Roseville on niche.com scores a generous B-, worryingly citing "Nightlife" as it's biggest shortcoming.

Unique to Roseville, and something you'll only see by living here, is the sheer diversity of it's populace: (In large part) Free of class, racial barriers, and an overwhelming sense of community (As seen by the plethora of churches that somehow cram into the 4 x 3 mile city). A day in the life of a Rosevillian can fully be contained in Roseville, where you work, eat, shop for groceries, see a movie, and just live. The stores are there designated for those who live there., and not an overtly expensive entity enticing wealthy people outside the city to visit. Property values reflect the demographic that lives there. Albeit boring, a socially integrated and diverse city such as Roseville is only amongst the few socially integrated suburbs in the metro Detroit area. The city exists as a good case study in communities without the detriment of class, wealth, and systemic barriers.



1.1.2, Roseville, Mi

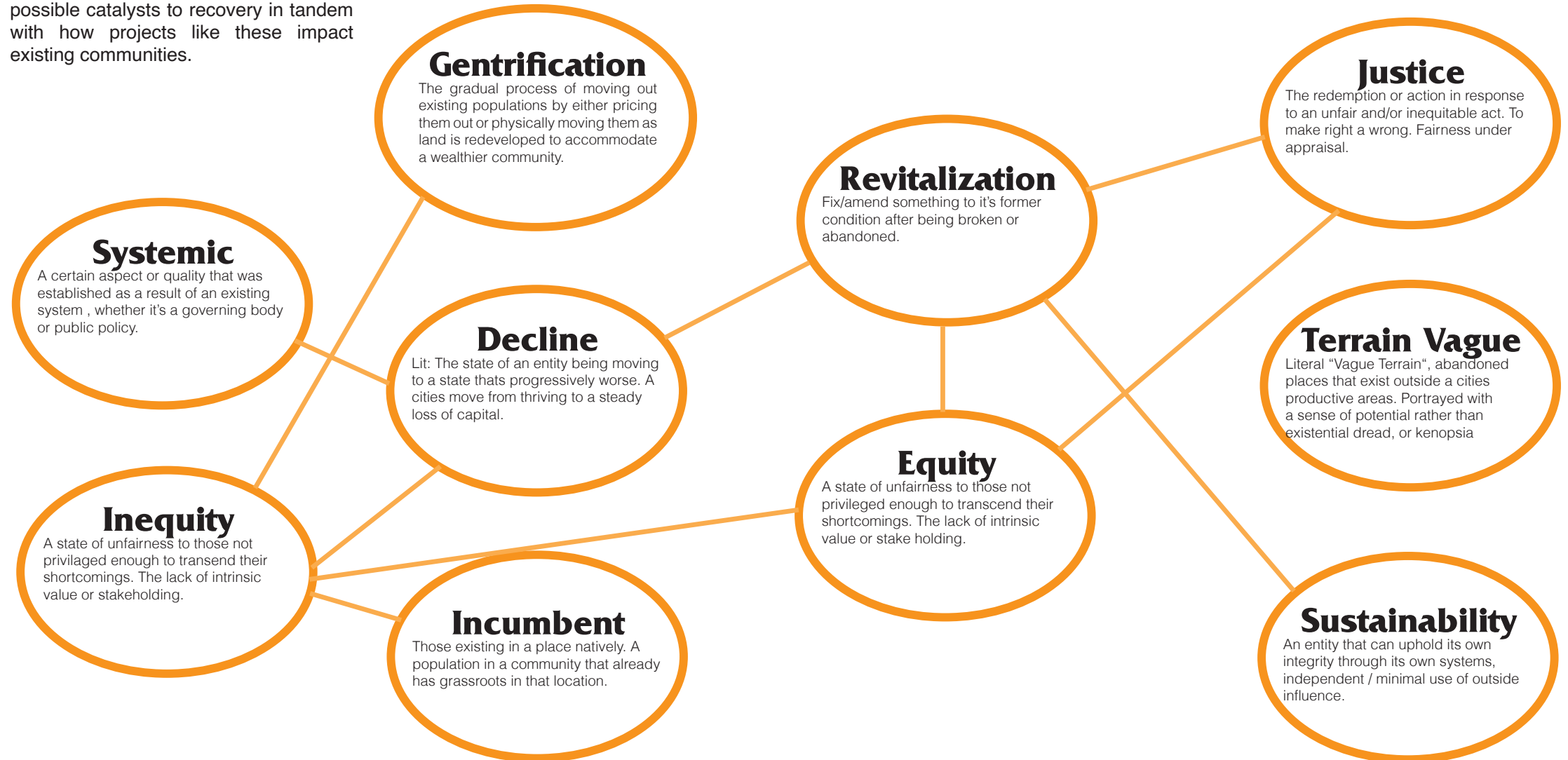


1.1.3, Stross Mural, Utica St.

Defining Terms

On Terms

Before getting to the heart of what this thesis contains, it's important to properly define the vernacular that will be used, and how it is used, in order for the context to be clear. This thesis deals with the complexity of systemic inequality from the lens of Detroit's history and proposes possible catalysts to recovery in tandem with how projects like these impact existing communities.



1.2.1, Terms chart

Thesis Statement

The prospect of being an affordable housing developer in an urban environment comes with a dualistic, inherently contrasting set of truths: To develop and revitalize is to bring value into a neighborhood, but to bring value into that neighborhood is to spur further developments that might be tailored to a demographic that isn't apart of the incumbent population. The golden age of cities in America fled faster than they grew, and the resulting population loss, as well as economic downfall, resulted in a state of urban decay, especially in Rust Belt cities like Detroit, Michigan. Amongst the decay, Detroit sees vacancy in mass, multitudes of abandoned lots, and a growing sense of liminality between it's less populous neighborhoods, all existing in a neighborhood the city largely forgot. And at the center of it all, the people of Detroit live in a state of desiring equality, better conditions to live, and for a city to remember them.

Recovery and revitalization efforts are not unknown aspects to urban environments, as there are efforts to criticize them for their intentions and effectiveness. Nor is a city's historical context outside of what informs its present conditions. Since the concept of gentrification is a general result from city revitalization projects, gentrification itself is a study on its own. And lastly, the research will inform the concepts behind affordability in single family housing, and the importance of equity in a community.

By studying what has already been done in cities with similar and differing qualities, it can inform how success

can be found in Detroit, and what to avoid in order to accommodate those who live there already. Chicago is a natural next step to study, as it shares many similarities with Detroit, being a large, rust belt city as well as the largest metropolis in its respective state. Chicago has undergone numerous revitalization efforts, most notably Plan 21, which created subsets of "Urban Suburbs" in order to retain its dwindling population. While the plan saw success from a fiscal point of view, those left on the border of those neighborhoods began to be further pushed back as affordability skyrocketed over incumbent feasibility. Similar actions happen internationally in places like Brixton, London, where landlords and developers with no stake in the community exploit the culture of it for the benefit of profit alone. Then places like Sacramento, who utilized land grants and community land trusts to create a lease to own model for affordable housing, giving growing single families equity in their respective communities.

Recovery in Detroit is mixed, depending on one's perspective. From the city perspective, re-identifying Detroit's Downtown with community engagement and sports culture was successful, and moves the city forward. The residences of the people however, especially those outside the city core, are met with little to no development. And there's no guarantee that prospective development won't prevent gentrification.

While gentrification to some might seem like an inevitability of neighborhood development, how can one design and revitalize existing / new housing

developments that brings affordability and equity to an incumbent and potentially new populace. How might new technologies bring efficiency over Detroit's outdated systems in residences like plumbing and HVAC. In what ways can these new developments be sensitive to the existing culture of a neighborhood?

Through mapping and precedent study, the use of revitalizing neighborhoods has been effective in providing growth to that neighborhood, both locally and internationally. Equity and protected housing value isn't impossible with efforts from the SHRA in Sacramento and Vanguard Design in Detroit. These systems work, its just a matter of who is behind every step of the way and how well new and incumbent communities take to it.

By designing to represent the existing culture of a place and doing away with hard barriers between new developments and older ones, plus salvaged residences, one can provide a non interruptive intervention to community culture and provide sustainable / affordable housing. This in tandem with land grants and Community Land Trusts, the value of those residences are protection and shouldn't impact the relative value of its surroundings, therefore keeping an incumbent population from being forced to leave. This intervention is valuable because of the shortage of equitable housing projects in Detroit, and the possibility of bringing people back to the city's neighborhoods is valuable in times of continued decline.

Mapping various conditions in Detroit

bore fruit and continued to show the need for revitalization in the outer areas of the city. Income, abandonment, population loss over time, and the after effects of Redlining are amongst the criteria that lead to 3 potential neighborhoods. The criteria for intervention were places with high vacancy, middling to low income, middling to low population, and an existing suburb condition like schools, amenities, etc. Proximity to existing suburbs is also a consideration, leading me to Mt. Olivet, just West of the Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Here we see multitudes of abandoned 1920s prairie style homes that are in various forms of condition. By working through what's salvageable and desired for new developments, it can provide a framework for other neighborhoods as well.

This thesis is supported by the sheer lack of truly affordable housing in Detroit and the relative value of constructing salvage and new properties. The gaps in this thesis are unavoidable however, as developments like this are usually bottlenecked in policy and budget limitations. While the funding for these projects exist, being guaranteed is a different story. There is also a concern in terms of the fee for labor, whether its the architects construction documentation or the labor for the contractor. These amounts are made vague deliberately to provide the thesis with more objective and measurable content.

The importance of this thesis is clear: To stifle the doubts of potential opportunity in Detroit for affordable property ownership. An alternative to renting, which is often only beneficial to the landlord. That equity in this context is

Detroit In Context: The Perfect Storm

Detroit In Decline

Roseville's mother city, Detroit, does not share that same benefit. Social Integration in Detroit is mixed, and if its not the extremely varied neighborhood identities that signify that, then take a look into Detroit's context where redlining created hard barriers that separated those of different income and race, or even it's history in gentrifying neighborhoods in favor of lucrative development opportunities. If the past were the past, then the city would simply move forward. After all, the culture of the city is deeply rooted in community and even the least well off neighborhoods share a communal bond. But these barriers still persist today, and the blights on Detroit's history follow it.

After losing 65% of its population from the 50s to today due to what is characterized as "White Flight", Detroit is in need of some sort of population growth. A city meant to house 2 million people cannot sustain at only 700,000, as the current context of Detroit would signify.

To put that into perspective, that's 200% more than Chicago, 110% more than St. Louis, and 300%+ more than Sacramento at their worst in terms of population loss. This condition, in tandem with Detroit's overall decline, is traceable when Detroit's recent history is put into context.

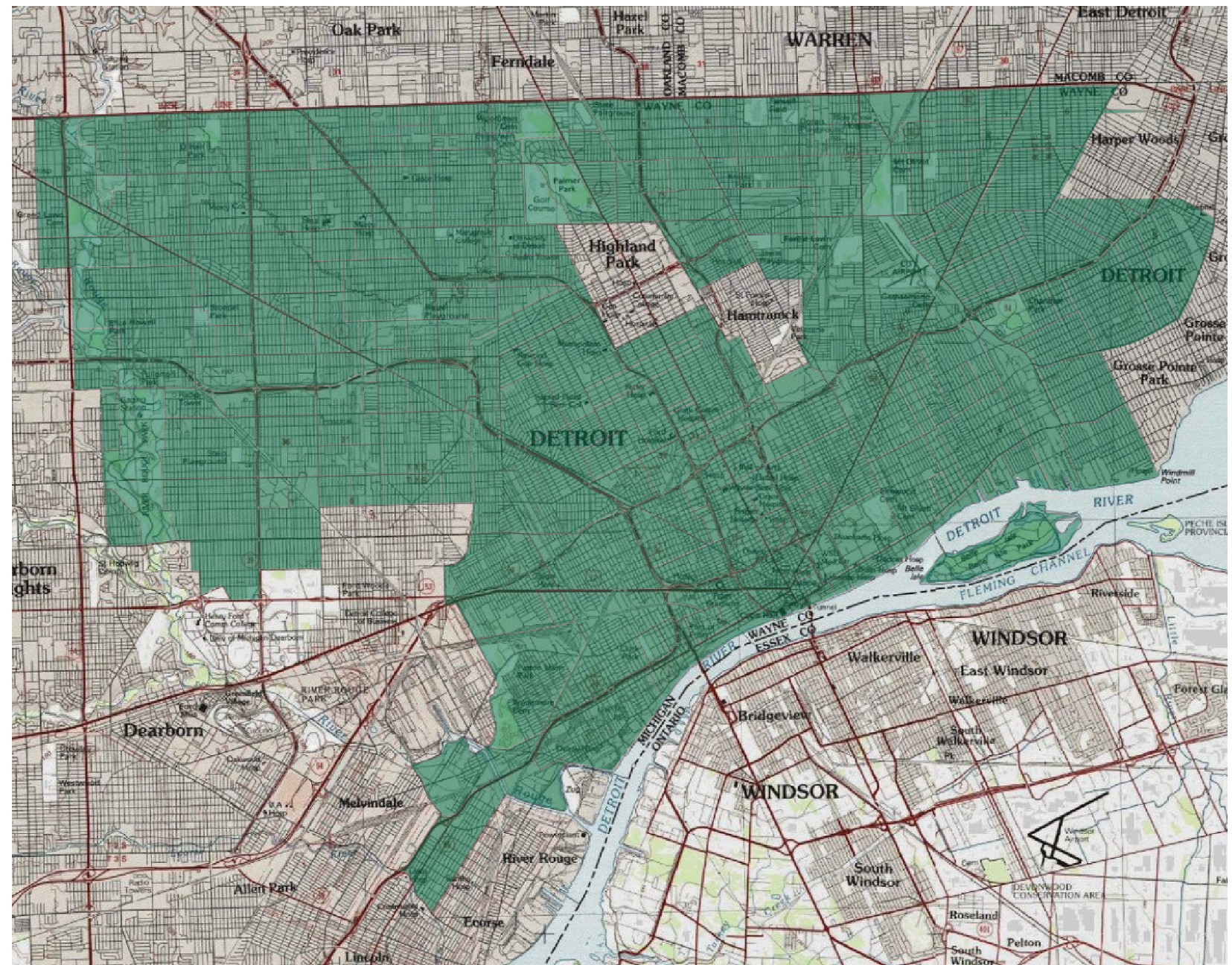


Figure 2.1.1, Detroit

Paris of the Midwest: 1900s - 1920s

Detroit's early success can be attributed in large part due to the after effects of the Industrial Revolution: More efficient mass manufacturing practices, the popularization of the automobile, the use of mass rail travel, and Henry Ford's popularized use of the assembly line. Detroit in particular became a city where these industries thrived, coupled with it's French past earning the title of "The Paris of the Midwest."

Many famous production facilities were born during this time:

Ford Piquette Avenue Plant (1904)

Cadillac Factory (1905)

General Motors Research Lab (1928)

Fisher Building (1928)

Here we also see mass immigration into the city, skyrocketing the population from about 200,000 to nearly 1,000,000 people. This exponential increase is due to families from Europe and the American South searching for work opportunities. Along with the predominantly American white population, there was also a large rise in the European and African American population. This move sets a catalyst for future racially charged city development, as these populations were desired to be kept separate from each other due to their race and income status.



2.1.2, Campus Martius, Detroit



2.1.3, Detroit, 1920s

The Redline Era: 1930s - 1980

Due to the rising populations of US cities and the rise in diversity between races and income, the Home Owners association was tasked with zoning areas in a city based on their "desirability." These zones determined the availability of home loans to certain demographics of people and prioritized urban development to areas considered "desirable" by the city. Desirability was determined by what shape the land was in, the income of it's community, and the race of those that lived there. This lead to areas of wealthy white residents being more valuable to the city than low income Black or European populations.

- Tier 1: Best, Desirable, Most developed
- Tier 2: Still Desirable, Developing
- Tier 3: Declining, Needs Development
- Tier 4: Hazardous, Undesirable,

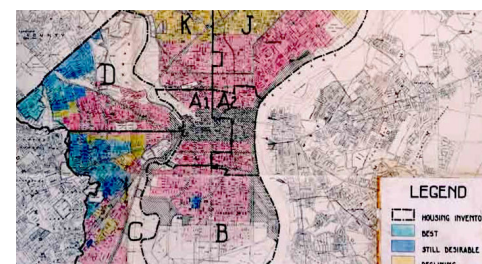


Figure 2.1.5, Philadelphia Redline Map

Detroit Population 1935:
~1,600,000

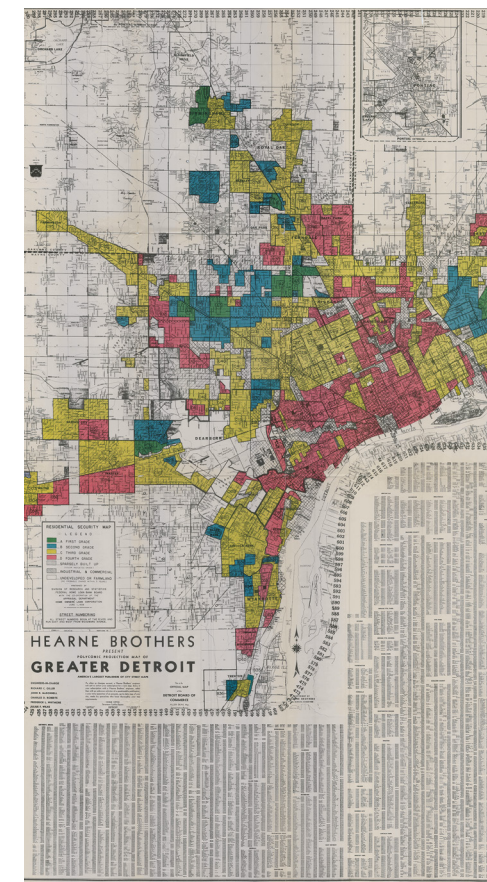


Figure 2.1.4, Original Detroit Redline

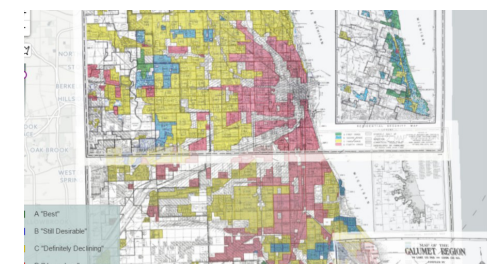


Figure 2.1.6, Chicago Redline Map



Arsenal of Democracy: 1940s

WWII was an unexpected industrial powerhouse for Detroit, and the city saw a sudden economic boom that set most of Detroit's economic prosperities and shortcomings in motion. WWII was very important for catalyzing every major automotive producer at the time (GM, Ford, and Chrysler) to shift production to producing machines of war. Edsel Ford transitioned the willow plant to build B-24 bombers at a rate of 1 per hour, and over 8000 by 1945. Here we see Chyslers invention of the Jeep, and also produced M-3 tanks. General Motors, however, took a much more radical change in production and produced tanks, aircrafts, parts for them, trucks, canons, and machine guns towards the war effort.

This isn't the only story of Detroit during WWII however. Due to very selective wartime rationing and racial tension built up from class seperation, class conflict broke out and quickly turned violent, resulting in over 30 deaths and 675 people injured.

Detroit Population by 1950:
~1,850,000 (Highest Ever)

Uprising of 1943

Rooted in social unrest between the White and Black population:

Limited work environments, poor living conditions, disproportionate wartime rationing.

Started from two alleged rumors, antagonizing both "sides"

Resulted in:

34 Deaths
675 Injured
\$2,000,000 in damages

WWII Production

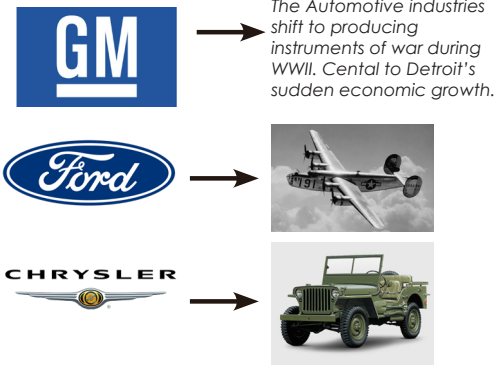


Figure 2.1.7, WWII VS 1943 Uprising

Continued Racial Inequality: 1950s- 1970s

Detroit's hottest Summer is said to be 1967.

Most would agree this is due to two factors: temperature and the Uprising of 1967, or "The 12th Street Riots."

In the early morning of July 23rd, city police received an anonymous tip regarding the legitimacy of a bar called "The Blind Pig" on 12th Street. Legitimacy aside, this resulted in an all out raid by the police. The brutal display witnessed by the public lead to a full scale conflict between citizens and the police.

Escalations got out of hand, and soon the uprising spread to neighboring areas, and resulted in over 1400 destroyed buildings and \$50,000,000 in damages to the city. Deaths vs. injured are debated to this day, but it is agreed that there were over 40 deaths and 1000 injured. The scale became so severe that the state deployed the army to quell the unrest, but decades of aggression towards segregation, brutality, inequity, and injustice had surpassed the resistance efforts, so the uprising lasted for 5 days.

Here is where historians might see this as Detroit's breaking point, where decline starts. But in reality, this was only another step paving the way for Detroit's decline into disaster.

Detroit Population by 1970:

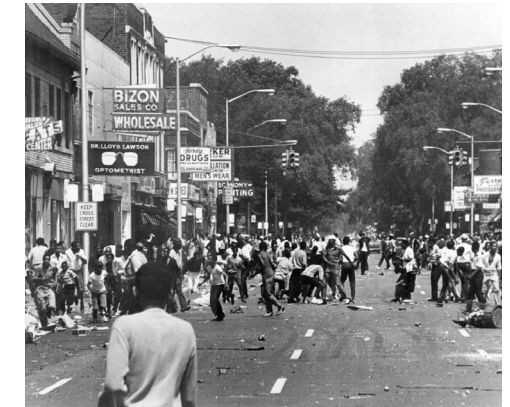


Figure 2.1.8, 12th Street, 1967 Uprising

Uprising of 1967

Began after an unsolicited police raid at the Blind Pig on 12th Street.

Escalations in police violence and onlooker retaliation resulted in a full riot, lasting 5 days

Resulted in:

Over 40 Deaths
Over 1000 Injured
1400 Destroyed buildings

"[African Americans] have always held, the lowest jobs, the most menial jobs, which are now being destroyed by automation. No remote provision has yet been made to absorb this labor surplus. Furthermore, the [African Americans]'s education, North and South, remains, almost totally, a segregated education. And, the police treat the [African Americans] like a dog."

- James Baldwin, Essay (1966)

Suburban Flight and the Great Migration: 1950s- 1990s

It can be argued that Detroit as a city isn't susceptible to change. When families and businesses were incentivized by Federal Housing Act benefits that allowed cheaper home development in city suburbs, the city did little to resist the loss of over 65% of it's population to it. Cities during this period became places attributed to crime, pollution and unrest not suitable for families and local business, so they fled to the suburbs on mass. During this period however, some of the population was replaced by African American families seeking better opportunity from the South, resulting in the 80 / 20 percent race split we see today.

Detroit Population 1990:
~1,000,000

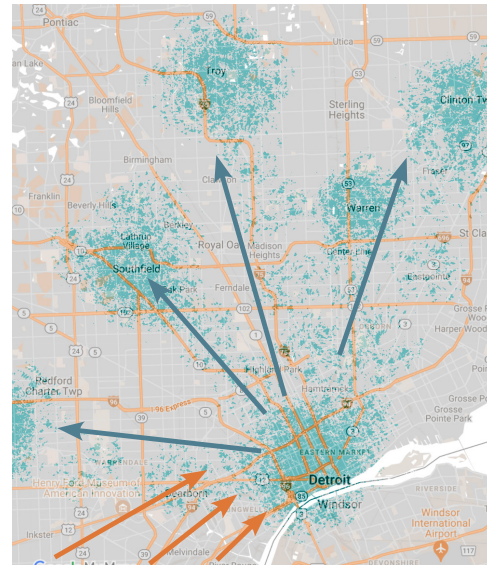
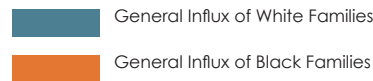


Figure 2.1.9. White Flight Movement



The Case of Troy:

As work shifted to the suburbs, Troy became one of the desirable areas to move from Detroit.



The Case of Ann Arbor:

Along with Troy, Ann Arbor became one of the more desirable areas to move from Detroit.



The Case of Southfield:

Along with Troy and Ann Arbor, Southfield became one of the more desirable areas to move from Detroit.



Coleman Young Remains Mayor for 20 years (Winning re-election 4 more times) and headed various revitalization projects Downtown, including Cobo Hall. Controversial for his decision to enforce eminent domain over Poletown and moving money out of neighborhoods



Kwame and Bankruptcy 2000s- 2013s

With the stage set we start to see the current state of Detroit take shape in the form of a few controversial steps by the city.

Our actor here is former mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. Michiganders alike know of him and revere him in infamy due to his treatment of city finances and his non admission of guilt to the court. What can be allegedly traced to his name is the funneling of over \$10,000,000 in city coffers to his own personal finances, his wife, and his lavish lifestyle. Rearrangement of city funds saw a stark decrease in neighborhood funding as well as funding for public parks such as th Belle Isle Zoo. From the end of his tenure as mayor in 2002 to 2021, he spent that time in prison for his crimes against the city, to be pardoned by then president Donald Trump in January 2021.

Detroit Population 2020:
639,111



Figure 2.1.10, Kwame Kilpatrick

This blight on Detroit's outlook fell to succeeding mayors to fix, only to concede to bankruptcy under Dave Bing in 2013 in the amount of \$20 Billion. This is due in large to the precedent set by Detroit's history in financial mismanagement, the inability to combat income disparity, and the continued flight of Detroit families, and their work, to the suburbs. In exchange for financial help, the Detroit City council ceded financial power to the state



Figure 2.1.11, Bankruptcy, Unknown

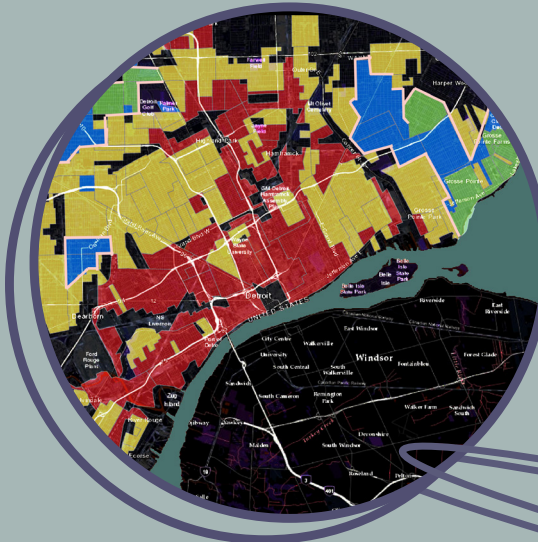
White population decreased from 54% - 34%

1973 Coleman Young elected mayor

1973-1989

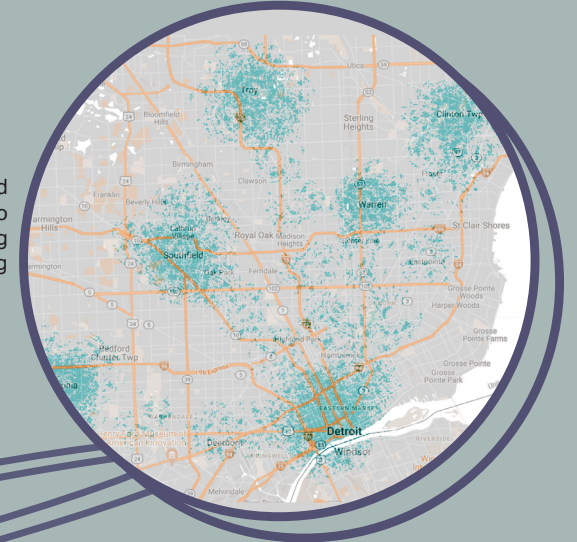
A Perfect Storm

Detroit's historical context informs its present. It can be argued that the collective aspects of social disparity, income inequality, mass population loss, and harsh economic hardships post WWII in large part lead to the current state of Detroit's decline



Income Separation

Redlining separated people of different ethnic backgrounds and income from each other leading to a form of segregation and forming a glass ceiling over lower income neighborhoods



Suburban Flight

Edge City growth promoted middle class families to move to the suburbs along with their work, depopulating Detroit by 65%



Civil Unrest

The underlining issues of income and race separation caused an upswing in racial tension, causing multiple uprisings that resulted in deaths and city damage.

Recession and Bankruptcy

Economic hardship following suburban flight and Detroit's decline, the 2008 recession, and the resulting bankruptcy claim in large part lead to it's current state.



Figure 2.1.12, The Perfect Storm

The Terrain Vague

Ruin & Progress

Ignasi Solas-Morales defines the *Terrain Vague* as “The relationship between the absence of use, of activity, and the sense of freedom, of expectancy, is fundamental to understanding the evocative potential of the cities terrains vagues. Void, absence, yet also promise, the space of the possible, of expectation.” - *Terrain Vague (2013)*.

For Detroit, this lens is all to relevant. This in tandem with the concept of the *Liminal*, the spaces between nodes of use, denoted by what was, and that absence creating a surreal threshold through Detroit’s neighborhoods.

But these spaces are not inherently without use. People live in these spaces, despite the population loss, disrepair, and city neglect. Given these concepts, it is easy to romanticize the “ruin” aspect of it, or as some would say “Ruin Porn.”

Nevertheless this is one of the lenses that Detroit can be viewed, but not with an existential sense of dread but with potential, of opportunity, and with regard for those living here that are willing to participate in having an impact on these areas.

Detroit’s Terrain Vague is an idea centered around Detroit’s past, present and future. The state of urban decline is not just a picture of one point in time, but a movement from one point to another. Of apparent decline, to recovery, to progress. Or to continued decline if no interventions are made.



2.2.1. Chair in the Park



2.2.2, Vague Lot



2.2.3, Surreal Fog



2.2.4, Grant St.



2.2.5, Toys R Us, Roseville

The Stigma of Ruin

An Essay on Ruin & Progress In Mt. Olivet

The memory of Detroit as a whole is not singular in nature, and depends whether or not one has overseen it's history directly or indirectly, or whether it's looked on in hindsight. The screen memory of Detroit in its current state can be determined as the observation of Detroit's financial shortcomings and it's relative "Golden Age" during the rise of the automotive industry and it's post depression state of "The Arsenal of Democracy" during WWII. During these periods, however, you see another Detroit. One met with the lack of social justice and racial inequality. The destruction of culturally rich Black Bottom to build Lafayette Park is remembered as an achievement of Mies Van Der Rohe and the city. The social uprising of 1967 is simply remembered as the 'riot that burned the city'. The resulting racial tensions coupled with the gradual move of businesses and families to the suburbs, remembered as 'White Flight', caused a shift in the narrative of Detroit to one of decline. Those that were financially able had left the city, leaving those who fiscally couldn't behind. And soon a gradual, passive forgetting took over the status of Detroit as an industrial beacon, as well as cemented it's status in decline three generations later. The resulting flight to the suburbs left most of Detroit's single family housing in a state of vacancy, and eventual ruin as people were incentivised to live in the city core.

Mt Olivet is a neighborhood that sits on the cusp of decay and progress, where new residents replaced old ones, and many blocks of houses that are inhabited. West of The Mt Olivet

Cemetery, however, houses are mostly left abandoned and in ruin, with poverty being the primary driver behind their preservation as well as their decay. There sits houses forgotten by time, not reachable due to dilapidation, and those that are were purchased long ago to be rented. The question posed by this paper is more of an open ended one: How can the memory of a time forgotten



2.3.1, Hollywood St., Mt Olivet

be remembered in this place? Should it? And how can it's traces be adapted into something that can link itself to the present community?

Introduction

History books will often detail a certain view of Detroit, one of obsolescence and of a "Golden Age" that the resulting "riots" and economic hardships left in a state of ruin and decline. It's people will often tell a different story of Detroit, one of racial inequality and tension between the city and its inhabitants, unequal treatment between an established "American" population and those considered "foreign" or "undesirable"¹ This treatment as well as societal shortcomings like

the Great Depression or White Flight led to the gradual abandonment of Detroit by it's middle class population and left behind an impoverished one with little agency over their current living situation. Detroit's outer rim remains a broad mixture of ruin, abandonment, and inhabiting by a new population and community, creating a dichotomy between what was and what is to be. Mt Olivet, an East side neighborhood just North East of Hamtramck, perfectly shows this dichotomy in its direct contrast between developed areas and those left in ruin, preserved by an absence of use. This condition calls into question how the stigma of ruin and housing development impacts the current state of the neighborhood as well as it's future in terms of how people live there and how the traces of the former Euro-American neighborhood impact its present population.

"Memory is a symbolic representation of the past embedded in social action,"

— Michael Rothberg, quoting Alon Confino and Peter Fritzsche, *Multidirectional Memory*

Detroit in Context

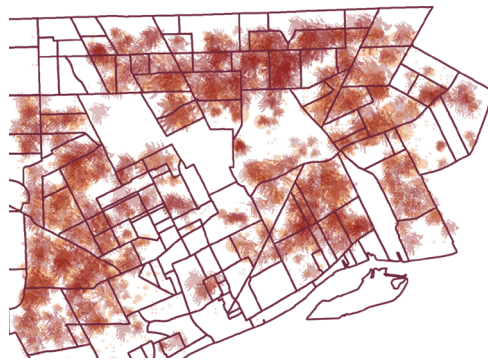
The dualistic nature of Detroit's collective memory can be alluded to as multi-dimensional in scope. Determined by the contrasting experiences of two influential Detroit communities: Middle class, White citizens and impoverished minorities. Early urban policy in Detroit predetermined this separation of citizens with the segregating practices

of Redlining, social housing in select areas, as well as the enactment of eminent domain in primarily cultural centers like Poletown East, Black Bottom, and Paradise Valley⁴. Memory and culture clashed as intersecting events brought about further divide: A golden age became a mass segregation, destruction of cultural centers became "Urban Renewal", and uprisings became riots. The screen memory of Detroit from an outside view supports mainly one narrative over the other: The city's rise and fall as the "Paris of the Midwest" or "The Arsenal of Democracy", a stage for racially charged riots, post White Flight decline, and continued economic depravity into the present, and the ruin that spurs from it. Not as well advertised in Detroit's narrative is the incumbent population, the experiences of those who lived there for generations, those who couldn't leave due to living in poverty, how they experienced these large scale events and how the present conditions are coped with.

The Lost Outer Rim

Amongst the most forgotten areas of Detroit is it's outer rim communities. Historically, these areas contained most of Detroit's single family housing and functioned as the transition between the Urban Core and the growing suburbs. Post White Flight, the gradual pull of middle class White families to the suburbs after the 1950s, left these areas scarcely lived in, as most of Detroit's population continued to live in the urban core. These areas are part of Detroit's Terrain Vague, or places that exist outside Detroit's productive areas

(places that produce capital) according to the works of philosopher and architect Ignasi Solà-Morales. Because these areas are generally abandoned by people and the city, passively forgotten by time, this leads to the stigma over Detroit's ruin, or a romanticize of the ruined areas of Detroit, nostalgic for a time that simply "was", or "stagnant". The reality of these areas is that they are gradually repopulated, giving new life to older housing, either through private ownership or renting from a landlord. Either way, these areas aren't as abandoned as the narrative lets on. In the present day, another culture and memory clash is happening, but at a less extreme rate: The clash between the neighborhood's past, and the state of current developments in the area. The Mt. Olivet neighborhood showcases this



2.3.2, Detroit Vacancy

dichotomy in a fairly succinct manner.

"Poverty is the great preserver of history,"

— Robert Bevan, quoting Lucy Lippard, *Destruction of Memory*

On Mt Olivet

The neighborhood of Mt Olivet sits in between multiple juxtapositions: Between Detroit's Urban core and the

Suburbs; Between the active Osborn community and the largely abandoned Airport Sub neighborhood; And its very own condition between single family housing and the Mt Olivet Cemetery that takes up about 50% of the neighborhood. The site in question contains two residential areas at about 5-6 blocks each, one to the West and the East of the cemetery. What's characterized here is one area that sits largely developed and lived in on the East and another that has been largely abandoned and steered clear of prospective developers and landlords due to its ruined nature on the West. This stark contrast reflects the selective nature of development in Detroit's outer rim, choosing which areas are forgotten, and which ones are left in ruin. Beyond a few disenfranchised renters, the area remains vacant, with only shells enduring a state of limbo imposed by the neighborhoods lack of wealth, and the cities unwillingness to act to either salvage or demolish the hundred year old structures. What was a symbol of wealth and family growth in a once bustling neighborhood became an uncanny, liminal area that serves almost entirely as a reminder of a past long gone.

The populace of Mt Olivet and the greater Osborn community vary drastically from it's origins to now. A wealthy 1920s Detroit grew its bounds as people continued to bloat a fairly compact city. Mt Olivet was established with new kit and craftsman style housing with a very sturdy brick envelope, intended to house the growing Euro-immigrant population. post White flight, the area was settled by a new population. As the Great Migration for African Americans continued North, formerly White populations were replaced with a primarily Black one, re-contextualizing the state of single family housing from a more static, ownership

based living versus a continually moving, ungrounded renting one. Without proper footholds in incumbent communities, the current disenfranchised community are left with what was allotted to them, in areas that were just as forgotten as they were by the city.

What Now?

The unfortunate consequence of investigating development in the lens of ruin and memory is that most of the conditions presented here are either framed in the past or the present, and with the current condition of Mt. Olivet sitting in limbo, with no signs of movement, a future paved for the existing populace is bleak. Hope remains in the form of the ideas expressed by the terrain vague, where attention drawn to the strange, uncanny and empty lots of unused land and brings awareness to it, there lies hope that this ruin can be acknowledged by the city and properly be reclaimed, as seen with projects like Object Orange.

"Derelict buildings may be suspended in a state of ruin, where entropy is assaulted, suspended, celebrated, or accelerated. The result is a new relationship between art and architecture, where art utilizes architecture's public facade as a canvas for announcing failure through constructive practice."

— Whitney Moon, *Reclaiming the Ruin*

In Whitney Moon's essay, *Reclaiming the Ruin*, she delineates 3 stages of reclamation: Highlight, Appropriate, and Transform. In the context of Mt Olivet, highlighting is a very significant first step, as the inherent problem with abandonment in that area is that the area is simply ignored, and built around in favor of more developed areas, despite it's proximity to well developed residential

areas. The undesirable nature of the site warrants it's own highlight, whether its this paper or by it's own radical means, such as with Object Orange. To appropriate the site, empty lots can serve as communal nodes, or even extensions to existing properties. Given that the houses were built to withstand time, the argument can even be made for salvaging existing structures and re-contextualizing them as starter housing, or even duplexes. Transforming the site from its current state is still an abstract, but the essence, or the aura of the site



2.3.3, Object Orange



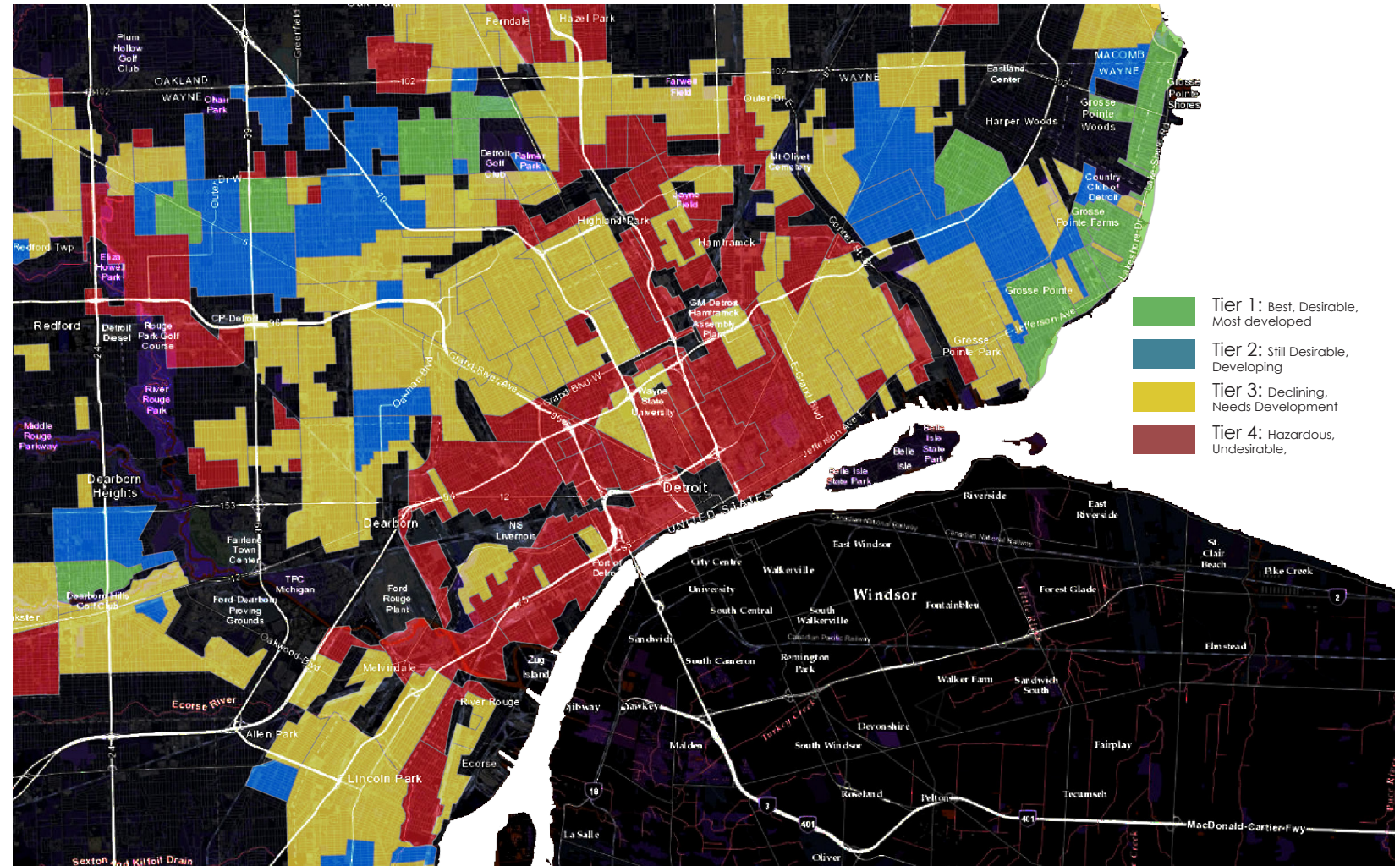
2.3.4, Heidelberg Project

The Need for Intervention

Detroit in Decline

The need for intervention is growing as the city continues to lose people and more neighborhoods become neglected as the city funnels resources to revitalizing its Downtown and Midtown centers. This is expected, due to the sheer amount of income brought into the cities coffers as sports and entertainment dominate Detroit's income in that area. But Detroit isn't just a Downtown / Midtown center. It's a city meant to house 2,000,000 people that has seen one of the worst declines in US history and hasn't done what it could to recover from decades of it.

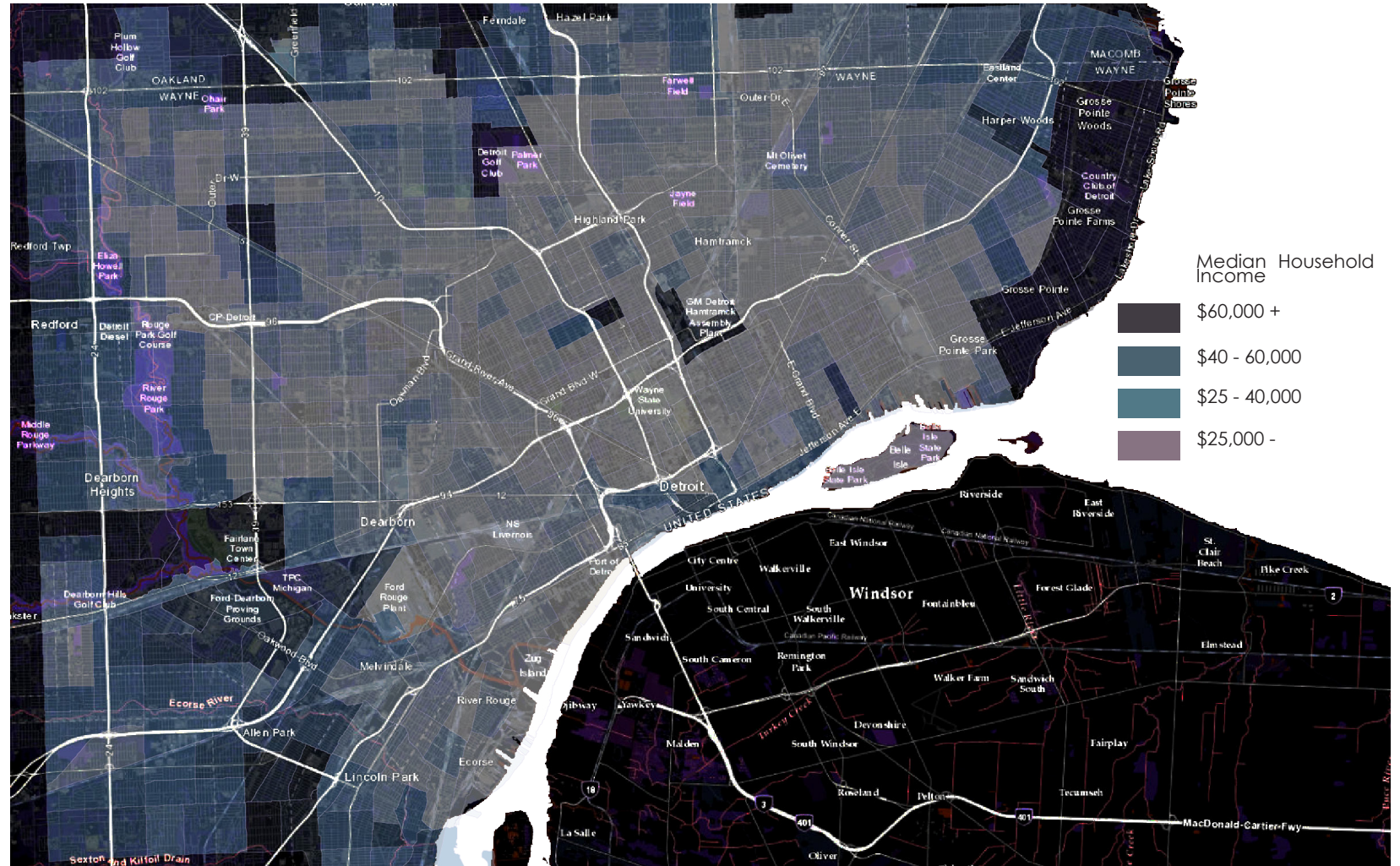
Most major US cities in recent history saw a lot of the same highs and lows, from the great depression, to the economic upswings of WWII production, social segregation through redlining, growing income equality, suburban flight, etc., but Detroit sits as an anomaly of being just about the only city to never quite recover. The current reality of Detroit in terms of income, vacancy, poor conditioned houses, and the post redlining landscape is that these facets are connected and inform the Cities current state.



2.4.1, Redline Map

On Income

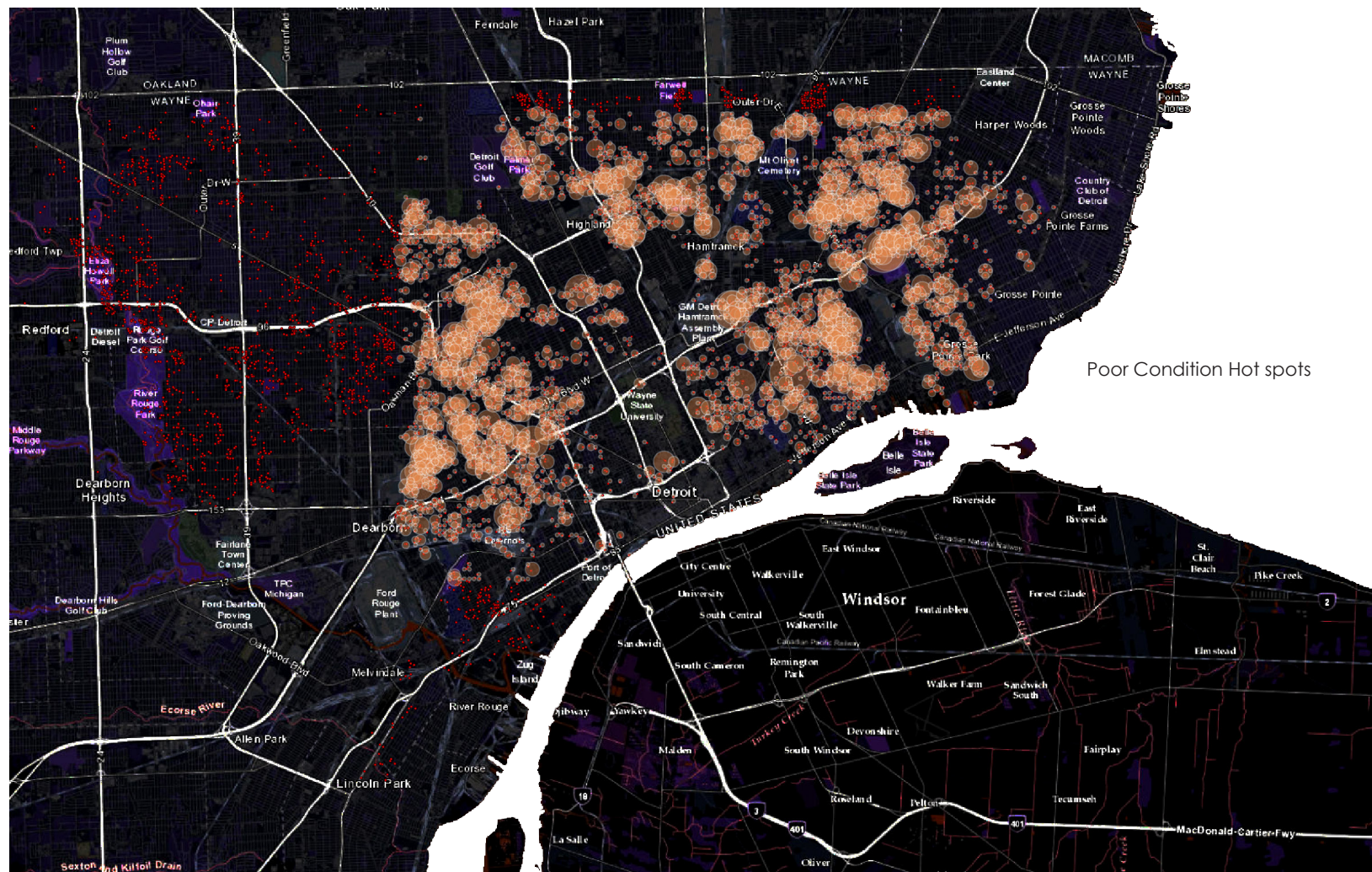
Income Separation like all major cities, has a fairly large gap between average household incomes of wealthy and low income residents. Detroit, however, has a fairly consistently low income over most of it's neighborhoods, except for outliers like Indian Village and Detroit's Downtown. The highest average income in Detroit per neighborhood is about \$70,000 yearly, with most of Detroit's populace making less than \$30,000 yearly.



2.4.2, Income Map

Poor Condition Houses

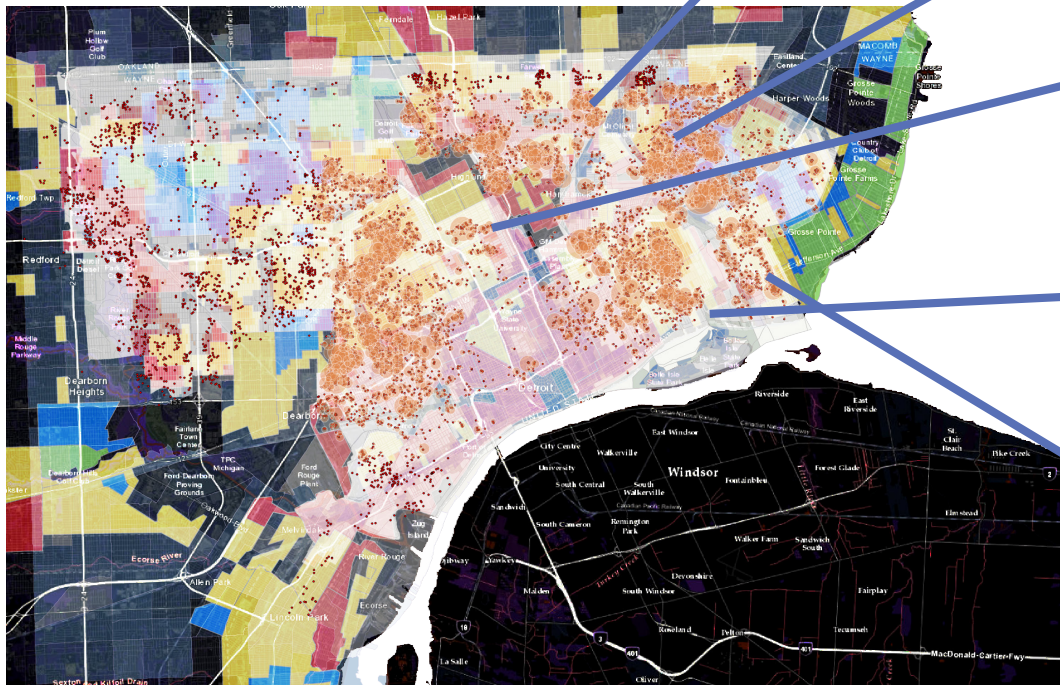
Poor condition housing relates in tandem with vacancy, as Detroit's neighborhoods become increasingly abandoned, more and more neighborhoods fall to neglect. Clear hot spots for this are the Gratiot Woods, West End, Midwest, Martin, and Mt. Oliviet neighborhoods among those that saw the heaviest amount of abandonment due to White Flight. Border communities, again, continue to suffer as the city neglects its neighborhoods.



2.4.4, Poor Condition Houses Map

Inalienable Inequality

By overlapping these three mapping studies, there is a clear pattern that emerges. Historically Red and Yellow redlined areas remained in a state of low priority by the city. This is consistent with the average lower income in those regions. One anomaly here is Indian Village and Corktown, who thrive under historical designation and independent developers. Former Green and Blue regions of Detroit are met with more abandonment and vacancy than Red and Yellow due to the populations of these regions in the 1950s leaving these areas. Even places with high vacancy still retain an incumbent population, most likely a deep rooted one that persisted over the financial hardships and flight from the region.



2.4.5, Neighborhood Inequality Diagram



Mt. Olivet

- Historically yellow
- Very high vacancy
- Median Household income of \$22,000 yearly



Eden Gardens

- Historically blue
- High vacancy
- Median income of \$30,000



North End

- Historically red
- Moderate vacancy
- Median income of \$24,000



Indian Villiage

- Historically yellow
- Very low vacancy
- Median income of \$66,000



Jefferson-Chalmers

- Historically yellow
- Low vacancy
- Median income of \$40,000

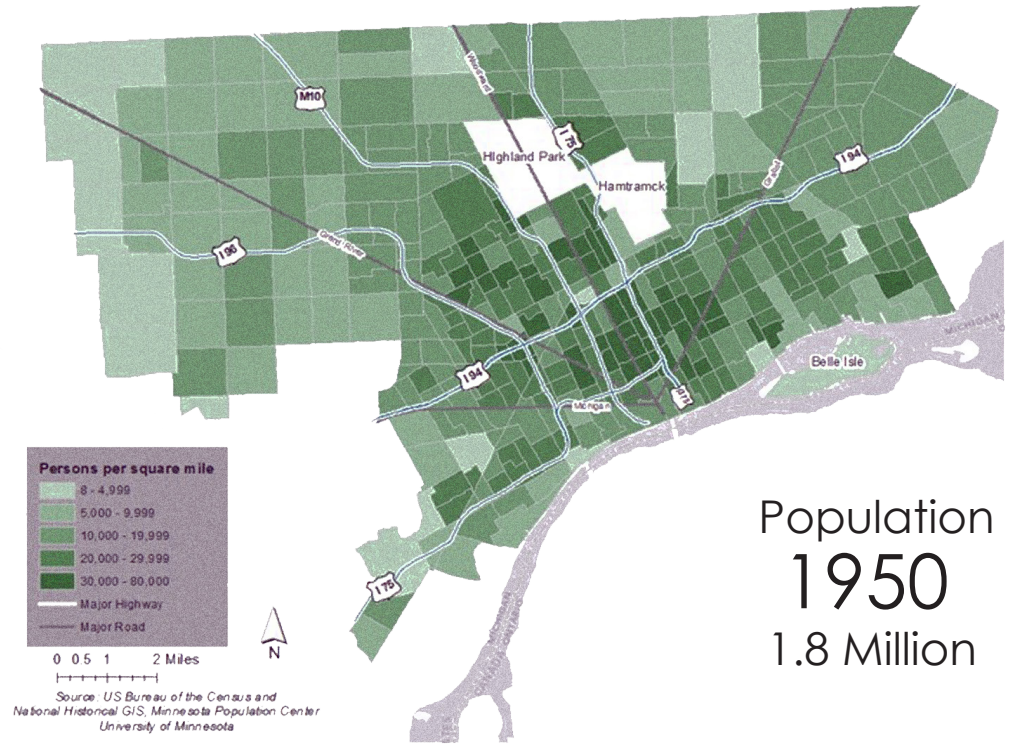
Incumbents at a Loss

The most dense neighborhoods reside in Detroit's city core, which is also the area of Detroit's most development. But less than 650,000 people is not enough to bring life to a city as large as this.

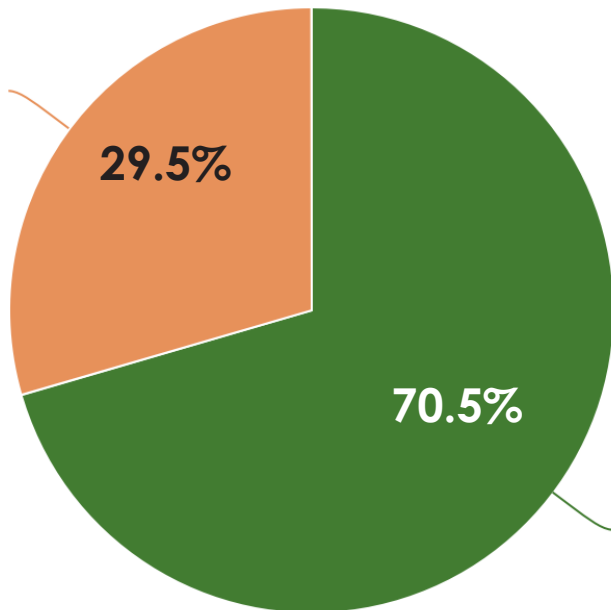
Of Detroit's 650,000 people, only 47% of them actually own their home. The renting market in Detroit can be deconstructed down to the sheer fact that more than 30% of its residence make less than \$23,000 yearly, making renting the most cost effective way to live in Detroit. Even in areas with a high population, the likelihood that the incumbent community has a true foothold in Detroit with generational wealth is slim. Especially in Detroit's outer rim

communities. This is a relatively new condition, as the foreclosure crisis post 2010 left former home owners with nowhere to live except rental housing.

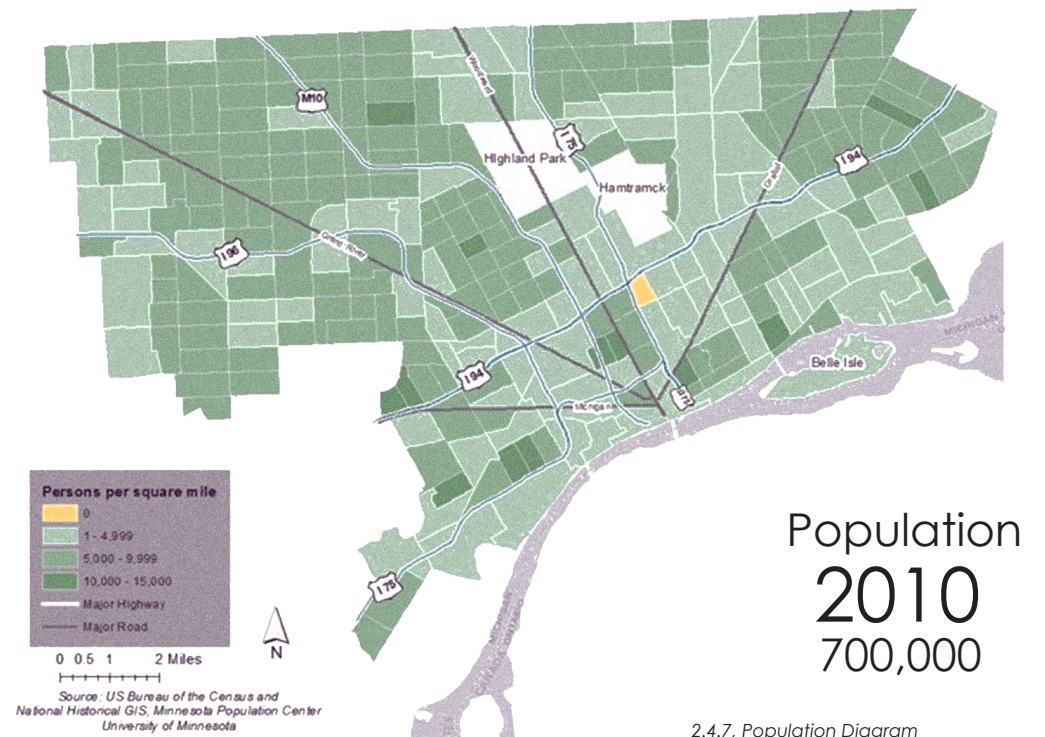
Another current condition that hinders home ownership in Detroit is the old condition of the housing stock. The outdated envelopes and living systems of Detroit's single family housing left them as undesirable to prospective homeowners, and usually attract the likes of prospective landlords looking to exploit their inexpensive lot costs and provide minimal effort in raising up these properties to be livable.



Abandoned Houses / Vacancies



Occupied Residences



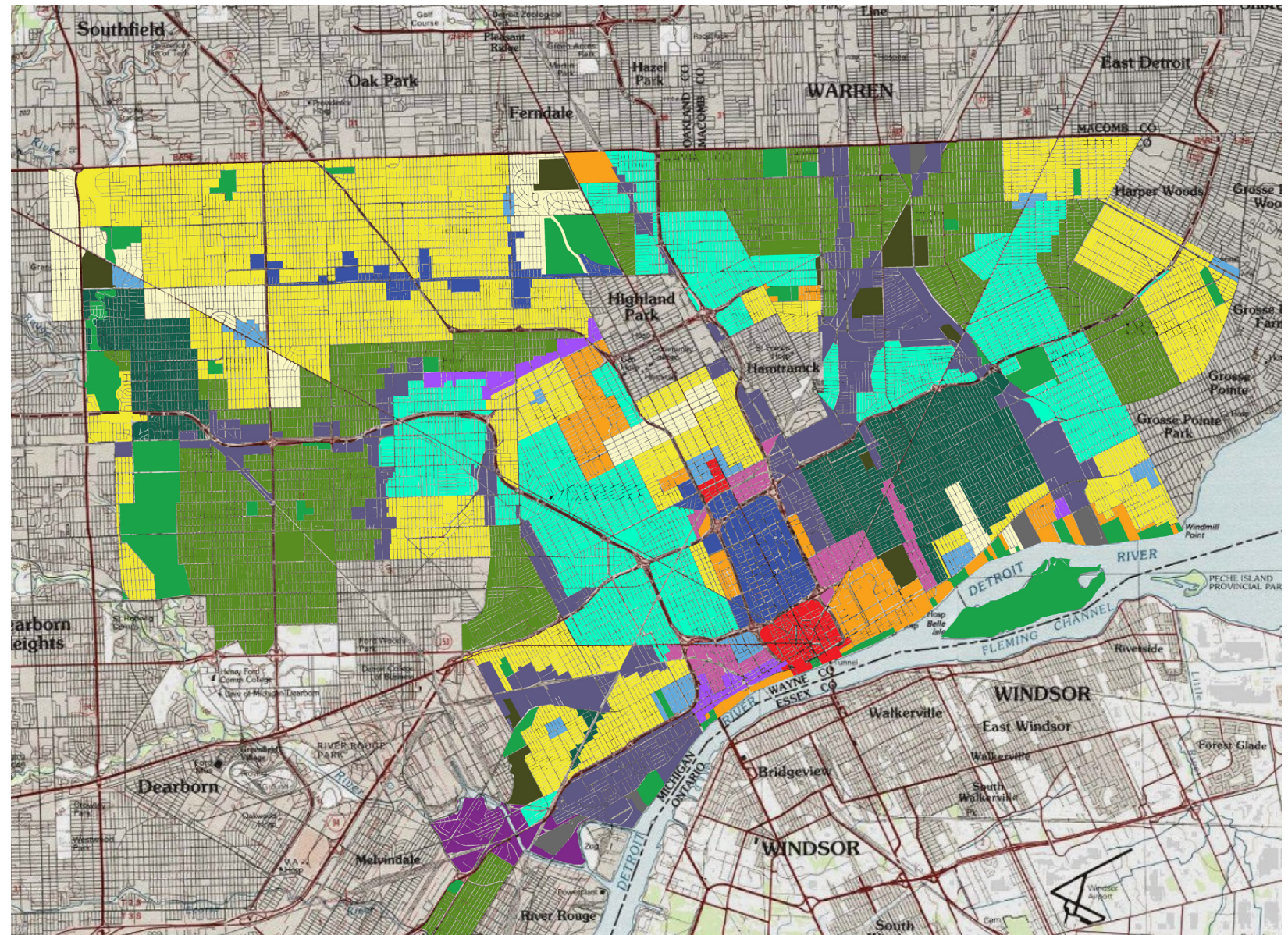
Intervention Outside Detroit

The cycle of rise and decline is embedded into the nature of cities in ways you cannot alienate. What differs between cities is what they do to intervene in decline and attempt to progress forward.

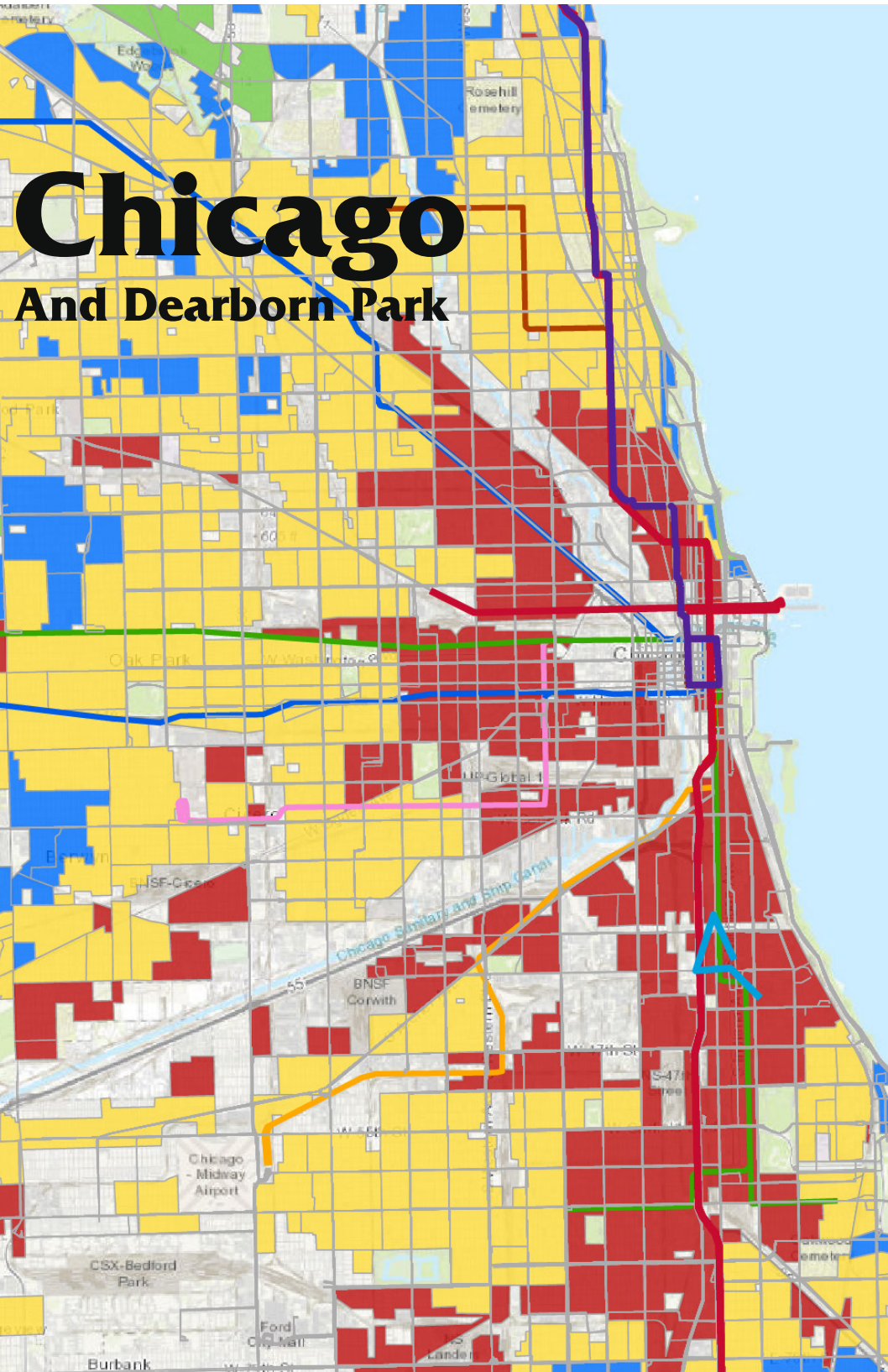
When recovering from disaster, cities tend to grow from micro communities and branch out as desire paths are made. The "10 Minute City" system establishes a relationship between living space and basic amenities. So when cities with already established desire paths recover from disaster, they tend to build on top of what was there and establish a new and revitalized community to inspire growth. On the surface, this is a natural next step. But what of the people already living there? Those not economically fortunate enough to be able to live in these new spaces? What happens to them? Where do they go?

Gentrification is the gradual pricing out or forced movement of incumbent populations. Unfortunately this concept is fairly normal to new neighborhood projects in cities. Where more often than not, low income populations are either forced into the border neighborhoods or crammed into multifamily project housing.

With the need and necessity for housing and neighborhood revitalization efforts in Detroit is clear, how have other major US cities tackled the same parallels? How did they handle their low income population? And how successful was it?



3.1.1, Future City Framework Zones



3.1.2, Chicago Redline Map

Chicago

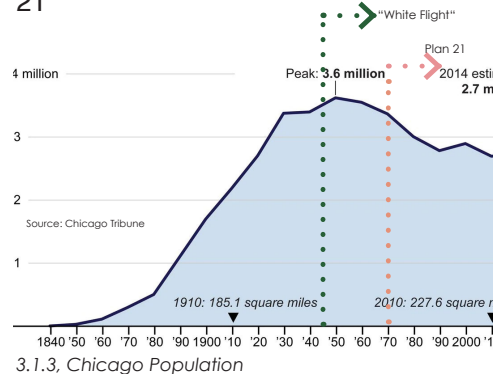
And Dearborn Park

Chicago

As a rust belt, midwestern, city, Chicago saw a lot of same the rises and declines as Detroit: Becoming a manufacturing powerhouse in the 1920s, suffering under the Great Depression, economically thriving under WWII, suffering a population decrease in a time where middle class families were fleeing to the suburbs, and systemically segregating it's low income / minority populace into undesirable communities through redlining, the transit system, and even city revitalization projects.

Retained Population

To this day, Chicago still maintains over 75% of its original population since it's 3.6 million peak in 1950, now sitting at 2.7 million. This is due in large to success seen in 1973 Chicago's "Plan 21"



3.1.3, Chicago Population



Proposed in 1973 by Chicago Central Area Committee to laid a ground work for the creation of an integrated "city suburb" in Chicago's business center called the Chicago Plan 21. Despite the initial success this plan was met with, neighborhoods tangent to these developments met the plan with resistance, due to the starch increase in property value happening without consideration of the welfare of border neighborhoods. To this day, efforts are being made by both sides to progress city welfare in Chicago.

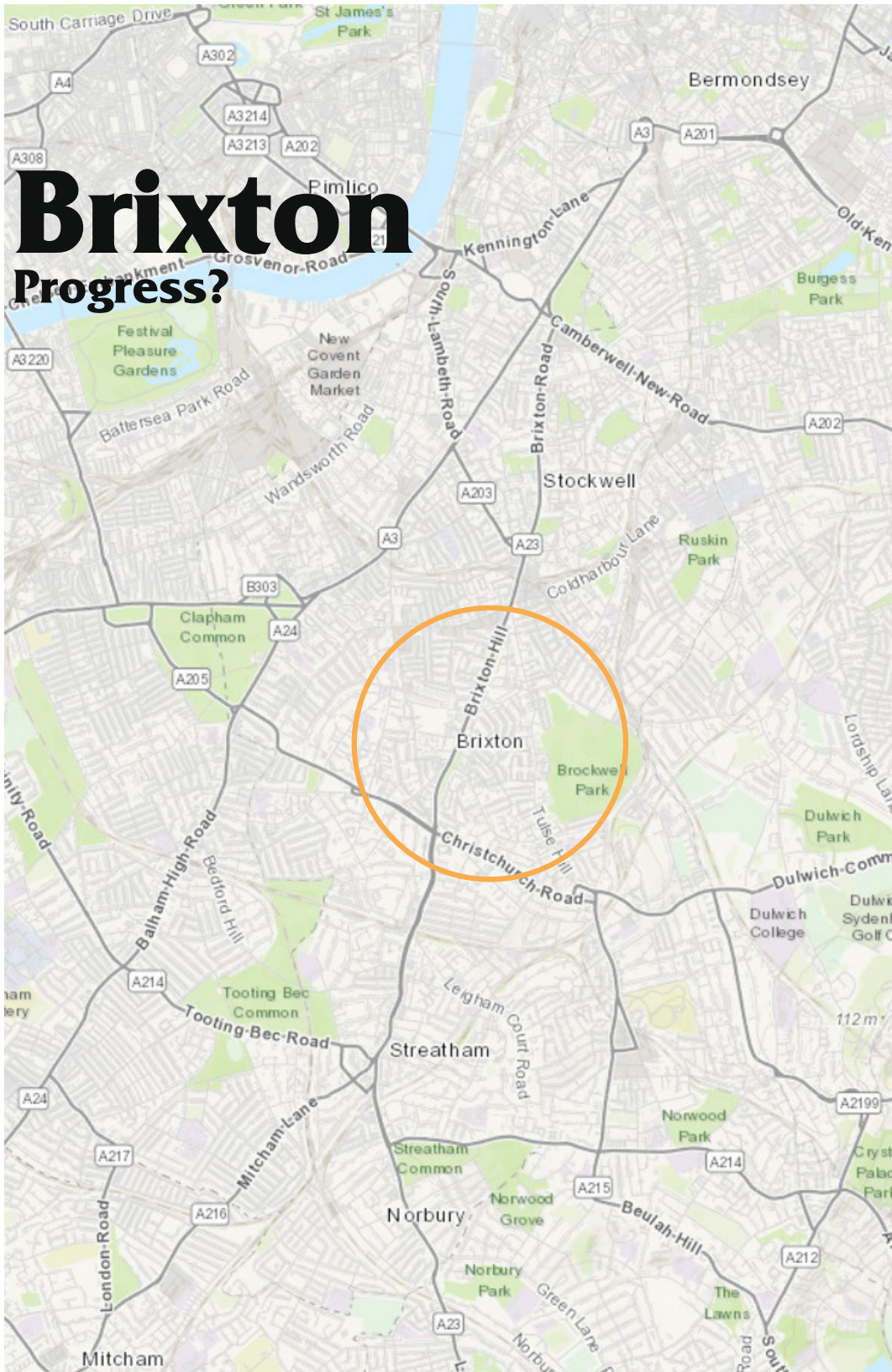


Dearborn Park

3.1.4, Dearborn Park

Successful? Yes and No

- NO Community input on development.
- Called for separation of neighborhoods by race and income.
- + Preserved 75% of existing population from flight.



3.2.1, Brixton Map

Brixton Progress?

Brixton, London

Just South of the River Thames in London, the Brixton neighborhood sits as a symbol of gentrification in London, as well as a culturally integral neighborhood to its Afro-Caribbean population. This population in London had been in a tough spot since immigrating to London after WWII and has since been at odds with the city as well as the police in their generally harsh treatment. Like Detroit, Brixton had been known for its high crime and low income housing.

Electric Avenue

Electric Avenue exists as Brixton's primary hub for shopping and amenities. It is also home to a large chunk of Brixton's housing. Now, independent realtors are looking to capitalize on the culture of this neighborhood by buying out lots of housing and commercial spaces and pricing out the existing population.



3.2.2, Various Brixton

Push Back and Integration

Community push back is prevalent in this area, and continues to be a fight today, but then there's commercial spaces like Pop Brixton, an event center made from shipping containers, that openly encourage social integration for the incumbent population and outsiders. Pop Brixton also gives benefits specifically to the native population to discourage being priced out of the area.



3.2.3, Electric Avenue



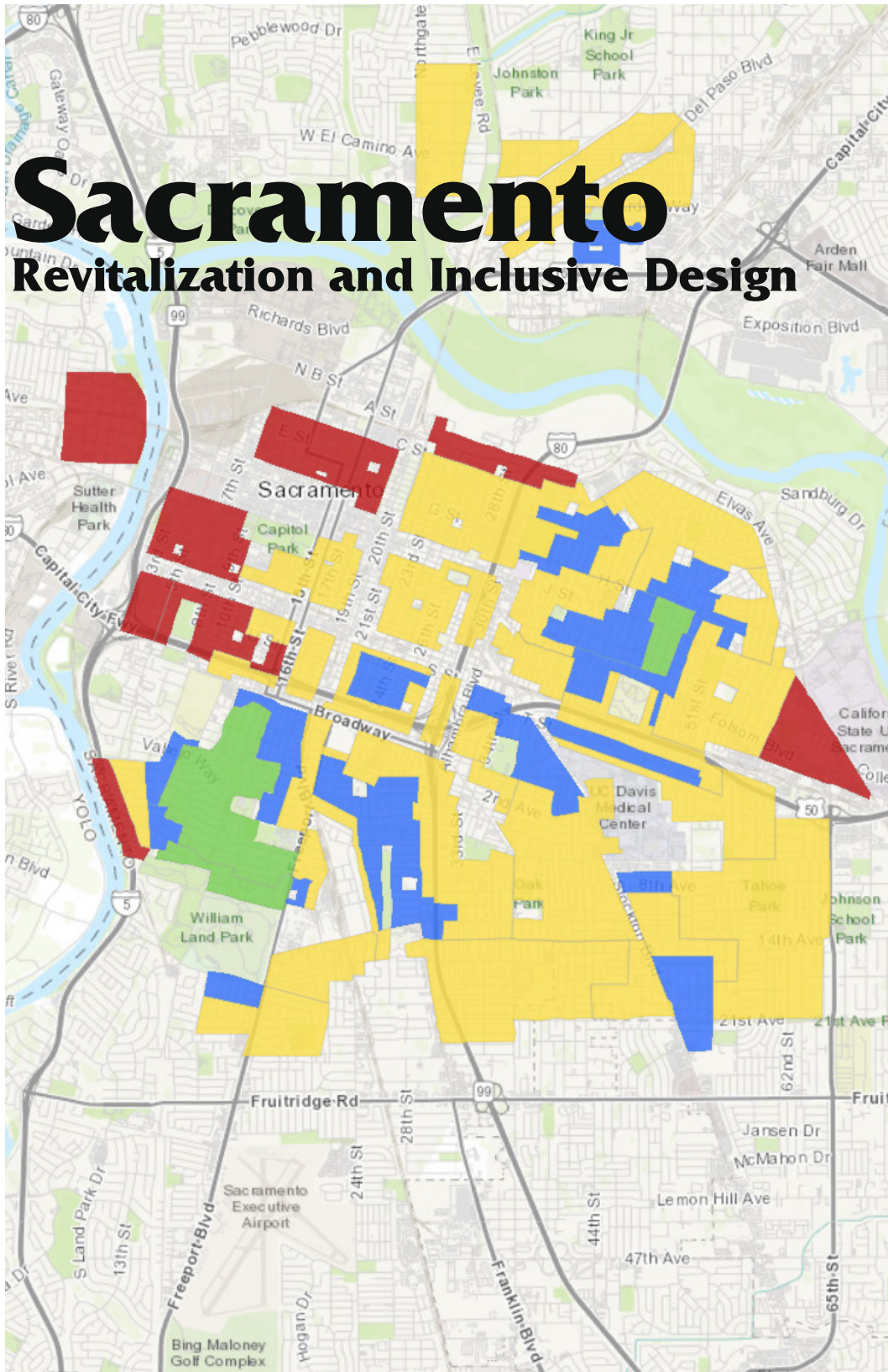
3.2.4, Pilsen Protest



3.2.5, Pilsen Graffiti

Successful? Could be...

- NO Community input on development.
- Low income population is priced out.
- + Social integration is encouraged.



3.3.1, Sacramento Redline Map

Sacramento

Like nearly all major American cities in the 1930s, redlining dominated city development for nearly 50 years after its conception, leading to discrimination in city benefits such as housing opportunity and transit for those of low income and/ or people of color. Post war middle class families were also incentivised to leave the city and settle in the suburbs that follow. This in tandem with development of the downtown / urban core was the catalyst for a series of new

Downtown Redevelopment

Since 1980, the city took initiative to redevelop the cities urban core and give more walk-ability to the streets and provide high end consumer faire. This massive redevelopment lead to a gradual increase in population to the area as it essentially brought suburban life and jobs to its downtown.

Current population: ~ 500,000 (2020)

Community Revitalization

The (SHRA) or The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency develops plots of land for affordable and interim housing designed to the interests of the communities.

They use various funding programs such as land trusts or state grants to put the community as the primary stakeholder, creating many homes and preserving neighborhoods through a “lease to own“ program or renting.

Programs:

- Community Development Block Grant
- Home Investment Partnership
- Housing Trust Fund
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program



3.3.2, Sacramento



3.3.3, Sacramento Downtown Redevelopment



INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES



3.3.4, Pheonix Park

Successful? Almost!

- + Community input on development.
- + Population growth that doesn't destroy existing communities
- Decentralized, doesn't totally prevent gentrification

Community Stake Holding and Equity

On Stake Holding

Cities like Chicago, Brixton, and Sacramento are just a few of the outliers when it comes to recovering from decline, but a pattern emerges from these efforts that can be traced to other urban centers: The building of new urban communities with the direct purpose of attracting new people and developers to the area to grow the city from within. To this effect, the examples given were successful in that. Where most of the faltered however, was in the treatment of the respective communities incumbent population.

When people think of the concept of a “minority” in the US, they generally think of a group of non-white citizens that take up a small percentage of an areas given population. On a national level,

the white population technically still holds a majority (76.3%) of the population, but when you zoom into the lens of the city, Detroit in particular, you see a stark difference in this demographic, where the African American population alone hits 82%. In this instance, it can be argued that the concept of a “minority” is a misnomer. That being said, why should the city prioritize the benefit of the few over the true majority?

Cities prioritize capital, and the ability to grow by any means possible. Even if it means further marginalizing whole communities of people. And if it isn't the city, like with Chicago, then it's put into the hands of private developers. The conclusion here is the same, when stake holding is put into the hands of just

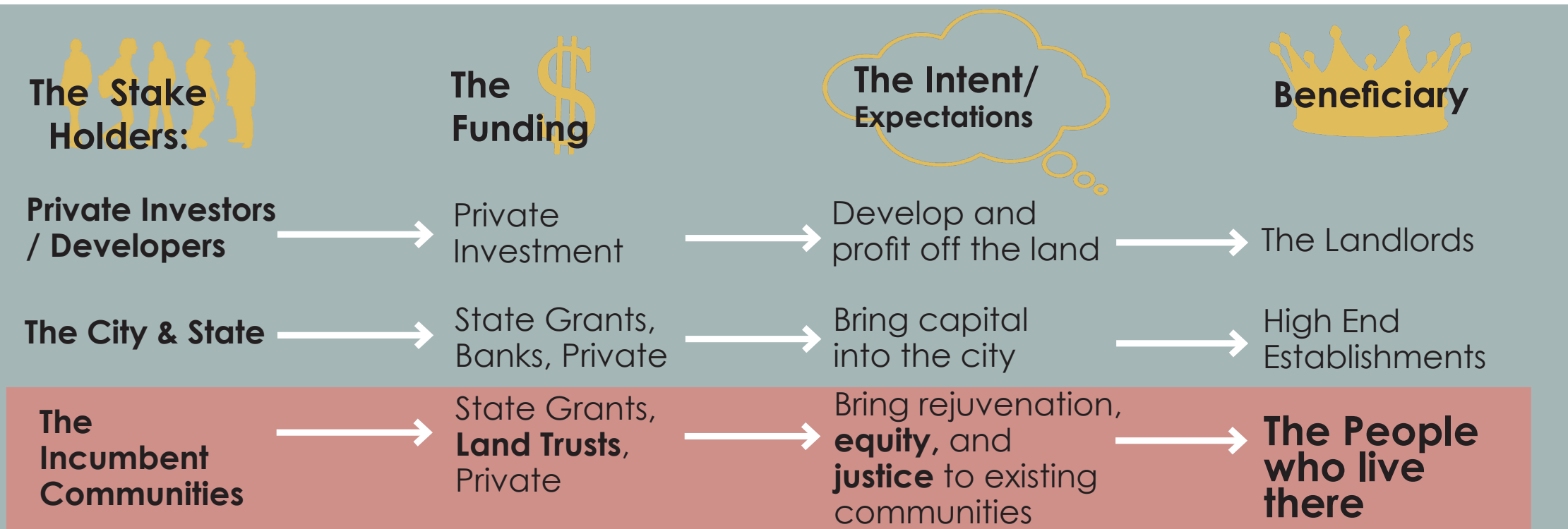
private developers and the city, there is no incentive for them to accommodate for the incumbent population.

But what of Sacramento? Why was neighborhood development in Sacramento successful in combating the negative affects of gentrification? Because a development initiative put stake holding into the hands of the community that lives there. Phoenix Park was successful because it maintained affordability for low income residents AND provided opportunity for equity, or grassroots ownership of that property.

While this result might seem almost Utopian in philosophy, it becomes real with proper implementation. And that

implementation needs a synergy between three components: A Community who desires fair priced housing, a public developer who values social equity and justice, and the usage of unconditional funding methods, like state grants or **community land trusts**.

The first step is to bring equity to the community. The city and private developers generally seek capital to benefit themselves for the time being, with further development in mind. But starting with the community is the only way to truly bring justice to it and give people a grassroots presence in it, rather than doing the opposite with attractively priced rental housing.



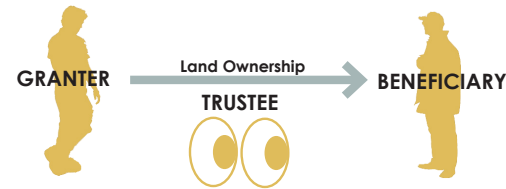
Land Trusts and You

What is a CLT?

A primary concern of land equitable land development falls into the hands of where the money comes from. Detroit isn't the kind of city that has to funds to throw towards developments like these. And even when it does, Downtown developments usually take priority over housing or neighborhood revitalization. So where does the funding come from? One answer is **community land trusts**.

Land trusts designations of land that are sold by a **granter** directly to a **beneficiary** while being mediated and regulated through a **trustee**. The beneficiary is then given autonomy over the land they purchased. So what generally happens is a plot of land is purchased and developed on (usually using state grant money or unconditional private investment), then that property is sold or leased to a prospective tenant.

A **COMMUNITY** land trust slightly differs because of the strict adherence to keeping the properties affordable. If a homeowner leases a home, they can buy in to owning the property or they can sell it off, earning a portion of the increased market value while the rest goes back to the trust and the property gets resold at its original cost. This is what ensures low property cost and neighborhood stability in a community.



"A land trust is a legal entity that takes ownership of, or authority over, a piece of property at the behest of the property owner. Land trusts are living trusts that allow for the management of property while alive.

- investopedia.com

4.2.1, Stake Holding Chart



4.2.2, Equity Diagram

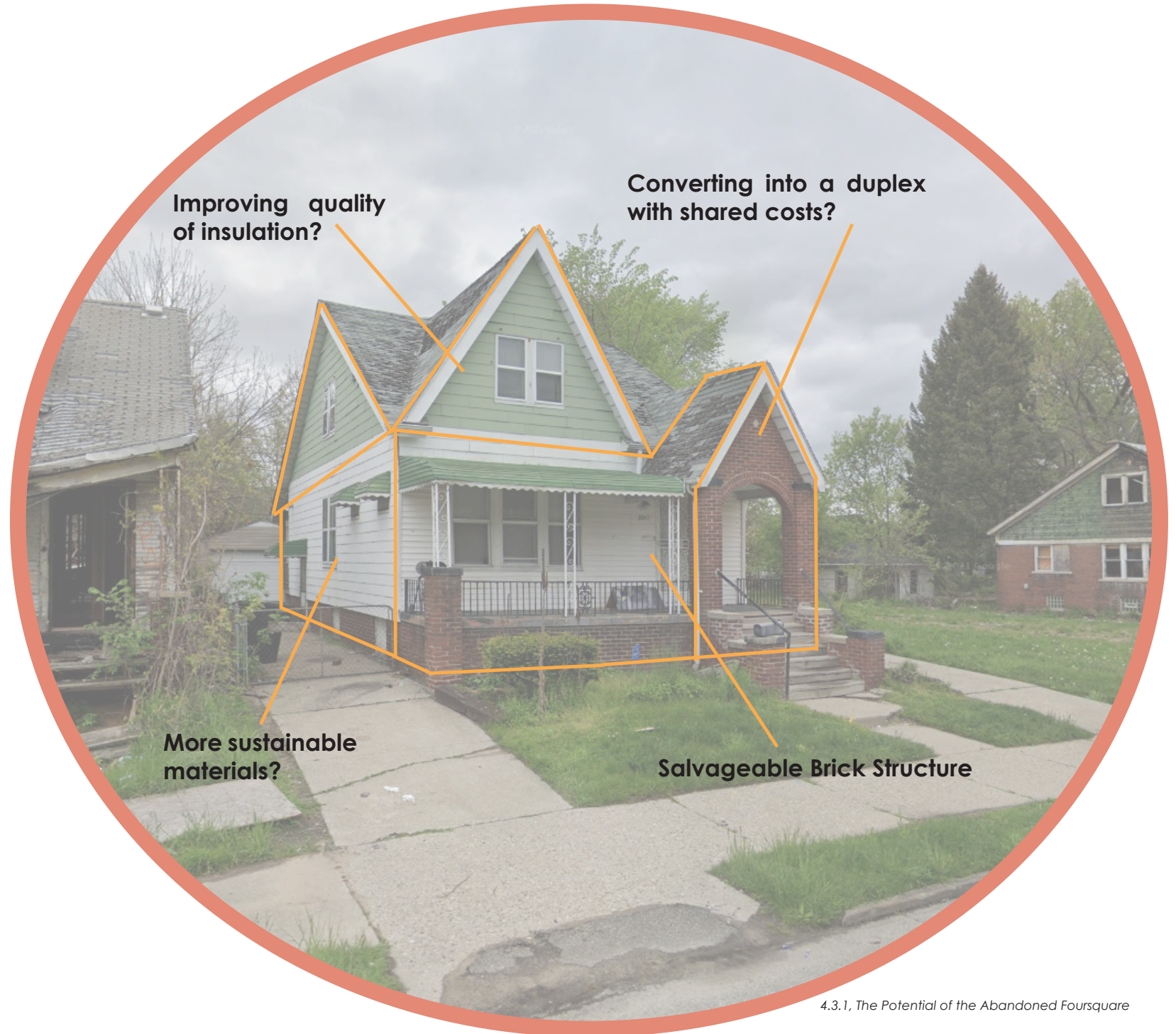
On Method and Vernacular

On Method

This thesis creates a framework for an equitable neighborhood in Detroit that addresses the social inequality and inequity in the city. This intervention starts with locating a neighborhood in Detroit that is in need of intervention and has the potential to provide a good groundwork for growth. Then it will assess the integrity of the abandoned properties that can be salvaged or developed over. Houses can then be converted into duplexes or have a modular focus with gradual development in mind, providing growing families a space to grow while maintaining a low upfront cost.

Why houses and not other amenities such as schools or parks? While the study might lead to these amenities, attracting bodies into the city is of high priority, and there is a demand for consistently affordable equitable housing in Detroit. How this might differ from other cities is the radical use of community lead development and land trusts. With the goal of retaining the incumbent population first and then to attract people into the city. Without people, there is no other growth.

People *first*.



4.3.1. The Potential of the Abandoned Foursquare

On Vernacular

The architectural language of Detroit's housing varies between different eras, income levels, and style. The constraints put on construction are dependent on Michigan's chaotic seasonal weather, which falls under the Cold, Humid climate zone. Current building standards for Eastern Michigan require an envelope at a R value of 21 with an R value of 49 for roof assemblies, so any housing construction before those standard were made would not be current.

Some notable characteristics of Detroit housing is a primarily brick and stud envelope with gabled roofs and a protruding attic dormer on the roof. These houses use a crawl space and "Michigan Foundation" approach to accommodate frost depth. These houses were generally designed to be permanent generation inheriting bungalows as families circulate within the confines of a then thriving city.

1930s Detroit for example saw a mass construction of brick Kit and Craftsman style Foursquare housing in the single family and duplex design. These houses in their time heavily relied on boilers for heating and cooling due to having little to no insulation, and energy was much cheaper thus more expendable. The houses themselves exist primarily in Detroit's Outer Rim, extending from outside the city core to the border of the suburbs. Post White flight however, these houses are largely abandoned. Persisting though is their foundations and their brick structure.

Another notable example is Neo-colonial style housing. Also constructed in the 1940s, these houses were designed with optimism in mind. Their large floor plans for single families as well as super sturdy brick structure gave a certain aura of monumentality to a more optimistic and economically driven Detroit.



4.3.3, Typ. Prairie Style 2 Story Foursquare



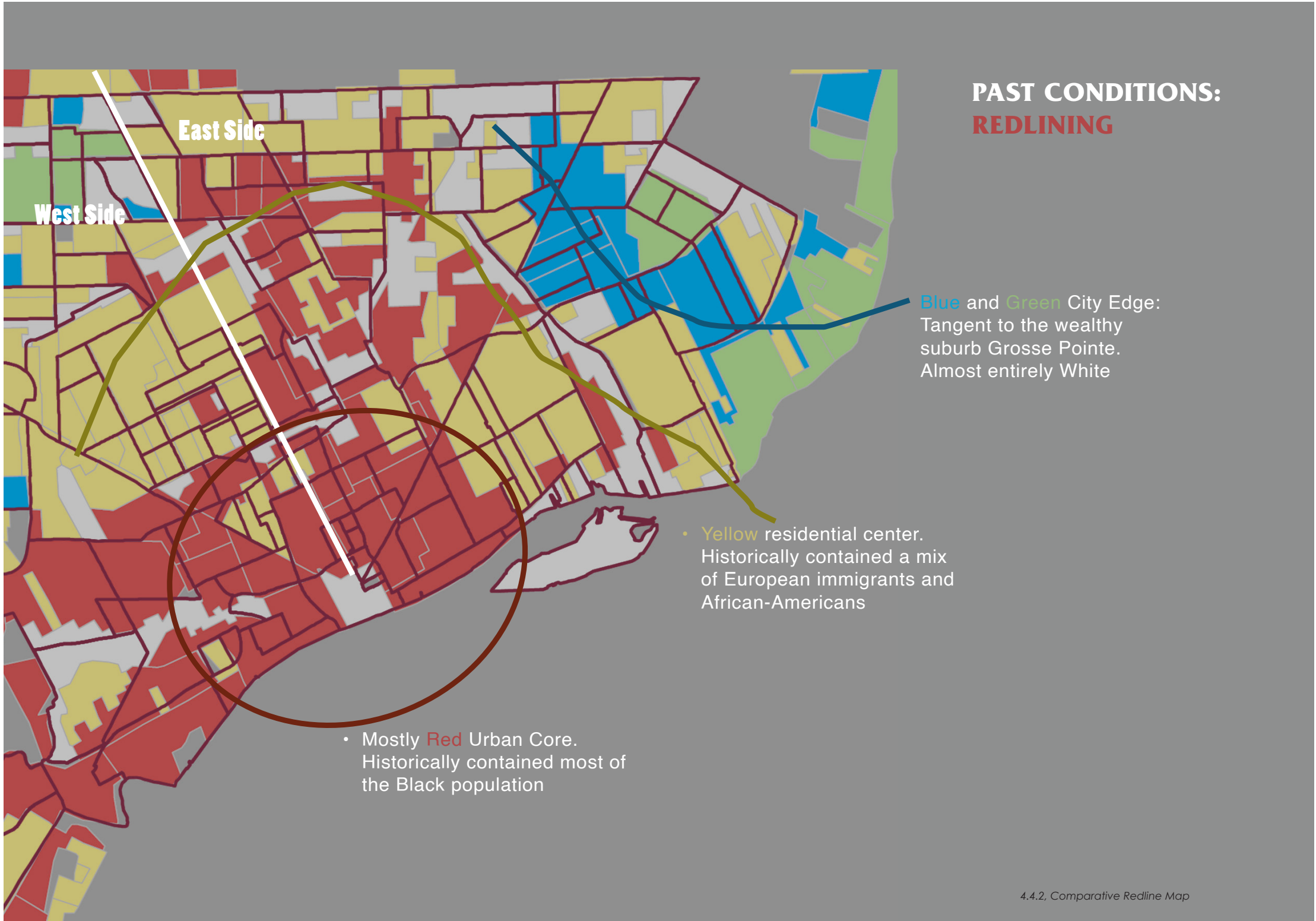
4.3.2, "The Detroit" By Aladdin Homes

Choosing a Site



CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- **East of Woodward (East Side):** Personal familiarity & Proximity to both lower middle class and wealthy suburbs.
- **Low Income Neighborhood:** Those in most need of equity
- **High Vacancy:** Potential for population growth and development
- **Low To Moderate Population:** Entice a new community in tandem with the incumbent one

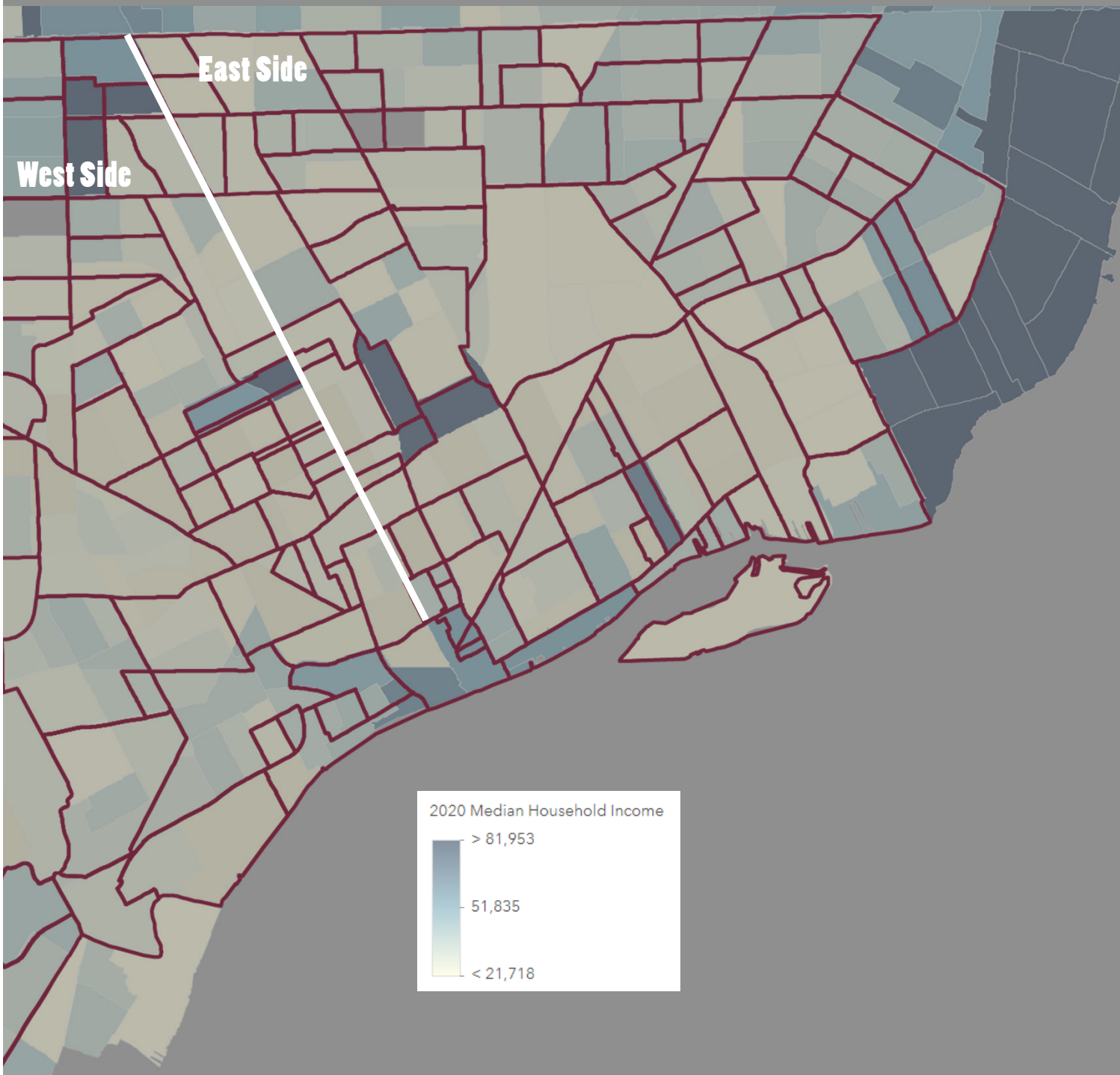


**PAST CONDITIONS:
REDLINING**

Blue and Green City Edge:
Tangent to the wealthy suburb Grosse Pointe.
Almost entirely White

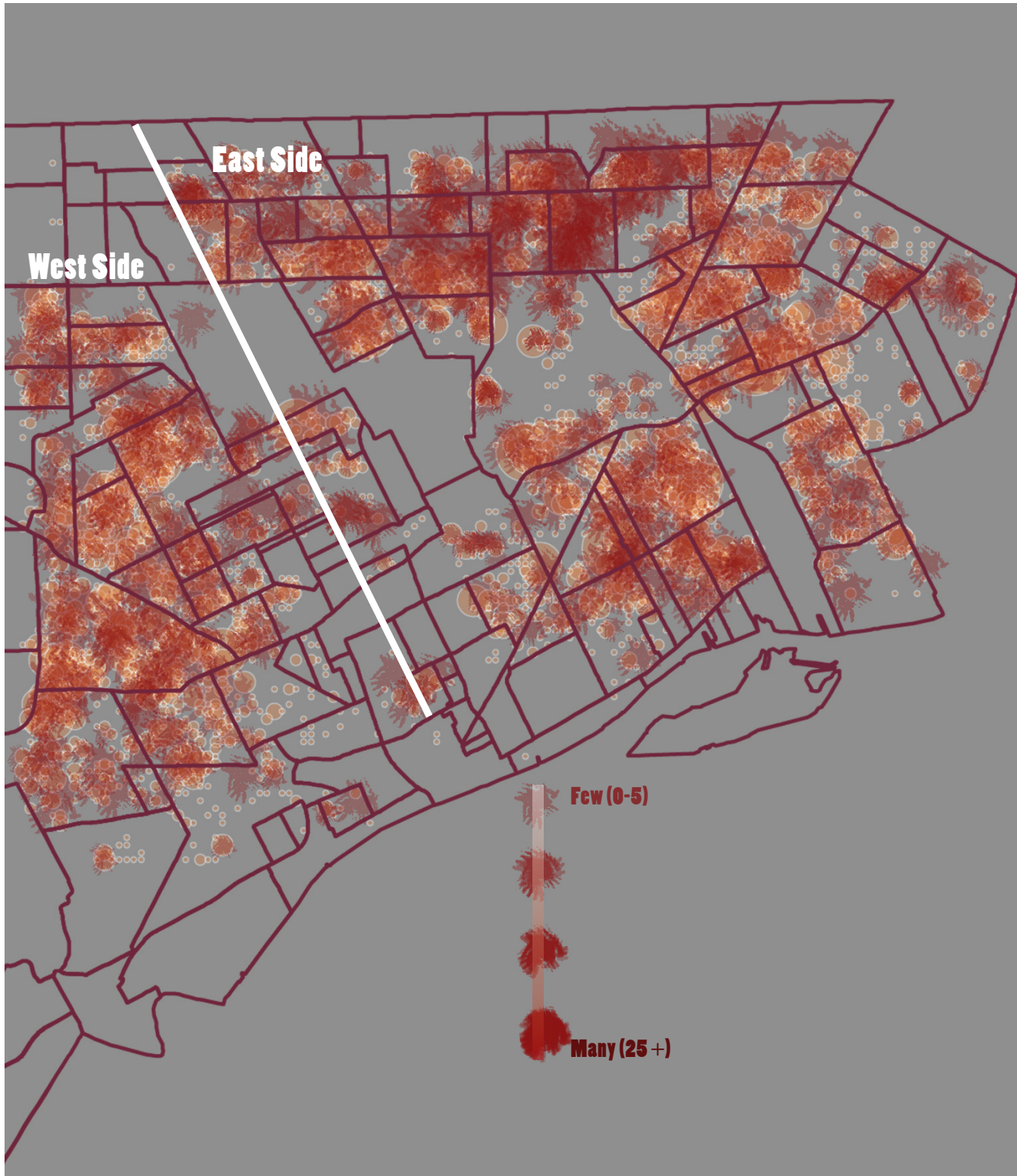
• Yellow residential center.
Historically contained a mix of European immigrants and African-Americans

• Mostly Red Urban Core.
Historically contained most of the Black population



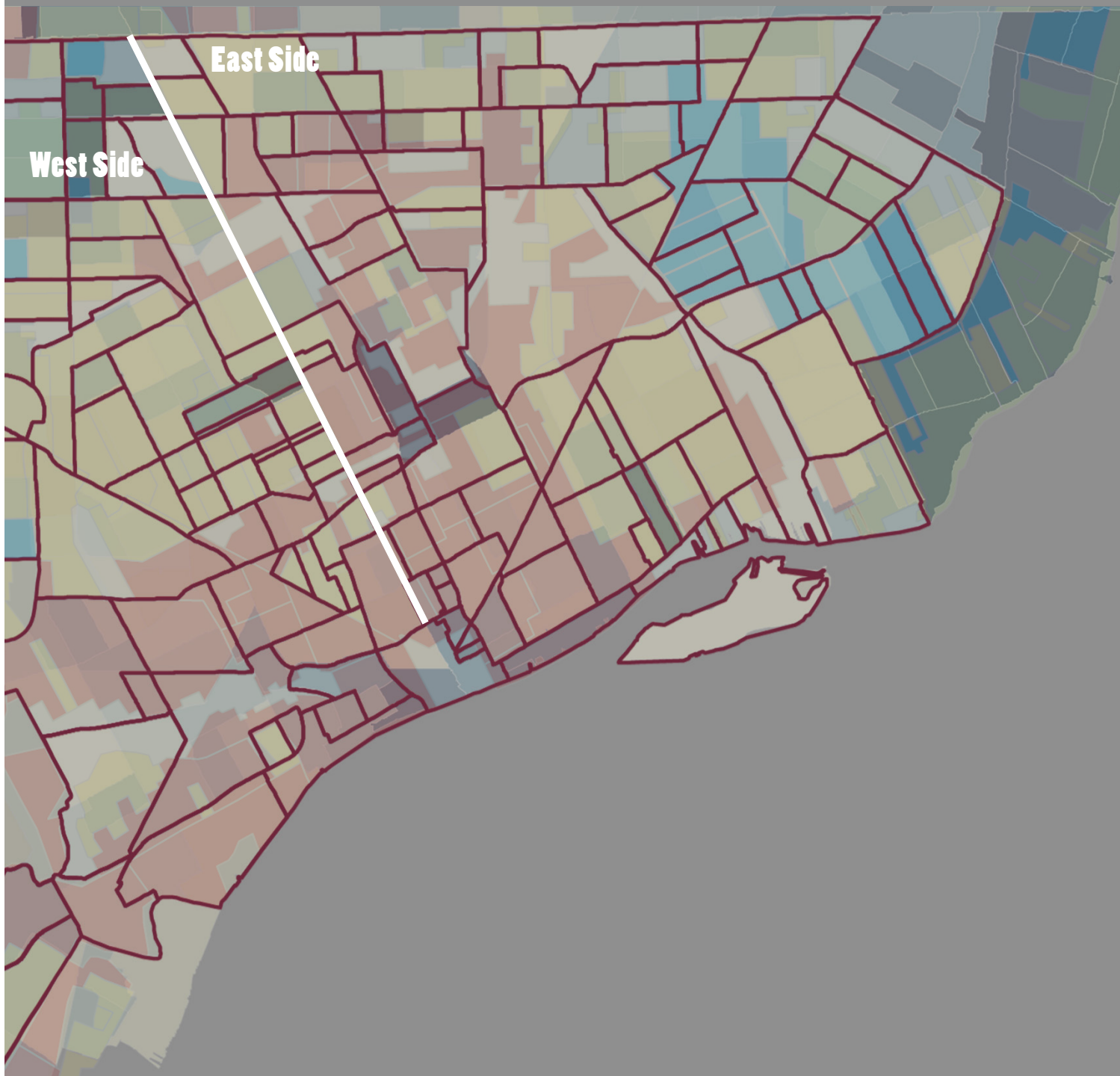
CURRENT CONDITIONS: INCOME

Detroit's poorest neighborhoods reside outside the urban core, but wealthy areas overall are very sparse and do not compare to the wealthy Grosse Pointe.



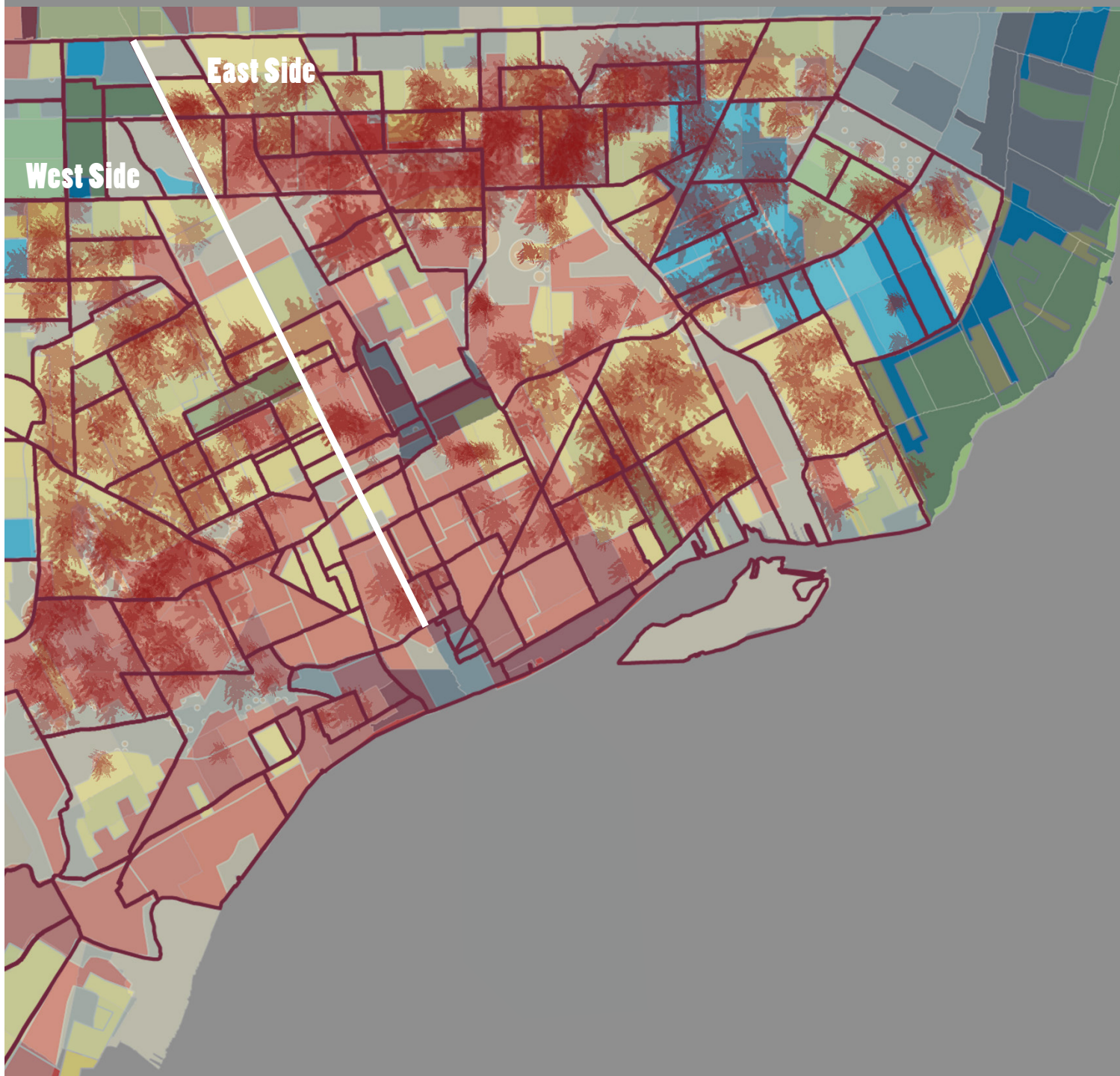
CURRENT CONDITIONS: **VACANCY**

More abandonment exists around the urban core due to flight. Those houses have since been left to neglect.



CURRENT VS PAST: INCOME

The wealthy portions of Detroit are left to those under a lot of development and industrialized areas.



CURRENT VS PAST: VACANCY

Despite White Flight, poor conditioned and vacant houses mostly fall within the yellow and red areas, as those areas were never prioritized by the city.



HOT SPOTS BASED ON CRITERIA

MT. OLIVET



- High Vacancy
- Declining Population
- Tangent to diverse, low income suburbs
- Part of the *Good Neighborhoods Initiative*
- 7 Mile, Van Dyke
- Non-Centralized Gang Violence
- 1920s Colonial Type Housing
- ~\$50,000 Median Housing Value
- Renters Market

GRATIOT WOODS



- High Vacancy
- Dense Population
- Proximity to Detroit's Urban Core
- Section 8 Multifamily Housing and Duplexes
- Gratiot, I94 Access
- Non-Centralized Gang Violence
- 1920s Prairie Style Housing
- ~\$22,000 Median Home Value
- More Owned Homes

EDEN GARDENS



- High Vacancy
- Low Population
- Proximity to Detroit's East Side
- Single Family Housing and Duplexes
- Gratiot, Outer Drive Access
- 1920s Prairie Style Housing
- ~\$42,000 Median Home Value
- More Owned Homes

Mt Olivet Site Study

Detroit's North-East set of neighborhoods currently sits as the most vacant and low income area in Detroit. Mount Olivet and Osborn in particular are hot spots for vacancy and neglect. Here is where an intervention could take root.

Despite the higher than average crime rate, there is an incumbent community who lives in the area and has a desire to make it a better place to live. At the moment, Osborn is covered under the *Good Neighborhoods Initiative: A* program by the Silkman Foundation to provide funding to local schools and the welfare of children.

The Osborn area is located between 8 Mile to the North, McNichols to the South, Gratiot to the east, and Van Dyke to the West. A few notable locations include the Mt. Olivet Cemetary, the Bel Air Cinema, and its close proximity to 8 mile are fairly important community assets.

The community of Osborn is dense towards the 8 Mile & Gratiot side, yielding over 35,000 residents. Mt. Olivet, however, only has just over 4,000 of that population. Poverty is very high at **35%** of the total population yielding less than \$25,000 a year income per household.

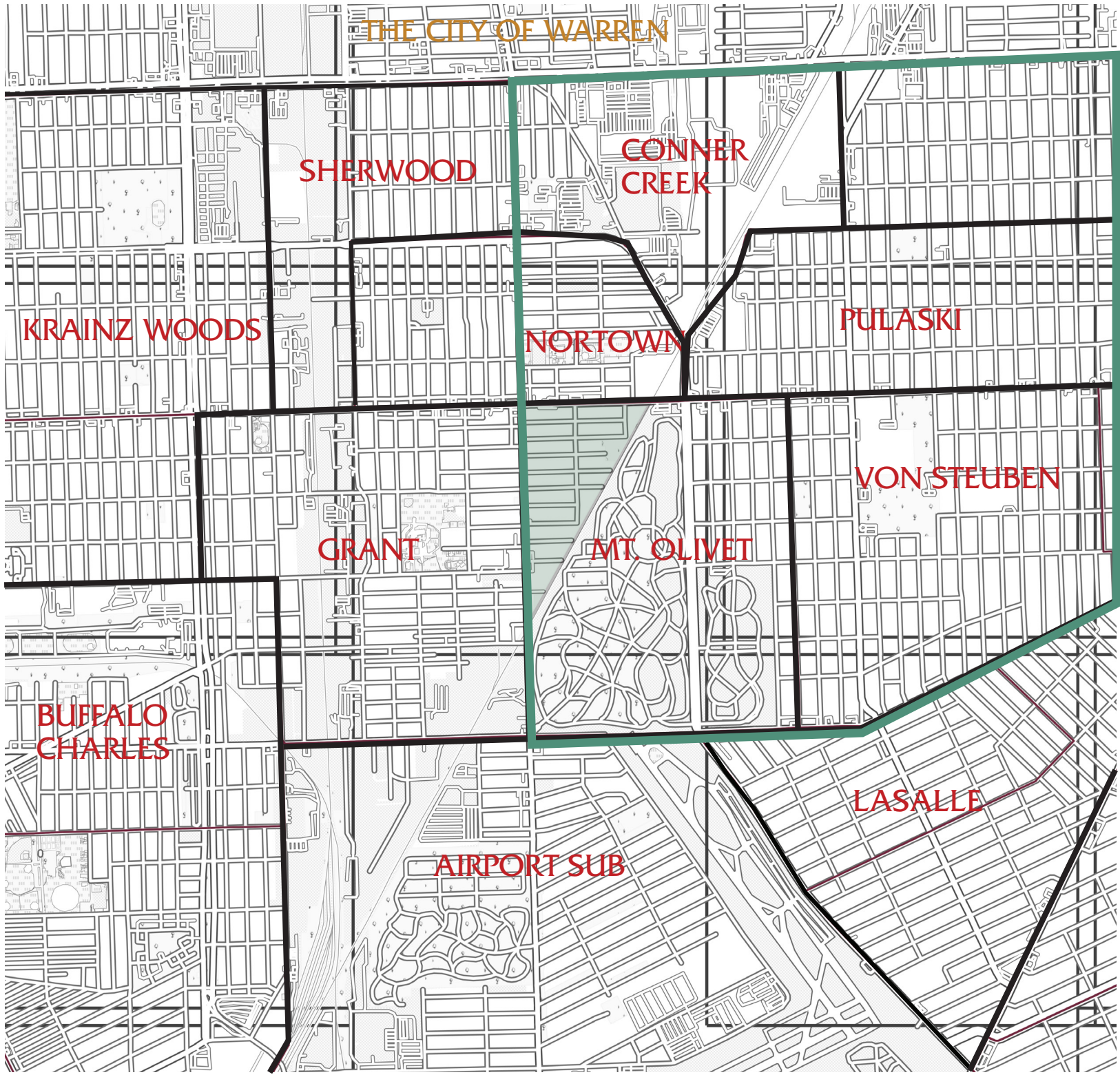
Residents are generally very committed to upholding the community and have an active social media presence. However, since renting is so prominent in Mt Olivet, the incumbent population



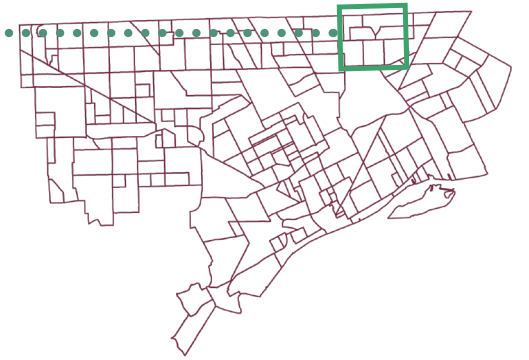
5.1.1. Osborn Sign



5.1.2. Osborn High School 78

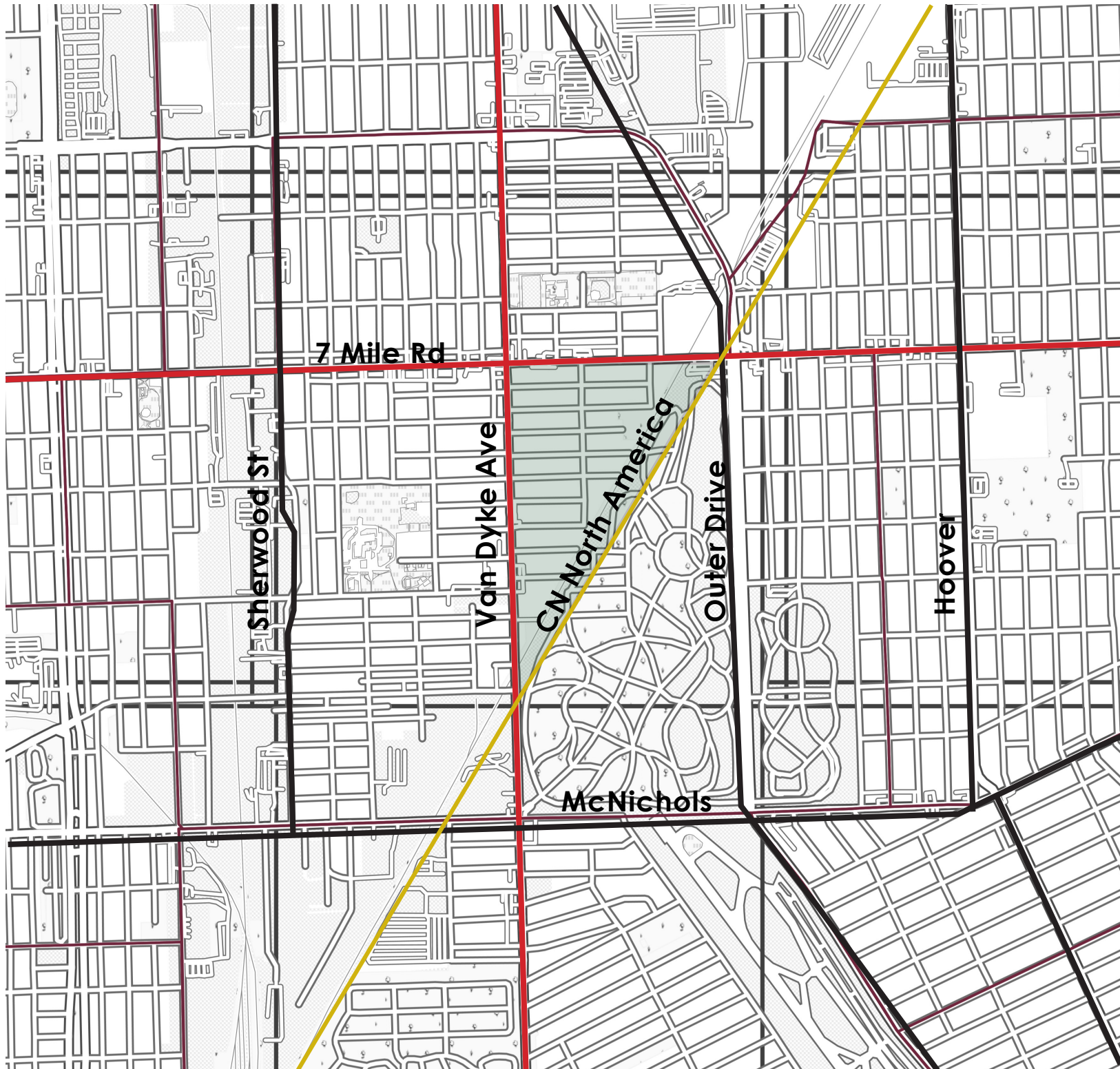





**LOCATION AND
CONTEXT**



5.1.3, Osborn Site Map

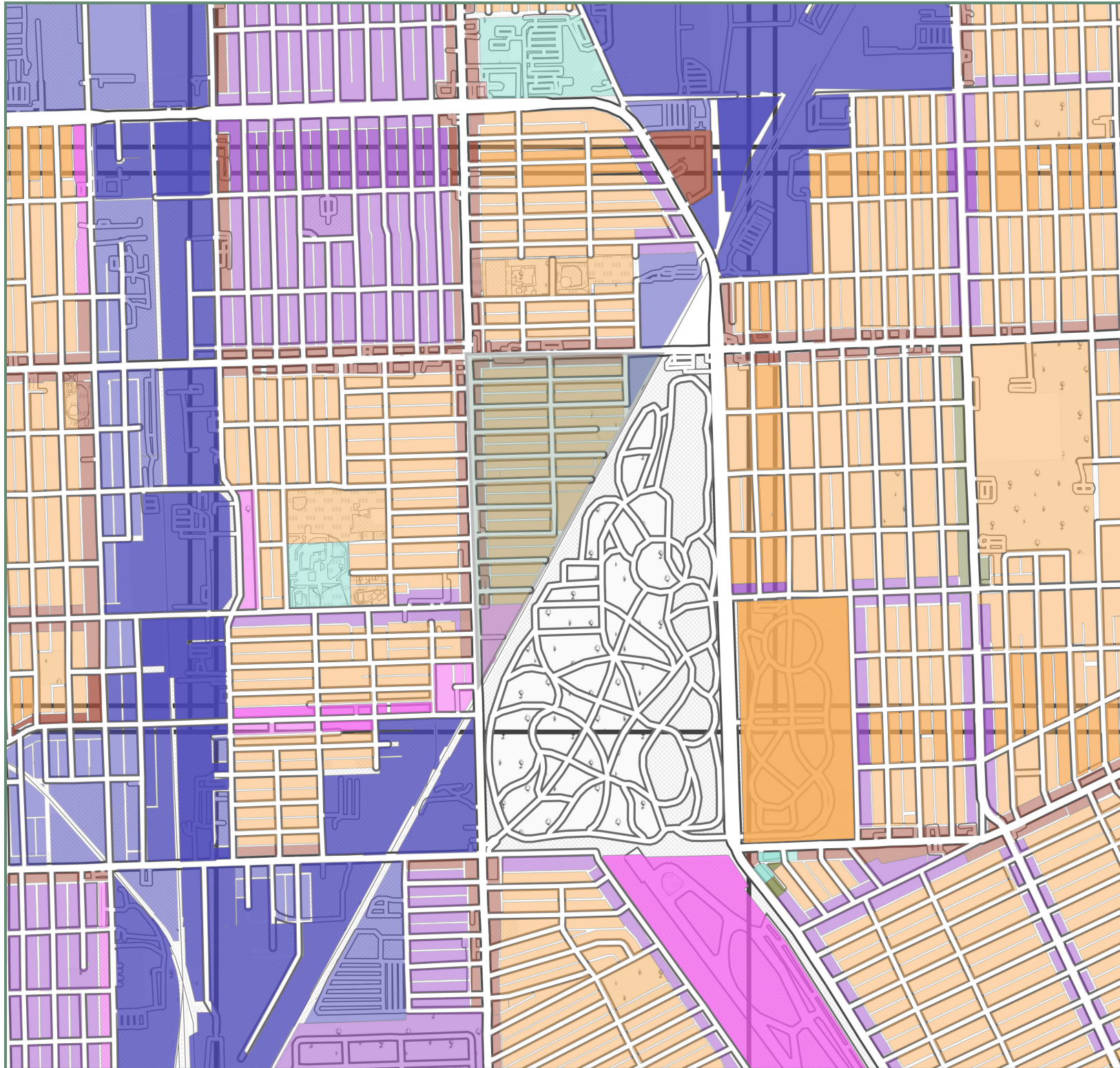
MAIN ROADS & RAILS



-  Major Roads along Site
-  Rail Line
-  Main Roads Around Site



5.1.4. Osborn Road Map

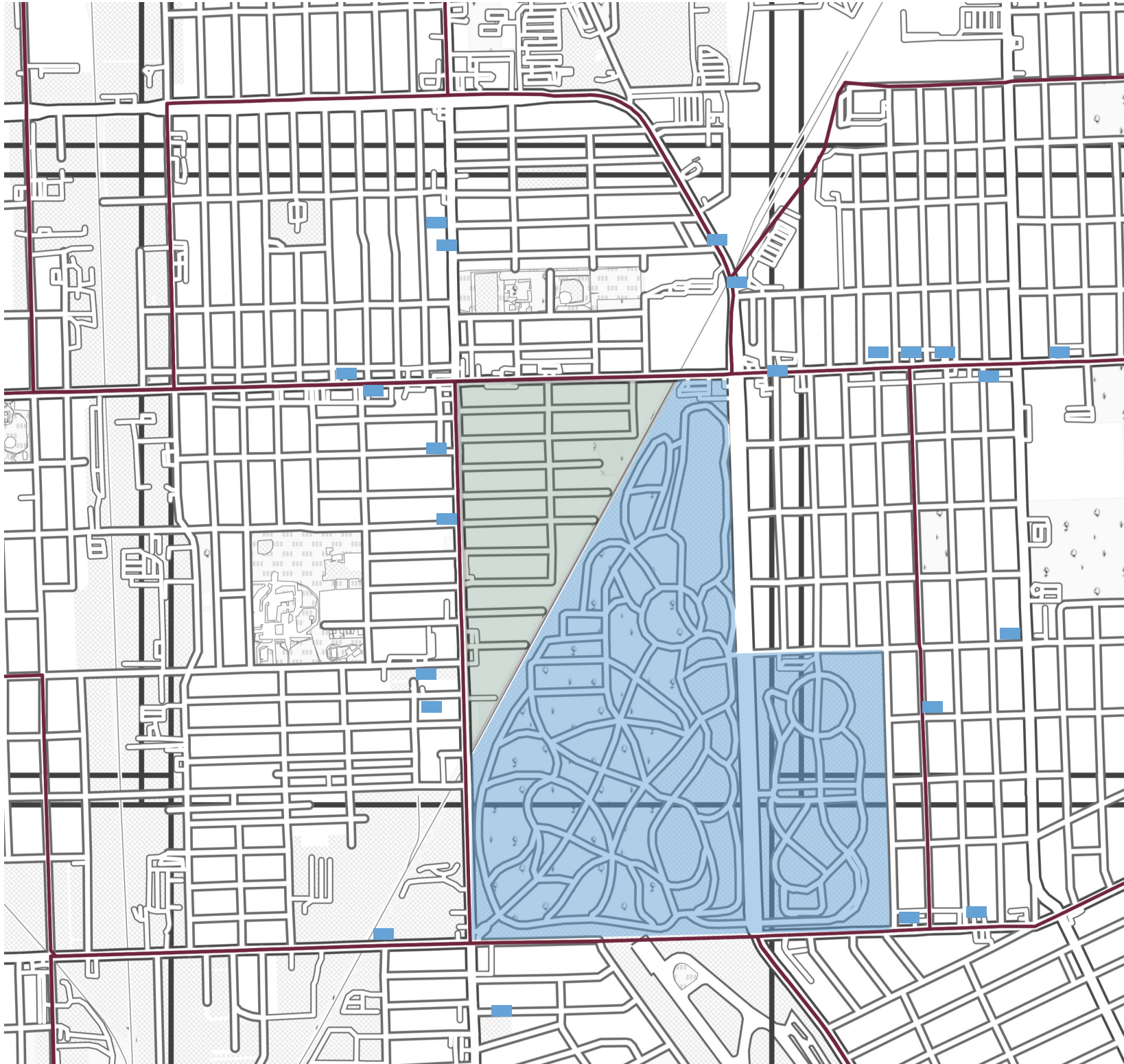


1 SQ MILE: ZONING

- R1:** Single Family Residential
- M4:** Intensive Industrial District
- R5:** Medium Density Residential
- R3:** Low Density Residential District
- M2:** Restricted Industrial District
- B4:** General Business District
- R2:** Two-Family Residential District



5.1.5, Mt Olivet Zoning Map



1 SQ MILE: SACRED SPACES

The sacred

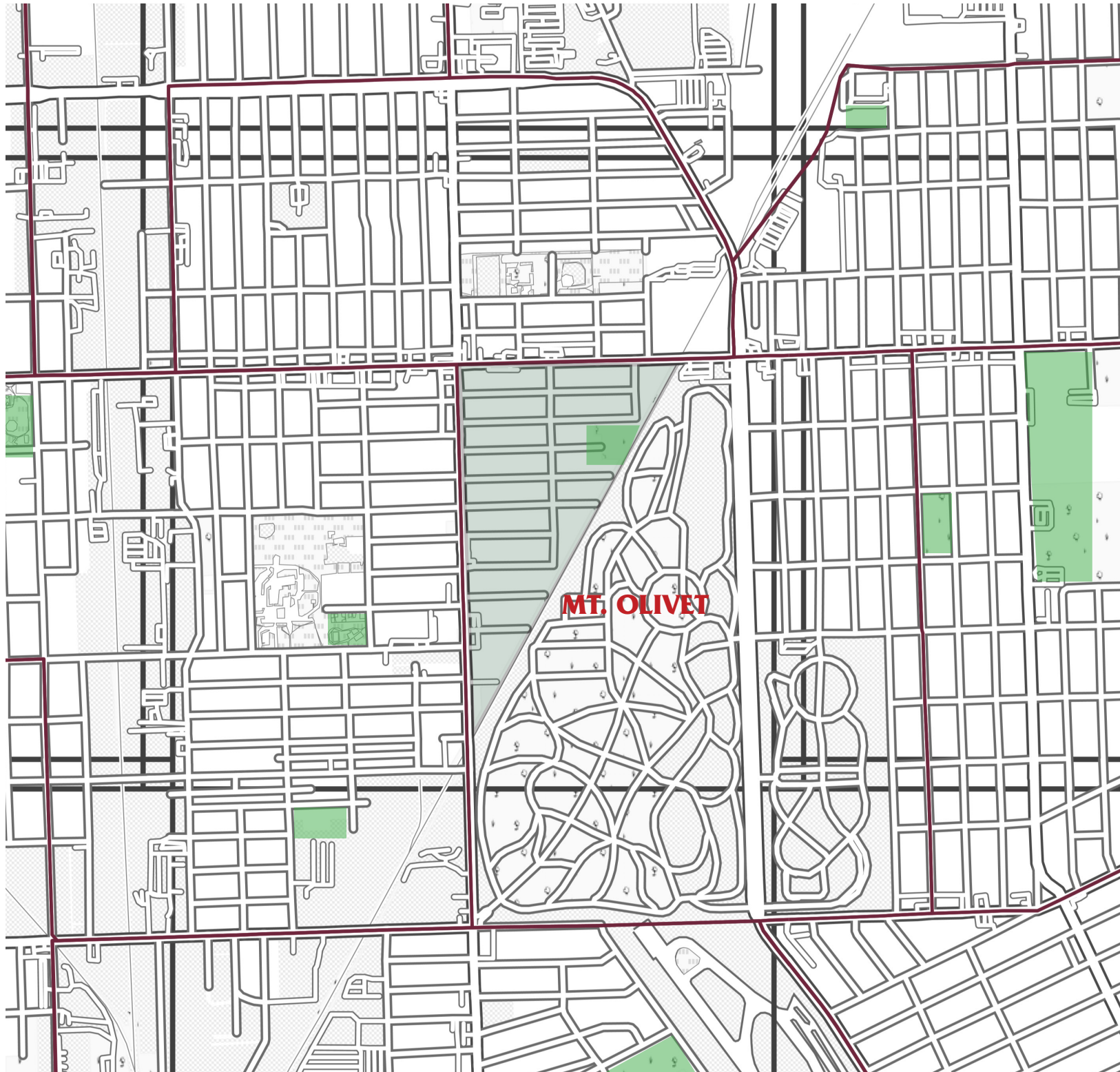
Provides incite into the culture of the community and the variety of religions.

Also due to the influence of the cultural impact of the cemetery.



1 SQ MILE: GREEN SPACES

Green spaces are considered an amenity in a community driven neighborhood, so park proximity is a value. The existing park in proximity to the site is inaccessible and abandoned. Beyond the site, multiple green spaces exist to break up the suburban condition of Mt Olivet.



5.1.7, Mt Olivet Green Space Map

Narrowing the Scope

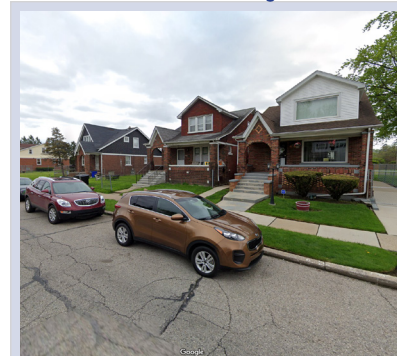
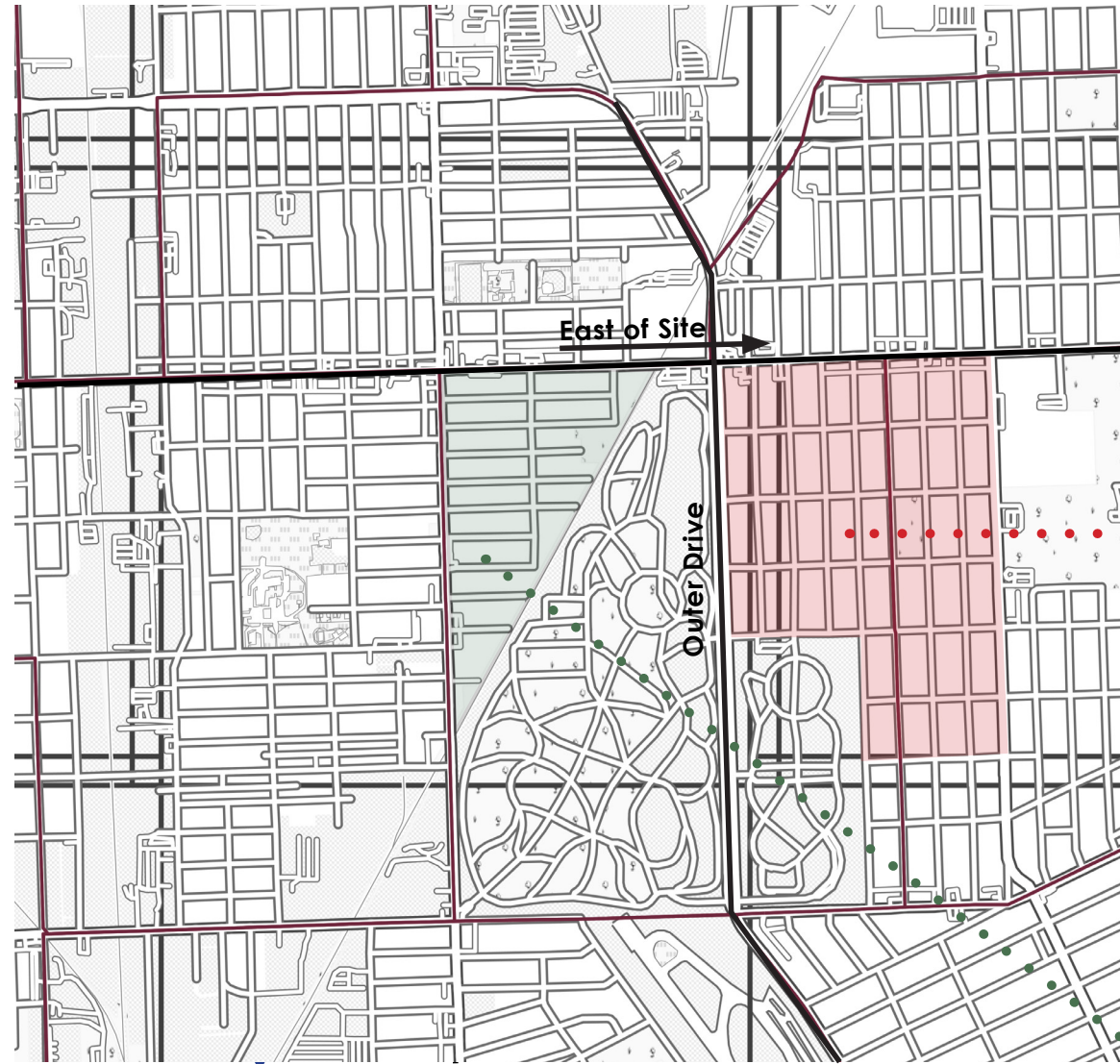
The chosen site sits is a triangular plot between Van Dyke Avenue, the cemetery, and 7 Mile Road. As stated in the Stigma of Ruin, Mt Olivet as a strange condition where tangencies to the cemetery remain largely abandoned minus a few renters. The main roads Van Dyke and Outer Drive serve as demarcations between the developed and inhabited areas of the neighborhood. While unfortunate given that the greater Osborn community has seen more development in recent years, that triangle plot becomes a desirable place to stage an intervention.

The West condition of Mt Olivet is mostly in context of the Douglass-Jones Private Academy, where the surrounding residences acts as satellites of the campus. These houses are in fair, lived in shape with signs of life and care put into the infrastructure as well as a bustle with people. The houses here are generally valued at about \$40-\$50,000

The East condition is similar, having Osborn High School as a node of interest. The houses here are neo-colonial in nature and also exist in an area with a bustle of life. The houses here are generally valued at \$50-\$75,000.

The chosen site contains about 7 blocks of 4 square housing of varying degrees of wear as well as a now abandoned Robinwood Park East of Hollywood St.

Zooming in further, the proposal will confine itself to one street and set the stage for what can potentially be applied to the entire area at large.



5.2.8, Mt Olivet Site Condition Map

The Vernacular of Mt. Olivet



5.2.9, Various Photos Around Mt Olivet

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Intervention, Not Interruption

POV of a Cynic

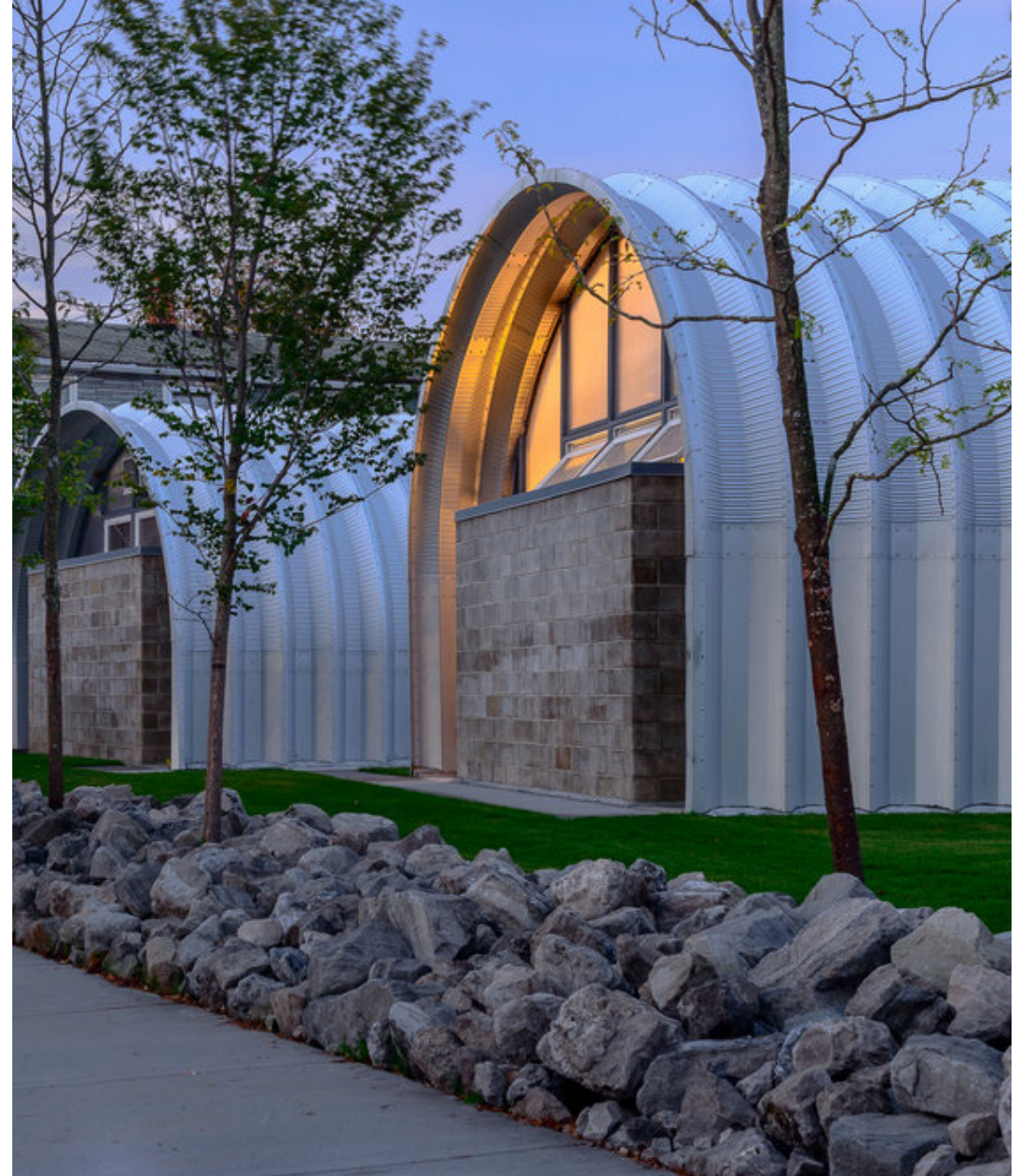
As previously stated, the motif for this thesis is to create a framework for equitable design that is tailored first, and foremost to the culture and nature of the existing neighborhood. To add, supplement and overtime improve the existing condition of the area as well as the fiscal condition of the inhabitants. Since the success of the project hinges on how the residences perform efficiently and fiscally. Given this logic, the intervention here is a more soft approach, and radical from a policy standpoint. The physical presence of this intervention should blend with the existing condition, and not seek to paint it as a place of extravagance. This thesis seeks to create an intervention, not an interruption.

In a cynical point of view, the unfortunate consequence of these kinds of developments is de-contextualizing the existing space within its own domain and that it can directly result in the removal of the existing population through gentrification. While this thesis seeks to circumvent that, it doesn't stop independent developers and landlords from creating projects tailored around personal gain. Core City's Philip Kafka of Prince Concepts developed True North to be an affordable housing solution for prospective artists in the area. While successful in his own right, no one in the bounds of Core City actually had access to living there, as the properties were leased via word-of-mouth on Kafkas part and sold out before construction

even finished. This also bring value to Core City, and desirability for shops and amenities, and also raises the property value of tangent residential blocks. These concerns are rarely considered when these developments are made, and the results are pushing incumbent populations to rent housing in the city core, robbing them of a chance at generational wealth.

The memory of the space is fairly rich. To simply demolish it and build something new dictates that the structures overall are problematic in nature. While this is true from an outdated perspective, the idea of salvaging existing structures hinges on this logic. And the protection of existing structures, as this thesis defends, is actually for pragmatic reasons as well. The existing brick structure and foundations save a big chunk of construction costs as well as provide an envelope to build new interior partitions within. Their size is also perfect living space for 1-2 tenants each floor. The existing floor space condition can even accommodate a duplex condition for starter homes.

The proposition here is to preserve the simplistic nature of the foursquare design and to in turn defend the foursquare design in a modern context. A Detroit foursquare house generally has 1.5 - 2 floors with a dormer, 4 brick exterior walls acting in shear, a covered porch, and ornamentation via a minimal use of siding or brick patterning.



6.1.1, True North, Core City Detroit

Laying a Framework

Land Trusts and You (Redux)

To bring back Community Land Trusts in the context of Detroit, there are a few examples one can base their own framework from. Two notable active examples are the Oakland Avenue Commission's trust in the North End neighborhood and the non-centralized Storehouse of Hope, based primarily in the North End neighborhood.

This thesis bases its approach mostly on the Storehouse of Hopes model, as it tackles multiple salvage projects. What's taken away from this is the emphasis of the community/individual balance. This balance entices any kind of person to buying into a CLT, whether they are looking for their own benefits or to contribute to a greater community. The purpose of a CLT is to protect the interests of the community as a whole by preserving the value of their homes as well as having access to certain amenities delineated by the trust. While these vary wildly in scope, the purpose is to preserve and sustain community welfare as well as maintain the trust.

This thesis ultimately proposes a trust that is more hands on with the prospective owners, giving a fair amount of options at a cost lower than the average rent in the area, and providing access to amenities such as a network of contractors and the potential for community growth in the form of parks and infrastructure improvement.



6.2.1, Oakland Row Student Project



6.2.2, Storehouse of Hope Banner

Land Trusts and You (Redux) (Continued)

This thesis lays the groundwork for two main drivers for an intervention: The salvage and new development of affordable single family housing with a backbone of a Community Land Trust to uphold the housing value over time to protect the incumbent population from gentrification. The salvage and new housing developments will provide owners with material costs and construction documentation for free with an option to provide labor themselves or through the trust.

This proposal for a community based land trust encompasses the Hollywood St. in Mt Olivet as a way of narrowing the scope and providing a baseline for future expansion into other streets as well as the abandoned Robinwood Park.

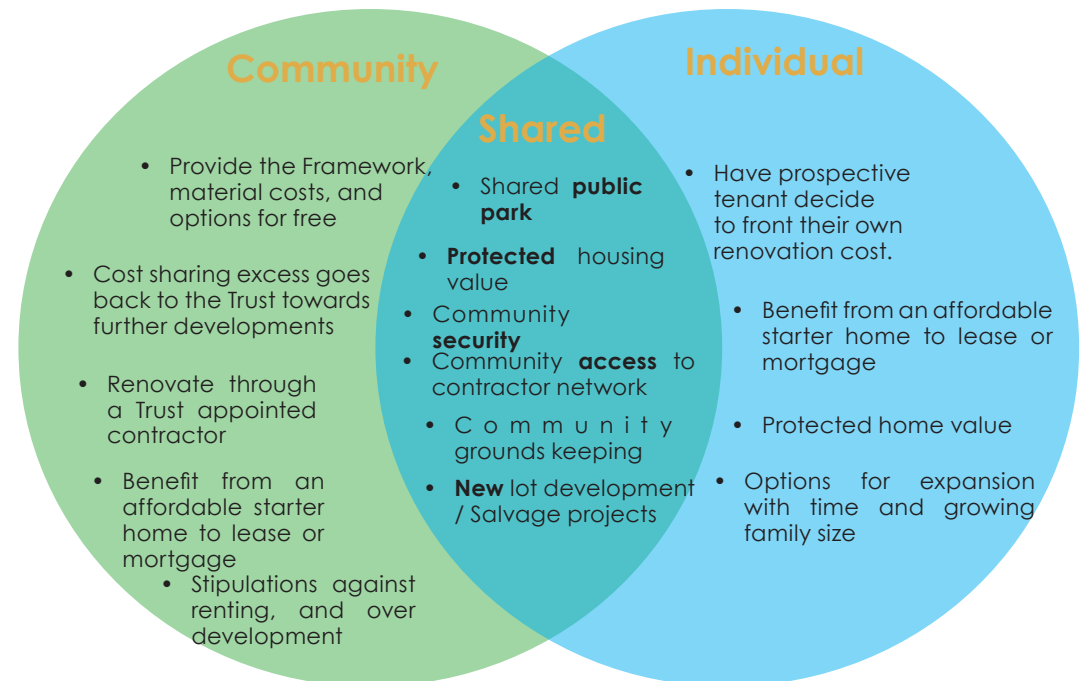
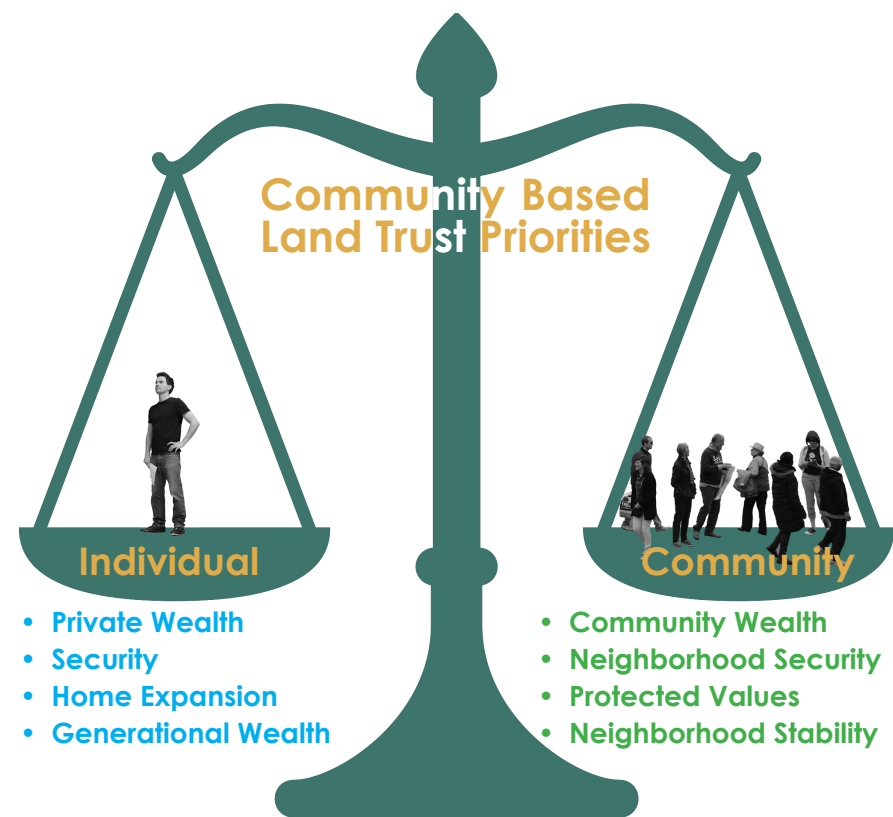
Taking inspiration from the Storehouse of Hope, the CLT seeks to propose both community and individual based intensives and stipulations meant to protect both entities equally. The intention here is to provide people coming from the suburbs a more accessible way to orient themselves in an urban context.

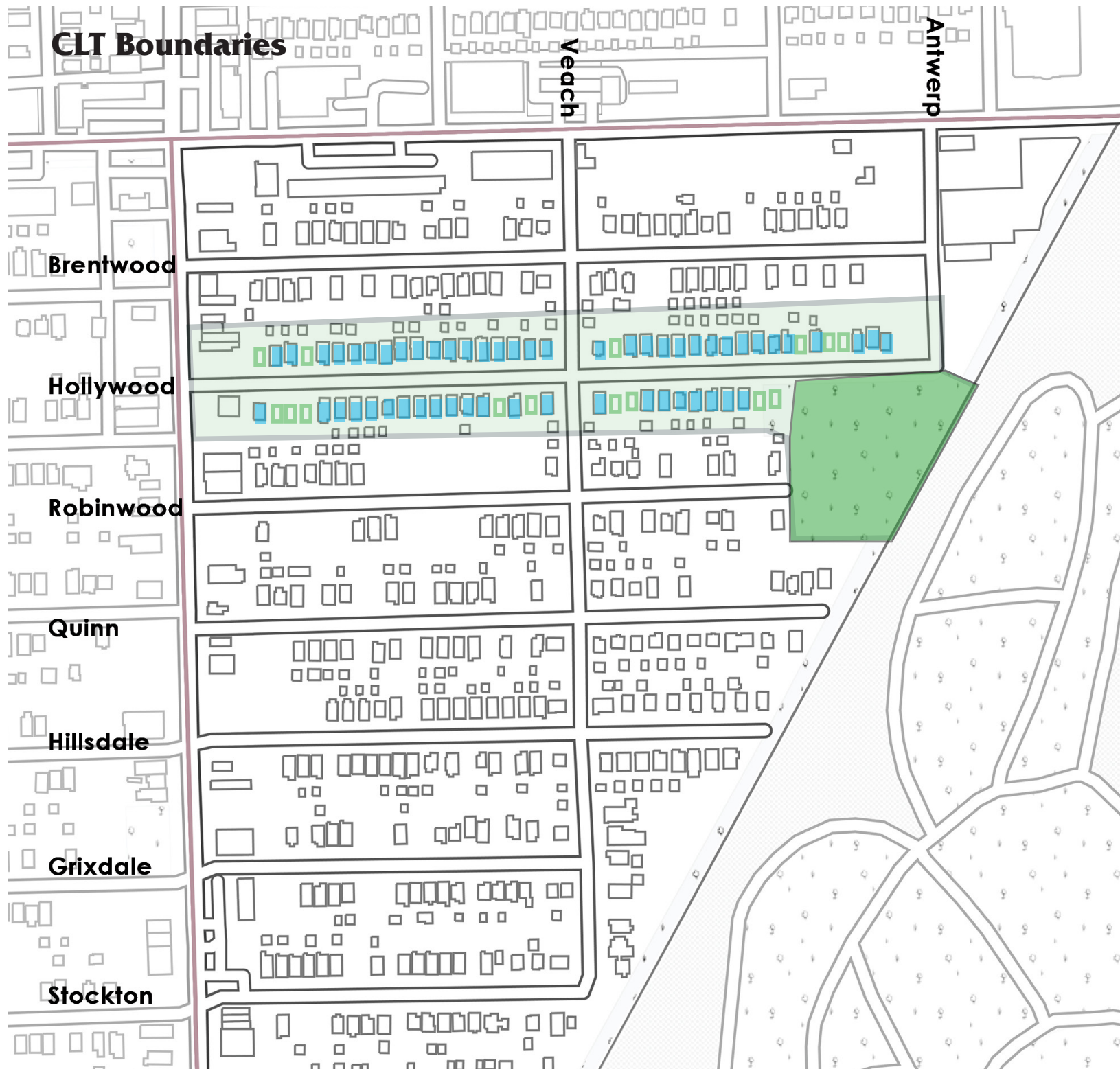
What gives this proposal equity to the community is the use of checks and balances for individual and community benefits. Renovating through the trust provides opportunity for the trust to gain its own wealth to sustain its existence as well as lay a groundwork for expansion. When housing lots are sold off, the property owner will get the proceeds to that sale while the trust might get a small commission depending on the nature

of the property. The board of trustees will ideally be made up of community members to assure that community wealth is upheld.

Home ownership also works in tandem with individual and community wealth, with more home owners comes more agency for individual development and communal. This might also prevent an individual from, for example, buying multiple lots and creating an apartment complex, but that protects the community from individual monopolization of the land. Another stipulation is that these properties are lease to own or mortgaged through the trust. Coffers in the trust exist as a buffer for lending and cost of upkeep/expansion only.

The biggest shortcoming for CLTs is it's funding. While this proposal values the idea of appraisal before funding, CLTs often fail because coffers simply dry up. Unfortunately, signs of goodwill to a greater community can fall short due to the lack of financial backing. In Detroit, many state grants and loans are offered for affordable housing developments, like Motor City Match, but the loans have to be paid back, and if you under or overshoot your cost estimates, your proposal can fail. Money handling in this proposal will be started at the Granter level and regulated by the board of trustees. Another unfortunate circumstance of money handling with a committee is the exploitation of those funds, so a hands off approach to finances would be necessary to build community trust.





Key

- Jurisdiction
- Proposed Salvage
- Proposed New Developments
- Future Development Zone



The Flow of Money



Starting a CLT

Private Investment,
Motor City Match Loan,
State Land Grants,
Tax Revenue Sharing Grant

Revitalizing Property

Purchasing Lots for Salvage or
for New development.

Providing frameworks, plans,
and estimates for free to
prospective owners

Options for Owners

Allow options for prospective
owners to renovate through
the Trust or provide their own
labor at certain loan tiers for
a lease-to-own model at a
protected value

Return / Investment

Money coming back to the
Trust can sustain it as a
program AND allow for further
developments like Robinwood
Park, East of the block.

6.2.5, Money Flow Diagram

Robinwood Park



6.2.6, Money Flow Diagram 104

An Equitable Intervention

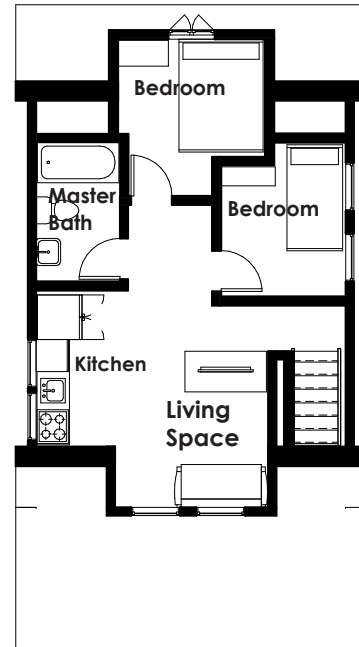
How We Live

If the Community based land trust is the backbone of this thesis' intervention, then the architectural portion documented here is the heart of it. Truly affordable housing can exist in the form of ownership for low income populations of Detroit, and not exclusive to those who live in the suburbs.

**Authors Note: "As a middle class white male, I've never had a month where I hadn't had to worry about not eating, nor living without a roof over my head, as well as my parents before me. That is not a reality shared with the disenfranchised populations of Detroit, as they have relatively little agency over how they live."*

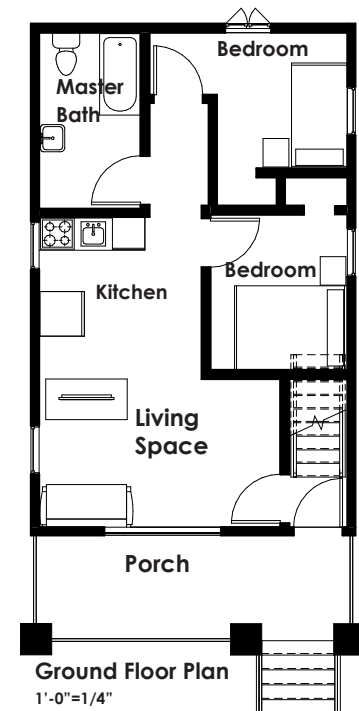
The first proposal is for the salvaging of older housing on Hollywood St. The properties here are in various states of disrepair, some better off than others. In large part, each structure has a well intact brick envelope followed by a concrete porch and a failing roof structure.

The proposal here is to salvage the structure and footing of each salvage and add new interior partitions, windows, proper spray foam insulation, and repair the floor and roof assemblies to better accommodate a duplex condition, which includes a thicker and insulated floor assembly, a properly ventilated roof assembly with an air gap and mushroom vent.



Ground Floor Plan

1'-0"=1/4"



Ground Floor Plan

1'-0"=1/4"

6.3.1, Salvage Floor Plans



6.3.2, Salvage Rendering

The bottom line for a salvaged foursquare house per owner would run about \$80,000 total and \$40,000 for each owner if there was a duplex condition. This number is drawn from the cost of materials and budget alone. This number also includes a buffer for other potential repairs in the envelope, so this number could potentially be even smaller. At about **\$225/month** for a 15 year mortgage this is very competitive to renting, as that usually costs anywhere from \$500 - \$1500 a month for a house, not including utilities.

Insulation alone can bring down the cost of heating by at least half, especially for Michigan weather. Places where heat rises would have to be comfortable for the 2nd floor occupier, so a properly insulated roof structure with an air gap

and ridge vent would be necessary for air to escape.

Things that **aren't** included due to being at the owners discretion are:

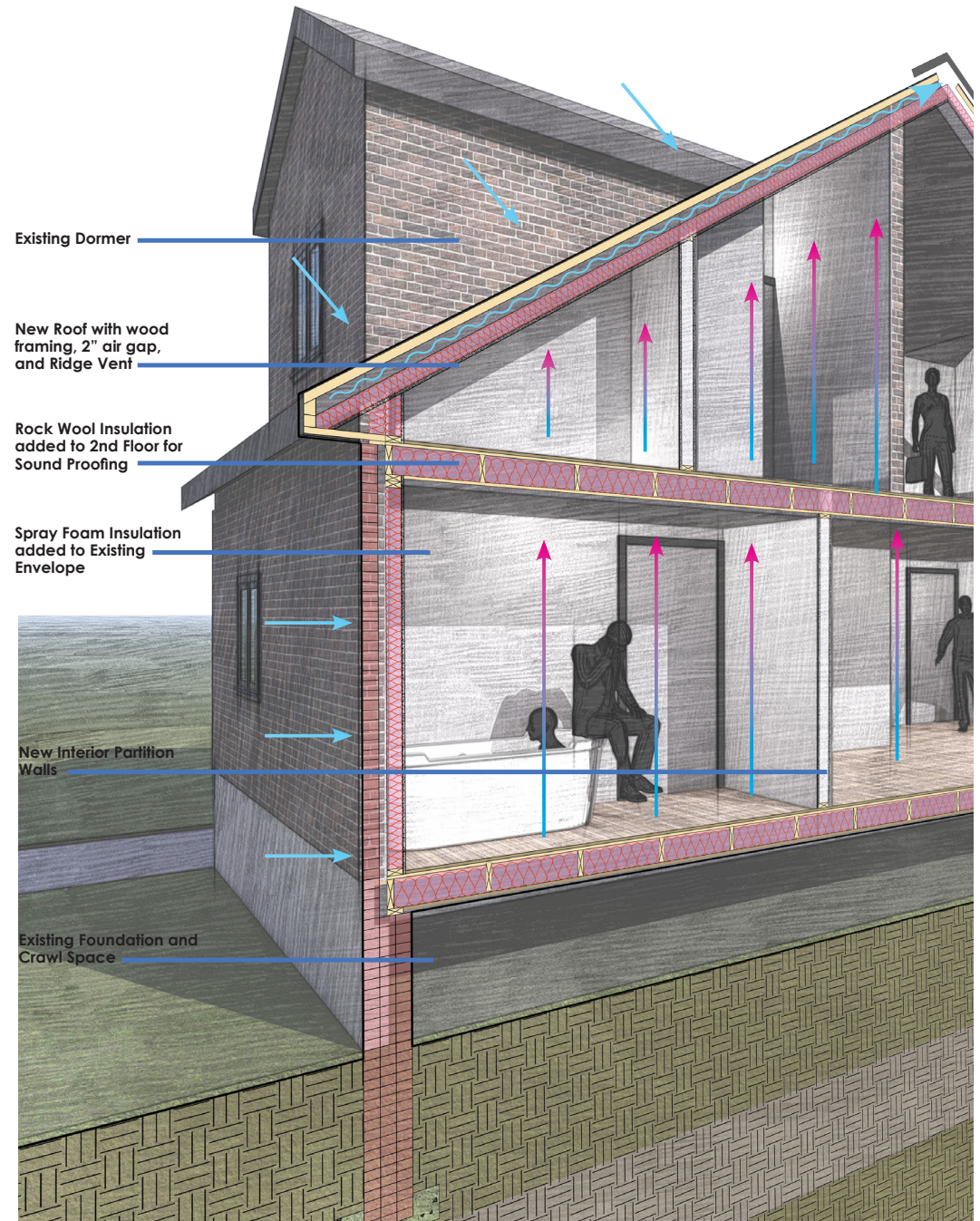
- New living room furniture
- Exterior shingling
- Interior paint
- Carpeting
- (Again) Labor

Due to the large variable nature of these things, they aren't included in the final pricing.

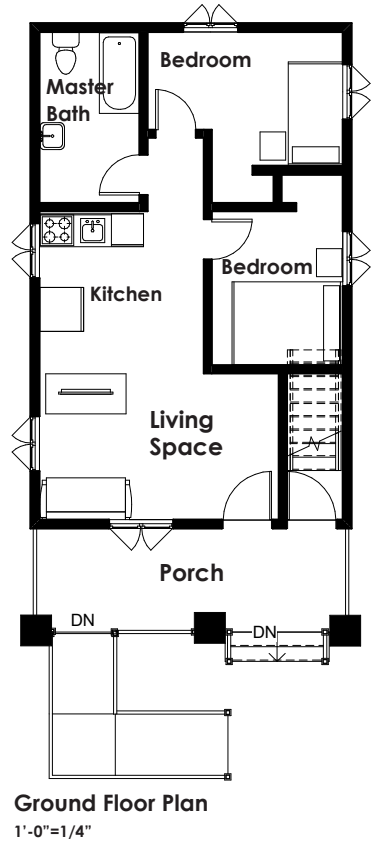
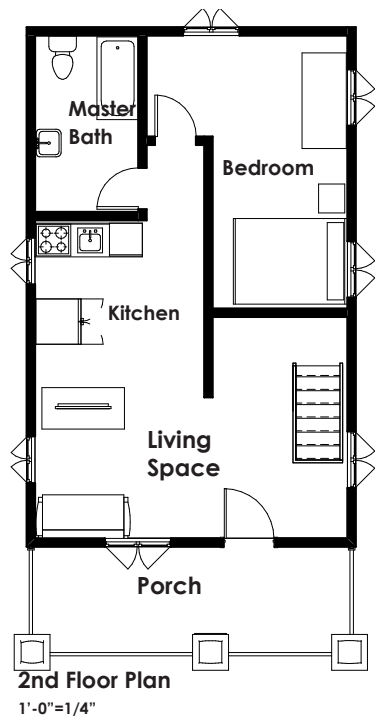
For Salvage / Renovation		Total Cost	
Cost of Property		\$40,000 per Owner OR ~\$225/Month per Owner for 15 years	
~\$20,000 preexisting property at 600sf Per Floor			
Property Needs *Costs are approx through online data for material alone			
- New Bathroom			
+ New Sink, Vanity, WC, Tiling, Tub, Shower Assembly, + Materials		\$2,500 Budget	
- New Kitchen			
+ Kitchenette, Refrigerator, Cabinets Island		\$10,000 Budget	
- New Interior Walls	~\$15/lf	\$750	
- Exterior Wall Repairs			
+ Spray Foam Insulation	~\$6/sf	\$5,000	
+ Masonry		\$1,000 Budget	
+ Siding	~\$6/sf	\$5,000	
- Concrete Porch + Steps	~\$7/sf	\$945	
- New Roof			
+ Asphalt Shingles, Wood frame, Insulation, Ridge Vent	~\$325/100sf	\$1,950 / 2 = \$975	
- Electrical Routing		\$1,800 / 2 = \$900	
- Railing	~\$10/lf	\$220	
- Windows	~\$200 Each	\$1,400	
		Additional Cost Saving	
		Utilities	
		Heating:	
		Existing Condition (No Insulation): ~\$3000 / year	
		With Spray Foam Insulation added: ~\$1600 / year	

WC: \$250
Tub and Shower: \$700
Tiling (Floor and Shower): \$350
Vanity and Sink: \$500

6.3.3, Salvage Cost Chart



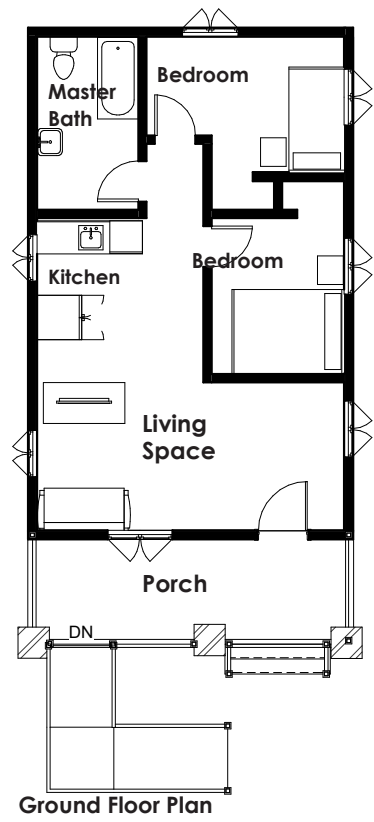
6.3.4, Salvage Wall Section 108



6.3.5, New Duplex Floor Plans



6.3.6, New Duplex Rendering



6.3.7, New Bungalow Plan



How We Live II

With vacancy, comes opportunity. With emptiness, comes potential. As noted by the CLT boundaries, a number of lots fall under the “New Development” category. This gives a unique opportunity for home owners where they have a choice between a single story bungalow and a shared 2 story duplex. Both options carry the same design motifs as well a square footage per floor. Given the nature of these developments either option would be more expensive for prospective owners. The prices for each are arguably still competitive to renting rates.

The two residences share a similar envelope as the salvage: brick on stud. But these residences have a modern and efficient configuration of fenestration, shed roof assembly, and cost effective design. Both residences also have a modern crawl space and foundation, at 18” above grade.

The Duplex specifically doubles in cost for interior partition walls and envelope costs. Given that these share the foursquare design, structure is fairly simple with the exterior walls acting in shear. The interior walls, unlike the salvaged homes, have more flexibility in terms placement, whether the prospective owner prefers a more open plan VS more bedrooms.

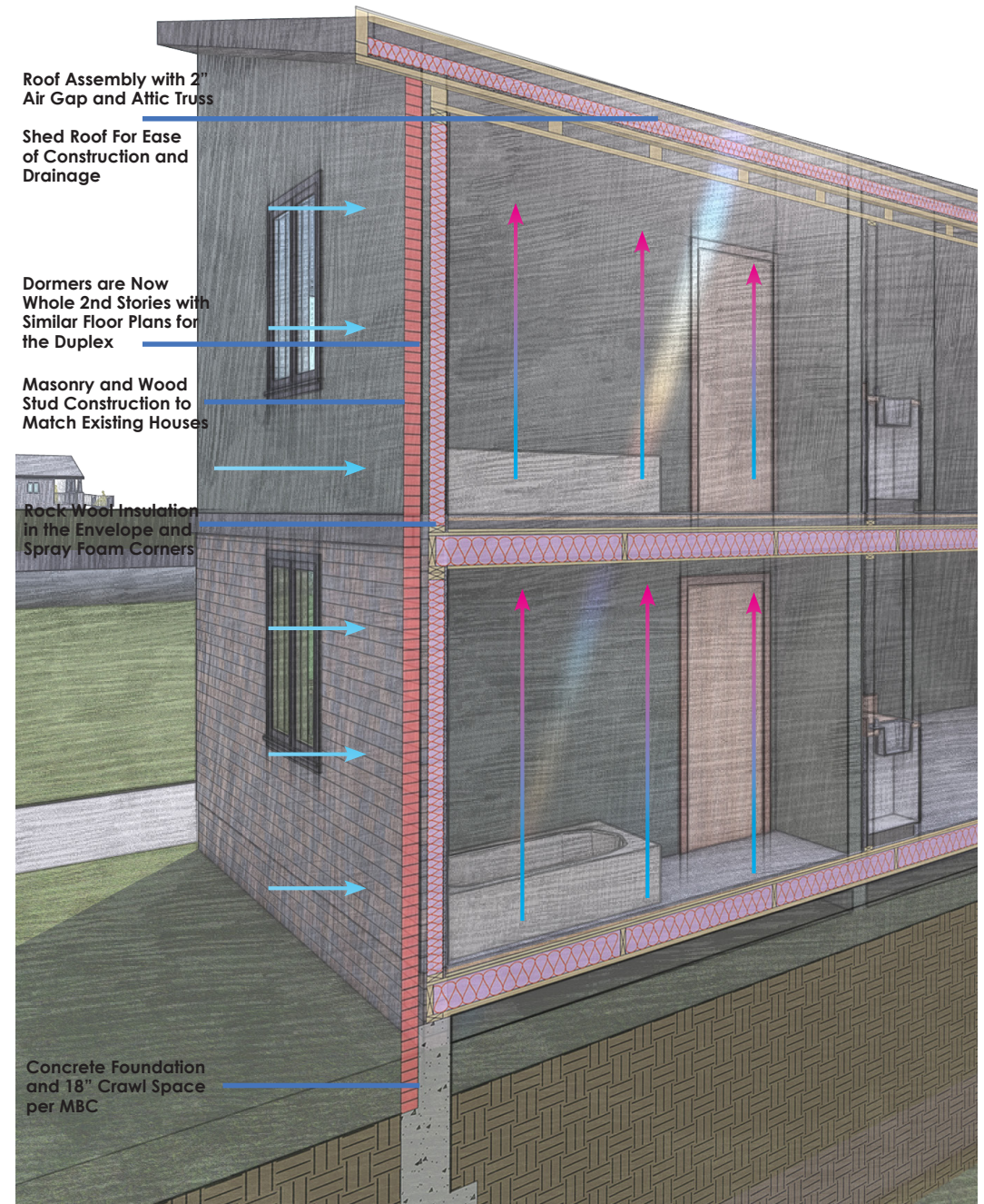
The single story bungalow is largely built the same as the duplex, minus the 2nd story condition and porch. Spaciously, these homes have the same foot print as other houses on the site, but have nearly half the height. Each home can be fit with a rain barrel for about \$200 for 58 gallons.

New Construction: Duplex		Total Cost
Cost of Empty Lot		\$68,225 OR ~\$380/Month for 15 years
- \$2000 (As low as \$1000)		
Construction Costs		
<i>*Costs are approx through online data for material alone.</i>		
- Bathroom	+ Sink, Vanity, WC, Tiling, Tub, Shower Assembly, + Materials	\$2,500
Budget		
- Kitchen	+ Kitchenette, Refrigerator, Cabinets Island	\$10,000
Budget		
- Interior Walls	~\$15/lf	\$750
- Exterior Walls		
+ Rock Wool Insulation	~\$6/sf	\$5,000
+ Masonry	\$9.50/sf	\$8,000
+ Siding	~\$6/sf	\$5,000
+ Assembly (GWB, Studs, Sheathing)	\$15/lf	\$1,500
- Concrete Porch + Steps	~\$7/sf	\$945
- Roof		
+ Asphalt Shingles, Wood frame, Insulation, Attic Truss	~\$160/100sf	\$960
- Electrical Routing		\$1,800
- Floor / Ceiling Assembly + Joists, Subfloor, Insulation, Hardwood Flooring, Sheathing	~\$13/sf	\$15,600
- Foundation (Crawl Space)	~\$13/sf	\$7,800

6.3.8, New Duplex Cost Chart

New Construction: Duplex		Total Cost
Cost of Empty Lot		\$49,895 per Owner OR ~\$275/Month per Owner for 15 years
- \$2000 (As low as \$1000)		
Construction Costs		
<i>*Costs are approx through online data for material alone.</i>		
- Bathroom	+ Sink, Vanity, WC, Tiling, Tub, Shower Assembly, + Materials	\$2,500 Budget
- Kitchen	+ Kitchenette, Refrigerator, Cabinets Island	\$10,000 Budget
- Interior Walls	~\$15/lf	\$750
- Exterior Walls		
+ Rock Wool Insulation	~\$6/sf	\$5,000
+ Masonry	\$9.50/sf	\$8,000
+ Siding	~\$6/sf	\$5,000
+ Assembly (GWB, Studs, Sheathing)	\$15/lf	\$1,500
- Concrete Porch + Steps	~\$7/sf	\$945
- Roof		
+ Asphalt Shingles, Wood frame, Insulation, Attic Truss	~\$160/100sf	\$960/2 = \$480
- Electrical Routing		\$1,800/2 = \$900
- Floor Assembly + Joists, Subfloor, Insulation, Hardwood Flooring, Sheathing	~\$13/sf	\$7,800/2 = \$3,900
- Foundation (Crawl Space)	~\$13/sf	\$7,800/2 = \$3,900
- Railing	~\$10/lf	\$220
- Windows	~\$200 Each	\$1,400

6.3.9, New Bungalow Cost Chart



6.3.10, New Development Wall Section

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Self Reflection

Going into this thesis in the Spring of 2021 left me with a few uncertainties, as any research project would. 1: Could I make something that meaningfully adds to the multitudes of Detroit based projects already being undertaken? 2: Me being a White suburban male, do I have a legitimate place to weigh in on complex social and urban issues? 3: Will my research be enough to rationalize my approach?

Throughout the course of my thesis year, these answers were gradually fulfilled, or made redundant overtime. I can make peace with a thesis that feels fairly complete, with plenty of room to expand. Even amongst other Detroit based theses, there is always place for a new and informed approach

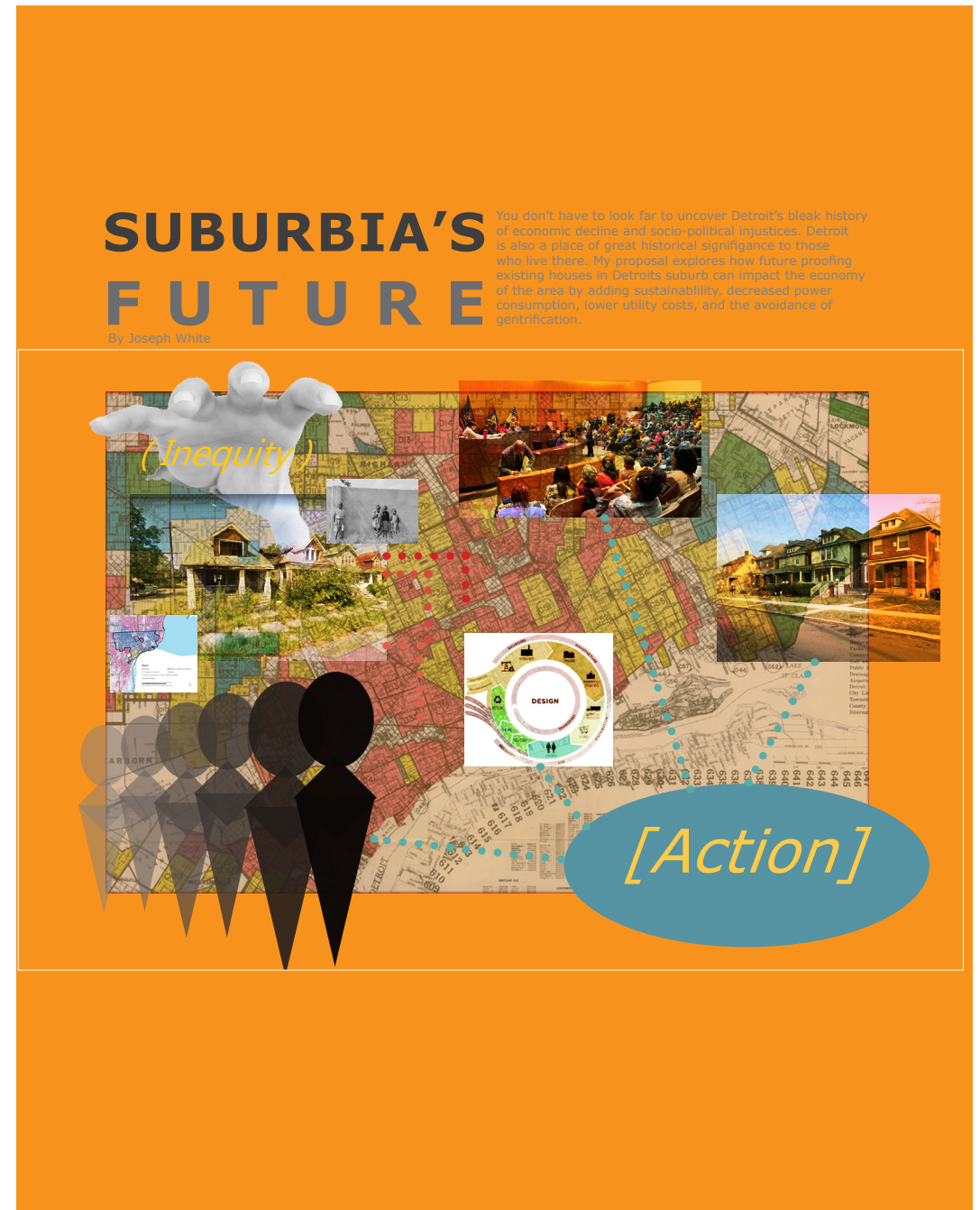
Where most of my meaningful contributions come to play is the scales I work at, starting from an overlook of Detroit and zooming all the way down to the screw. While there are naturally many gaps to this approach, I found that such studies into context were helpful in keeping my choices informed, as well as legitimized when presenting it.

As a white male, I can never alienate myself from that topic, and will never truly understand what it means to be part of a ethnicity of people that has yet to see stability in their own place of living. Being informed by community members and those who actively partake in similar developments proved to be very valuable in legitimizing and informing my proposal.

Given that there's a multitude of Detroit based theses enacted in my graduating year alone, there's bound to be overlapping, similar results, and investigations. Where we differ is the conclusions we come to. While one conclusion might stick to urbanism and sustainable neighborhood design, my conclusion was more zoomed in to the residence itself, and my research backs up my conclusions.

In hindsight, my only regret is not being able to find a dedicated community in the Osborn area to base my findings on. While these things exist online, and informed my approach, that personal connection lacked in this case.

Before I started out my working career as a work monkey for a Detroit landlord, I felt I had an understanding of Detroit's urban fabric. Very quickly I was proven wrong, and not just by the spirit of it's people, but the sheer lack of effort landlord put into actually caring for the people they serve. It's a relationship that only sees people cycling in and out of their homes and only sought to benefit a dispassionate person, far removed from the context in which they operate. I know now the parasitic nature of these people, but even as a 15 year old who understood little about social policy at the time, you can see there's something wrong with a fast tracked cycle of renting and eviction in Detroit. Those left without footholds and with nothing to show for their investments.



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