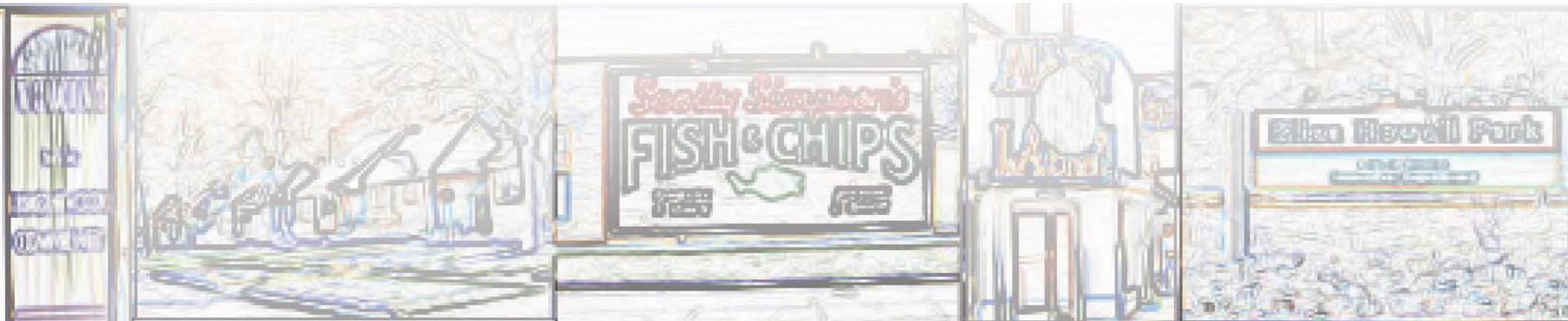


# A LAND USE PLAN FOR BRIGHTMOOR



Urban + Regional Planning Program  
Taubman College of Architecture + Urban Planning  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
April 2008

# A LAND USE PLAN FOR BRIGHTMOOR

**PREPARED BY:**

**Kimiko Doherty**

**Lisa Morris**

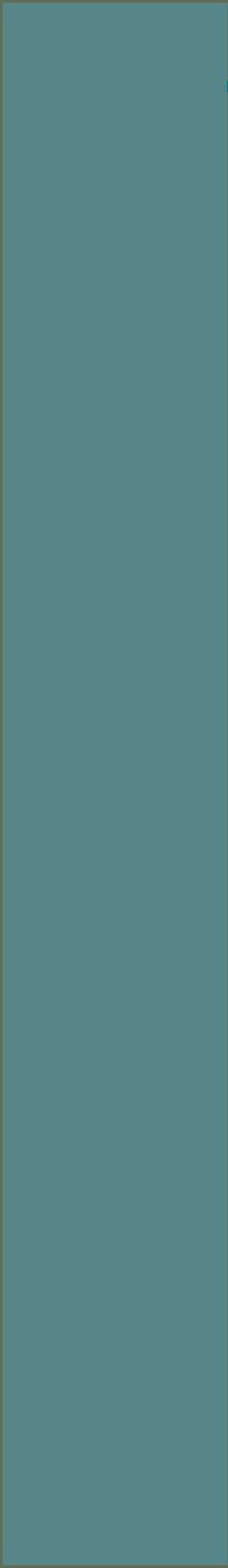
**Tim Parham**

**Sarah Powers**

**Erin Schumacher**

**Bonnie Wessler**

Urban + Regional Planning Program  
Taubman College of Architecture + Urban Planning  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
April 2008



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

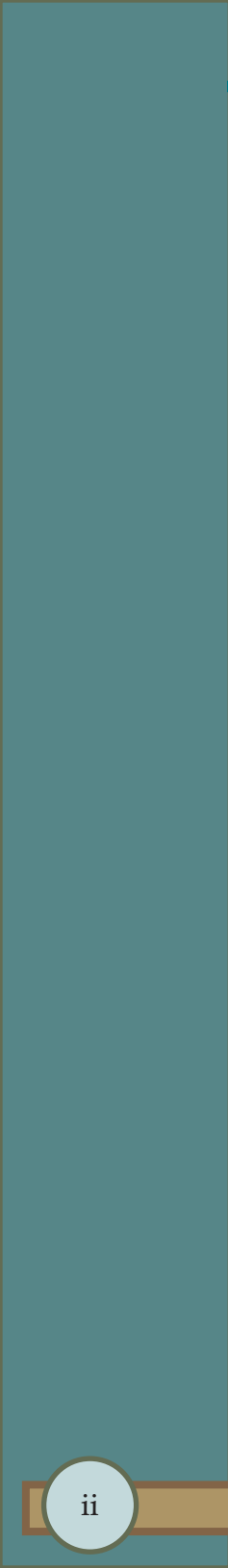
We thank the Brightmoor Alliance, our community partner, and those who served on our advisory committee: Reverend Jerome Warfield of Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist Church; Pastor Cecil Poe, Ph.D., of Leland Missionary Baptist Church; John O'Brien of Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development; Brandon Ivory of Local Initiatives Support Corporation; and Marvin Hicks.

We thank the following people and organizations for their time, expertise, and willingness to help with creating a land use plan:

- Brightmoor neighborhood residents
- Participants in our three community meetings
- Mary Banks and Mike Chateau, Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development
- Dave Douches & Joe Coombs, Michigan State University Extension
- The Detroit Recreation Department
- Gregory Parrish, Detroit Planning and Development Department
- Deacon Burk, Deacon Wilson, and the staff of Leland Missionary Baptist Church
- Carrie Lewand-Monroe, Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority

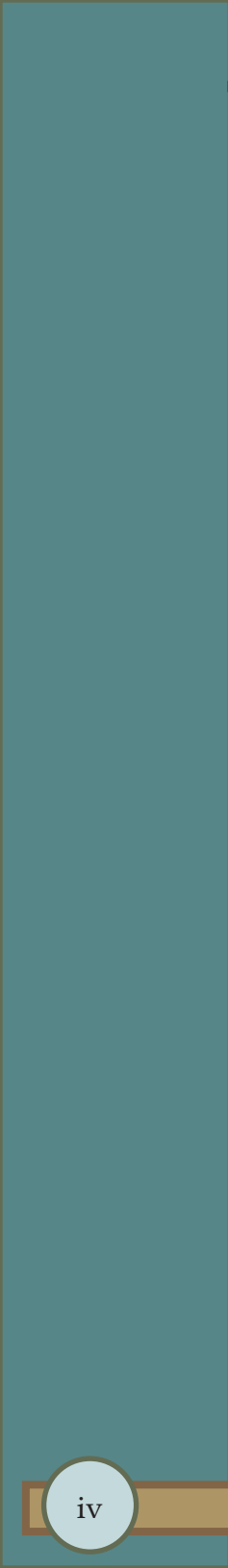
Many thanks go to the organizations that paid the expenses of this project: the Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation and the Detroit Vacant Properties Campaign.

This project would not have been possible without the support and guidance of Professor Margaret Dewar and Community Partnerships Manager Eric Dueweke.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary .....	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2: Current Conditions .....	5
Chapter 3: Goals .....	17
Chapter 4: Future Land Use .....	19
Chapter 5: Residential Reinforcement .....	29
Chapter 6: Residential Revitalization .....	37
Chapter 7: Neighborhood Reinvention .....	55
Chapter 8: Parks Enhancement .....	75
Chapter 9: Business District Realignment .....	85
Chapter 10: Implementation .....	101
Appendices:	
Appendix A: Methods .....	107
Appendix B: Resources .....	119



# LIST OF FIGURES

## *Chapter 1*

1.1: Brightmoor in the region .....	1
1.2: Brightmoor boundaries .....	1
1.3: Brightmoor Community flag on Fenkell Street .....	2
1.4: Original B.E. Taylor house and floor plan .....	2
1.5: Remaining Taylor house in Brightmoor .....	3
1.6: Brightmoor Community Center .....	3

## *Chapter 2*

2.1: Age of Brightmoor residents, 2000 .....	5
2.2: Age of Detroit residents, 2000 .....	5
2.3: Unemployment rates, 2000 .....	6
2.4: Poverty rates, 1999 .....	6
2.5: Per capita income, 1999 .....	7
2.6: Example of a Brightmoor neighborhood threatened by foreclosure .....	7
2.7: Generalized land use in Brightmoor, 2005 .....	8
2.8: State, city, county, and NDND-owned properties .....	9
2.9: Vacant land in Brightmoor .....	10
2.10: Figure-ground showing structures in Brightmoor .....	11
2.11: Median household income in the Brightmoor area, 1999 .....	12
2.12: Median value of owner-occupied lots in the Brightmoor area, 2000 .....	12
2.13: Assets in and around Brightmoor .....	13
2.14: Bus routes and bus frequency in the Brightmoor area .....	14

## *Chapter 4*

4.1: Future land use planning areas .....	20
4.2: Diagram of the character of the five planning areas .....	22
4.3: Cross-section of Brightmoor as shown in Figure 4.2 .....	22
4.4: Well-maintained homes south of Schoolcraft Road .....	23
4.5: Row of homes near Eliza Howell Park with lamps in every front yard .....	23
4.6: The Hubert School .....	23
4.7: NDND infill housing .....	24
4.8: House in the process of being deconstructed .....	24



4.9: Vacant lot transformed into a community garden .....	24
4.10: Solar panels for alternative energy production .....	25
4.11: Detroit homestead near Schoolcraft Road .....	25
4.12: Urban agriculture .....	25
4.13: A splash park .....	26
4.14: A dog park .....	26
4.15: Nature education .....	26
4.16: A farmer’s market can be a temporary use .....	27
4.17: Public art improves a building façade .....	27
4.18: All Wet Laundry, a well-maintained façade on Fenkell Street .....	27

### ***Chapter 5***

5.1: Reinforcement areas with assets.....	29
5.2: Intact housing in the reinforcement area .....	30
5.3: Typical brick-faced homes in the reinforcement area east of Eliza Howell Park .....	30
5.4: A well-secured house in Brightmoor .....	33
5.5: A well-secured house in Brightmoor .....	33
5.6: Improved sidewalks in Brightmoor .....	34
5.7: Consistent street lighting on Outer Drive .....	34
5.8: The Hubert School .....	35

### ***Chapter 6***

6.1: Revitalization areas with assets .....	37
6.2: Vacant lots, infill housing, intact housing, and dumping in the revitalization area .....	38
6.3: Typical block in the revitalization area, showing intact housing, a vacant lot, and a boarded up house .....	38
6.4: A house with code violations .....	39
6.5: House before NAP involvement .....	40
6.6: House after NAP involvement .....	40
6.7: A house being demolished .....	41
6.8: A derelict house being deconstructed .....	42
6.9: A house being rehabilitated .....	43
6.10: Dumping in the residential areas of Brightmoor .....	44
6.11: Dumping in Eliza Howell Park .....	44
6.12: An NKCDC vacant lot, before and after cleanup and implementation of dumping prevention features .....	45

6.13: Potential sites for adjacent lot transfer .....	46
6.14: An adjacent lot transfer. Original lot is highlighted in the first picture; an addition on an adjacent lot is shown in the second picture .....	46
6.15: A site that may benefit from an adjacent lot transfer .....	47
6.16: Potential pocket park locations .....	48
6.17: A pocket park in Seattle, Washington .....	48
6.18: An educational pocket park in East Harlem, New York .....	49
6.19: A community garden near the north end of Eliza Howell Park .....	49
6.20: Possible infill housing zones and government or NDND-owned buildable lots .....	50
6.21: An NDND infill house .....	51
6.22: A row of infill homes in the foreground, with an older home in the background .....	51

## **Chapter 7**

7.1: Reinvention area with nearby assets.....	55
7.2: A portion of the reinvention area, showing high levels of vacancy .....	56
7.3: A vacant lot between two abandoned houses in the reinvention area .....	56
7.4: Original lot highlighted in the first picture; an addition on an adjacent lot in the second picture; and yet another addition in the third, along with a fence surrounding the new homestead .....	57
7.5: Existing Detroit homesteads in the reinvention area .....	58
7.6: An existing Detroit homestead in Brightmoor that includes a house and fenced-in lots on both sides .....	58
7.7: A cultural celebration on a community commons .....	59
7.8: Potential sites for a community commons in one portion of the reinvention area .....	60
7.9: Earth Works Garden’s seedlings greenhouse on Meldrum Street .....	62
7.10: Potential recreation facility sites along Schoolcraft Road .....	63
7.11: Potential high school campus sites .....	66
7.12: Detroit School of Arts .....	67
7.13: A brightfield in Brockton, Massachusetts.....	69

## **Chapter 8**

8.1: Parks in the Brightmoor area .....	75
8.2: The proposed Lyndon Greenway .....	76
8.3: Concentrations of owner-occupied homes near the parks .....	77
8.4: Chandler Park .....	79
8.5: Vacant areas that could become part of the parks .....	80
8.6: Vacant areas incorporated into parks .....	80

8.7: A vacant lot with playground equipment next to Rouge Park .....	80
8.8: HEP walking routes .....	81
8.9: The current Lyndon Avenue entrance to Eliza Howell Park .....	82
8.10: What the Lyndon Avenue entrance could become .....	82

## *Chapter 9*

9.1: Business cluster locations along Fenkell and Schoolcraft .....	85
9.2: Thea Bowman Community Health Center .....	87
9.3: New Beginning Genesis Bible Church .....	87
9.4: Grandy’s Coney Island at the corner of Fenkell and Lahser .....	88
9.5: U.S. Post Office at Braile and Fenkell .....	88
9.6: The former gas station at Fenkell and Evergreen .....	88
9.7: Sonny’s Hamburgers at Schoolcraft and Evergreen .....	89
9.8: The former laundromat at Schoolcraft and Outer .....	89
9.9: Dumping in front of a vacant building on Schoolcraft Road .....	90
9.10: Festival attendees at Jazzin’ on Jefferson paint a mural .....	92
9.11: Vacant buildings on Lahser Road, north of Brightmoor .....	93
9.12: Vacant storefronts on Fenkell Street .....	93
9.13: A bicycle rack at Frankford and Girard created as part of the Artsrack Project .....	94
9.14: Bench designed by a Kensington artist on Frankford Avenue .....	94
9.15: The block of Fenkell between Trinity and Burt .....	95
9.16: Paulie’s Thrifty Hardware .....	95
9.17: The Guardian Bank building, where NDND plans to locate its new office .....	96
9.18: Empty storefronts on the south side of Fenkell between Braile and Pierson .....	96
9.19: Site of former gas station on Fenkell that could host temporary uses .....	97
9.20: Former Sunoco gas station on the northeast corner of Fenkell and Evergreen .....	97

# LIST OF TABLES

## ***Chapter 4***

4.1: Characteristics of the residential planning areas .....	21
--------------------------------------------------------------	----

## ***Chapter 7***

7.1: Potential recreation facility sites and considerations .....	64
-------------------------------------------------------------------	----

7.2: Potential high school campus sites and considerations .....	67
------------------------------------------------------------------	----

## ***Chapter 9***

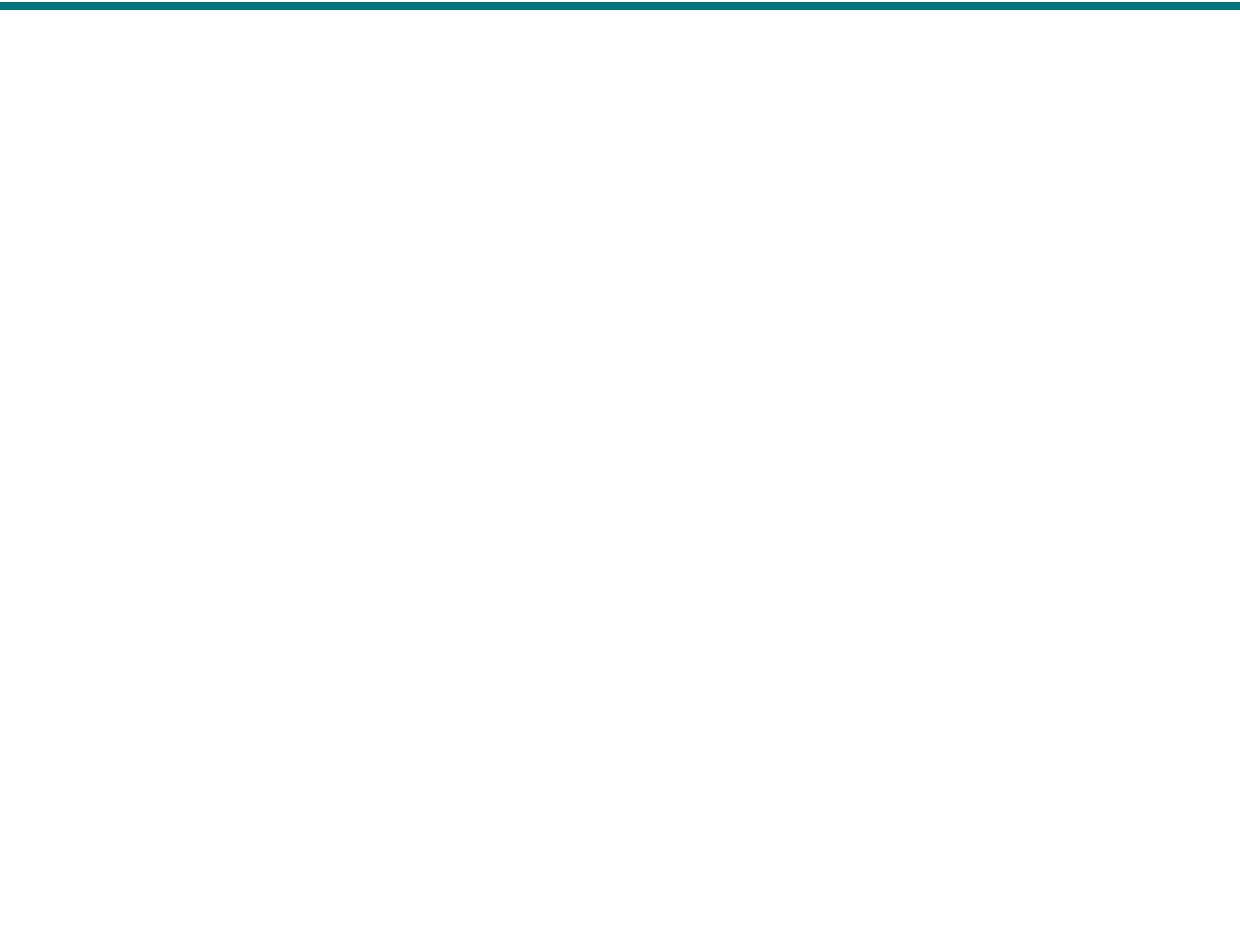
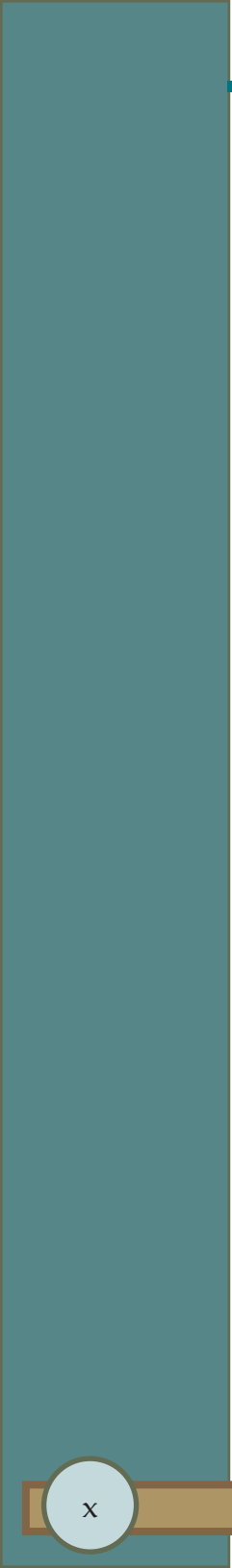
9.1: Retail demand in Brightmoor .....	86
----------------------------------------	----

## ***Chapter 10***

10.1: Short-term strategies .....	103
-----------------------------------	-----

10.2: Intermediate strategies .....	104
-------------------------------------	-----

10.3: Long-term strategies .....	105
----------------------------------	-----



# SUMMARY

The purpose of this land use plan is to guide decisions about land reuse and development in Brightmoor, Detroit, taking into consideration residents' needs, market forces, current land uses, and existing infrastructure. The plan identifies five planning areas within Brightmoor: residential areas to reinforce, residential areas to revitalize, residential areas ready for reinvention, parks, and retail. Each of these areas has a set of strategies to reach goals developed with stakeholder input.

Today many organizations and the mayor's office have taken particular interest in helping Brightmoor succeed. The Skillman Foundation designated Brightmoor as a Good Neighborhood; Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation identified Brightmoor as a Strategic Investment Area; and the City of Detroit chose Brightmoor as one of six focus areas for the Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative. This land use plan proposes strategies to coordinate these initiatives to create the Brightmoor that residents desire.

## **Background**

Single-family residential is the dominant land use in Brightmoor. The condition of these properties ranges from well-maintained homes to derelict houses and vacant lots. These mixed conditions reflect population trends. In 2000 the population of Brightmoor was about 25,000, a 14 percent decline from 1990. Brightmoor contains many parks, both large and small, and two commercial corridors run through Brightmoor, along Fenkell Street and Schoolcraft Road.

## **Vision**

Brightmoor has many assets. Home ownership rates are as high as 80 percent in some areas, while in others vacant land and buildings offer opportunities for reuse. The parks have great potential to become centers of activity for residents and act as regional draws. Commercial areas have the advantage of being located near roads with high levels of traffic. Although residents and community leaders cannot expect thousands of new residents to move to Brightmoor, they can channel resources to strengthen Brightmoor's assets and strategically plan for a smaller and stronger future.

## Goals and Strategies

Reflecting themes that stakeholders discussed about their hopes for Brightmoor, this land use plan aims to promote community identity through land use; connect Brightmoor to the region; enhance green space, recreation centers, and parks; and foster economic development.

### *Residential Reinforcement*

Brightmoor has intact neighborhoods that could benefit from strategies to support existing homeowners. To reinforce community identity in these areas and maintain their residential character, the plan suggests several strategies.

- Prevent mortgage foreclosures
- Assist homeowners in maintaining their homes and neighborhood
- Improve street lights, sidewalks and public buildings to enhance the neighborhoods

### *Residential Revitalization*

The plan proposes several strategies to improve the quality of the housing stock and create a sense of community identity in these areas, many of which may be used in conjunction with the reinforcement strategies.

- Improve the condition of existing houses and lots
- Return vacant land to productive use
- Construct infill housing in targeted locations

### *Neighborhood Reinvention*

The plan proposes several strategies to turn vacant land into an asset, support community initiatives, and provide recreation, green space, connections to the region, or economic benefits to the neighborhood.

- Foster the creation of Detroit homesteads, large-scale adjacent lot transfers
- Create a community commons, a large, safe area for public use
- Promote urban agriculture
- Attract a recreation center
- Build a high school
- Produce renewable energy

### *Parks Enhancement*

According to the City of Detroit Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan of 2006, the parks within the Brightmoor area are in fair or poor condition, an assessment with which residents agree. This land use plan identifies strategies to address this shortfall and meet the goal of enhancing green space, recreation centers, fields and parks.

- Encourage activity in the parks
- Expand green space and create new parks
- Create connections between the parks and the neighborhood

### *Business District Realignment*

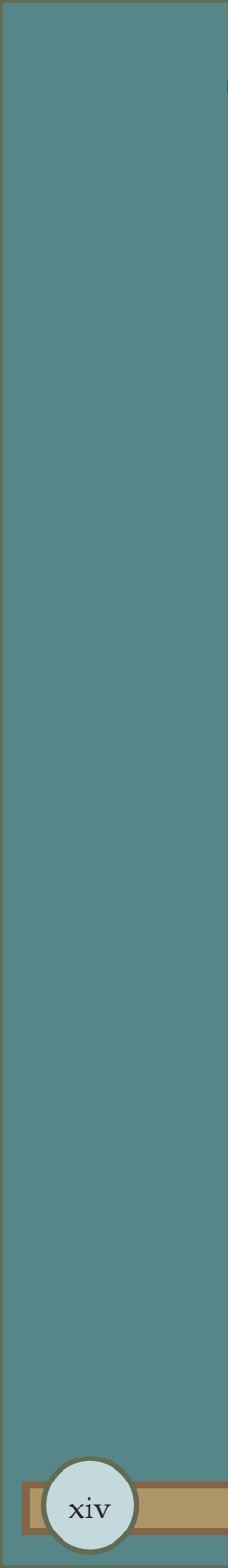
The plan identifies five business clusters in Brightmoor: Fenkell and Lahser, Fenkell between Trinity and Braile, Fenkell and Evergreen, Schoolcraft and Evergreen, and Schoolcraft and Outer Drive. This plan proposes strategies to foster economic development in these areas.

- Present a clean and safe environment
- Market redevelopment opportunities in the retail clusters
- Encourage entrepreneurial reuse of vacant lots and buildings

## **Implementation**

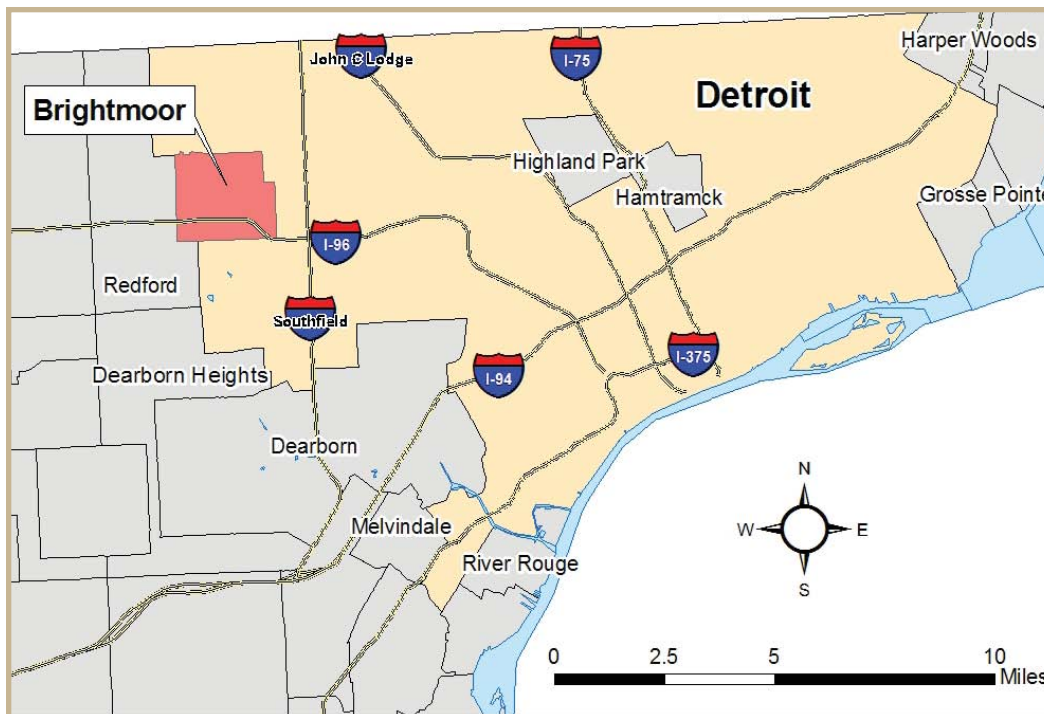
The strategies of this land use plan are divided into three categories: short, intermediate, and long-term. Short-term strategies, which are the easiest to implement, could begin within a year with primarily local partners. Intermediate term strategies, which may be implemented using a mix of both local and non-local partners, could begin within three years. Long-term programs, which may build upon the short and intermediate term strategies, may require significant partnership and investment with non-local partners.





This land use plan for Brightmoor identifies strategies and focus areas for residential and commercial development and outlines potential uses for vacant land. Its purpose is to guide decisions about land reuse, taking into consideration residents' needs, market forces, current land use, and existing infrastructure. The recommendations can help residents and others identify, maximize, and build on existing assets.

Brightmoor is a four-square-mile area in northwest Detroit (see Figure 1.1). Although different organizations define Brightmoor differently, this plan uses the boundaries of the Brightmoor Alliance: Puritan Street on the north, Fullerton Street on the south, Telegraph Road on the west, and Evergreen Road and Westwood Street on the east (see Figure 1.2).



**Figure 1.1: Brightmoor in the region**  
Sources: ESRI, the Brightmoor Alliance.



**Figure 1.2: Brightmoor boundaries**  
Sources: ESRI, the Brightmoor Alliance.

Despite past disinvestment, many opportunities exist in Brightmoor today. Public and private organizations already working in the area can coordinate their efforts to increase their impact. With this goal in mind, the Brightmoor Alliance, a coalition of more than 40 organizations, asked students and faculty in the Urban and Regional Planning Program at the University of Michigan to create a land use plan to guide future development decisions.

This plan combines insight from a variety of sources. In addition to interviews conducted with stakeholders and advice from the advisory committee, students gathered input from residents and community leaders at two community meetings. Comments from community meetings organized by other groups also inform the recommendations, as do best practices from around the country. The plan briefly discusses the history of Brightmoor, outlines its current conditions, and then recommends land use strategies to reinforce Brightmoor's strengths and envision new uses for vacant areas.

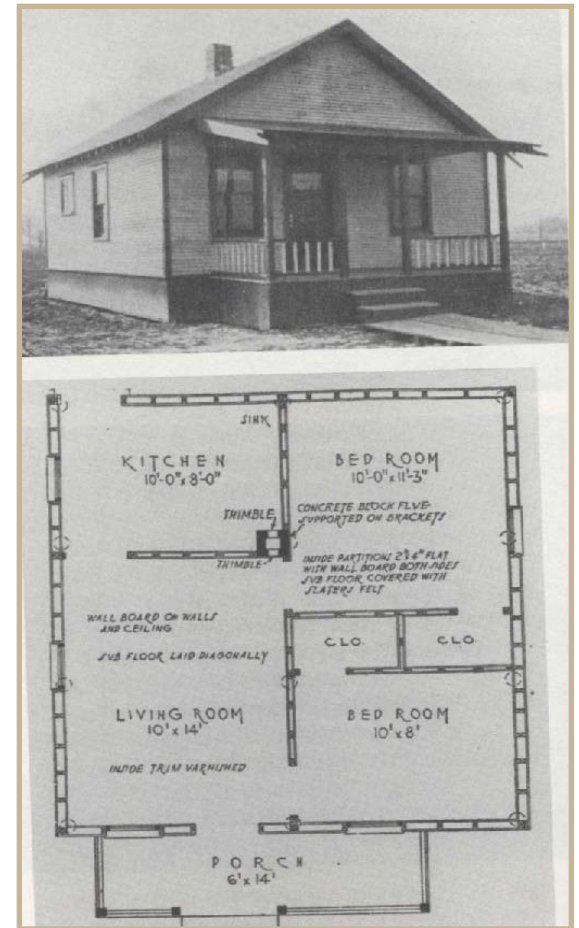


**Figure 1.3: Brightmoor community flag on Fenkell Street**

## Brightmoor Then and Now

B.E. Taylor, Brightmoor's first developer, built the neighborhood as housing for autoworkers. The lot sizes were small by today's standards—about 35 by 125 feet—and remain the typical size of Brightmoor's residential parcels. The standard house in Taylor's development was only 400 to 600 square feet with a low-slung front porch, basic kitchen, living room, and single bedroom (see Figure 1.4). Many homes lacked indoor plumbing, furnaces, and basements, while concrete slabs served as foundations.<sup>1</sup> Although few of Taylor's houses remain, low-quality housing stock still characterizes much of Brightmoor.

Taylor left many legacies in Brightmoor. He supplied bus service to ensure that workers could get to and from work, encouraged retail business, and built the original Brightmoor Community Center to serve the needs of residents and provide a communal meeting space.<sup>2</sup> Today's community center continues to serve a similar function (see Figure 1.6).



**Figure 1.4: Original B.E. Taylor house and floor plan**

Source: Loeb, *Entrepreneurial Vernacular*, p72.

In 1926, the City of Detroit annexed Brightmoor, which at that time had approximately 11,000 residents. Along with this annexation came city services, including police, public works and street paving.<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 1.5: Remaining Taylor house in Brightmoor**

When the auto industry suburbanized in the decades following World War II, many of Brightmoor's working-class residents followed.<sup>4</sup> The resulting decrease in property values opened the door to landlords who purchased houses inexpensively and rented them cheaply. The decline in housing demand, exacerbated by other factors like absentee landlords, a regional economic downturn, the 1980s crack cocaine epidemic, and a rise in gang activity, took its toll on Brightmoor. At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Brightmoor still suffers from the disinvestment of previous decades, which left a large amount of vacant land and abandoned buildings (see Chapter 2).

Despite these challenges, Brightmoor has much promise. Many organizations are working to improve the area. In addition to the efforts of the Brightmoor Alliance, the Skillman Foundation identified Brightmoor as one of its target areas; its projects focus on improving the lives of children and youth. Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) named Brightmoor a Strategic Investment Area for development funding. Most recently, the City of Detroit designated Brightmoor as one of its target areas for concentrated funding and services through the Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative (NDNI). These and other initiatives could significantly improve the quality of life for Brightmoor residents.

The following chapters provide further context and outline strategies to guide development and land reuse in Brightmoor. Chapter 2 offers background about the population, economic conditions, housing, land use, transportation, and regional context. Chapter 3 describes the goals of the plan. Chapter 4 lays out the plan's overall vision, tying together the goals and strategies. Chapters 5 through 7 describe land use strategies for residential sections of Brightmoor, which form the majority of the

community. Chapter 8 presents ideas for enlivening Brightmoor's many parks. Chapter 9 outlines strategies for commercial development. Finally, Chapter 10 lays out implementation approaches.



**Figure 1.6: Brightmoor Community Center**

## Notes

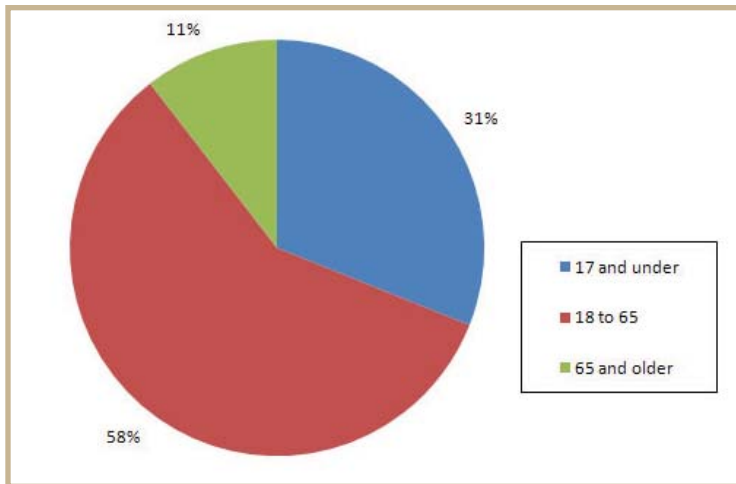
- 1 Carolyn S. Loeb, "Chapter 2, Brightmoor: The Case of the Absent Architect," *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1920s*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 65.
- 2 Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, Inc., "Detroit's Brightmoor Community," unpublished, no date.
- 3 Loeb, *Entrepreneurial Vernacular*, 57-62.
- 4 Social Explorer, "1960, 1970, 1980 Census Tracts: Detroit Essentials," Social Explorer, 2006, [socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?g=0,20](http://socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?g=0,20) (accessed April 28, 2008).

A land use plan for the future of Brightmoor requires an assessment of its current conditions. This chapter describes the residents, housing, current land use, regional context and transportation of Brightmoor.

### *The Residents of Brightmoor*

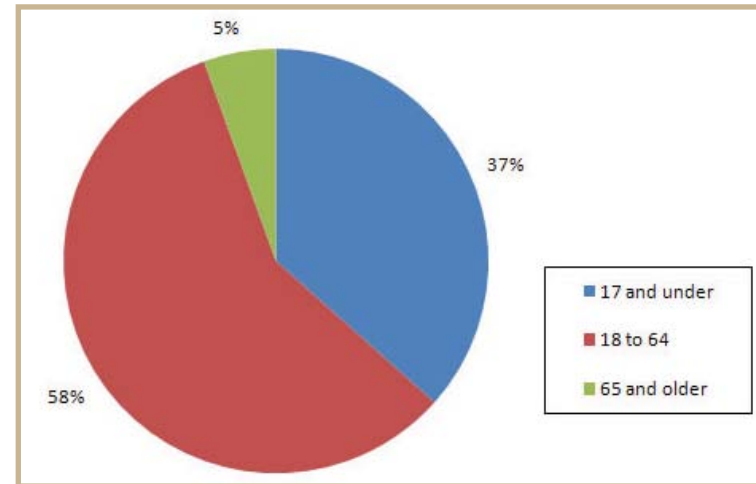
In 2000 around 25,000 people lived in Brightmoor, a 20 percent decline from its peak population of around 31,000 in 1980.<sup>1</sup> Population loss occurred later in Brightmoor than in Detroit as a whole. Its period of greatest decline was the 1990s, when it lost around 13 percent of its population. During that same time period, Detroit lost only around 8 percent of its residents. Brightmoor was about 80 percent African-American and 20 percent white in 2000, compared to 81 percent African American and 12 percent white in the city as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

Brightmoor has a young population. About 37 percent of Brightmoor’s residents were children in 2000 (see Figure 2.1). For Detroit, this figure is slightly lower at around 31 percent (see Figure 2.2). The young population of Brightmoor suggests that a land use plan needs to include uses and spaces that serve this substantial group. In 2000 Brightmoor also had a smaller percentage of senior citizens – 5 percent compared to 11 percent in the city as a whole.<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 2.1: Age of Brightmoor residents, 2000**

Source: US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block level, P12 Sex by Age. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).

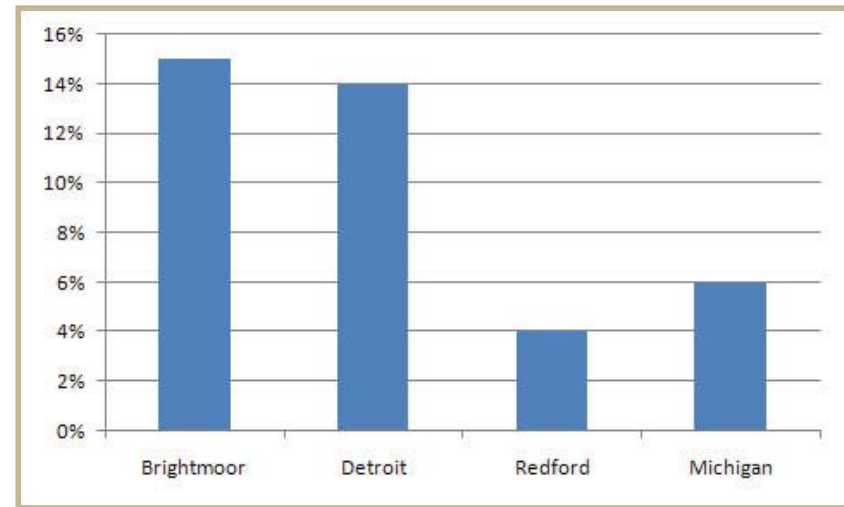


**Figure 2.2: Age of Detroit residents, 2000**

Source: US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, place level, P12 Sex by Age. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).

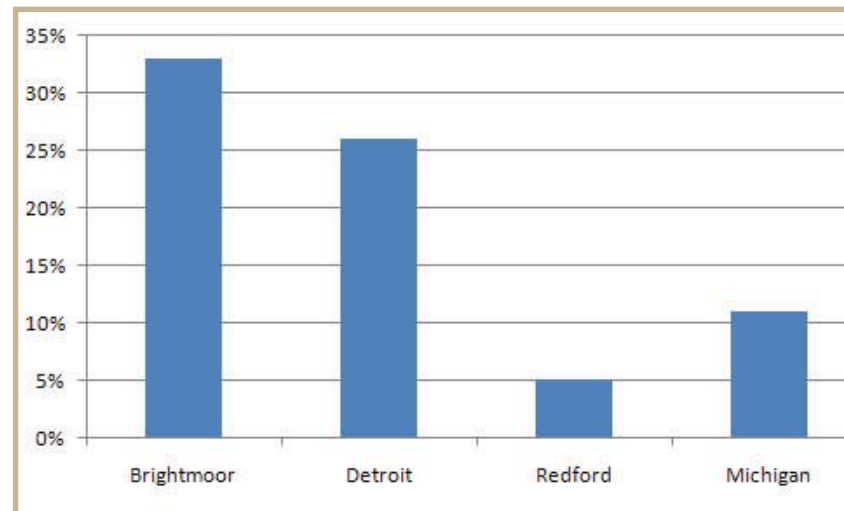
Brightmoor residents face high unemployment and poverty rates and have low per capita incomes (see Figures 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5). These rates are especially stark in contrast to neighboring Redford and the State of Michigan. Almost 20 percent of Brightmoor's households reported having no earnings in 1999, while 13 percent of all households received public assistance.<sup>4</sup>

Brightmoor residents have education levels comparable to residents of Detroit as a whole but lower than the state average. About eight percent of Brightmoor's residents over the age of 25 reported having a bachelor's degree or higher, while 27 percent reported not having a high school diploma. These figures are similar to Detroit, where about 11 percent of the population had a bachelor's degree or higher, and 30 percent did not have a high school diploma. In Michigan, 11 percent reported having a bachelor's degree or higher, but only eight percent reported not having a high school diploma.<sup>5</sup>



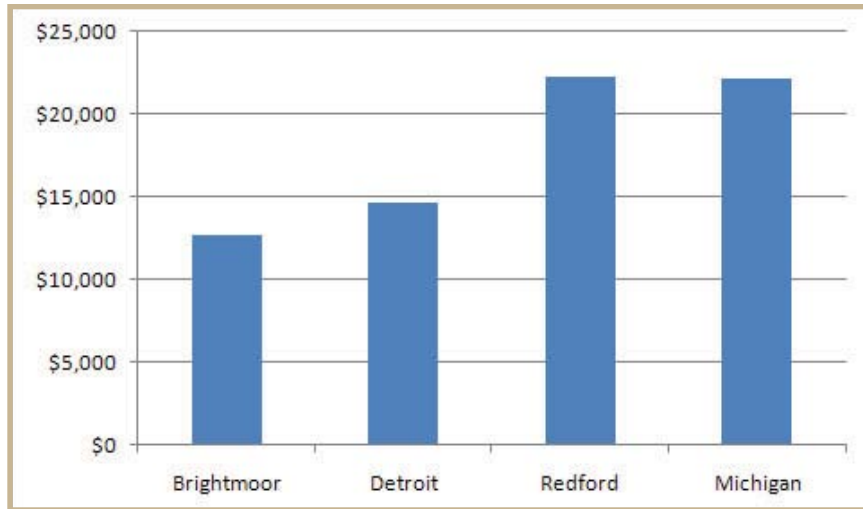
**Figure 2.3: Unemployment rates, 2000**

Source: US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, P43 Sex by Employment Status for the Population 16+ Years. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).



**Figure 2.4: Poverty rates, 1999**

Source: US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, P87 Poverty Status in 1999 by Age. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).



**Figure 2.5: Per capita income, 1999**

Source: US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, P82 Per Capita Income in 1999 (Dollars). [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).



**Figure 2.6: Example of a Brightmoor neighborhood threatened by foreclosure**

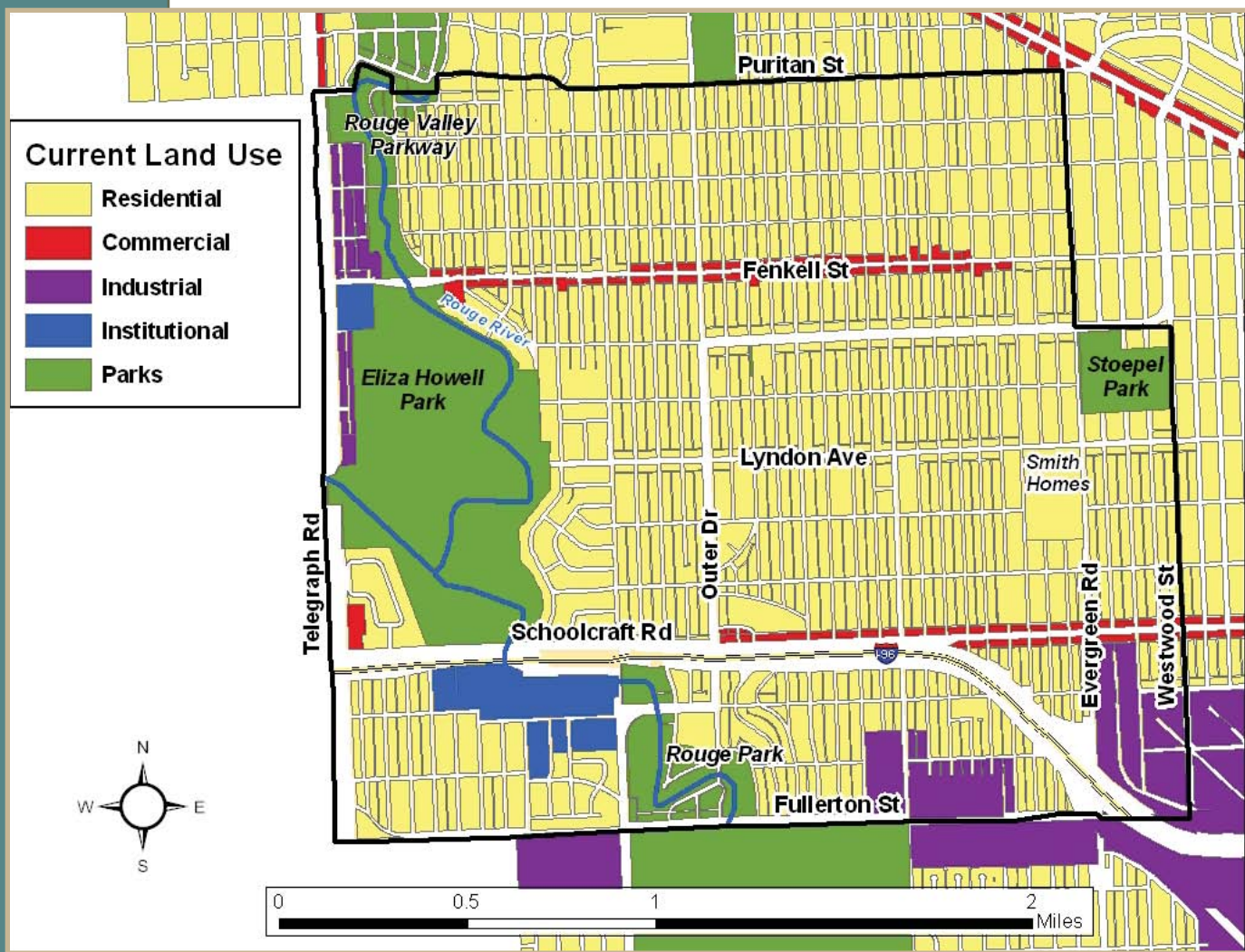
## *Housing in Brightmoor*

As population has declined, Brightmoor has lost many of its housing units. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units declined around 14 percent, compared to around 9 percent in Detroit. In 2000, the housing vacancy rate in Brightmoor was 11 percent, similar to Detroit's 10 percent rate. In 2000, 45 percent of the housing units in Brightmoor were renter-occupied and 55 percent were owner-occupied. The percentage of renters was slightly higher than Detroit's 50 percent rate.<sup>6</sup>

The national mortgage foreclosure crisis is affecting Brightmoor. In 2000, the rate of subprime mortgage loans was around 50 percent in Brightmoor and Detroit, but only about 30 percent in Wayne County and Redford. Brightmoor's zipcode, 48223, has the seventh highest mortgage foreclosure filing rate in the metro Detroit area.<sup>7</sup> Foreclosures threaten the integrity of Brightmoor's neighborhoods, since foreclosed homes tend to remain empty and are subject to vandalism.

(See Appendix A for more information on how Census boundaries were chosen)





**Figure 2.7: Generalized land use in Brightmoor, 2005**  
Sources: ESRI, SEMCOG.

## *Current Land Use in Brightmoor*

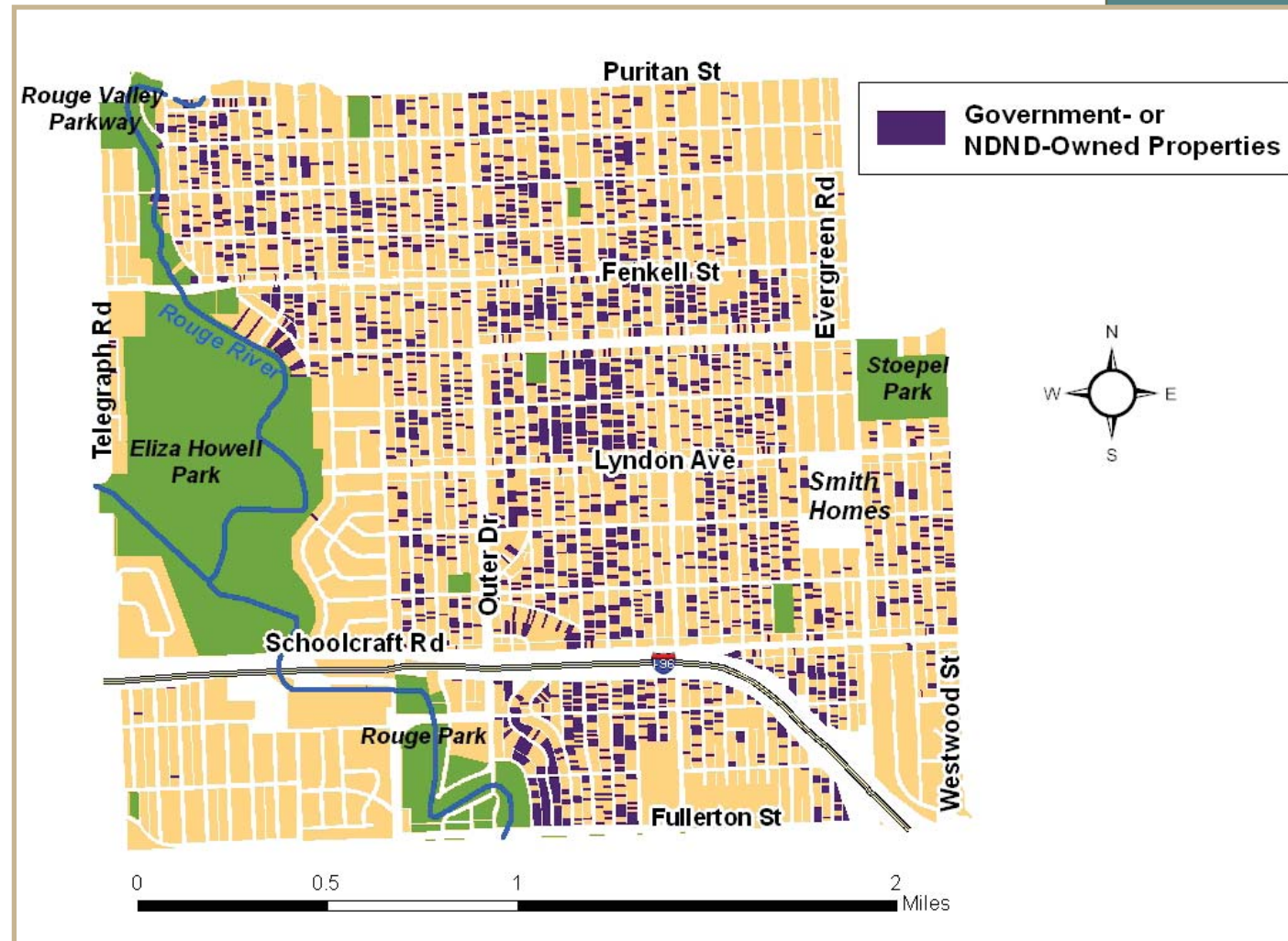
In addition to characteristics of the population and the housing stock, current land use is a major consideration for a land use plan. Brightmoor's land use is primarily single-family residential (see Figure 2.7). There are also several multi-family housing complexes: one on Fenkell Street north of Eliza Howell Park; one on Schoolcraft Road just south of Eliza Howell Park; and a couple on Outer Drive; and the Smith Homes, a public housing complex.

Brightmoor has many parks, both large and small. This abundance of parkland, over 400 acres, has the potential to become a major asset to the neighborhoods and residents. The largest of these parks is Eliza Howell, located on the western side of Brightmoor. Stoepel Park is a smaller but quite actively used park on the eastern edge of Brightmoor. River Rouge is another large park located just south of the Brightmoor boundary. Brightmoor's neighborhoods are not well connected to these parks. This disconnection, combined with safety concerns, keep residents from fully enjoying the parks.

Brightmoor has two commercial strips, one along Fenkell Street and the other along Schoolcraft Road. Today the majority of the storefronts are vacant, many of the buildings are in poor condition, and residents have to travel outside Brightmoor for basic goods like groceries. Despite these challenges, a few nodes of activity exist along Fenkell and Schoolcraft at busy intersections. The existing businesses include gas stations, liquor stores, fast food, restaurants, a major post office, a medical center, and suppliers of household goods like hardware, furniture and pharmaceuticals.

Industrial areas are located on the south side of Brightmoor, near Interstate 96. Although these areas are only partly occupied, this plan does not address the future of the industrial land uses in Brightmoor.

Because of tax foreclosure, almost 2,000 properties in Brightmoor are owned by either the city, county, or state. The community development corporation Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development (NDND) owns an additional 700 properties (see Figure 2.8).<sup>8</sup> These properties are principally vacant lots but also include some houses.



**Figure 2.8: State, city, county and NDND-owned properties**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, property inventory list, 2007; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.

Around 25 percent of the land in Brightmoor is vacant.<sup>9</sup> The city, state, county or NDND own around two-thirds of the vacant lots, but private individuals own the remaining third. Figure 2.9 shows the location of vacant land in Brightmoor, with high concentrations evident in the middle section. The abundance of vacant land and government and NDND-owned properties presents challenges as well as considerable opportunities for reuse. Currently, this land attracts dumping and criminal activity, and is often poorly maintained by its owners. However, with the right strategies, the land can become an asset to residents.



**Figure 2.9: Vacant land in Brightmoor**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; maps.live.com.

Figure 2.10 shows a figure-ground map of Brightmoor. Every building is shown in black; the white spaces are either roads or vacant land. This map shows that the area east of Eliza Howell, and in the northeast and southwest corners of Brightmoor, have more intact housing areas. The central section shows large amounts of vacant land. Larger commercial and industrial buildings exist along Fenkell Street and Schoolcraft Road, as well as just east of Telegraph Road and in the southeast corner of Brightmoor.

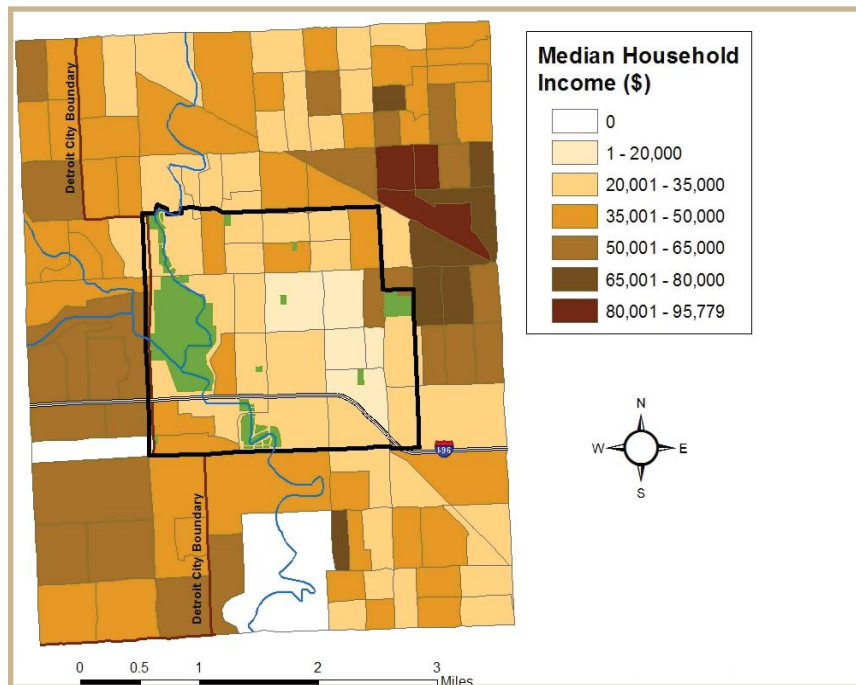


**Figure 2.10: Figure-ground showing structures in Brightmoor**  
Source: Google Earth; ESRI.

## Brightmoor in the Region

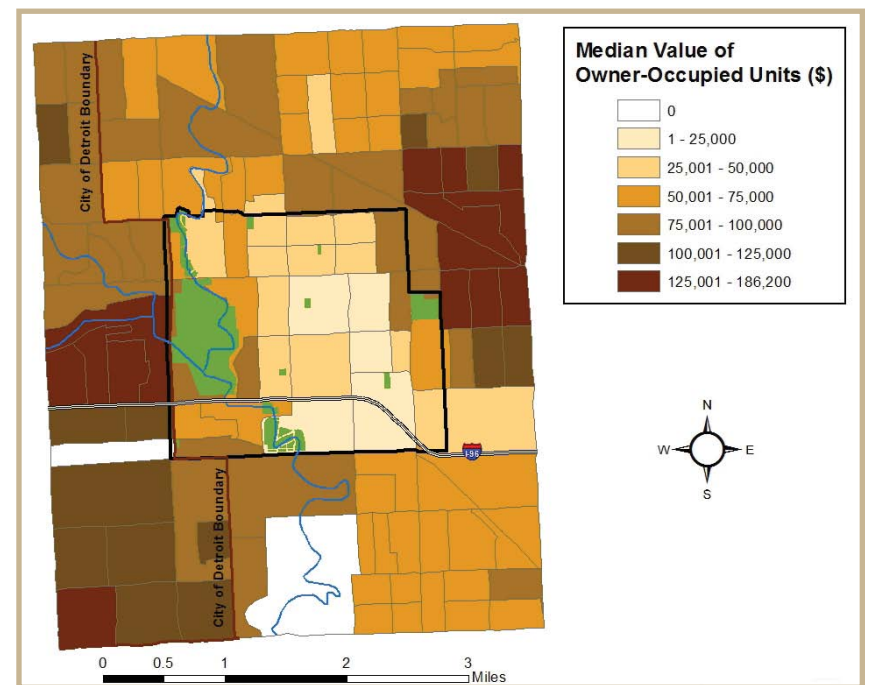
Brightmoor is well placed within the region. Several major thoroughfares pass through it. Interstate 96, a freeway on which 120,000 cars travel each day, runs through Brightmoor, with two exits on westbound I-96 at Telegraph and Schoolcraft Roads and Outer Drive and Schoolcraft Road and an additional exit on eastbound I-96 at Evergreen and Schoolcraft Roads. Telegraph Road runs along the western border of Brightmoor with around 60,000 cars per day; on the east Evergreen Road experiences a volume of 30,000 cars a day; Fenkell Street and Schoolcraft Road traverse Brightmoor with around 20,000 and 10,000 cars each day, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Many people travel in and around Brightmoor; this presents an opportunity to capture some of the traffic to support retail within Brightmoor.

Brightmoor is surrounded by areas with more prosperous residents. Both Redford Township to the west and the Grandmont and Rosedale Park neighborhoods to the east have higher median household incomes than Brightmoor (see Figure 2.11). In addition, median housing values in Brightmoor are lower than those of the surrounding areas (see Figure 2.12).<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 2.11: Median household income in the Brightmoor area, by Census block group, 1999**

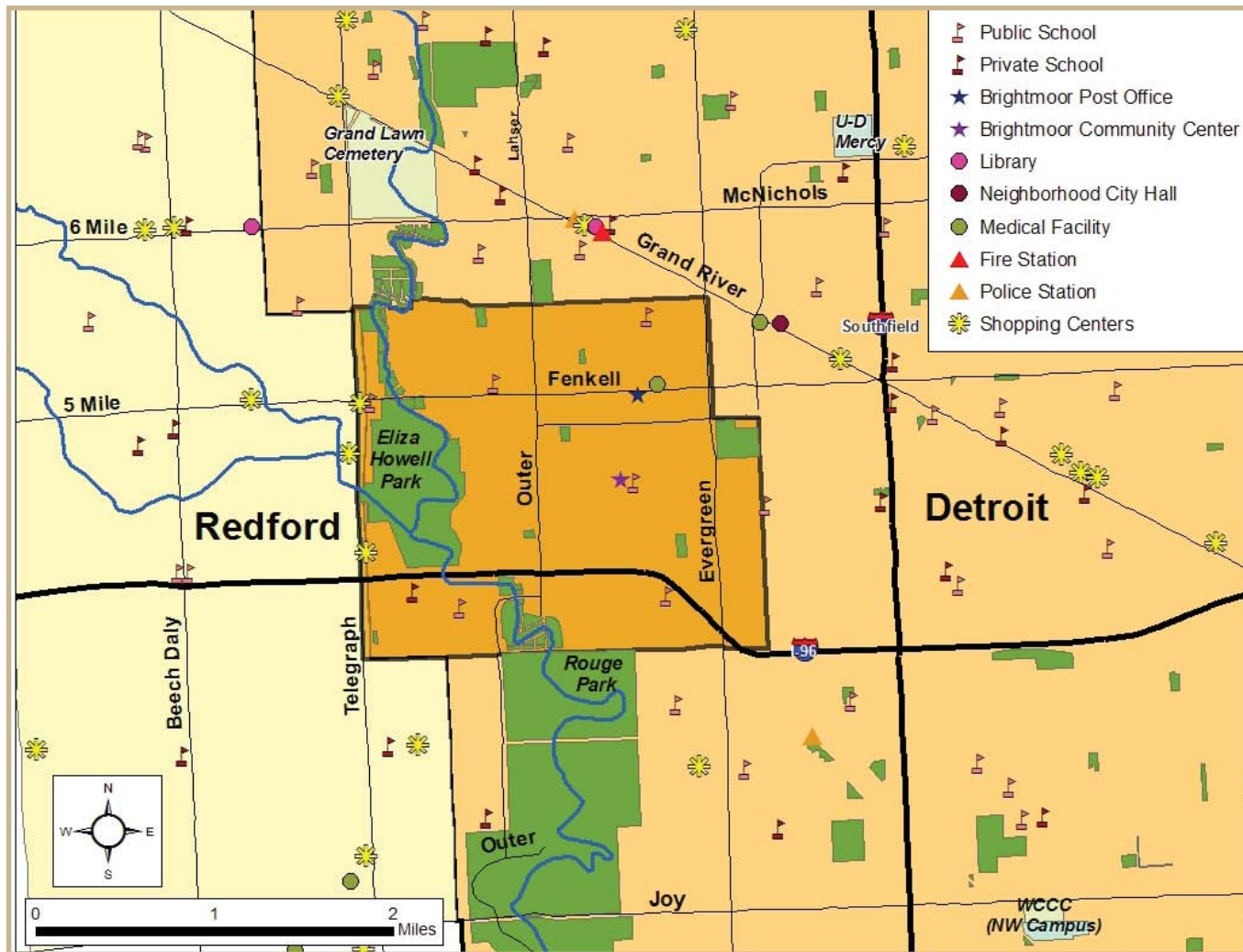
Source: US Census Bureau 2000. American FactFinder. Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, P53 Median Household Income in 1999 (\$). [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008); ESRI.



**Figure 2.12: Median value of owner-occupied units in the Brightmoor area, by Census block group, 2000**

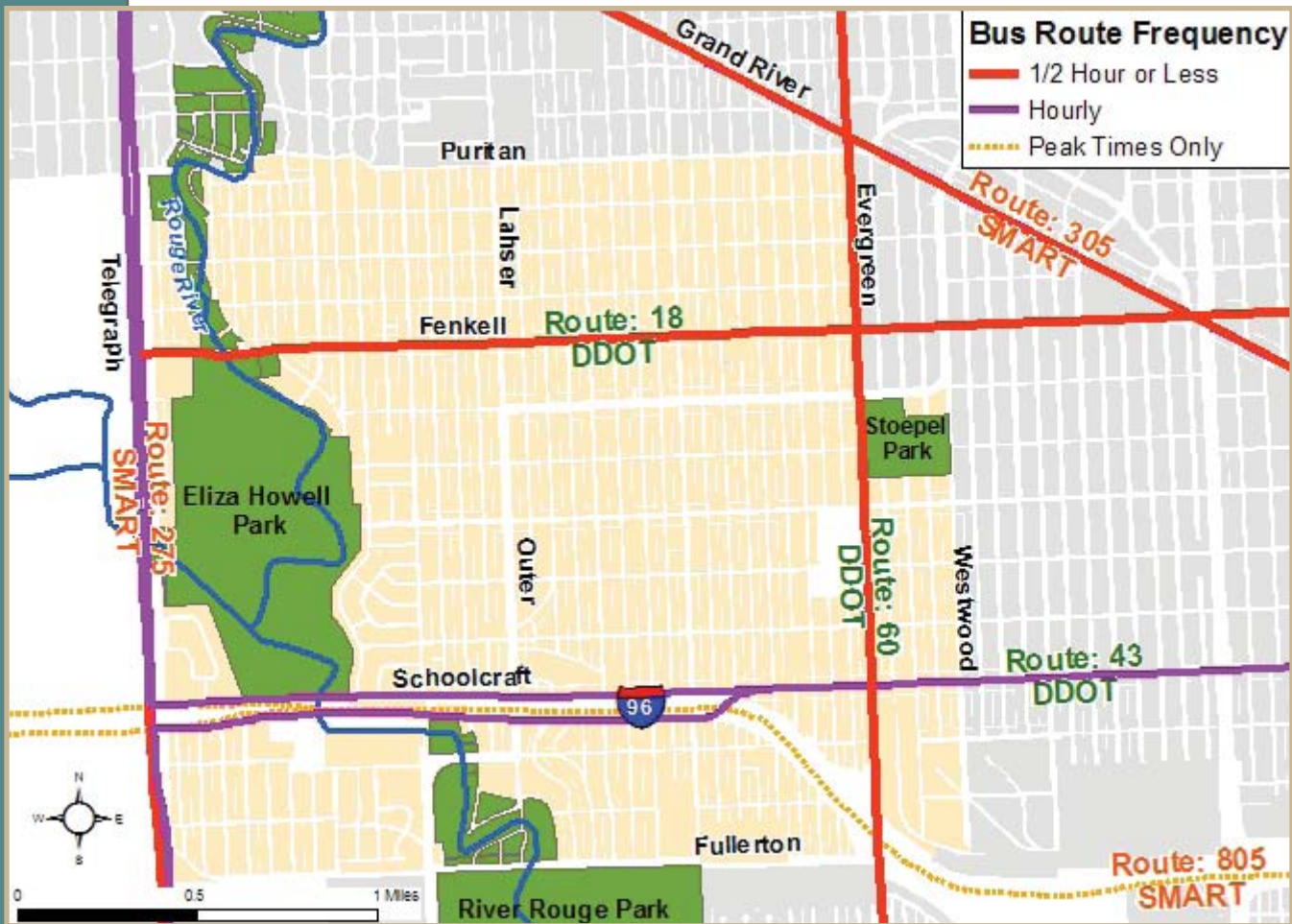
Source: US Census Bureau 2000. American FactFinder. Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, H76 Median Value (\$) for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008); ESRI.

The areas surrounding Brightmoor have assets that Brightmoor residents can access, such as shopping locations (see Figure 2.13). With better transportation connections, residents could benefit from nearby assets.



**Figure 2.13: Assets in and around Brightmoor**

Sources: ESRI; www.yellowpages.com (accessed January 25, 2008); Detroit Planning and Development Department public schools, private schools, libraries, neighborhood city halls, medical facilities, fire stations, and police stations GIS layers, 2007; SEMCOG shopping centers layer.



**Figure 2.14: Bus routes and bus frequency in the Brightmoor area**  
 Source: ESRI, SMART, DDOT.

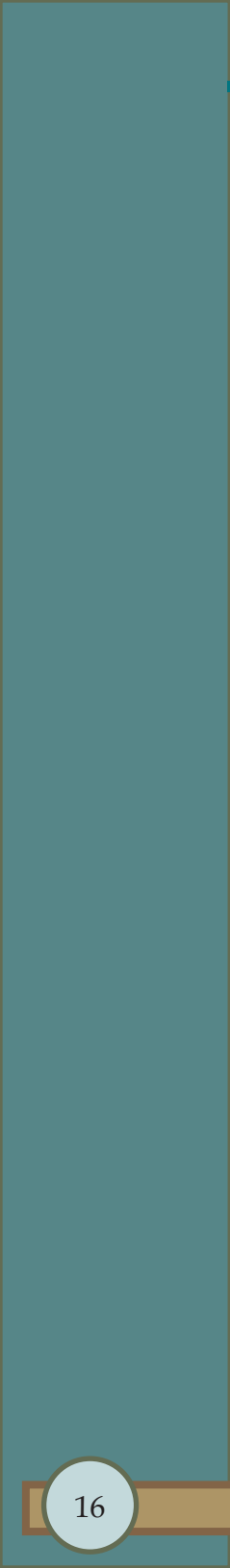
Four city bus lines serve Brightmoor and help connect it to the surrounding areas. Public transportation is especially important considering that in 2000 around one-third of Brightmoor’s households did not have a car.<sup>12</sup> This figure is greater than the rate of 20 percent for the city as a whole. One bus route runs east-west along Fenkell, while three others run along the periphery—north-south down Telegraph on the west and Evergreen on the east, and east-west on Schoolcraft.<sup>13</sup> Regional public transportation is available through SMART, a bus system connecting Detroit to surrounding suburbs in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties. Three SMART routes go through or near Brightmoor and connect residents with job and retail centers such as the Summit Place Mall in Pontiac, the Southland Shopping Center in Southgate, and the Renaissance Center in downtown Detroit.<sup>14</sup>

Brightmoor faces many challenges such as unemployment and poverty rates and a considerable amount of vacant land. However, Brightmoor also has many assets on which to build including a strong home ownership rate and an advantageous location within the region. This land use plan provides guidance about how to take advantage of these opportunities. Chapter 3 will discuss the goals that guide the plan.

## Notes

- 1 Social Explorer. 1980 Essential Demographic Profile. [www.socialexplorer.com](http://www.socialexplorer.com) (accessed April 12, 2008).
- 2 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block group and place levels, P1 Population and P3 Race. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 3 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block and place levels, P12 Sex by Age. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 4 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, P43 Sex by Employment Status for the Population 16+ Years, P87 Poverty Status in 1999 by Age, P82 Per Capita Income in 1999 (Dollars), and P58 Earnings in 1999 for Households. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 5 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, block, place and state levels, P37 Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25+ Years. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 6 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block group and place levels, H 1 Housing Units, H 3 Occupancy Status (Housing Units), and H 3 Tenure (Occupied Housing Units). [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 7 Ron French and Mike Wilkinson, "Easy money, risky loans drive home losses," *The Detroit News*, 27 November 2007, [www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071127/BIZ01/711270403](http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071127/BIZ01/711270403) (accessed March 24, 2008).
- 8 Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, property inventory list, 2007.
- 9 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; [maps.live.com](http://maps.live.com) (accessed March 2008).
- 10 Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments. Major Road Segments in Wayne County. [semcog.org/Data/Apps/network.report.cfm](http://semcog.org/Data/Apps/network.report.cfm) (accessed April 1, 2008).
- 11 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, block group, P53 Median Household Income in 1999 and H76 Median Value (Dollars) for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 12 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Sample Data, Detailed Tables, block group and place levels, H44 Tenure by Vehicles Available. [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed April 15, 2008).
- 13 Detroit Department of Transportation. Bus Information. [www.detroitmi.gov/ddot/index.html](http://www.detroitmi.gov/ddot/index.html) (accessed January 21, 2008).
- 14 SMART. Routes and Schedules. <http://www.smartbus.org/Smart/Ride%20SMART/Route.aspx> (accessed January 25, 2008).





Brightmoor residents and community leaders emphasized four themes as they talked about their hopes for Brightmoor: community identity, regional connection, green space, and economic development. Those themes are reflected in the goals of this land use plan:

### **Promote community identity through land use**

Brightmoor residents expressed their desire for gathering places where they can come together. By connecting residents with community assets and suggesting creative uses for vacant land, this plan aims to enhance the positive identity and sense of community in Brightmoor.

### **Connect Brightmoor to the region**

Residents would benefit from land uses that not only enhance access to amenities in Brightmoor but also promote connections to services outside its boundaries. Close to the major thoroughfares I-96 and Telegraph Road, Brightmoor has opportunities for connections to other parts of Detroit, nearby cities and townships, and the region as a whole. These connections can foster job opportunities, improve access to retail, and generally make residents less isolated.

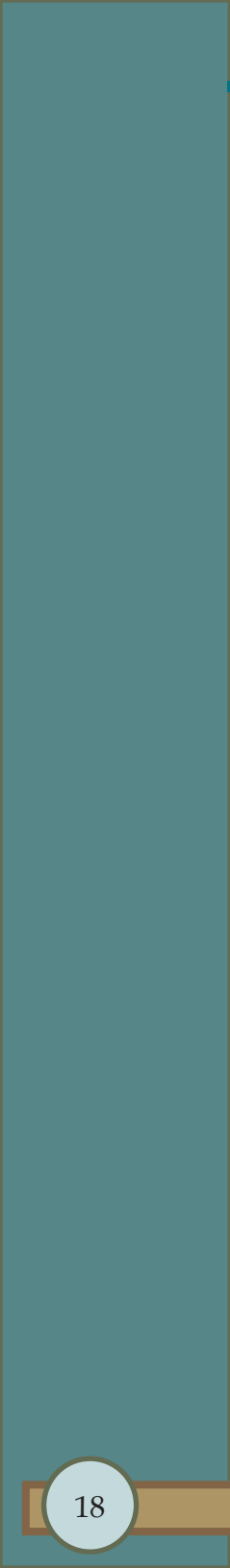
### **Enhance green space, recreation centers, fields and parks**

Residents and community leaders see the wealth of parks and green spaces in Brightmoor as assets. These places, however, are underutilized and poorly maintained. Existing open space, including vacant lots, could be preserved and enhanced while increasing use by residents.

### **Foster economic development**

The many organizations, community groups, and individuals with plans or visions for Brightmoor show that possibilities for economic development exist within Brightmoor. By identifying sites for potential opportunities and suggesting land uses that have the potential to generate jobs, this plan could provide a starting point for increasing economic development in Brightmoor.

These four goals inform the recommendations that follow. Chapter 4 presents the overall vision of the plan, tying the themes together with specific strategies outlined in Chapters 5 through 10.



This plan takes into consideration Brightmoor's current conditions, the ideas gathered at community meetings, and the goals laid out in Chapter 3 to recommend strategies to guide change in Brightmoor. This chapter outlines the overall vision of the plan.

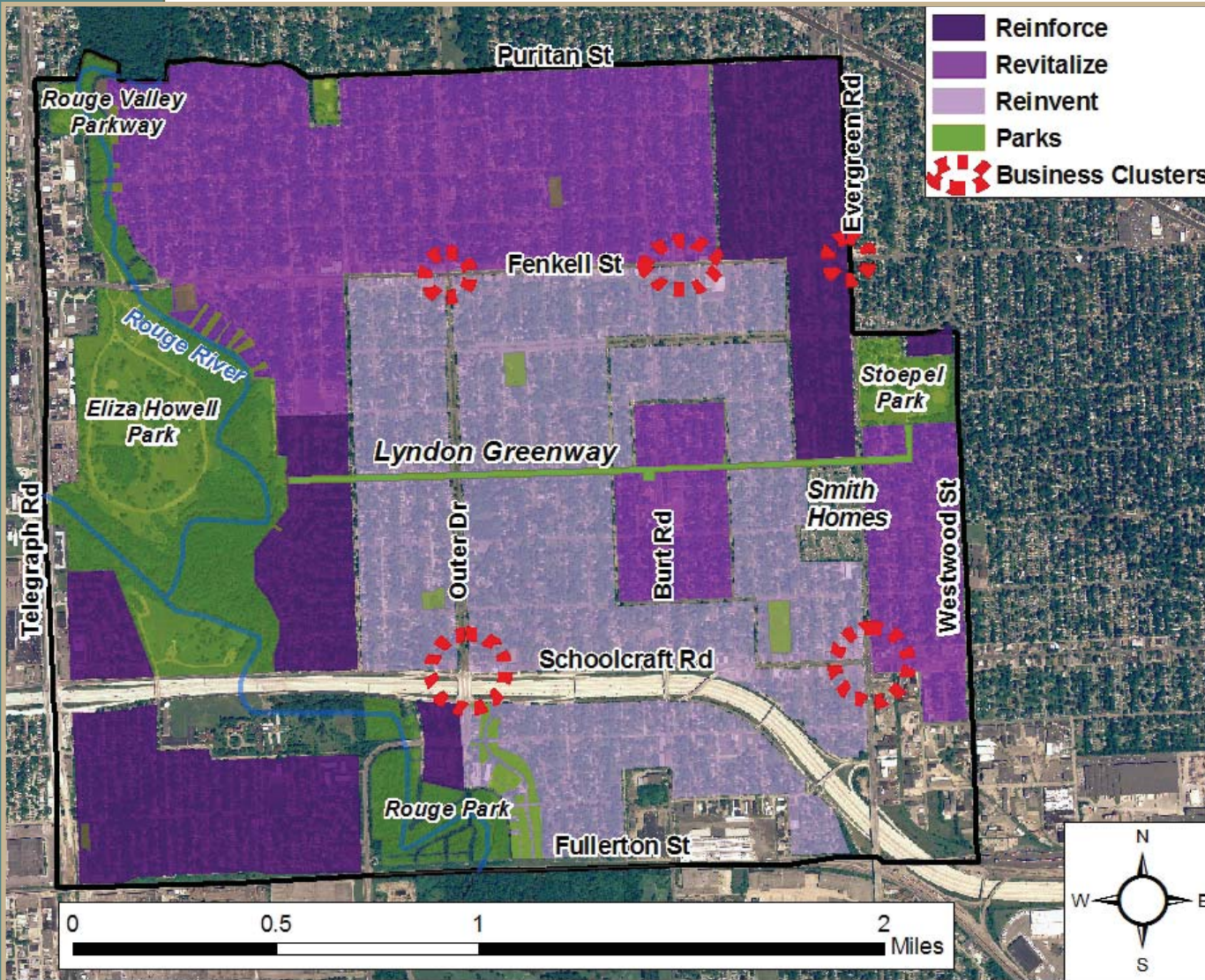
Brightmoor has many assets on which to build—churches, schools, parks, and strong neighborhoods. Residents and community leaders cannot rely on thousands of new residents moving to Brightmoor, but they can channel resources to strengthen these assets and strategically plan for a smaller and stronger future. Vacant land and buildings provide opportunities for change and creative reuse.

In October 2005, the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) initiated The Shrinking Cities Institute through a community design workshop for the Oak Hill neighborhood in Youngstown, Ohio. Like the rest of Youngstown, Oak Hill experienced a drastic population decline that resulted in vacant and underutilized land. At the time, 60 percent of Oak Hill parcels were vacant. During the design workshop, CUDC staff worked with residents and city staff to pursue their goal “to find ways that vacancy can be transformed into an asset for the neighborhood, rather than a liability.”

At the end of the three-day workshop, CUDC outlined a series of ideas and strategies to address vacant land that involve both city and community-based initiatives. Residents expressed desires for code enforcement, convenience retail, parks, adjacent lot acquisition, vacant lot inventory, land banking, and urban homesteading. Using this feedback, neighborhood surveys, and the Youngstown 2010 plan, CUDC developed a number of design alternatives for Oak Hill, including a Central Park to consolidate green space in the center of the neighborhood, urban agriculture tied to a farmer's market, a greenway with a bike path network, and a low-density alternative with large home plots.<sup>1</sup>

Youngstown, Ohio, has experienced depopulation similar to that of Brightmoor due to a decline in the steel industry. The Youngstown 2010 plan is the result of a collaborative process among city planners, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to develop creative strategies to reuse vacant land and concentrate future land use.<sup>2</sup> The American Planning Association awarded this plan the National Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach in 2007<sup>3</sup> and the *New York Times Magazine* designated it the best idea for “Creative Shrinkage.”<sup>4</sup>





**Figure 4.1: Future land use planning areas**

Sources: ESRI; Donna Erickson Consulting, Inc; State of Michigan Center for Geographic Information.

The plan breaks Brightmoor into five planning areas:

Residential areas in need of:

- Reinforcement
- Revitalization
- Reinvention

Parks and green space

Business clusters

The strategies outlined in Chapters 5 through 9 seek to further the goals articulated in Chapter 3 to address population decline creatively and effectively through land reuse.

## Residential Area Characterization

Based on field work, research, and discussions with residents, this plan divides Brightmoor’s residential areas into three types according to their level of vacant land and proximity to existing assets. **Reinforcement areas** have almost no vacant land or homes. These intact residential neighborhoods are a major source of strength for Brightmoor. **Revitalization areas** are those with home values, home ownership rates, vacant land rates and government-owned property rates around the Brightmoor average (see Table 4.1). They are also generally located close to assets such as schools, churches, parks, community institutions, and strong residential areas. **Reinvention areas** are those with the greatest amount of vacant land and the lowest owner-occupancy rate. These areas are located in the middle of Brightmoor and offer the greatest opportunities for transformation.

Type of Area	Average Home Value*	% Owner-Occupied Structures**	% Vacant Land***	% Government-Owned Properties****
Reinforcement	\$90,000	80%	1%	1%
Revitalization	\$40,000	40%	25%	15%
Reinvention	\$20,000	35%	40%	25%
Brightmoor Average	\$40,000	50%	25%	15%

\*Average State Equalized Value (SEV) for single-family houses, doubled to estimate market value.

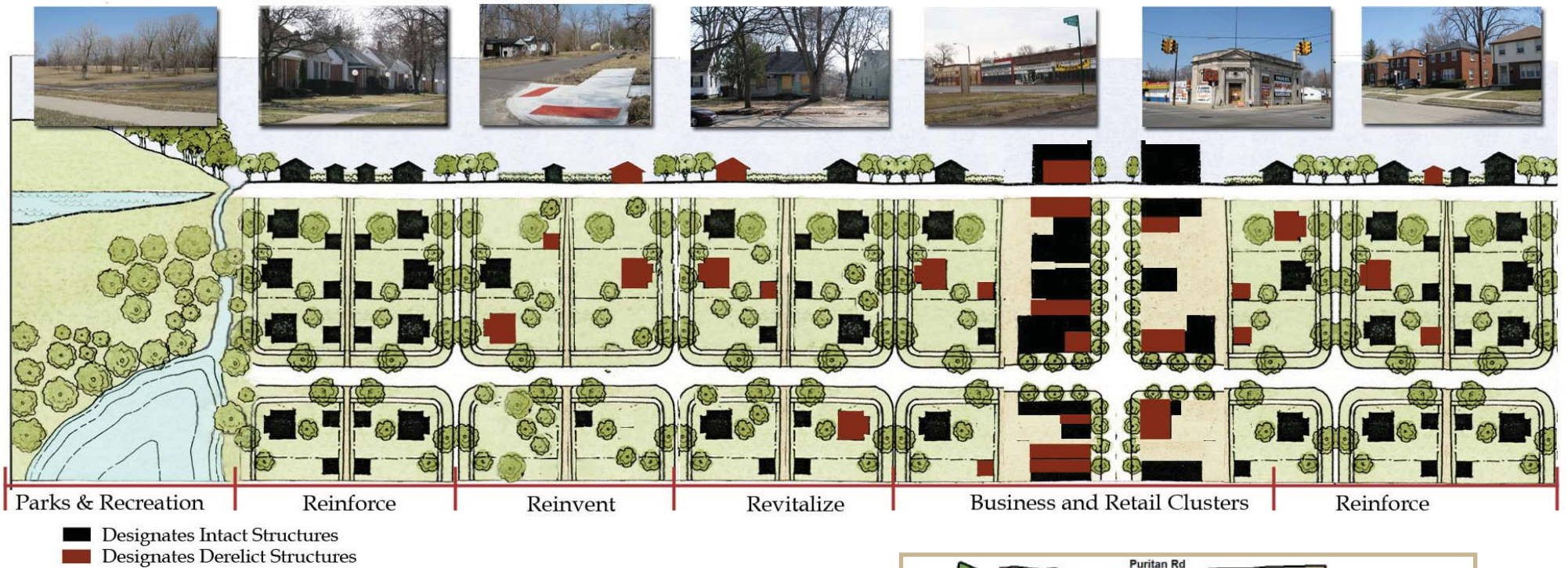
\*\*Number of properties where taxpayer had same address as property divided by number of single-family houses.

\*\*\*Vacant land area divided by total land area (not including roads or parks).

\*\*\*\*Number of properties owned by either the city, county or state divided by the total number of properties in the area.

### Table 4.1: Characteristics of the residential planning areas

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor’s data file, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2007; Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, property inventory list, 2007; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.



**Figure 4.2: Diagram of the character of the five planning areas**

The diagram in Figure 4.2 illustrates the character of the five different areas as they change across Brightmoor. This diagram begins at the southwest side of Eliza Howell Park, moves northeast and crosses Fenkell towards Grand River Avenue (see Figure 4.3). Each area has an image, a street view and a view from above that describes it.



**Figure 4.3: Cross-section of Brightmoor as shown in Figure 4.2**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; ESRI.

## Planning Areas

This plan builds on Brightmoor's assets and envisions new uses for vacant land that will benefit residents. It presents a series of strategies based on efforts from the neighborhood to the city or state levels and by private, nonprofit, and public organizations.

The **reinforcement areas** will remain strong through programs to support homeowners, ensuring that residents can remain in their homes and maintain them. Investments in neighborhood infrastructure such as sidewalks and streetlights will improve the feeling of security and neighborhood identity, making these areas even more desirable places to live. Reuse of the closed Hubert School will add new life to the area and turn this vacant campus into a neighborhood asset once again.



Figure 4.4: Well-maintained homes south of Schoolcraft Road



Figure 4.5: Row of homes near Eliza Howell Park with lamps in every front yard



Figure 4.6: The Hubert School



Community-controlled land reuse and increased safety will strengthen the **revitalization areas**. These places will welcome new residents through infill housing, strategically placed to enhance the surrounding neighborhood. Homeowners and responsible landlords will have the chance to expand their properties, buying adjacent lots to make room for gardens, garages, play equipment, and dog runs. Residents and community organizations will take control of vacant land to start community gardens and care for smaller “pocket” parks, transforming them into community gathering places. The enforcement of building codes will ensure that owners keep their properties in good condition, while government agencies and community organizations will tear down, deconstruct, or rehabilitate derelict structures that pose safety hazards.



Figure 4.7: NDND infill housing.



Figure 4.8: House in the process of being deconstructed

Source: [www.bayareacustomhomes.com](http://www.bayareacustomhomes.com).



Figure 4.9: Vacant lot transformed into a community garden

The **reinvention areas** hold great potential for new uses. Detroit homesteads could transform parts of these areas into large-lot neighborhoods as homeowners absorb surrounding vacant lots into their properties. Large swaths of vacant land could become a community commons, available for whatever use participants want, including a baseball diamond, a soccer field, or an outdoor performance stage. Alternatively, outside investment could turn parts of this central area into an urban farm, a facility for renewable energy, a recreation center, or a high school. These uses could create jobs and provide fresh food, energy, recreation, or education to residents.



**Figure 4.10: Solar panels for alternative energy production**

Source: [www.gettyimages.com](http://www.gettyimages.com).



**Figure 4.12: Urban agriculture**

Source: [www.greeningofdetroit.com](http://www.greeningofdetroit.com).



**Figure 4.11: Detroit homestead near Schoolcraft Road**

Brightmoor's **parks and green spaces** will be social and recreational centers of activity. A new facility in Eliza Howell Park such as a splash park, dog park, or nature center will draw people in from outside Brightmoor and create a new recreational area for residents. The Lyndon Greenway will connect Stoepel Park to Eliza Howell Park, and a new entrance to Eliza Howell at Lyndon Street will encourage residents from the surrounding areas to use the park more frequently. Residents will gather at pocket parks, butterfly gardens, playfields, community gardens, and basketball courts located along the Greenway and throughout Brightmoor. Schools will use the parks to teach children about their environment and may also start school gardens to educate youth about the food system. Brightmoor will become a green community, where residents enjoy their parks and green spaces.



**Figure 4.13: A splash park**  
Source: [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com).



**Figure 4.14: A dog park**  
Source: [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com).



**Figure 4.15: Nature education**  
Source: [www.greeningofdetroit.com](http://www.greeningofdetroit.com).

**Business clusters** will act as destinations for Brightmoor residents and those in surrounding areas such as Rosedale Park and Redford. The businesses in these locations will provide needed services and jobs to residents, keep money circulating in Brightmoor, and reuse vacant structures. Temporary uses such as fruit stands and farmer’s markets will provide entrepreneurial opportunities for area residents. Façade improvements, public art, banners, and street and sidewalk improvements will promote a stronger identity in these locations so that residents and those passing through the area will know that something is happening in Brightmoor.



Figure 4.16: A farmer’s market can be a temporary use

Source: [www.growinghope.net](http://www.growinghope.net).



Figure 4.17: Public art improves a building façade



Figure 4.18: All Wet Laundry, a well-maintained façade on Fenkell Street

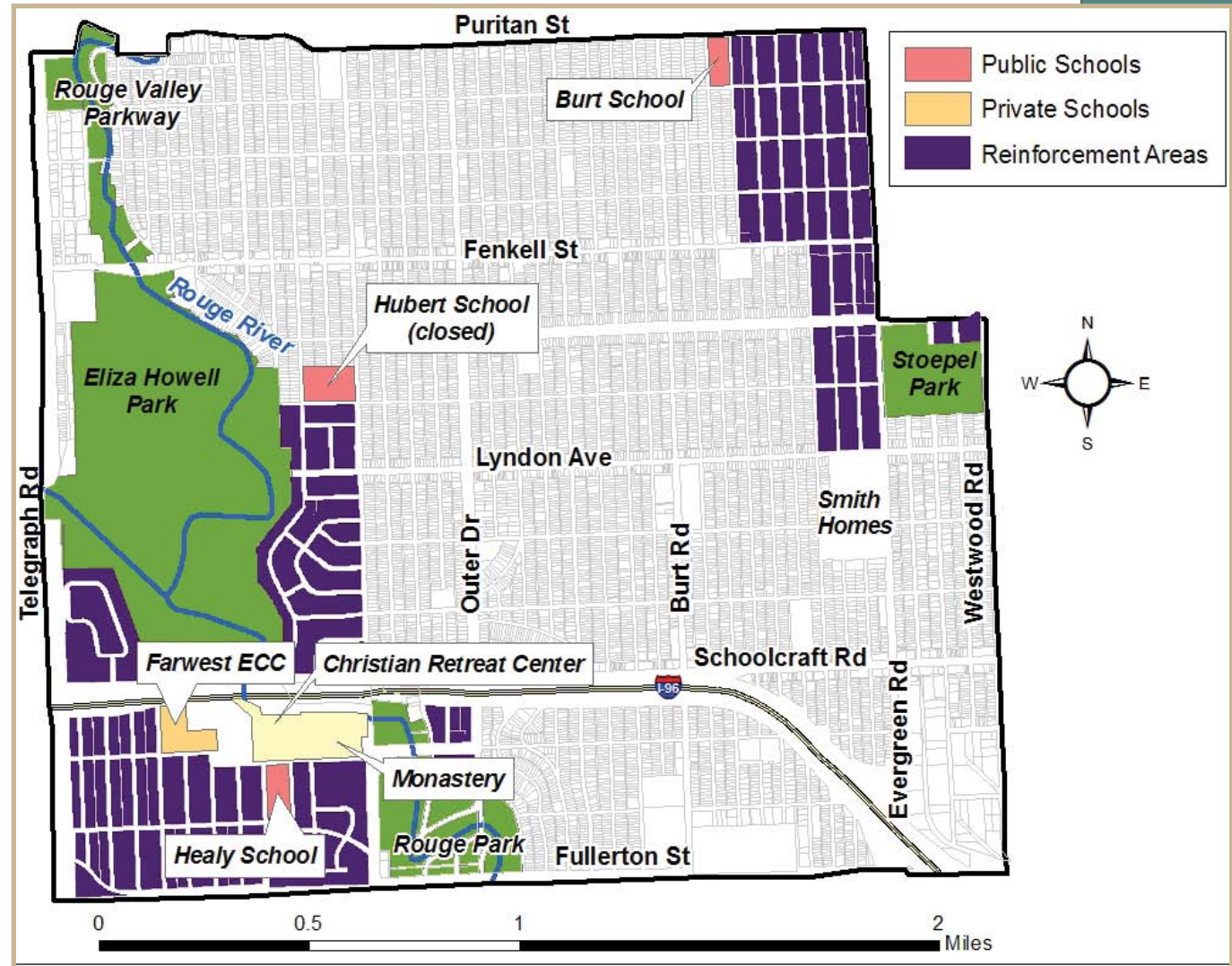
This vision is possible with strong investment from the city, community leaders, residents, and institutions working in the area. Chapters 5 through 9 will outline strategies to achieve this vision, starting with the residential reinforcement area. Chapter 10 will discuss how to implement these strategies.

### Notes

- 1 Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, Oak Hill Community Design Charrette, Planning (Cleveland: Kent State University, 2005).
- 2 Thomas Finney, William D'Avignon, Anthony Kobak, and Jay Williams, "Youngstown 2010 Citywide Plan," City of Youngstown Planning Department, 2005, [www.youngstown2010.com/plan/plan.htm](http://www.youngstown2010.com/plan/plan.htm) (accessed January 1, 2008).
- 3 American Planning Association, "Winners of APA's 2007 National Planning Excellence," Achievement and Leadership Awards, December 15, 2006, [www.planning.org/newsreleases/2006/ftp121506.htm](http://www.planning.org/newsreleases/2006/ftp121506.htm) (accessed April 24, 2008).
- 4 Belinda Lanks, "The 6th Annual Year in Ideas; Creative Shrinkage," New York Times Magazine, December 10, 2006, [query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C04E6D91631F933A25751C1A9609C8B63](http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C04E6D91631F933A25751C1A9609C8B63) (accessed April 24, 2008).

This chapter focuses on reinforcing Brightmoor neighborhoods that have intact housing and few vacant lots. Residents and community leaders can take advantage of programs to ensure that these neighborhoods remain intact and well maintained through home repair, foreclosure prevention, and property maintenance. The Brightmoor Alliance could help keep these neighborhoods strong by increasing public awareness of the resources available, advocating for infrastructure improvements, and helping to build on existing assets.

The areas where the Brightmoor Alliance could focus reinforcement strategies, called **reinforcement areas**, are located in the northeast and southwest corners of Brightmoor and near the two largest parks – Stoepel on the east and Eliza Howell on the west (see Figure 5.1). The reinforcement areas are predominantly residential with the exception of parks and some commercial buildings along Fenkell Street. Schools located in these areas include: Burt School, Healy International Academy and Farwest Early Childcare Center, as well as the closed Hubert School. The neighborhood south of I-96 is adjacent to River Rouge Park and a parochial school campus (Farwest ECC).



**Figure 5.1: Reinforcement areas with assets**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor’s data file, parcel map data file, and public schools, private schools and parks GIS layers, 2007; ESRI.

Housing characteristics in these areas differ from the rest of Brightmoor in several important ways. The majority of the housing stock was built after World War II and was not part of B.E. Taylor's original development. The single-family, brick-faced homes typical of these intact residential areas have retained more of their value than the older homes in other sections of Brightmoor. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 show streets with typical well-built and well-maintained homes in the reinforcement area east of Eliza Howell Park.

The average market value for homes located in the reinforcement areas is around \$90,000 compared to the Brightmoor average of \$40,000.<sup>1</sup> In 2000, owners occupied about 75 percent of the housing units, much higher than the 55 percent rate for Brightmoor as a whole.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the 3 percent vacancy rate for housing units was significantly lower than Brightmoor's overall 10 percent rate.<sup>3</sup> According to 2007 Detroit assessor's data, about 80 percent of all the single-family housing in the reinforcement areas was owner-occupied, compared to 50 percent for all of Brightmoor.<sup>4</sup>

Despite their current strength, these areas would benefit from strategies to ensure that they remain strong.

## Residential Reinforcement Strategies

### Prevent homeowners from losing their homes due to mortgage foreclosures

- *Publicize existing home foreclosure prevention programs to encourage resident participation*
- *Establish an early warning system to identify homeowners in danger of foreclosure*

### Assist homeowners in maintaining their houses and neighborhood

- *Help create access to low-interest, home repair loans*
- *Monitor vacant houses to prevent theft and vandalism and maintain their exterior appearance*

### Improve street lights, sidewalks and public buildings to enhance the neighborhoods

- *Promote safety through sidewalk and street light improvements*
- *Reuse the closed Hubert School*



**Figure 5.2: Intact housing in the reinforcement area**

Source: maps.live.com.



**Figure 5.3: Typical brick-faced homes in the reinforcement area east of Eliza Howell Park**

## **Strategy: Prevent homeowners from losing their homes due to mortgage foreclosures**

The current nationwide home foreclosure crisis is affecting Brightmoor's intact residential areas. Foreclosure leads to vacancy, which can lower the value of surrounding properties and attract drug-dealing, dumping, and arson.<sup>5</sup> A coordinated and concerted effort to prevent foreclosures could help preserve the areas' residential integrity by minimizing the number of vacant properties. Below are two ways, one short-term and one long-term, that the Brightmoor Alliance and other community organizations could use to assist in preventing mortgage foreclosures.

### *Publicize existing home foreclosure prevention programs to encourage resident participation*

In the short term, the Brightmoor Alliance could publicize existing programs to ensure that residents in danger of losing their homes are aware of available assistance. Programs for counseling and assistance include:

- Detroit Home ownership Preservation Enterprise (Detroit H.O.P.E.) for presentations on foreclosure prevention, a hotline and website for information and counseling ([www.995hope.org](http://www.995hope.org)).<sup>6</sup>
- Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Save the Dream program for a listing of home ownership counselors' names and contact information ([www.mshda.info/counseling/search](http://www.mshda.info/counseling/search)).<sup>7</sup>
- Fair Housing Administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's *FHA Secure* program to refinance an adjustable rate mortgage ([www.fha.gov](http://www.fha.gov)).<sup>8</sup>

(See Appendix B for more details)

### *Establish an early warning system to identify homeowners in danger of foreclosure*

A long-term approach the Brightmoor Alliance can use to prevent foreclosure is to identify and counsel borrowers at risk of losing their homes. The *Detroit Legal News* publishes a listing of properties going through foreclosure in Wayne County. State law requires that the property be listed four weeks in a row prior to the sheriff's sale. The Brightmoor Alliance could monitor this publication to identify Brightmoor properties, then refer the homeowner to a housing counselor or even have one on staff to conduct outreach through phone calls and personal visits to attempt to prevent the foreclosure. Since the window of opportunity to prevent foreclosure is short, effective counseling services must be swift. This strategy could be an effective tool to target Brightmoor residents at risk of foreclosure and bring the resources to them.

**Strategy: Assist homeowners in maintaining their houses and**

In southeastern Michigan, the Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office pioneered an early warning system and developed a nationally recognized model that other agencies and organizations can use. Its Foreclosure Prevention Program identifies homeowners in danger of foreclosure through the *Legal News* postings. The office assigns a social worker to connect the homeowner with various resources to address the underlying causes of foreclosure such as loss of work or medical issues. In 2007, the success rate in preventing mortgage foreclosure was around 45 percent.<sup>9</sup>



## neighborhood

The physical appearance of houses affects perceptions of the entire neighborhood, which has repercussions on housing value and community spirit. The following approaches address maintenance of both occupied and unoccupied houses.

### *Help create access to low-interest, home repair loans*

Without needed repairs houses will deteriorate, lowering their value and that of surrounding properties. Some homeowners may have trouble paying for the repair of their homes. If a homeowner needs financial assistance for home maintenance and repairs, the following programs are available:

- Senior Emergency Home Repair Program, a city grant for low-income senior homeowners to repair furnaces, plumbing, roofing, electrical systems and structural repairs;
- Lead Hazard Reduction Program, a city lead removal program for low-income homeowners, especially those with children under the age of six;
- Owner-Occupant Property Improvement Program Loan, a state program that provides low interest loans for home improvements for low-to-moderate income homeowners.<sup>10</sup>

(See Appendix B for more details on program assistance)

Resources available through these programs are limited. For example, Senior Emergency Home Repair grants are limited to \$12,000, and applicants are chosen through a lottery system. Only 750 seniors are chosen to receive grants each year.

Another challenge to encouraging home improvements is that some homeowners make too much money to qualify for assistance but do not have good enough credit to receive loans from a bank. To fill these gaps, a community development corporation could apply for funding from a foundation to start a home repair loan program independent of government agencies.

Frogtown CDC in St. Paul, Minnesota, offers a program called Frogtown Facelift that provides loans to residents who earn up to 80% of the metropolitan region's median income. The City of St. Paul and private foundations fund the program, which issues loans of up to \$30,000 to low- to moderate-income homeowners. Borrowers repay one-third of the loan over a maximum of 12 years at a 5% interest rate; they pay another one-third when they sell the home; and Frogtown CDC forgives the other one-third over a five-year period. This model makes home repair affordable to homeowners who otherwise might not be able to care for their homes.<sup>11</sup>

*Monitor vacant houses to prevent theft and vandalism and maintain their exterior appearance*

When houses become vacant, either because of foreclosure or a lack of housing demand, community organizations, and residents can mitigate the effects on the neighborhood by preventing damage to vacant homes.<sup>12</sup> Strategies include:

- Maintaining the exteriors by mowing the lawn or shoveling the sidewalks;
- Installing automatic lights to create the appearance that the home is occupied;
- Securing houses by boarding them up without drawing attention to them (see Figures 5.4 and 5.5.)

The Brightmoor Alliance, block clubs, churches, or concerned residents could organize these types of “keeping up appearances” tactics.



**Figure 5.4 and 5.5: Well-secured houses in Brightmoor**

## **Strategy: Improve street lights, sidewalks and public buildings to enhance the neighborhoods**

Factors other than the quality of the housing stock contribute to whether a neighborhood will remain intact. With investment in highly visible infrastructure like street lights, sidewalks, and public buildings, residents could feel safer and more comfortable in their neighborhood.

### *Promote safety through sidewalk and street light improvements*

In several areas, Brightmoor's sidewalks need improvement. Many are so broken up and cracked that they are useless, and residents walk in the street. Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) is an internationally recognized program that encourages children to walk or bike to grade school, and can provide funding to install or improve sidewalks and crosswalks within a two-mile radius of a school.<sup>13</sup> Three Brightmoor schools have been designated as focus areas for SRTS—Burt, Gompers and Murphy. Community input could guide specific improvements within this two-mile radius. This plan recommends that improvements focus on areas with intact housing and more density where the improvements will have the greatest impact.

At community meetings, residents indicated that street lighting needs improvement. In the short term, the Brightmoor Alliance and other community organizations could organize programs to install porch lights and street lights on individual properties. Funding from a foundation could be made available for such a purpose. In the long term, the City Department of Public Works could invest in better lighting for Brightmoor neighborhoods, especially those with intact housing.

In the Madison East End neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland, a community association received a \$4,900 grant to install 31 front porch lights to deter criminal activity in the area. They installed the lights on streets that are the darkest at night, helping police and residents monitor the neighborhood and sending a message that "Madison East End is a community that is watching."<sup>14</sup>



**Figure 5.6: Improved sidewalks in Brightmoor**



**Figure 5.7: Consistent street lighting on Outer Drive**

## *Reuse the closed Hubert School*

The Hubert School (see Figure 5.8), which closed in 2005, sits empty just east of Eliza Howell Park. Residents indicated that they would like to see a new use for Hubert that would bring life back to the vacant buildings. Its reuse could help strengthen the area north of the school, where more vacant land and homes exist. It could also enhance the identity of the reinforcement area south of the school.

Hubert is available for rent by the Detroit Public Schools Real Estate Office. The original building dates to 1921 with additions in 1929 and 1953. The buildings have over 70,000 square feet of space.<sup>15</sup>

The school could be reused in a number of ways to become an asset to the neighborhood. A use that serves many Brightmoor children, such as a day care center or recreation facility, might be especially appropriate. Another possibility is a use that serves the elderly population, such as a senior center or low-income senior housing. If a developer purchased the buildings to convert them to low-income senior housing, the developer could potentially take advantage of low-income housing tax credits to help cover costs.



Figure 5.8: The Hubert School

The New Chicago Elementary School in North Memphis was converted into a mixed use structure that includes 39 affordable rental units for senior citizens, a police mini-precinct, and a community center. The project resulted from a collaborative effort between a church, the city, a private developer, a bank, and the bank's community development corporation. The project was funded through community development block grants, low-income housing tax credits, and private loans.<sup>16</sup> Located in an economically depressed section of Memphis, this project helped spark renewed interest in the neighborhood.<sup>17</sup>

This chapter presented strategies to reinforce Brightmoor's intact residential areas. Ensuring their continued success will help to bolster Brightmoor and promote community identity. The following chapter presents strategies to address residential areas of Brightmoor that have experienced more vacancy and abandonment. Many of the strategies laid out in this chapter apply to these areas, but they also require additional revitalization strategies.

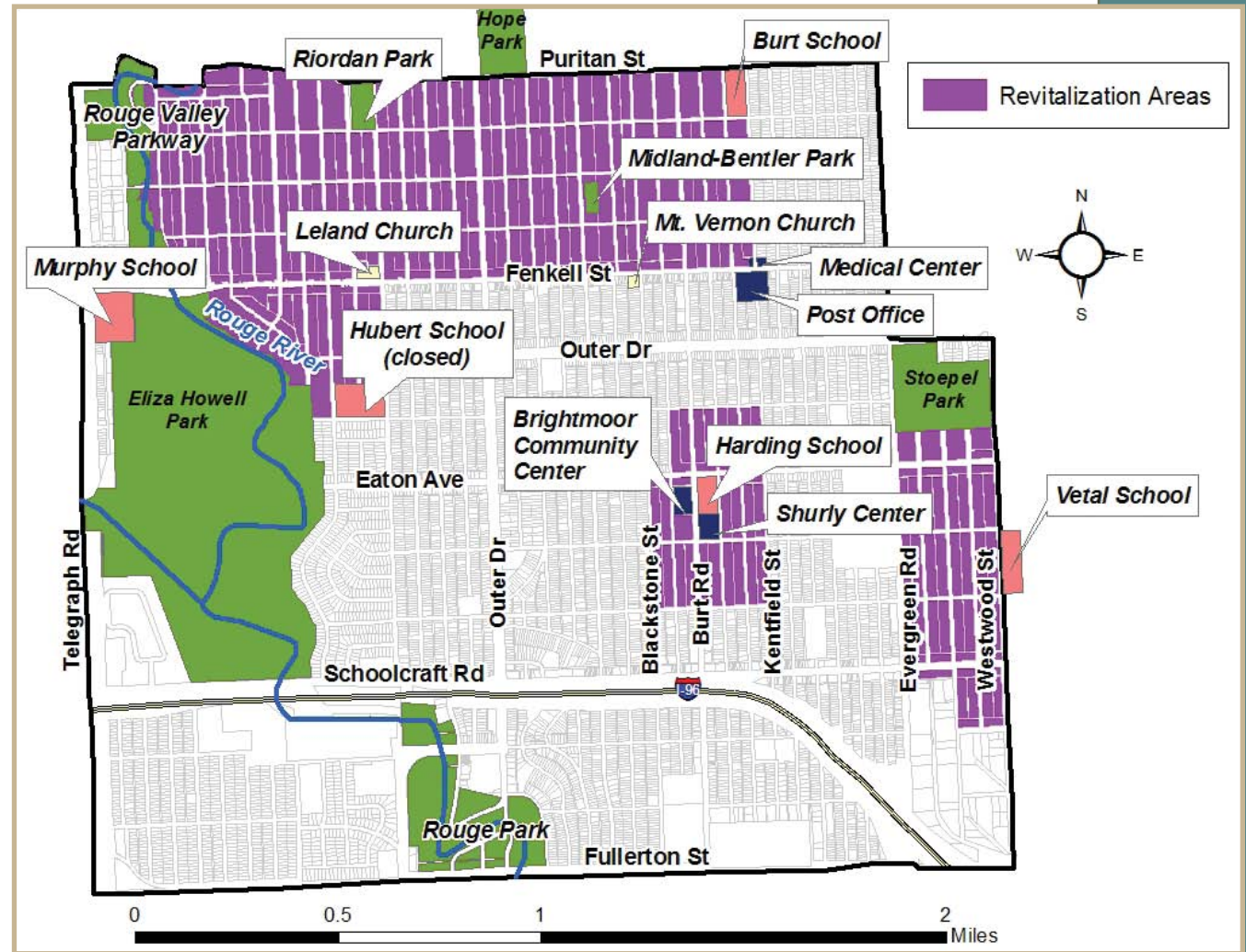
## Notes

- 1 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007. This figure was determined by averaging the state equalized values (SEV) of all single-family residential parcels in the reinforcement areas and in Brightmoor, and then doubling that figure to estimate market value. Commercial, multi-family, industrial, vacant, and non-taxable properties were excluded from the analysis.
- 2 US Census Bureau, American FactFinder, Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block level, H3 Occupancy Status (Housing Units), [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 3 US Census Bureau, American FactFinder, Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block level, H4 Tenure (Occupied Housing Units), [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 4 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007. A property was determined to be owner-occupied if, 1.) It has a single-family residential structure on it; vacant land and commercial, industrial and multi-family properties were excluded; 2.) The property address and taxpayer address match.
- 5 National Vacant Properties Campaign (NVPC), "Campaign Reports and Presentations, Vacant Properties: The True Cost to Communities," National Vacant Properties Campaign, August 2005, [www.vacantproperties.org/latestreports/True%20Costs\\_Aug05.pdf](http://www.vacantproperties.org/latestreports/True%20Costs_Aug05.pdf) (accessed March 20, 2008).
- 6 Detroit H.O.P.E., "About Us," [detroithope.org/about\\_detroit\\_hope.html](http://detroithope.org/about_detroit_hope.html) (accessed March 22, 2008).
- 7 Michigan State Housing Development Authority, "Save the Dream," [www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-45866\\_47905-177801--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-45866_47905-177801--,00.html) (accessed February 12, 2008).
- 8 Fair Housing Administration, "You Can Avoid Foreclosure and Keep Your Home," [portal.hud.gov/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,717446&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page?_pageid=33,717446&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL) (accessed February 8, 2008).
- 9 Heather Mooney, Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office, interview conducted by Lisa Morris on April 17, 2008.
- 10 Michigan State Housing Development Authority, "Owner Occupied PIP Requirements," [www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-5505\\_46195-29483--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-5505_46195-29483--,00.html) (accessed April 27, 2008).
- 11 Greater Frogtown CDC, "Home Improvement Lending Programs," [www.greaterfrogtowncdc.org/homeimprovement.htm](http://www.greaterfrogtowncdc.org/homeimprovement.htm) (accessed April 8, 2008).
- 12 Danielle Bober, et al., "Putting Back the Welcome Mat: A Neighborhood Guide to Turning Vacant Houses into Homes" (Urban and Regional Planning Program, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, 2007).
- 13 National Center for Safe Routes to School, "SRTS Guide," [www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/) (accessed April 27, 2008).
- 14 Baltimore Mayor's Office, *News from Our Neighborhoods*, [www.ci.baltimore.md.us/mayor/neighborhoodnews/News%2520from%2520Our%2520Neighborhoods%252004.pdf](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/mayor/neighborhoodnews/News%2520from%2520Our%2520Neighborhoods%252004.pdf) (accessed April 24, 2008); Mitchell Henderson, Madison East Baltimore Neighborhood Association, interview conducted by Erin Schumacher on April 24, 2008.
- 15 Detroit Public Schools Office of Real Estate Administration, "Vacant DPS Buildings Available for Lease," [www.detroit.k12.mi.us/admin/bs/bss/fm/properties/VacantDPSBuildingsAvailableforLease.pdf](http://www.detroit.k12.mi.us/admin/bs/bss/fm/properties/VacantDPSBuildingsAvailableforLease.pdf) (accessed April 18, 2008).
- 16 Tennessee Housing Development Agency, "LIHTC 1998 Allocations," [www.thda.org/Programs/lihtc/98alloc.pdf](http://www.thda.org/Programs/lihtc/98alloc.pdf) (accessed April 23, 2008).
- 17 The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, "Back to School: Communities Ace Adaptive Reuse Test," [www.stls.frb.org/publications/br/2000/d/pages/2-article.html#top](http://www.stls.frb.org/publications/br/2000/d/pages/2-article.html#top) (accessed April 23, 2008).

This chapter focuses on strategies to revitalize residential areas of Brightmoor that have more vacancy and deteriorated properties than the reinforcement areas discussed in the previous chapter. Well-maintained homes are common in these areas, but many blocks have vacant houses and lots. Approximately 25 percent of the land is vacant within the revitalization area.<sup>1</sup> Without intervention, vacant properties may fuel further disinvestment.<sup>2</sup> However, programs to support homeowners and address property abandonment could help revitalize these areas.

The areas identified where the Brightmoor Alliance can focus revitalization strategies, called **revitalization areas**, are located north of Fenkell Street, northeast of Eliza Howell Park, south of Stoepel Park and near the Brightmoor Community Center in the middle of Brightmoor (see Figure 6.1). Despite the presence of vacant lots and derelict houses, these areas have many parks, schools and community institutions that serve as anchors and could act as destinations for social, recreational and educational purposes.

In addition, a number of churches and Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development (NDND) are planning development projects within and near



**Figure 6.1: Revitalization areas with assets**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file and parcel map data file, 2007; ESRI; City of Detroit public schools GIS layer.

this area. These include the NDND Town Center near the Brightmoor Post Office; Leland Missionary Baptist Church's senior housing development and school next to their building on Fenkell Street; and Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist's proposed Trinity Homes development along Trinity Street and Burt Road south of Fenkell. These projects are potential future anchors in these areas.

The revitalization areas have a mix of property conditions. The average home value here is \$40,000, and approximately 40 percent of the homes are owner-occupied, the same as Brightmoor's averages.<sup>3</sup> Fifteen percent of the properties in these areas are owned by the state, county or city.<sup>4</sup> Many well-maintained homes are located adjacent to vacant land or houses in poor condition. A housing and lot conditions assessment in early 2007 found that of 375 properties in a portion the revitalization area, 37 were vacant lots. Many of the houses were in good condition, but about 30 properties were characterized as being in "poor" or "critical" condition, needing demolition.<sup>5</sup>

Strategies for these areas aim to stabilize the existing housing, care for vacant land, and prevent abandonment. The strategies described in Chapter 5 can also apply in the revitalization areas. The strategies outlined below are additional approaches to address disinvestment and revitalize the residential nature of these areas.

## Residential Revitalization Strategies

### Improve the condition of existing houses and lots

- *Enforce existing codes to ensure properties are maintained*
- *Demolish, deconstruct or rehabilitate housing*
- *Address illegal dumping*

### Return vacant land to productive use

- *Transfer adjacent lots to neighboring property owners*
- *Reuse vacant land as pocket parks*
- *Encourage community gardening*

### Construct infill housing in targeted locations



**Figure 6.2: Vacant lots, infill housing, intact housing, and dumping in the revitalization area**

Source: maps.live.com.



**Figure 6.3: Typical block in the revitalization area, showing intact housing, a vacant lot, and a boarded-up house**

## **Strategy: Improve the condition of existing houses and lots.**

The first step in revitalizing these neighborhoods is improving what already exists through maintaining homes, recycling or removing derelict structures, and discouraging illegal dumping. These approaches help to improve the condition of existing homes and lots.

### *Enforce existing codes to ensure properties are maintained*

Code enforcement is a way for public agencies to insist on minimum standards for structures, both residential and commercial.<sup>6</sup> These standards include limitations on garbage and debris; peeling paint; graffiti; rotting or missing windows, doors, and roofs; snow and ice accumulation on sidewalks; and grass height.<sup>7</sup> Residents and community organizations, such as churches or block clubs, can help identify problem structures and report them to city officials. When building codes are enforced, building owners must make improvements to address safety hazards or face legal consequences.

Residents and community groups can report properties with code violations to the City of Detroit Department of Administrative Hearings (DAH) (see Appendix B for contact information). If no action is taken by the owner within a set amount of time, the DAH will fine them up to \$10,000. If the owner does not pay the fine within a reasonable amount of time, the City of Detroit may place a lien on the property.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 6.4: A house with code violations**



Citizens can report deteriorated buildings to Wayne County as well. Wayne County's Nuisance Abatement Program (NAP) can seize deteriorated properties if the owners do not respond to requests to rehabilitate them. In these cases, the Forfeiture Unit of the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office goes before a judge to argue that the property is a nuisance and should be turned over to the County. After the Prosecutor's Office acquires the title of the property, they sell it at auction. The Nuisance Abatement Program can be reached by email at [info@fixitupwaynecounty.org](mailto:info@fixitupwaynecounty.org) or through their hotline at (313) 224-5757 (see Appendix B for more information).<sup>9</sup>

In 2007, NAP successfully worked with a landlord near Brightmoor to clean up his derelict property. The house was dangerous and unsightly due to fire damage, dumping, and extensive illegal activity. This success had a ripple effect: neighboring houses began to improve without NAP involvement.<sup>10</sup>



**Figure 6.5: House before NAP involvement**  
Source: Michael D. Russel.



**Figure 6.6: House after NAP involvement**  
Source: Michael D. Russel.

## *Demolish, deconstruct, or rehabilitate housing*

Derelict houses, or those that are in very poor condition, lower the value of surrounding properties and attract drug-dealing, dumping, and arson.<sup>11</sup> Removal of derelict houses is a strategy that the Brightmoor Alliance can implement immediately. Deconstruction would require planning but, in the future, may help salvage useful material from derelict houses. Rehabilitation may be appropriate for those homes that are in better condition.

### **House Demolition**

Demolishing a house requires tearing it down, closing off all utilities, removing the foundation, leveling the site, and removing the debris. Government-owned houses and derelict houses near schools and on major streets in Brightmoor should be top priorities when scheduling demolitions, to improve safety for students and the image of Brightmoor in highly visible areas.<sup>12</sup>

Detroit has programs to demolish vacant and dangerous structures. Residents or community organizations may call the Building and Safety Engineering Department at (313) 224-3215 to have them inspect a structure and determine whether it needs demolition. If an inspection determines that the building should be demolished, it is placed on the Department of Public Works' demolition list.<sup>13</sup> To determine whether a building is already on the demolition list or to find out the status of a building on that list, call the Building and Safety Engineering Department Demolition Division at (313) 224-2733. If the derelict building is attracting illegal activity, residents or community organizations may contact the Detroit Police Department by calling 311, the City of Detroit citizen service center (see Appendix B for more contact information).<sup>14</sup> After demolition, maintenance of the property is still the property owner's responsibility. If the owner of the property does not pay the bill for demolition or any accumulated fines, then the Building and Safety Engineering Department can place a lien on the property.<sup>15</sup>



**Figure 6.7: A house being demolished**

## House Deconstruction

Instead of demolishing derelict houses, a private company or community organization could deconstruct derelict homes to salvage the building materials. Deconstruction involves disassembling a building in order to recover and recycle as many building materials as possible. This requires skilled labor and a deconstruction plan, similar to a construction plan. Deconstruction may cost 30 to 50 percent less than demolition; demolition may cost \$7,000 whereas deconstruction might cost around \$5,000.<sup>16</sup> Labor costs are greater, but the other savings offset these costs. Unlike demolition, deconstruction does not require heavy equipment to tear down and carry away building materials; skilled laborers perform the work with hand tools and small machinery. Deconstruction also saves money in the cost of waste disposal.<sup>17</sup>

Deconstruction could offer a source of jobs for residents. A community organization could train and pay residents to deconstruct houses in the area, rather than paying contractors to perform demolitions. Some of the building materials could be stored for reuse in home repair projects or community art projects. However, according to federal law, those materials cannot be reused as structural components in another building unless the materials are inspected to certify their structural integrity. Anyone performing this work should consider possible health hazards, such as lead paint and asbestos, and take appropriate precautions.<sup>18</sup>

A Detroit design collective, Los Pistoleros, is performing a market study to assess whether a demand for deconstructed materials exists and how someone might establish such a deconstruction business. Deconstruction can turn a community liability into a community asset, build skills, and provide free materials for home repair projects in the area.

A company called Resource Energy Efficient House (REEHouse) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, deconstructs abandoned houses and uses the materials in new construction. The materials they reuse include frame lumber, roof sheathing, rafters, and joists. The company partnered with a nonprofit community development agency called Harambee Ombudsman Project to train youth involved in Youth from Fast Track and the Wisconsin Conservation Corps to deconstruct and construct houses under the guidance of REEHouse's regular journeymen.<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 6.8: A derelict house being deconstructed**

Source: [www.deconstructioninstitute.com](http://www.deconstructioninstitute.com).

## House Rehabilitation

Not all vacant houses need to be demolished or deconstructed, however. Some houses may be rehabilitated. Rehabilitation creates opportunities to reuse existing structures and can be more cost effective than demolishing and building new.<sup>21</sup> A structure should be demolished when the cost to rehabilitate the house will be significantly more than the expected return on that investment, either from sales income, rental income, or income from subsidies; or when the cost to replace a vacant house with a new structure will garner larger returns or better serve its expected residents. Since many houses in Brightmoor were not built using high quality materials and are not up to current standards, many are not worth rehabilitating. In these cases, demolishing the existing structure and either building new or finding an alternate use for the land would be a better strategy.



Figure 6.9: A house being rehabilitated

Motor City Blight Busters is a local organization that has demolished over 100 derelict houses. The organization generally acquires these houses through donation, but if the site is in a particularly important location, such as near a school or church, or on a major thoroughfare, such as Lahser Road, they will purchase it from the owner. Once a derelict house has been demolished, Blight Busters generally gives or sells the lot to an infill housing developer, such as NDND or Habitat for Humanity.<sup>20</sup>

## *Address illegal dumping*

Illegal dumping is the dumping of any waste on a street, sidewalk, curb or property without consent of the property's owner. It is a significant problem, and affects public safety, public health, property values, and neighborhood condition.<sup>21</sup> In Brightmoor, dumping occurs on vacant lots, near derelict houses, and on street curbs throughout the revitalization areas. Waste varies from construction debris, tires, and old appliances, to litter from passersby and household trash. Strategies like community policing, signs, and barriers can help discourage dumping in these areas.



**Figure 6.10: Dumping in the residential areas of Brightmoor**



**Figure 6.11: Dumping in Eliza Howell Park**

Sites with dumping attract more dumping. Therefore, the first step to discouraging repeated dumping on a site is to remove the trash from the site. The Department of Public Works may provide dumpsters to community groups that organize a clean-up effort. Community groups can contact Neighborhood City Hall at 313-935-5322 to inquire about obtaining a dumpster from the city. A University of Michigan student organization, Detroit Partnership (DP), works with Motor City Blight Busters, NDND, and the Brightmoor Alliance to clean up as many sites as they can on a single day every spring. Hundreds of volunteers put in a full day of effort on "DP Day," cleaning up as many as ten sites in and around Brightmoor.<sup>22</sup>

Check-ups by local residents and organizations could supplement these large-scale annual efforts. Concerned individuals may report illegal dumping by calling Detroit's Illegal Dumping Hotline at 1-800-545-4948.<sup>23</sup> The Brightmoor Alliance's current effort to compile a database of all the abandoned cars and illegal dump sites in Brightmoor could contribute significantly to an ongoing effort to reduce dumping in Brightmoor and may help NDNI focus enforcement action.<sup>24</sup>

Once a lot has been cleaned, the next step is to prevent further dumping. Signs placed on clean lots by the Department of Public Works or a community organization can include the illegal dumping hotline and a list of fines imposed on illegal dumpers. A sign not only provides helpful information but also shows that the site is cared for. The Brightmoor Alliance can educate residents about the steps they should take if they witness dumping. To report dumping to the Department of Public Works, residents should call the Illegal Dumping Hotline and tell them the license plate number, vehicle description, company name or logo if applicable, date and time, and description of the dumper. The owner of the property is ultimately responsible for clean-up of the site. The Department of Public Works can impose fines on the property owner if the site is not cleaned up in a certain period of time.

Generally, reuse of vacant lots and the removal of derelict structures is the best way to prevent illegal dumping. Properties that are maintained and monitored by residents and local community organizations are not as likely to be targeted by illegal dumpers.

The New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC), in Philadelphia, cleaned up many vacant lots that were the site of illegal dumping. Only when they began to landscape the lots, planting trees and placing attractive fencing along the street in the way of trucks that might back up to the site to dump, did dumping decrease. This use of natural barriers, plus regular monitoring of the sites and sign placement, eliminated dumping on sites cared for by the NKCDC.<sup>25</sup>

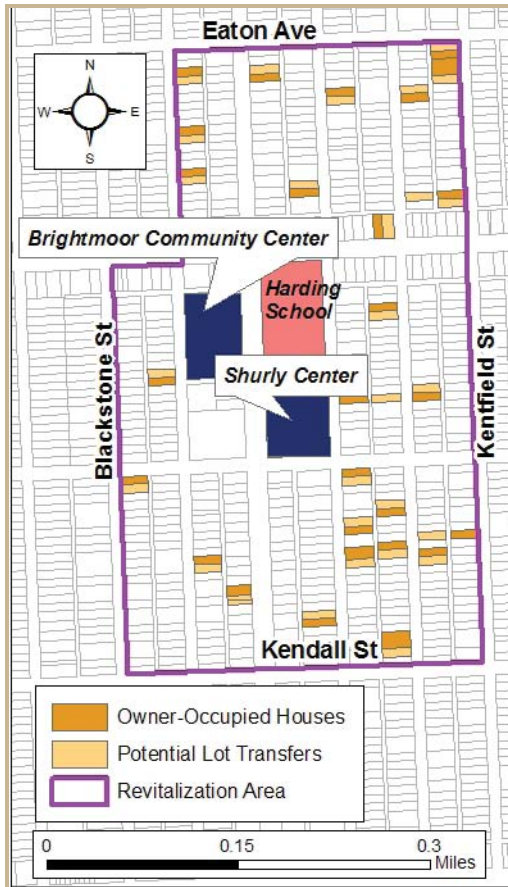


**Figure 6.12: An NKCDC vacant lot, before and after cleanup and implementation of dumping prevention features**

Source: [www.cooperativeconservationamerica.org](http://www.cooperativeconservationamerica.org).

## Strategy: Return vacant land to productive uses

Returning vacant land to productive use will help promote community identity by discouraging dumping and illegal activity and providing opportunities for such community-building activities as gardening and socializing. Methods for doing this include transferring vacant adjacent lots to neighboring property owners, creating pocket parks, and organizing community gardens.

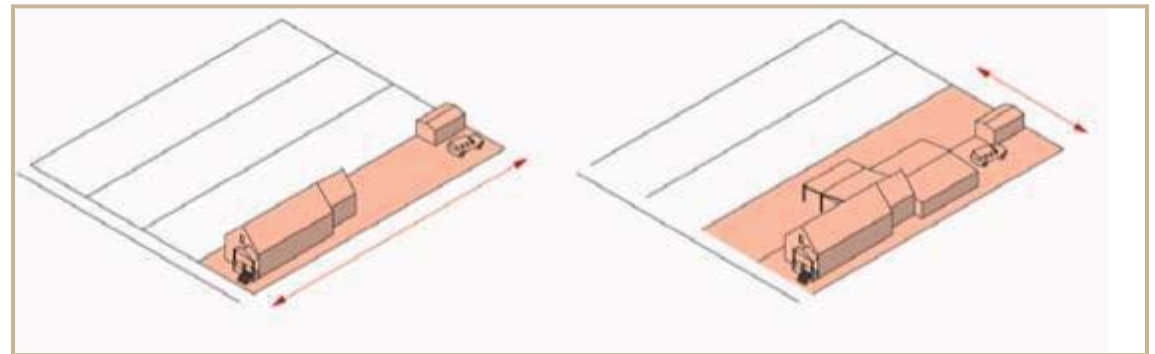


**Figure 6.13: Potential sites for adjacent lot transfer**

Source: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file parks and public schools GIS layers, 2007; ESRI.

### *Transfer adjacent lots to neighboring property owners*

An adjacent lot transfer program would allow property owners to inexpensively purchase government-owned lots and merge them with their own property. Adjacent lot transfer programs offer a way to get vacant properties into the hands of tax-paying owners, whether landlords or owner-occupants, who would be able to put the land to use. These programs enable homeowners to increase the size of their lots and use the extra land for gardening, a garage, lawn expansion, or other uses. In Cleveland, Ohio, and Flint, Michigan, programs that transferred lots to adjacent owner-occupants have succeeded in improving the conditions of vacant land.<sup>26</sup>



**Figure 6.14: An adjacent lot transfer. Original lot is highlighted in the first picture; an addition on an adjacent lot is shown in the second picture.**

Source: [www.interboropartners.com](http://www.interboropartners.com).

Within the revitalization area, about 300 vacant parcels owned by the city, county, state or nonprofit organizations could be sold to the owner of an adjacent occupied lot.<sup>27</sup> Owners with outstanding building code or property maintenance code violations could be excluded from the program to reduce the possibility that these properties would become eyesores.

An adjacent lot transfer program is already in place in the city, but those who have tried to use it consider it difficult to understand, slow, and frustrating.<sup>28</sup> The Detroit Planning and Development Department's current policy allows property owners, including nonresident owners such as landlords, with no outstanding taxes to acquire an adjacent vacant lot for \$300-\$500 plus fees.<sup>29</sup> The Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority (MLBFTA) program allows neighbors of a vacant lot who are current on their property taxes to purchase it for \$250 plus fees, but only if that lot is not buildable. Buildable lots owned by the MLBFTA are sold at auction.<sup>30</sup>

The Brightmoor Alliance and other neighborhood advocates could recommend that the County Treasurer's Office, the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority, and the Detroit Planning and Development Department coordinate their programs to allow owners to determine quickly whether one of those agencies owns the property, and then apply to purchase it from that agency.<sup>31</sup> Coordination among these programs would simplify the process for homeowners, encouraging more participation. In the interim, the Brightmoor Alliance could assist residents who would like to purchase adjacent parcels by providing assistance in navigating this bureaucratic process.



**Figure 6.15:** A site that may benefit from an adjacent lot transfer

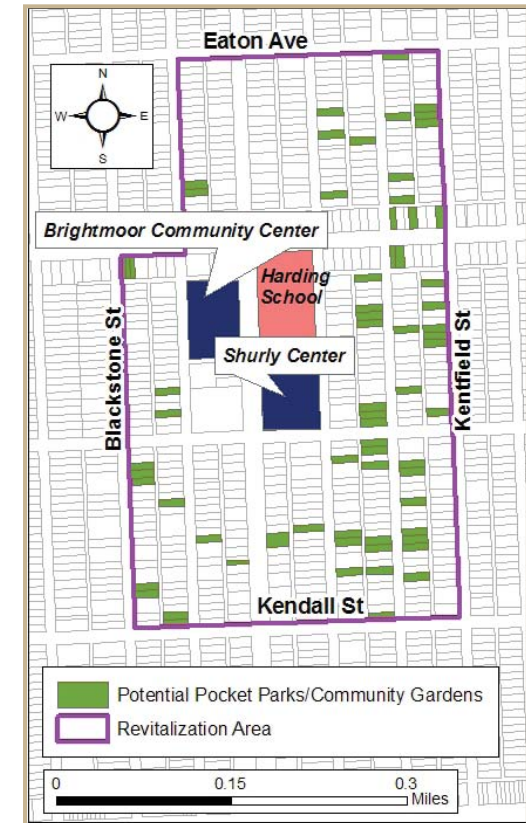


## Reuse vacant land as pocket parks

A pocket park is a small space used and maintained by a group of people for recreation and beautification.<sup>32</sup> Pocket parks improve neighborhood quality and provide recreational and socialization space for children, adults, and families. They may include flowers, plants, and trees; benches and chairs for relaxation; water features such as fountains or ponds; or playground equipment. People are less likely to use a well maintained pocket park as a dumping site or as a site for illegal activity. A pocket park can be created, maintained and used by a neighborhood block club, interested neighbors or a church group.

Pocket parks will be most easily implemented on vacant land already owned by the city, county, or state. Approximately 700 vacant lots in the revitalization area are owned by one of these entities. Of those, about 400 are not adjacent to an occupied property and therefore would not be eligible for the adjacent lot transfer program.<sup>33</sup> The three government agencies that own most of the vacant lots could assist the process by defining leasing options for the communal use of vacant land. They could lease the lots to the Brightmoor Alliance, a church, another community group or individual residents inexpensively provided that they implement a pocket park plan. Local residents and block clubs could enlist the aid of the Brightmoor Alliance to identify and develop sites that would be desirable for pocket parks.

Pocket parks became popular in the late 1960s and have since been implemented all over the world. Northamptonshire, England, is well known for its plentiful and meticulously-planned pocket parks. In the 18 years since their pocket program began, only one, out of more than 80, has closed due to lack of local maintenance and interest. Pocket parks are planned out carefully, and only implemented once the neighborhood residents have asked for one and demonstrated that they will be able to care for it. A single pocket parks officer within the local government provides information about how to start a pocket park, and the surrounding residents maintain the park, usually as part of a community organization formed for that purpose.<sup>34</sup>



**Figure 6.16: Potential pocket park or community garden locations**

Source: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file parks and public schools GIS layers, 2007; ESRI.



**Figure 6.17: A pocket park in Seattle, Washington**  
Source: Joe Mabel.

## *Encourage community gardening*

A community garden is “any piece of land gardened by a group of people.”<sup>35</sup> Flowers, fruits, vegetables, grains and herbs produced in a community garden will benefit the gardener and may be sold locally or consumed by the gardener. Community gardens can supply healthy food, encourage outdoor physical activity, and promote interaction and knowledge-sharing among residents. The prospect of procuring fresh produce and other crops previously unavailable or unaffordable can spur people to transform a vacant, unkempt lot into a garden.

Over 115 community gardens participate in the Garden Resource Program Collaborative in Detroit, and several community gardens exist in Brightmoor. One is located near the Eliza Howell Park and is maintained by 4-H. Another is located near the Leland Missionary Baptist Church and is maintained by the Michigan State University Extension Service. To help encourage community gardening throughout Brightmoor, the Brightmoor Alliance could approach the Skillman Foundation through their Good Neighborhoods Initiative to coordinate and subsidize soil testing and initial soil treatment for several new community gardens. With funding from the Skillman Foundation and expertise from the Michigan State University Extension Service more lots could be tested and gardens planned.



**Figure 6.18: An educational pocket park in East Harlem, New York**

Source: East Harlem Preservation.



**Figure 6.19: A community garden near the north end of Eliza Howell Park**

After graduating from a local gardening class taught by the Greening of Detroit, Urban Roots, community gardeners not only produced food for themselves but were able to give produce to friends and family, can and preserve some for the coming seasons, and sell some produce at local farmers' markets.<sup>36</sup>

## Strategy: Construct infill housing in targeted locations



**Figure 6.20: Possible infill housing zones and government or NDND-owned buildable lots**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, property inventory list, 2007; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005; ESRI.

The revitalization areas were originally developed as owner-occupied, single-family housing. Today, little demand for new owner-occupied housing exists in Brightmoor. However, new housing located near assets and built in areas that already have many houses is more likely to attract buyers, since home buyers make choices based on the neighborhood, not just the house itself. Using an infill housing strategy can reinforce the value of the new home as well as strengthen the surrounding neighborhood.

The following criteria could be used to determine placement of infill housing:

- **Density of existing housing stock.** The densest areas are prime places for infill housing, since these areas are generally better maintained and monitored by residents. Developers may meet with the most success by building on the densest blocks first, then building in adjacent blocks as the neighborhood grows stronger. New housing will encourage neighborhood residents to invest in their homes, helping to return a sense of identity to the neighborhood.
- **Proximity to schools, parks and community institutions.** These places provide educational, recreational, and social opportunities. The areas surrounding them have fewer vacant lots and derelict buildings, more well-maintained homes, and higher home values, demonstrating value of these assets to residents. Infill houses in these areas would likely succeed due to their proximity to assets.
- **Availability of two contiguous lots.** Under current zoning, new single-family homes must be built on a lot with a minimum width of 50 feet and a minimum area of 5,000 square feet.<sup>37</sup> The typical Brightmoor lot is only 35 feet wide and about 4,400 square feet. Therefore, two lots side-by-side must be available for new construction.

Based on these three criteria, possible zones for infill housing and buildable lots currently owned by the state, county, city or NDND are shown in Figure 6.20.



**Figure 6.21: An NDND infill house**

This chapter outlined strategies that residents, the Brightmoor Alliance, the Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative and other stakeholders can use to strengthen the revitalization areas of Brightmoor. Other residential areas of Brightmoor, however, have few well-maintained structures and extensive amounts of vacant land. The next chapter will lay out strategies to deal with those sections of Brightmoor.

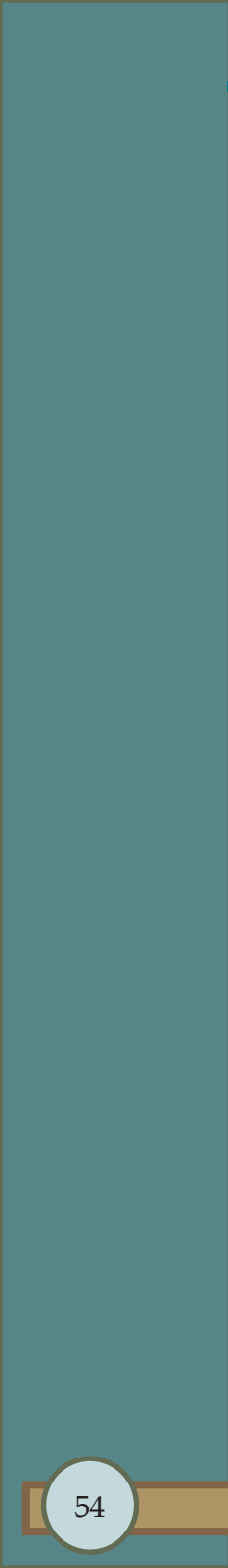


**Figure 6.22: Infill homes in the foreground, with an older home in the background**

## Notes

- 1 US Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Census 2000 Summary File 1, 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables, block level, H4 Tenure (Occupied Housing Units), [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) (accessed January 15, 2008).
- 2 National Vacant Properties Campaign (NVCP), "Campaign Reports and Presentations, Vacant Properties: The True Cost to Communities," [www.vacantproperties.org/latestreports/True%20Costs\\_Aug05.pdf](http://www.vacantproperties.org/latestreports/True%20Costs_Aug05.pdf) (accessed March 20, 2008).
- 3 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007. This figure was determined by averaging the state equalized values (SEV) of all single-family residential parcels in the reinforcement areas and in Brightmoor, and then doubling that figure to estimate market value. Commercial, multi-family, industrial, vacant, and non-taxable properties were excluded from the analysis.
- 4 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005. This figure was determined by dividing the number of properties owned by the city, county or state by the total number of properties in the area.
- 5 T. Bradford, et al., "Towards a Brighter Future: A Plan for Southeast Brightmoor" (Urban and Regional Planning Program, University of Michigan, April 2007.)
- 6 MCL 125-401 Michigan state law, [www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(apfy4tihq5n1t3iznmelhc45\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectName=mcl-125-402&relation=previous](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(apfy4tihq5n1t3iznmelhc45))/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectName=mcl-125-402&relation=previous) (accessed February 22, 2008).
- 7 D. Bober, et al., "Putting Back the Welcome Mat: A Neighborhood Guide to Turning Vacant Houses into Homes" (Urban and Regional Planning Program, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, December 2007)
- 8 City of Detroit, Department of Administrative Hearings Anti-Blight/Code Enforcement What's New. [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Default.aspx?tabid=78](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Default.aspx?tabid=78). (accessed March 28, 2008).
- 9 Christine MacDonald, County Takes Neglected Properties, Wayne County, [www.waynecounty.com/news/2006/county-properties.htm?AID=/20060905/METRO01/609050325/1006](http://www.waynecounty.com/news/2006/county-properties.htm?AID=/20060905/METRO01/609050325/1006) (accessed March 22, 2008).
- 10 Michael D. Russell, Assistant Wayne County Corporation Counsel, "Rap with NAP" PowerPoint presentation, Nov. 30, 2007.
- 11 NVCP.
- 12 T. Bradford, et al., 2007.
- 13 City of Detroit, Building and Safety Engineering Department, FAQs-Demolition Department, 2008, [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Departments/BuildingsSafetyEngineeringDepartment/BSEDFAQs/tabid/1472/Default.aspx](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Departments/BuildingsSafetyEngineeringDepartment/BSEDFAQs/tabid/1472/Default.aspx) (accessed April 19, 2008).
- 14 Detroit City Clerk's Office, FAQs - Citizens, [www.detroitcityclerk.com/html/faqs/citizens.htm](http://www.detroitcityclerk.com/html/faqs/citizens.htm) (accessed April 4, 2008).
- 15 City of Detroit, Buildings & Safety Engineering Department - What Happens If A Blight Violation Notice is Ignored, 2008 (accessed April 21, 2008).
- 16 Personal communication with Phillip Cooley, member of Los Pistoleros, interview conducted by Lisa Morris on April 14, 2008.
- 17 Robin Snyder, Deconstruction: Smart demolition, [www.smartgrowth.org/library/deconst\\_smart\\_demol.html](http://www.smartgrowth.org/library/deconst_smart_demol.html) (accessed April 22, 2008)
- 18 The Deconstruction Institute, A Guide to Deconstruction, [www.deconstructioninstitute.com/files/learn\\_center/45762865\\_guidebook.pdf](http://www.deconstructioninstitute.com/files/learn_center/45762865_guidebook.pdf) (accessed April 21, 2008).
- 19 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, Deconstruction: A community development tool at work in Milwaukee, [www.huduser.org/periodicals/fieldworks/0801/fworks4.html](http://www.huduser.org/periodicals/fieldworks/0801/fworks4.html) (accessed April 21, 2008).
- 20 Personal communication with John George, Founder of Motor City Blight Busters, interview conducted by Bonnie Wessler on March 25, 2008.
- 21 Environmental Protection Agency, Illegal Dumping Project, [www.epa.gov/region5/illegaldumping/](http://www.epa.gov/region5/illegaldumping/) (accessed April, 24 2008).
- 22 Personal communication with Tom Szczesny, Executive Director, The Detroit Project, interview conducted by Bonnie Wessler on March 21 2008.
- 23 Detroit City Clerk's Office, FAQs - Citizens, [www.detroitcityclerk.com/html/faqs/citizens.htm](http://www.detroitcityclerk.com/html/faqs/citizens.htm) (accessed April 4, 2008).
- 24 Brightmoor Alliance Bimonthly meeting, January 17, 2008,
- 25 Roger Taylor, Urban Resources Initiative.

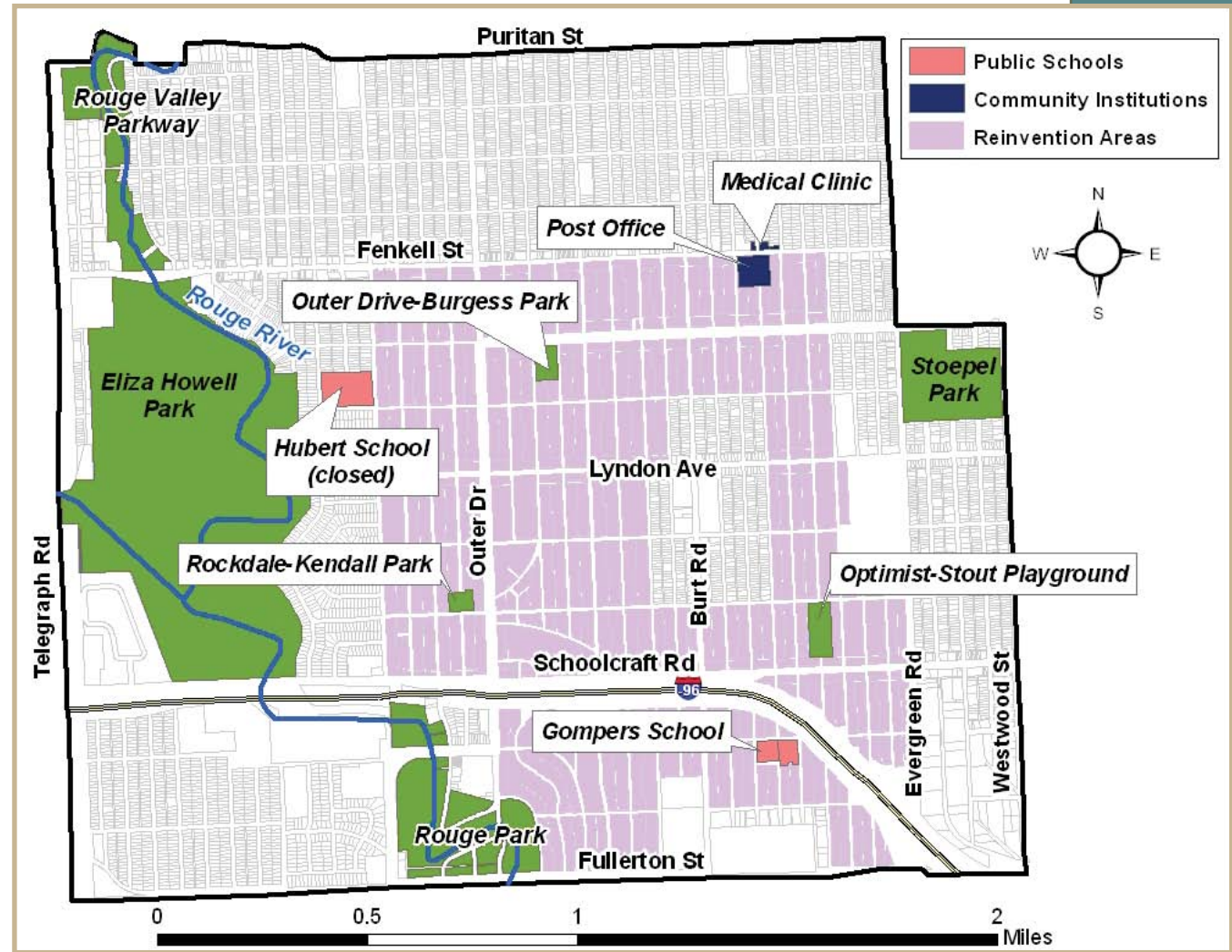
- Strategies for Restoring Vacant Land, URI Working Paper #43, New Haven, CT: Yale, 2000.
- 26 Laura Bozgo, Jessica de Wit, Sarah Haradon, Genesee County Land Bank: Side Lot Transfer Program Evaluation (Urban and Regional Planning Program, University of Michigan), [sitemaker.umich.edu/urpoutreachreports/environment\\_land\\_use\\_e\\_/data/1206389/ReportFile/side\\_lots\\_final\\_completereport.pdf](http://sitemaker.umich.edu/urpoutreachreports/environment_land_use_e_/data/1206389/ReportFile/side_lots_final_completereport.pdf) (accessed April 21, 2008).
- 27 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, property inventory list, April 2007; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.  
These 300 parcels are vacant lots owned by the city, county, state or NDND located adjacent to existing structures. Whether these structures are currently occupied is unknown.
- 28 Community meeting held on March 18, 2008, at Leland Missionary Baptist Church.
- 29 Personal communication with Fred Rottach, City of Detroit Planning & Development Department, Neighborhood Development Services, interview conducted by Kimiko Doherty on March 19, 2008.
- 30 Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth: Applications, [www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-34176\\_38800---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-34176_38800---,00.html) (accessed April 21, 2008).
- 31 D. Bober, et al., 2007.
- 32 Northamptonshire Pocket Parks, [www.pocketparks.com/about/benefits.asp](http://www.pocketparks.com/about/benefits.asp).
- 33 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, property inventory list, April 2007; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.
- 34 Northamptonshire Pocket Parks, [www.pocketparks.com/about/success.asp](http://www.pocketparks.com/about/success.asp)
- 35 American Community Garden Association, What is a Community Garden? [www.communitygarden.org/learn/what-is-a-community-garden/index.php](http://www.communitygarden.org/learn/what-is-a-community-garden/index.php) (accessed April 18, 2008).
- 36 Garden Resource Program Collaborative. News from the Detroit Farmers' Quarterly: Issue 13, [www.detroitagriculture.org/PDF\\_Files/2008%20January%20Newsletter.pdf](http://www.detroitagriculture.org/PDF_Files/2008%20January%20Newsletter.pdf) (accessed April 18, 2008).
- 37 Detroit City Planning Commission. Detroit Zoning Ordinance, Section 61-13-2, [www.detroitmi.gov/Legislative/BoardsCommissions/CityPlanningCommission/planning\\_zoning.htm](http://www.detroitmi.gov/Legislative/BoardsCommissions/CityPlanningCommission/planning_zoning.htm) (accessed April 21, 2008).



This chapter focuses on reinventing areas of Brightmoor that have the most vacant land and houses in need of removal. Although some well-maintained properties remain in these areas, virtually no market demand for single-family housing exists. The availability of vacant lots provides an opportunity to reinvent the area to create new residential patterns, community gathering places, or centers of activity, learning, or enterprise.

The largely vacant areas of Brightmoor, called **reinvention areas**, lie south of Fenkell, west of Evergreen, east of Lamphere, and north of Fullerton (see Figure 7.1). Despite the presence of structures in need of demolition or deconstruction and many vacant lots, these areas have assets that serve as anchors and could act as destinations for social, recreational, and educational purposes. They include parks such as Outer Drive-Burgess, Optimist-Stout, and Rockdale-Kendall, the high-performing Gompers School, and community services such as the Thea Bowman Medical Center and the Brightmoor Post Office.

This area is ready for reinvention since 40 percent of the land, or about 200 acres, is vacant. Home values are quite low- the average is approximately \$20,000,<sup>1</sup> and 35 percent of existing homes are owner-occupied.<sup>2</sup> The city, county or state own one quarter of the properties in this area.<sup>3</sup> Vacant land, illegal dump sites, and



**Figure 7.1: Reinvention areas with nearby assets**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor’s data file, parcel map data file, and public schools GIS layer, 2007; ESRI.



derelict houses surround the few well-maintained homes.

Currently, three types of initiatives exist in this area: nuisance abatement programs, community gardening support programs, and infill housing development. The City of Detroit and Wayne County have nuisance abatement programs (see Chapter 6). Motor City Blight Busters, a local non-profit, not only tears down derelict houses that have become nuisances but also renovates homes when financially feasible. In their 18-year history, they have demolished over 100 houses and renovated over 150 homes in the Brightmoor area. Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development (NDND) has started community gardens in this area, and is planning a large project on Fielding Street north of Schoolcraft Road with help from the Michigan State University Extension Service. NDND has also built infill housing on a number of streets, concentrating on the eastern and western sections of this area, from Burt Road to Evergreen Road and from Lamphere Street to Outer Drive.

In order to take advantage of the opportunity that vacant land presents, the plan proposes two types of strategies: supporting community-based efforts and cultivating opportunities for outside partnerships.

## Residential Reinvention Strategies

### Support community-based initiatives

- *Foster the creation of Detroit homesteads*
- *Create a community commons*

### Facilitate outside partnerships

- *Promote urban agriculture*
- *Attract a recreation center*
- *Build a high school*
- *Produce renewable energy*



**Figure 7.2: A portion of the reinvention area, showing high levels of vacancy**

Source: maps.live.com.

Community-based efforts stem from the current actions and desires of residents and include facilitating Detroit homesteads and creating a community commons. This plan recommends programs to strengthen grassroots initiatives and support residents' ideas for reinvention.



**Figure 7.3: A vacant lot between two abandoned houses in the reinvention area**

Partnership strategies require outside investment and may involve resident relocation and infrastructure changes. These strategies are not community-based but can still benefit Brightmoor residents by creating jobs, new food or energy sources, or new facilities for education or recreation.

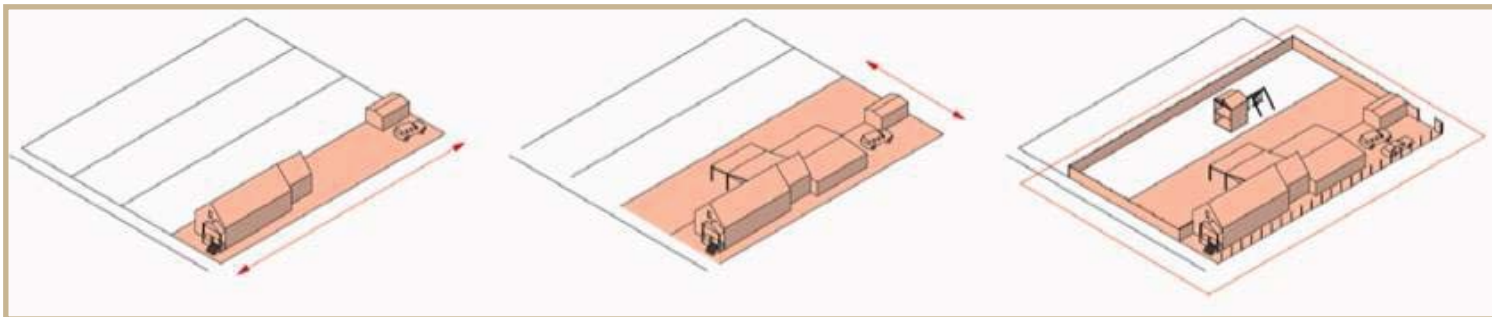
## Strategy: Support community-based initiatives

Two community-based initiatives, fostering Detroit homesteads and creating a community commons, are described in the following section. Residents already have begun to create Detroit homesteads independently, while the creation of a community commons would require additional community organization. With the support of the city and community organizations, these strategies could strengthen the reinvention areas.

### *Foster the creation of Detroit homesteads*

Vacant land in the reinvention area presents opportunities for homeowners to expand their properties by acquiring vacant lots. The reinvention area has over 1,000 homeowners, yet 40 percent of the land is vacant. Existing homeowners could expand their properties by purchasing the vacant land surrounding their homes. This practice, called Detroit homesteading, would encourage homeowners to assemble three or more lots to create larger, suburban-style properties. This concept builds on the adjacent lot transfer program discussed in Chapter 6; however, it involves the transfer of multiple lots, as shown in Figure 7.4.

This concept would transfer vacant land to an owner who will care for it, discouraging dumping and improving the overall appearance of the neighborhood. Detroit homesteading would also diversify the range of property types available in Brightmoor, adding to the current housing choices of apartments, multifamily units, and small single-family dwellings. In the long-term, offering a range of housing choices could help attract a wider array of residents to Brightmoor.<sup>4</sup>

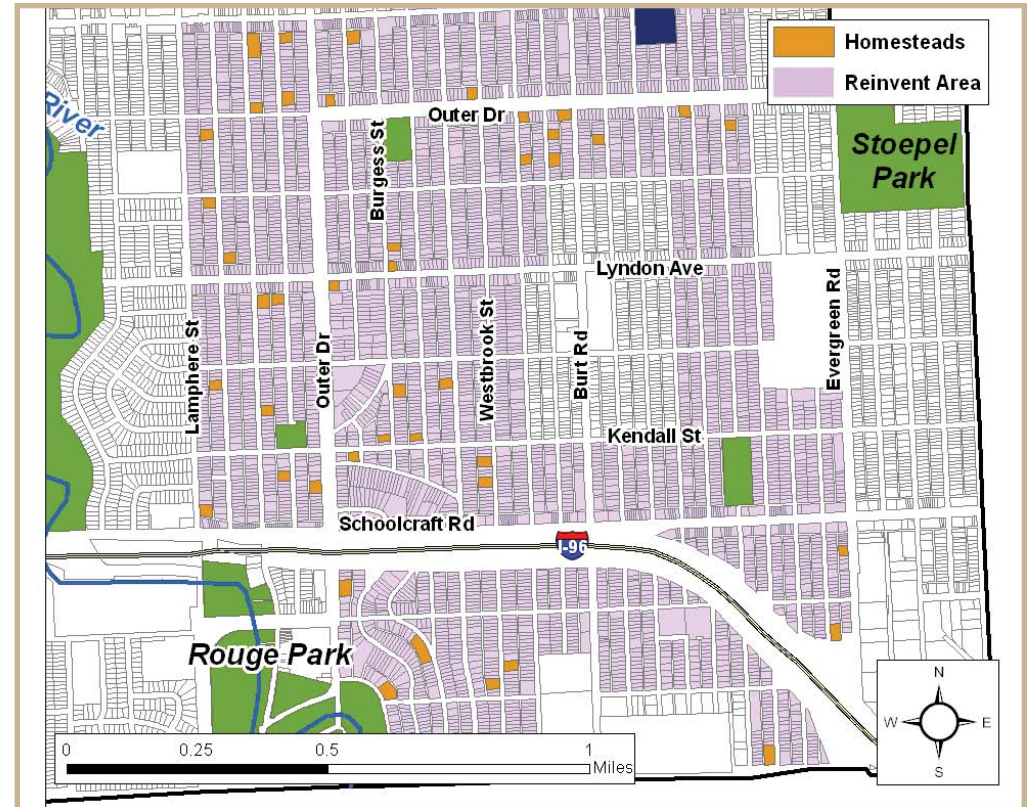


**Figure 7.4:** The original lot is highlighted in the first picture; an addition on an adjacent lot is shown in the second picture, and yet another addition is shown in the third, along with a fence surrounding the new homestead.

Source: [www.interboropartners.com](http://www.interboropartners.com).

Some homeowners are already adding land to their properties, regardless of whether they legally own the lots. At least 40 legal homesteads exist in the reinvention area (see Figures 7.5 and 7.6).<sup>5</sup>

Homesteading could grow if the city, county, and state expand current adjacent lot purchase programs and make vacant lots available to nearby homeowners with no code violations or outstanding taxes. The Brightmoor Alliance or a community development corporation (CDC) such as NDND could help facilitate more homesteading in Brightmoor. They could inform existing home-owners about this concept and assist potential homesteaders in navigating the property acquisition process with the city, county, or state. In addition, NDND could sell lots the organization owns at a nominal cost to homesteaders.



**Figure 7.5: Existing Detroit homesteads in the reinvention area**

Source: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007.



**Figure 7.6: An existing Detroit homestead in Brightmoor that includes a house and fenced-in vacant lots on both sides**

## *Create a community commons*

A community commons is “a tract of land owned or used jointly by the residents of a community,” similar to a town commons.<sup>6</sup> This concept builds on that of pocket parks, described in Chapter 6. A community commons would be a public space that residents could use as they wish. The consolidation of several vacant parcels could form a space large enough for a baseball or softball diamond, a social gathering space with picnic tables or a gazebo, a performance space, or even a place for local public art installations.



**Figure 7.7: A cultural celebration on a community commons**

Source: Barbara Bullock, VillageArts.com.

This initiative addresses concerns residents raised in community meetings. These include the desire for more recreation space and the community control of vacant property owned by absentee landlords.<sup>7</sup> A community organization, such as a neighborhood association or local church, could help determine the type of commons, define rules of use, maintain the space, and raise funds for infrastructure.

Creation of a community commons would be easiest using government- or NDND-owned lots. The owning agency or organization could lease the lots to the Brightmoor Alliance or another community organization to form the commons. A commons could be any size or shape residents desire. Because of this flexibility, a community commons could be built around occupied homes and would not require relocating residents.

North Philadelphia, a neighborhood in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was struggling when a local artist saw the potential vacant lots held. She began to clean them up on her own time, and soon other residents came out to help. These clean up efforts snowballed into painting murals and creating an “art park,” which became the pride of the community. This art park helped to spur other developments in the community such as more parks, a basketball court, and a job center.<sup>8</sup>

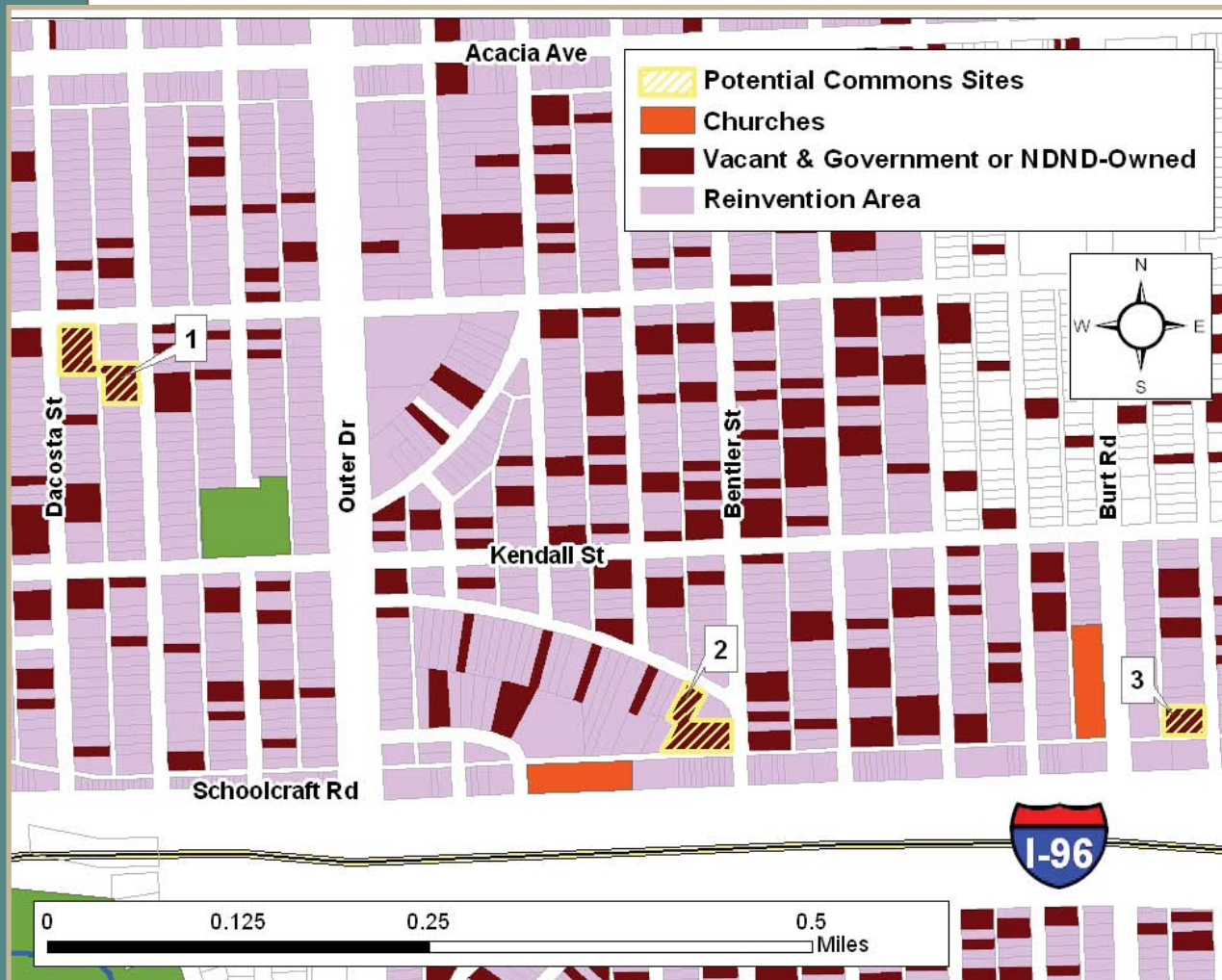


Figure 7.8 identifies three potential locations for community commons sites in the reinvention area. Site number one is located one block away from the Eliza Howell neighborhood, a strong residential area whose residents lack access to outdoor recreation areas such as soccer fields and baseball diamonds. The large swath of vacant land adjacent to this neighborhood could fill this need, and neighborhood residents could care for the space. Sites number two and three are located close to churches, Genesis New Beginning and Cathedral of Faith. These churches could help residents create the commons with assistance from the Brightmoor Alliance or NDND to acquire and lease vacant lots.

**Figure 7.8: Potential sites for a community commons in one portion of the reinvention area**

Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file and parks GIS layer, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.

## Strategy: Facilitate outside partnerships

A number of creative land uses could occur in the reinvention area with considerable capital investment and technical guidance. The following four concepts – urban agriculture, a recreation facility, an educational campus, and renewable energy – will require collaboration with private and public investors.

### *Promote urban agriculture*

Urban agriculture, also called urban farming, involves using vacant land for large scale production of crops, including food, flowers, and trees, depending on soil and climate conditions. Urban agriculture’s potential benefits include employing or engaging residents and selling fresh harvest directly to local customers.<sup>9</sup> The large amounts of vacant land in the reinvention area make urban agriculture possible in Brightmoor.

A number of small-scale agricultural initiatives exist in Detroit, driven by organizations such as the Greening of Detroit and coalitions like the Garden Resource Program Collaborative (GRPC).<sup>10</sup> Through the Detroit Agriculture Network (DAN), GRPC works to coordinate agricultural initiatives throughout the city by providing education, training, seed distribution, and information sharing.<sup>11</sup>

The exact types of agriculture that could succeed in Brightmoor have yet to be determined, though recent projects throughout Detroit indicate potential crops or products. In 2007, the Michigan State University Extension Service helped NDND plant a small potato patch in Eliza Howell Park that yielded enough potatoes to produce several dozen bags of potato chips that NDND distributed. Detroit’s Earth Works Garden produces honey in Detroit and nearby townships.<sup>12</sup> In addition, flower farming, or floriculture, is Michigan’s second largest cash commodity, generating over \$640 million in cash receipts in 2007.<sup>13</sup> These and other crops could be investigated by the Michigan State University Extension Service to see if they could be successful in Brightmoor.

Small Plot Intensive (SPIN) farming is an approach used to determine which crops to cultivate and sell locally for sites as small as a half-acre. By evaluating the local market, growing cycles, and soil conditions, participants can develop an optimal planting strategy.<sup>14</sup> Somerton Tanks Farm used the SPIN technique in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>15</sup> The Philadelphia Water Department owned land surrounding a local water tank and paid for annual lawn maintenance.<sup>16</sup> With financial support from the city and state as well as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, two farmers used the land surrounding the water tanks, a half-acre, to grow fruits and vegetables. They sold their harvest to restaurants and caterers and at farmer’s markets.<sup>17</sup> An economic feasibility analysis conducted at the end of 2007 identified the potential economic impact of ten farms similar to Somerton Tanks Farm in Philadelphia. The study projected annual sales of \$120,000, a total economic impact of \$2.5 million, and numerous new jobs created.<sup>18</sup>

Farming could occur on clusters of vacant properties currently owned by various government agencies or purchased for this purpose. Urban agriculture at a larger scale would require collaboration with a partner who understands farming and the business aspects of making urban agriculture economically feasible. The partner could be an entrepreneur or a corporation. A local organization such as a church or CDC could also spearhead urban agriculture with an outside partner. If urban agriculture is successful, it could expand to incorporate more lots, possibly involving the removal of streets and residential infrastructure such as streetlights and sidewalks and even the relocation of residents.

Other Detroit communities are taking advantage of the benefits of urban agriculture. Earth Works Garden on Detroit's eastside contains a three-parcel growing plot, a 2,200 square foot greenhouse, composting, and bee apiaries to educate youth and produce food. In operation since 1999, the farm works in partnership with the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and Gleaners Community Food Bank to provide fresh foods to needy families.<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 7.9: Earth Works Garden's seedlings greenhouse on Meldrum Street**

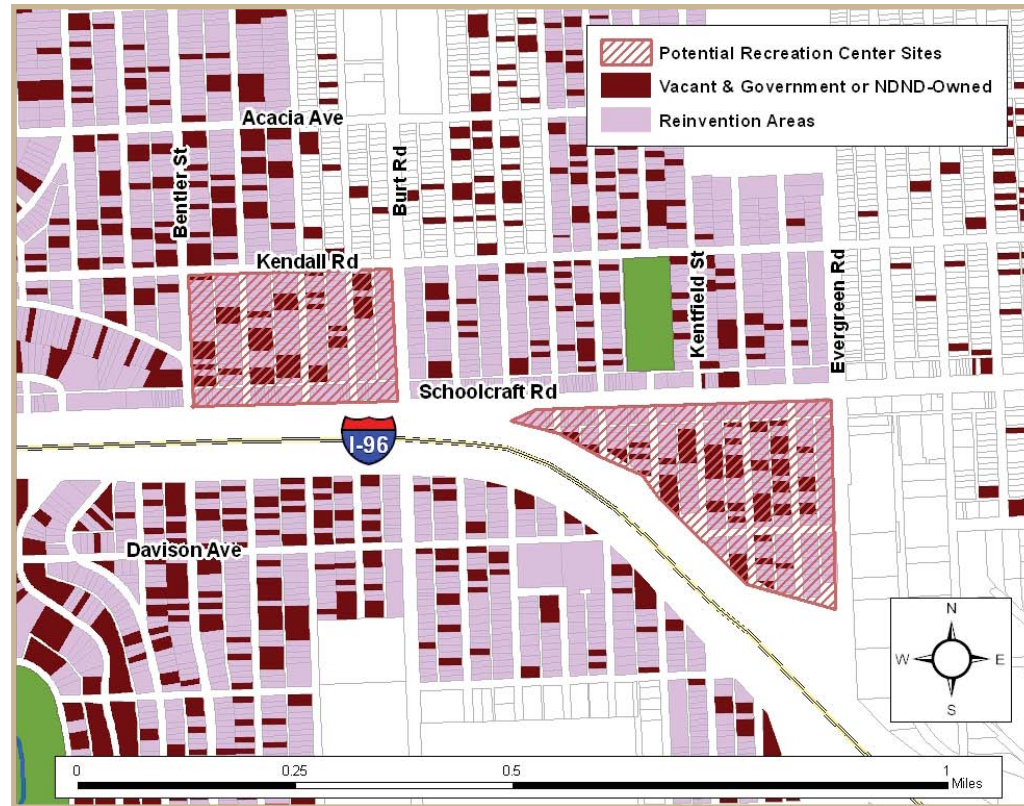
Source: [www.earth-works.org](http://www.earth-works.org).

## Attract a recreation facility

Brightmoor residents have consistently expressed enthusiasm for more and better recreation opportunities. Recreation centers help educate residents about physical well-being and promote activities to improve health and physical fitness. Due to the city's financial limitations, the creation of such a facility would require private investment. This section explores the feasibility and benefits of adding a privately-managed recreation center in Brightmoor.

Although Brightmoor has several parks and a community center, as well as a city-operated recreation center just outside the area, a new recreation center offering a variety of uses and activities could supplement these facilities and provide easily accessible recreation for residents of the central area. Brightmoor has few indoor recreation opportunities. Crowell Recreation Center, located just north of the Brightmoor boundary, is the closest indoor recreation facility. Individuals and families must travel to Redford Township for the nearest indoor tennis facility, at the YMCA, and three miles to Redford for the nearest ice rink.

The Detroit Recreation Department's Strategic Master Plan does not identify Brightmoor as an area to receive a new recreation facility (see Chapter 8). Brightmoor leaders could initiate an external partnership to develop a privately-owned recreation facility. Ease of access from I-96 and Telegraph Road will help bring potential users into Brightmoor from the surrounding region, including downtown Detroit, Redford Township, Livonia, Dearborn Heights, Taylor, and Southfield. The high volume of traffic on these roads makes Brightmoor a good candidate for a regional facility.



**Figure 7.10: Potential recreation facility sites along Schoolcraft Road**

Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file and parks GIS layer, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.



Potential Recreation Facility Sites and Considerations				
Possible location	Area (in acres)	Owner-occupied households to be relocated (estimate)	Rental households to be relocated (estimate)	Transportation access
On Schoolcraft between Evergreen and Kentfield	30	40	50	Access from I-96 from Evergreen and Bus 43
On Schoolcraft between Trinity and Bentler	23	30	30	Access from I-96 from Evergreen and Bus 43

**Table 7.1: Potential recreation facility sites and considerations**

Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; maps.live.com.

The size of recreation facilities varies. They can include indoor and outdoor facilities that can occupy up to 15 acres, or approximately four blocks in the reinvention area of Brightmoor.<sup>20</sup> However, outdoor sports fields for soccer, football, or track require significantly more than 15 acres. Uses that require less land include basketball courts, swimming facilities, a mini-golf course, and a go-kart track. Figure 7.7 identifies two potential locations for a large recreation facility along Schoolcraft Road. Depending on the size of a recreation facility, some residents may have to relocate. Table 7.1 lists the total area of each potential site, the number of households that would need to be relocated, and the ease of access.

Two limitations to a privately-owned recreation center are that it would create few jobs and some residents could not afford to use it. As few as five to ten full-time equivalent and 20 part-time employees can run a recreation facility.<sup>21</sup> User fees for recreation facilities can range from \$80 to \$100 per participant per sports season, which, for example, is about ten weeks for basketball or \$10 per week.<sup>22</sup> One way to deal with this issue would be to charge residents lower user fees but require outside visitors to pay the full price.

High Velocity Sports (HV Sports) is a recreation facility in Canton, Michigan. Teams play in basketball, dodgeball, flag football, indoor soccer, lacrosse, and volleyball inside the 110,000 square feet (quarter acre) facility. HV Sports also offers personal training, team building courses, summer camps, and sports clinics. A recreation facility that offers a variety of activities could be successful in Brightmoor.<sup>23</sup>

## *Build a high school*

A new high school in Brightmoor could serve the educational needs of neighborhood residents, provide new jobs, and address the desire for a local high school that residents expressed at community meetings. Given the cutbacks by Detroit Public Schools (DPS), a new school would require outside support.

At community meetings, residents expressed the desire for more educational opportunities for Brightmoor's children.<sup>24</sup> In particular, residents want a new high school to replace Redford High School on Grand River Avenue that closed in 2007. Despite the falling enrollments and budget constraints that led to the closure of several schools in the Brightmoor area, the need for a nearby secondary education facility exists. Brightmoor high school students in the Detroit Public Schools system primarily attend Cody High School on Cathedral Drive, four miles southeast of Brightmoor.<sup>25</sup> This school currently has an enrollment of 1,880 students,<sup>26</sup> more than the optimal size for a high school.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, eight elementary and middle schools that serve approximately 2,500 students operate in Brightmoor.<sup>28</sup> A new high school would alleviate some of the pressure on Cody High and keep local students in Brightmoor, close to their families and homes.

In addition to the educational benefits of having a high school, a Brightmoor campus could benefit the surrounding area by:

- Creating a centralized activity center for high school students and young adults, with after-school programs for music and athletics, for instance.
- Providing a venue for community arts, theater, or music.
- Coordinating with social service organizations to use the space after school hours for job-training and job-search activities for adults.

The size of the Brightmoor campus could vary, depending on the number of grades and the academic focus of the school. The current size trend for a new senior high school campus is at least 30 acres, or roughly six blocks, including sports facilities.<sup>29</sup> A focus that requires more space, such as a pilot school on environmental sustainability, may need even more land.



**Figure 7.11: Potential high school campus sites**

Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file and parks GIS layer, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.

Partners should consider transportation and access when determining the location of a new high school. Although students would primarily come from the Brightmoor area, students from nearby neighborhoods will likely attend the school as well. The school could use existing public transit routes, but this limits its location to somewhere along Fenkell, Schoolcraft, or Evergreen.

Figure 7.11 shows three potential locations for a new campus. As previously mentioned, the type of school would determine the size of the campus. Table 7.2 lists three possible locations, the total area for that campus, the number of households that may relocate, and access to transportation.

DPS, a charter group, a private school, or an organization working in partnership with a community college or university could manage the campus and school administration. A study of current and future student enrollment and educational needs could determine what type of high school would best suit Brightmoor students.

Potential High School Campus Sites and Considerations				
Possible location	Area (in acres)	Owner-occupied households to be relocated (estimate)	Rental households to be relocated (estimate)	Transportation access
Fenkell, from Lahser to Blackstone	40	40	75	Bus 18 on Fenkell
Outer Drive to Lyndon between Graydale and Bentler	33	30	80	One block south of Bus 18 on Fenkell. Next to the proposed Lyndon Greenway
Burt Road to Burgess between Acacia and Kendall	36	40	80	Bus 43 on Schoolcraft, one block away

**Table 7.2: Potential high school campus sites and considerations**

Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; maps.live.com.



**Figure 7.12: Detroit School of Arts**

Source: www.detroit.k12.mi.us.

Detroit School of Arts, a high school for approximately 500 students located near downtown, opened in August 2006. Through a partnership with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Detroit Public Television, media arts and communication programs supplement the regular high school curriculum. After school hours, Detroit Public Television uses the high school's production facilities.<sup>30</sup> A specialized high school in Brightmoor could similarly develop professional or job training skills for Brightmoor high school students.

Because renewable energy has the potential to address the energy crisis and create new jobs, many in Michigan have embraced it. Much of the excitement stems from the potential to adapt manufacturing infrastructure to produce solar panels or wind turbine blades or bearings. One resource for the Brightmoor Alliance is “Alternative Energy Directory: Version 2.0,” prepared by WWJ950 Newsradio staff after a half-day conference to highlight the opportunities for a “green Michigan.” They intend for it to be “a quick reference guide to companies committed to a green Michigan” and “to demonstrate the extensive resources and capabilities of Michigan’s alternative energy industry.” The staff updates the directory regularly.<sup>31</sup> The Brightmoor Alliance can use this directory to find partners for developing alternative energy production sites in the neighborhood.

## *Produce Renewable Energy*

Renewable energy production is the final strategy this plan presents for the reinvention areas. Methods of renewable energy production include biofuel, solar power, and wind power.<sup>32</sup> The sale of renewable energy whether electricity or biomass, could generate revenue for the producer. The impact of energy production on Brightmoor’s neighborhoods depend on the type of renewable energy produced. This section describes the potential benefits and the feasibility of different methods of renewable energy production in Brightmoor.

In Michigan, renewable energy is gaining popularity as an economic development tool. Governor Jennifer Granholm’s administration aims to diversify the state’s economy by expanding renewable energy production.<sup>33</sup> Detroit, along with the rest of southeast Michigan, boasts a skilled workforce, strong production infrastructure, and the globally connected transportation routes necessary to become a major player in the modern energy economy.<sup>34</sup> Brightmoor could tap into the heightened attention and activity given to this new sector but only with assistance from an external partner, because of the intensive nature of alternative energy production and the high initial capital investments required. Biofuel and solar power are feasible for Brightmoor, while other types, such as wind power, are not possible.<sup>35</sup>

### **Biofuel Production**

Much of the renewable energy research in Michigan focuses on biofuel production. Fuels made from biomass are currently the only clean, renewable energy source that could significantly decrease dependency on petroleum for transportation fuel. Biomass describes any organic material made from plants or animals, including wastes from the agriculture and forestry industries, municipal solid wastes, industrial wastes, and crops grown solely for energy purposes.<sup>36</sup> Funding is available to research and develop biomass production sites for renewable energy production.<sup>37</sup> Biomass plants such as soybeans and grasses could grow in Brightmoor.

Producing plants for biofuel production could reuse large portions of vacant land while providing economic development and job opportunities in Brightmoor. Large scale production of biomass plants would require land assembly. An organizing partner, such as the Biomass Conversion Research Laboratory at Michigan State University, could act as a research and education outreach partner with the Brightmoor Alliance to guide decisions about biomass fuel production in Brightmoor.<sup>38</sup>

## Solar Energy

Solar energy uses sunlight to produce energy. Solar energy sites, sometimes referred to as “brightfields,” can be as small as an acre or can use large tracts of land.<sup>39</sup> Solar energy requires that the land have little tree cover. In Brightmoor, solar panels could be placed at ground level on blocks with large amounts of publicly owned land or installed on roofs of vacant buildings, such as the former Hubert School. Panel installation can be configured around existing owner-occupied lots for a smaller scale project. A concentrated area of solar panels would allow for efficient maintenance and operation, but producers could locate multiple sites throughout the reinvention area.

Forming an energy cooperative is one possible organizing tool the Brightmoor Alliance and partners could use. Cooperatives use and sell solar energy produced on their own land.<sup>40</sup> One example is the Energy Cooperative Association of Pennsylvania, which purchases energy produced by member-owned photovoltaic systems.<sup>41</sup> This guarantees that the members can sell the energy they produce.

The price of brightfield installation varies with size. A larger brightfield, such as one in Brockton, Massachusetts, can cost \$3 million dollars to install. A public-private agency, the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, paid for two-thirds of the installation, and the U.S. Department of Energy covered the remaining third.<sup>42</sup> The Massachusetts site produces enough energy for 71 homes annually, with revenues of approximately \$130,000 each year. In the State of Michigan, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth Energy Office works with developers to help fund solar demonstration projects, such as the Urban Options Energy and Environmental Demonstration House in East Lansing, Michigan, and could be a source of funding for a brightfield project in Brightmoor.<sup>43</sup>



**Figure 7.13: A brightfield in Brockton, Massachusetts**

Source: [www.blog.thesietch.org](http://www.blog.thesietch.org).

Starting in Chicago in 1999, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) began the Brightfields Initiative to assist local governments and industry to reuse brownfields for solar energy production. Brownfields and other contaminated sites are ideal for solar energy technologies and photovoltaic systems because the panels can exist on the sites with little maintenance and without disrupting the site.<sup>44</sup> On a 21-acre brownfield in Chicago, four acres became solar panel hosts, while the other 17 were redeveloped as a solar panel manufacturing facility. The city gained 100 manufacturing and installation jobs. Because of Chicago’s success, other cities such as Cape Charles, Virginia; Stamford, Connecticut; Los Angeles, California; and Minneapolis, Minnesota; started similar projects.<sup>45</sup> Detroit environmental activists have expressed interest in this initiative, and the Brightmoor Alliance could contact them. Unfortunately, the DOE has stopped supporting the initiative, but the lessons learned and best practices can provide the Alliance with significant help.

## *Resident Relocation*

One challenge to large-scale land use changes is that they could involve relocating residents and closing streets within the reinvention area. This might lessen the burden on city services, such as garbage pick-up, street light maintenance, and police protection. However, moving families would be difficult because of emotional and financial attachments.<sup>46</sup> This section describes three possible ways to handle relocation.

**Financial incentives to sell.** A government agency or private developer could offer owners a buyout for their properties. This option could be appealing for landlords who consider rental properties an investment and are not emotionally invested in the area. Homeowners may also find this option appealing since the money can help them move elsewhere. Buyout offers occur in other cities. In Youngstown, Ohio, the city government offered \$50,000 for residents to move out of South Side, a neighborhood with significant amounts of vacancy.<sup>47</sup> In New Orleans, the state offered buyouts of as much as \$150,000 to owners of properties in flood-prone areas hit by Hurricane Katrina.<sup>48</sup> The amount of the offer would depend on the value of the property.

**Trade for a comparable property.** If a comparable home, owned by the city, state, or county, exists in another part of Brightmoor, the household could move to that property. Relocating into a new NDND home could be another means of trading properties, allowing the household to move into a modern home. Trading properties could result in little to no monetary transaction, only a change of property title. However, if residents moved into NDND homes, some funding source would have to pay for the cost of the new home, whether a private developer or a government agency. This strategy would both free up land in the reinvention area for large-scale redevelopment and increase density in other sections of Brightmoor, such as the revitalization areas.

**Relocation of existing houses.** The third alternative is to move an existing home to a vacant lot elsewhere in Brightmoor. A house may have sentimental value for the homeowner, preventing the homeowner from wanting to move.<sup>49</sup> The cost of moving a house will depend on the distance of the move and the size of house.<sup>50</sup> Structural integrity of the home will have to be verified before and after the move to ensure the household's safety.

These alternatives would increase the clustering of homes in order to provide better city services and create stronger neighborhoods. The scattered houses of the reinvention area do not generate enough tax revenue to pay for good city services such as policing and trash pick-up<sup>51</sup> nor does the area foster a neighborhood feeling. Buying residents out, trading properties, or physically moving existing houses would help deal with the strain on city services and strengthen other neighborhoods. Detroit could follow the example of New Orleans, where the city has targeted investment in strategic locations to spur private investment, while encouraging resident relocation out of flood-prone areas.<sup>52</sup>

Results of relocation efforts elsewhere have been mixed. In Youngstown, Ohio, the city wanted 100 residents to relocate in order to reduce the burden on city services. Most would not accept the city's offer of \$50,000. These relocations were to areas outside the residents' current neighborhoods.<sup>53</sup> A new bridge to Canada, proposed in southwest Detroit, would require around 350 houses, seven churches, three historic structures, and 56 businesses to relocate. Some residents oppose this proposal, citing pollution and relocation concerns, while others support it, saying it will bring needed jobs. Mediating these interests requires city leadership.<sup>54</sup> The Brightmoor Alliance and their partners would have to address this concern and would most likely need to seek additional help or funding from other sources, if the relocation of residents becomes a possibility.

This chapter described possible ways to reinvent the center of Brightmoor, using a range of opportunities from residential to industrial, and including both community- and externally-driven options. The next chapter offers strategies to enliven and expand Brightmoor's parks.

## Notes

- 1 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007. This figure was determined by averaging the state equalized values (SEV) of all single-family residential parcels in the reinvention areas and in Brightmoor, and then doubling that figure to estimate market value. Commercial, multi-family, industrial, vacant, and non-taxable properties were excluded from the analysis.
- 2 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007. A property was determined to be owner-occupied if, 1.) It has a single-family residential structure on it; vacant land and commercial, industrial and multi-family properties were excluded; 2.) The property address and taxpayer address match.
- 3 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007; Detroit Planning and Development Department, City Properties Inventory System, 2006; Wayne County Inventory, 2005; Wayne County, foreclosure, unsold and forfeited items, 2006; Wayne County Property Inventory, pre-2005.
- 4 Tobias Armbrorst, Daniel D'Oca, and Georgeen Theodore. "Improve Your Lot!" 2007, [www.interboropartners.com/stage.php?where=Improve\\_Your\\_Lot&page=1](http://www.interboropartners.com/stage.php?where=Improve_Your_Lot&page=1) (accessed April 24, 2008).
- 5 Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007. Homesteads were determined by identifying contiguous properties with the same taxpayer name and a taxpayer address that matched the property address.
- 6 Dictionary.com, "Commons," [dictionary.reference.com/browse/commons](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/commons) (accessed April 23, 2008).
- 7 Brightmoor Community Meetings, Detroit: February 5, 2008, and March 18, 2008.
- 8 "Make a Difference in Your Own Backyard," Project for Public Spaces. [www.pps.org/info/newsletter/august2007/your\\_own\\_backyard](http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/august2007/your_own_backyard). (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 9 Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security, "What is Urban Agriculture?" [www.ruaf.org/node/512](http://www.ruaf.org/node/512) (accessed April 26, 2008).
- 10 The Greening of Detroit, "Our Mission," [www.greeningofdetroit.com/6\\_0\\_our\\_mission.php](http://www.greeningofdetroit.com/6_0_our_mission.php) (accessed April 26, 2008).
- 11 Detroit Agriculture Network, "Garden Resource Program Collaborative," [www.detroitagriculture.org/Default.htm](http://www.detroitagriculture.org/Default.htm) (accessed April 26, 2008).
- 12 EarthWorks, "Our EarthWorks Projects," [www.earth-works.org/Projects\\_Page.html](http://www.earth-works.org/Projects_Page.html) (accessed April 26, 2008).
- 13 David Kleweno, "Michigan 2006-2007 Highlights," US Department of Agriculture, October 11, 2007.
- 14 Roxanne Christensen, "SPIN-Farming: advancing urban agriculture from pipe dream to populist movement," *Sustainability: Science, Practice, & Policy* 3(2):57-60, 2007, [ejournal.nbii.org/archives/](http://ejournal.nbii.org/archives/)



- vol3iss2/communityessay.christensen.html (accessed April 26, 2008).
- 15 Somerton Tanks Farm, "Farming in the Hood," [www.somertontanksfarm.org/about/](http://www.somertontanksfarm.org/about/) (accessed April 26, 2008).
  - 16 Kevin Parker, "Progressive Agriculture," Cuisine, October/November 2003, [www.somertontanksfarm.org/news/docs/progress.pdf](http://www.somertontanksfarm.org/news/docs/progress.pdf) (accessed April 26, 2008) 26-29.
  - 17 Somerton Tanks Farm, "Somerton Tanks Farm Newsletter - Winter 2006," [www.somertontanksfarm.org/news/docs/STF-Newsletter-2006.pdf](http://www.somertontanksfarm.org/news/docs/STF-Newsletter-2006.pdf) (accessed April 26, 2008).
  - 18 Urban Partners, "Farming in Philadelphia: Feasibility Analysis and Next Steps," Institute for Innovations in Local Farming, December 2007.
  - 19 EarthWorks, "Our EarthWorks Projects," [www.earth-works.org/Projects\\_Page.html](http://www.earth-works.org/Projects_Page.html) (accessed 25 March 2008).
  - 20 WideWorld Sports Center in Ann Arbor, MI is on 15 acres of land. WideWorld Sports Center, "About WWSC," [www.wideworldsports.com/about.html](http://www.wideworldsports.com/about.html) (accessed April 6, 2008).
  - 21 High Velocity Sports in Canton, MI employs 7 full-time, 20 part-time, and 65 contractors. HV Sports employee, interview by Tim Parham, April 7, 2008. Other information can be retrieved from: [www.hvsports.com/Default.aspx?tabid=29](http://www.hvsports.com/Default.aspx?tabid=29).
  - 22 At High Velocity Sports in Canton, MI, a season is the duration of a league. For example, a basketball league season is 10 weeks long. HV Sports employee, interview by Tim Parham, April 7, 2008. Other information can be retrieved from: [www.hvsports.com/Default.aspx?tabid=29](http://www.hvsports.com/Default.aspx?tabid=29).
  - 23 High Velocity Sports, "About HV Sports," [www.hvsports.com/Default.aspx?tabid=29](http://www.hvsports.com/Default.aspx?tabid=29) (Accessed April 27, 2008).
  - 24 Brightmoor Community Meeting, Detroit: February 5, 2008.
  - 25 Detroit Public Schools, "Map of School Locations," Detroit Public Schools, [www.detroit.k12.mi.us/schools/map\\_SchoolLocations.pdf](http://www.detroit.k12.mi.us/schools/map_SchoolLocations.pdf) (accessed April 19, 2008).
  - 26 Great Schools, Inc., "Cody High School Quick Facts," Great Schools, Inc., [www.greatschools.net/modperl/browse\\_school/mi/1082](http://www.greatschools.net/modperl/browse_school/mi/1082) (accessed April 19, 2008).
  - 27 Joe Nathan and Sheena Thao, "Smaller, Safer, Saner Successful Schools," National Clearing House for Educational Facilities, [www.ncef.org/pubs/saneschools.pdf](http://www.ncef.org/pubs/saneschools.pdf) (accessed April 19, 2008).
  - 28 Great Schools, Inc., "Find and Compare," Great Schools, Inc., [www.greatschools.net/](http://www.greatschools.net/) (accessed April 6, 2008).
  - 29 Janell Weihs, "School Site Size - How Many Acres Are Necessary?" Council of Educational Facility Planners International IssueTrak, September 2003, [www.cefpi.org/pdf/state\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.cefpi.org/pdf/state_guidelines.pdf) (accessed April 19, 2008).
  - 30 David Sokol, "Culture Club: Two Distinct Curricula are Skillfully Choreographed to Foster a Beehive of Professional-Level Arts Activity," Architectural Record, [archrecord.construction.com/schools/0701\\_CS3\\_detroit-1.asp](http://archrecord.construction.com/schools/0701_CS3_detroit-1.asp) (accessed April 24, 2008).
  - 31 Staff, "Alternative Energy Directory: Version 2.0," WWJ Newsradio 950, April 22, 2008, [www.wwj.com/pages/831997.php](http://www.wwj.com/pages/831997.php) (accessed April 30, 2008).
  - 32 U.S. Department of Energy, "U.S. Department of Energy: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Home Page," [www.eere.energy.gov/](http://www.eere.energy.gov/) (accessed April 5, 2008).
  - 33 Andy Guy, "Granhholm Touts Clean-Energy Jobs," Michigan Land Use Institute, [www.swiftwindturbine.com/pdf/CE\\_and\\_Swift.pdf](http://www.swiftwindturbine.com/pdf/CE_and_Swift.pdf) (accessed April 22, 2008).
  - 34 In April 2008, Gov. Granholm announced the second competition for the 21st Century Jobs Fund awards designed to diversify Michigan's economy and create jobs. Applicants for the fund compete for up to \$30 million to develop businesses in the areas of alternative energy, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and homeland security and defense. Bridget Beckman, "Granhholm Announces Second 21st Century Jobs Fund Competition to Diversify Michigan's Economy, Create Jobs," Michigan Economic Development Corporation, [www.themedc.org/News-Media/Press-Releases/Detail.aspx?ContentId=c0deadaa-01bc-4fe6-a7da-99580a6ba3bf](http://www.themedc.org/News-Media/Press-Releases/Detail.aspx?ContentId=c0deadaa-01bc-4fe6-a7da-99580a6ba3bf) (accessed April 22, 2008).
  - 35 Wind resource potential of the Detroit area is considered "poor." However, as research and design mechanics of wind production advance, this may be a potential future option for Brightmoor. Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, "Wind Resource Maps: Wind Power Density at 50 Meters," [www.michigan.gov/documents/windpower3-1-1pwr50\\_105253\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/windpower3-1-1pwr50_105253_7.pdf) (accessed April 5, 2008); Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, "Michigan Wind Energy Resource Maps," [www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-25676\\_25774-101765--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-25676_25774-101765--,00.html) (accessed April 5, 2008).
  - 36 U.S. Department of Energy Biomass Program, "Biomass FAQs," [www1.eere.energy.gov/biomass/biomass\\_basics\\_faqs.html](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/biomass/biomass_basics_faqs.html) (accessed April 22, 2008).
  - 37 The U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to allocate \$18.4 million in grants in biomass research, development and demonstration projects for fiscal years 2007-2009. Biomass Research

- & Development Initiative, "USDA, DOE to invest up to \$18.4 million for Biomass Research, Development and Demonstration Projects," USDA, DOE, [www.brdisolutions.com/default.aspx](http://www.brdisolutions.com/default.aspx) (accessed April 22, 2008).
- 38 Biomass Conversion Research Laboratory, "Home," Michigan State University, [www.everythingbiomass.org/](http://www.everythingbiomass.org/) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 39 RenewableEnergyAccess.com, "PVone Enables a Florida Brownfield to Produce Solar Energy," RenewableEnergyWorld.com, [www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/story?id=47428](http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/story?id=47428) (accessed April 5, 2008).
- 40 Green Power Network, "Green Power Marketing," U.S. Department of Energy, [www.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/markets/marketing.shtml?page=2&companyid=244](http://www.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/markets/marketing.shtml?page=2&companyid=244) (accessed April 22, 2008).
- 41 The Energy Cooperative, "Sun Provides Electricity: Local Company Provides Financial Incentive," The Energy Cooperative, June 5, 2002, [www.theenergyco-op.com/news\\_rel\\_solar.htm](http://www.theenergyco-op.com/news_rel_solar.htm) (accessed April 25, 2008).
- 42 Mike Baard, "Turn Around, Brightfield: Hard-knock New England city welcomes region's largest solar installation," Grist.com, [www.grist.org/news/maindish/2006/10/27/baard/index.html](http://www.grist.org/news/maindish/2006/10/27/baard/index.html) (accessed April 5, 2008).
- 43 Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, "Solar Tour of Michigan," [www.michigan.gov/documents/CIS\\_EO\\_Solar\\_Tour\\_of\\_Michigan\\_94202\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/CIS_EO_Solar_Tour_of_Michigan_94202_7.pdf) (accessed April 5, 2008).
- 44 Penny Adams, "Energy Department Announces National Initiative to Redevelop Brownfields with Renewable Energy," US Environmental Protection Agency, 1999, [www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/html-doc/brightfd.htm](http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/html-doc/brightfd.htm) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 45 Betsy Harter, "Chicago Pioneers Brightfields Conversions," WasteAge.com, November 1, 2000, [wasteage.com/mag/waste\\_chicago\\_pioneers\\_brightfields/](http://wasteage.com/mag/waste_chicago_pioneers_brightfields/) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 46 Les Christie, "You can't pay them enough to leave," CNNMoney.com, April 24, 2008, [money.cnn.com/2008/04/15/real\\_estate/Youngstown\\_plan\\_roadblock/index.htm?cnn=yes](http://money.cnn.com/2008/04/15/real_estate/Youngstown_plan_roadblock/index.htm?cnn=yes) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 47 Christie, 2008.
- 48 Michelle Krupa, "Planners question strategic decisions for N.O.," Times-Picayune, April 16, 2007, [www.nola.com/news/t-p/frontpage/index.ssf?/base/news-8/1176701927231600.xml&coll=1&thispage=1](http://www.nola.com/news/t-p/frontpage/index.ssf?/base/news-8/1176701927231600.xml&coll=1&thispage=1) (accessed May 2, 2008).
- 49 Christie, 2008.
- 50 "Expert House Movers," [www.experthousemovers.com/index.html](http://www.experthousemovers.com/index.html) (accessed May 3, 2008).
- 51 Stephen Henderson, "Smaller, better: To survive, improve city must find ways to condense population, Detroit Free Press, April 20, 2008, [www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080420/COL33/804200547](http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080420/COL33/804200547) (accessed April 20, 2008).
- 52 Krupa, 2006.
- 53 Christie, 2008.
- 54 Darren Nichols, "New crossing gets praise-Meeting on international bridge proposal hears from Delray residents who say upheaval may have benefits," The Detroit News, March 20, 2008, The University of Michigan NewsBank subscription service, [infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AWNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=11F9999E5B8F0208&p\\_docnum=3&p\\_queryname=2](http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=11F9999E5B8F0208&p_docnum=3&p_queryname=2) (accessed May 3, 2008).



Parks provide residents with places for recreation, relaxation, and social events. Neighborhood parks such as Eliza Howell and Stoepel are major assets to Brightmoor, and several current parks initiatives aim to improve existing parks and to create new ones, such as the Lyndon Greenway. Residents desire safer, better connected, and more active parks.<sup>1</sup> This chapter describes the condition of the parks, current park initiatives, residents' concerns, and strategies to achieve the goals laid out in Chapter 3.

Brightmoor residents have access to a great deal of open space and park land. Twelve parks of different sizes and offering different activities exist in Brightmoor (see Figure 8.1). Eliza Howell, a 250-acre park located on the western edge of Brightmoor, could become a major asset to the area. The park has football and baseball fields, playground equipment, and tennis courts. Residents and people from outside the neighborhood also use Eliza Howell as an unofficial dog park and golf driving range. The Rouge River flows through Eliza Howell. Currently, a combined sewer overflow basin on the south side of the park allows untreated sewage to enter the river. However, the Upper Rouge Tunnel, scheduled to be complete in 2016, will help keep the river clean.<sup>2</sup> Crowell Recreation Center,



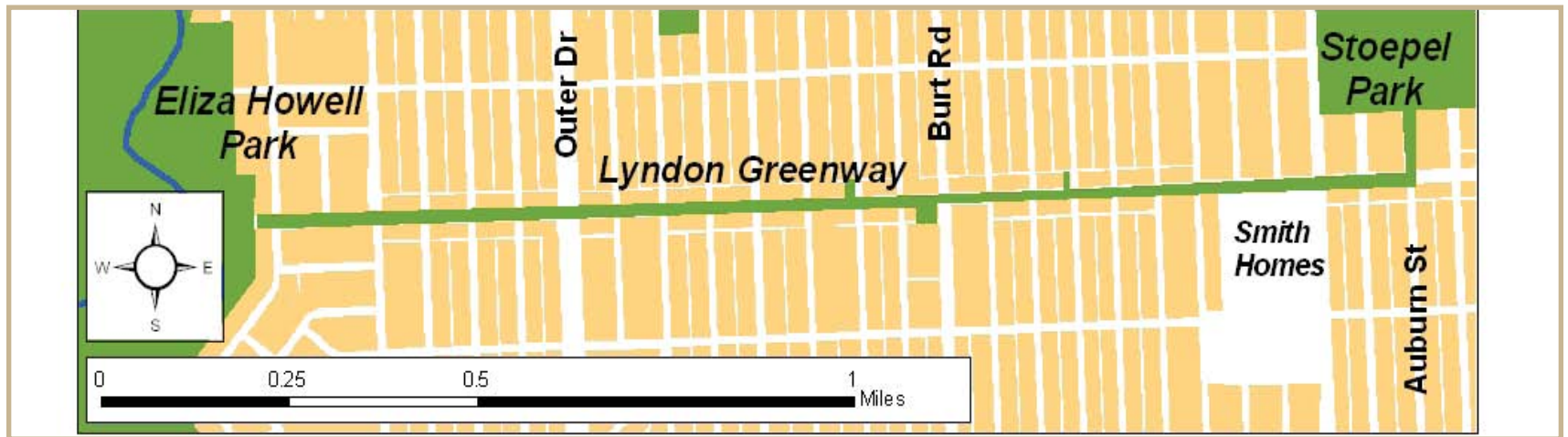
**Figure 8.1: Parks in the Brightmoor area**

Sources: ESRI; Donna Erickson Consulting, Inc.; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file and parks GIS layer, 2007.

to the north, is also slated for improvements in the near future.<sup>3</sup> Stoepel is a well-maintained and actively used park located on the east side of Brightmoor.

The Detroit Recreation Department's Strategic Master Plan and the Lyndon Greenway Plan are two major parks and recreation initiatives that affect Brightmoor. The Strategic Master Plan outlines major reinvestments scheduled to occur over the next 20 years in each of Detroit's parks and recreation facilities. Brightmoor's Optimist-Stout Park and Crowell Recreation Center are scheduled for major improvements during the summer of 2008, and Hope Park is slated to receive a new playfield.<sup>4</sup> Commissioned by Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, the Lyndon Greenway Plan proposes a pedestrian and bicycle corridor that would connect Stoepel Park to Eliza Howell Park along Lyndon Avenue and establish an entrance to Eliza Howell at the western end of Lyndon (see Figure 8.2). The plan proposes benches, street lights, trees, sidewalk improvements, and pocket parks. Each of these plans will benefit Brightmoor, the former by improving existing parks, and the latter by connecting two of Brightmoor's largest and most important parks.<sup>5</sup>

According to residents and the Strategic Master Plan, Brightmoor's parks are in fair or poor condition.<sup>6</sup> They lack adequate lighting, are difficult to access, offer few programmed activities, and have a reputation for being unsafe. These factors



**Figure 8.2: The proposed Lyndon Greenway**

Sources: Environmental Research Systems Institute, ESRI; Donna Erickson Consulting, Inc.; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file and parks GIS layer, 2007.

keep many residents from using the parks. Despite these deterrents, residents indicated that they value Brightmoor's park space and would like to have more parks closer to their homes, with better lighting, security, and programming.<sup>7</sup> Crowell Recreation Center, just north of the Brightmoor Alliance boundary, is the only indoor recreation center nearby. Like many of the parks in Brightmoor, it is currently in poor condition.

Despite their challenges, the parks in Brightmoor are assets. The blocks surrounding Eliza Howell, Stoepel, Rockdale-Kendall, and Riordan Parks have higher housing values and home ownership rates as well as homes that are well-maintained (see Figure 8.3). National studies have shown that people with sufficient access to parks, who visit them often and participate in activities during their visits, generally have less need of medical care.<sup>8</sup> Health benefits include lower rates of high blood pressure, depression, and stress.<sup>9</sup>

The strategies described in this chapter aim to preserve existing open space, increase park use, and create connections between parks and residents.

## Park and Recreation Improvement Strategies

### Encourage activity in the parks

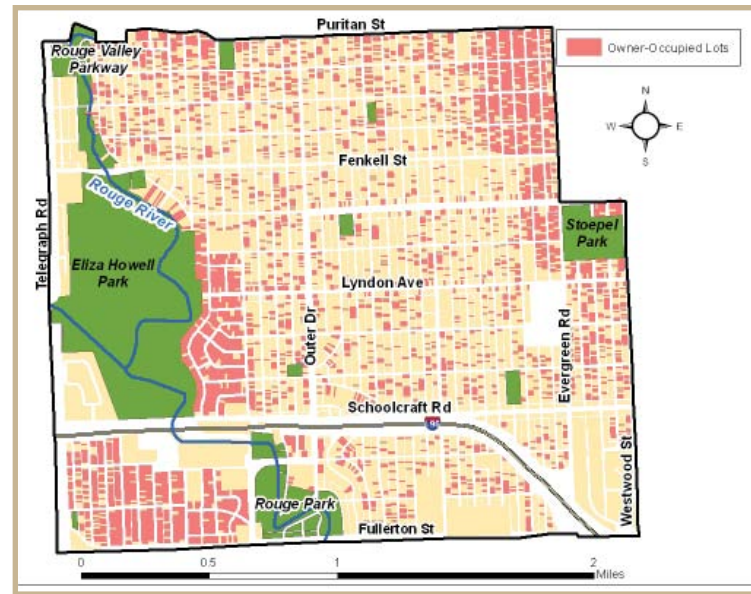
- Support additional security near parks
- Coordinate park programming to support neighborhood initiatives that encourage interaction with nature
- Make Eliza Howell Park a regional draw

### Expand green space and create new parks

- Add nearby vacant lots to parks
- Create new park space in underserved residential areas

### Create connections between the parks and the neighborhoods

- Develop the Lyndon Greenway
- Create a new entrance into Eliza Howell Park at the end of Lyndon Street
- Encourage infrastructure improvements that enable people to walk and bike



**Figure 8.3: Concentrations of owner-occupied homes near the parks**

Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, 2007 and parks GIS layer, 2007.

## **Strategy: Encourage activity in the parks**

Creating new activity in the parks invites residents to engage in recreation, relaxation, and socialization. Many parks exist throughout Brightmoor but currently appear to be underused. Methods for increasing or creating new activity in the parks include supporting additional security near parks, coordinating neighborhood initiatives with parks programming, and making Eliza Howell Park a regional draw.

### ***Support additional security near parks***

When asked what would make them use the parks more, many residents responded that safety was their primary concern.<sup>10</sup> To make the parks safer, community organizations could lobby the Detroit Police Department to add more patrols in and near the parks. In addition, residents could form a Citizens Radio Patrol<sup>11</sup> or organize CB patrol groups to monitor the parks and reduce illegal and unsafe activities.

For Clark Park in southwest Detroit, volunteers have made all the difference. In a park once known for its rape statistics, gang activity, and arson in nearby neighborhoods, volunteer safety patrols and an increased police presence have helped this park become a community center.<sup>12</sup> The park now hosts a summer sports program that teaches baseball, softball, golf, and tennis; teaches computer literacy courses; and has an intramural ice hockey league in the winter.<sup>13</sup>

Other organizations have been successful in working with local governments to improve parks. In Hartford, Connecticut, the Bushnell Park Foundation worked to raise funds to make improvements to Bushnell Park. The Foundation started with a master plan, then improved the entryways to attract more visitors, upgraded lighting to improve safety, and programmed jazz and other festivals. Nearby schools now use the park as an outdoor classroom for math, history, science, and the arts. The park receives about one million visitors a year, up 20 percent since before the improvements.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Coordinate park programming to support neighborhood initiatives that encourage interaction with nature***

City staff and community leaders can work together to encourage and sustain activity in Brightmoor's parks. Numerous organizations in Detroit already are working in Brightmoor to use the parks in creative ways. For example, Michigan State University Extension Service planted a potato patch in Eliza Howell Park that not only brought residents into the park on a regular basis to tend the potatoes but also provided a productive and fun activity. Community organizations could host activities in the parks, from church picnics to softball and soccer leagues. Community organizations could also organize "how-to" sessions such as how to build a raised bed for a community garden, spread mulch, or plant a tree properly. They could even start walking groups in the parks, as the Healthy Environments Partnership did in the summer of 2007 along Lyndon Avenue.<sup>14</sup> Creating connections between local organizations and the parks will raise the parks' visibility, improve their appearance, and attract more residents.

## *Make Eliza Howell Park a regional draw*

Eliza Howell Park has the potential to become a center of recreation not only for Brightmoor residents but also for residents of surrounding communities. Its proximity to Interstate 96 and Telegraph Road makes the park easily accessible to visitors from outside Brightmoor. By encouraging or organizing activities in Eliza Howell, the Brightmoor Alliance can help attract visitors from the region without compromising access for residents. The park's facilities could be expanded to include:

- Restrooms and water fountains
- A visitors' center, information kiosk or park ranger station
- Pavilions with picnic tables and barbecue pits

Larger scale investment in Eliza Howell Park would help make it a regional attraction. Possible activities include:

- A water or splash park
- A dog run or enclosed dog park
- A nature preserve with an education center
- Bike trails
- A disc golf course
- An amphitheater or space for performances

The Brightmoor Alliance could suggest to the Detroit Recreation Department that they partner with Wayne County Parks or private developers to construct these facilities.



**Figure 8.4: Chandler Park**  
Source: [chandlerparkonline.com](http://chandlerparkonline.com).

In 1998, Wayne County Parks redeveloped a portion of Chandler Park, owned by the City of Detroit, to include a water park. The county operates and maintains the water park with a lease agreement from the city for \$1 per year. The county charges a user fee to help cover the operation costs of the facilities while the Detroit Recreation Department maintains the grounds of the rest of the park. Chandler Park illustrates a strong example of a county-city partnership can create new activity and attract new patrons to a Detroit park.<sup>16</sup>



## Strategy: Expand green space and create new parks

Creatively incorporating vacant land as park space benefits neighborhood residents not only by providing them with additional places to exercise, relax, socialize, and enjoy the fresh air, but also by removing vacant lots. Although Brightmoor has a number of existing parks, the parks are not evenly distributed throughout Brightmoor. Opportunities to expand green space using vacant land will serve residents' desire for more park space.

### *Add nearby vacant lots to parks*

Vacant lots adjacent to Eliza Howell and Rouge Valley Parkway could be integrated into these parks. Much of the surrounding land is either vacant or has derelict housing and is reverting back to a natural state. This strategy could increase access for area residents who are cut off from the parks because no bridge crosses the river. Figure 8.5 and 8.6 identify vacant properties adjacent to existing parks.



**Figure 8.5 and 8.6: Areas that could become part of the parks**  
Source: ESRI; Detroit Planning and Development Department, parks GIS layer, 2007; maps.live.com.

Figure 8.7 shows an example of vacant land already being used as park space in Brightmoor.

### *Create new park space in residential areas*

The Recreation Department's Strategic Master Plan describes creating new parks in under-served areas, but no new parks are planned for Brightmoor.<sup>17</sup> As an alternative, residents or community groups can convert vacant lots into pocket parks (see Chapter 6).



**Figure 8.7: A vacant lot with playground equipment next to Rouge Park**

## Strategy: Create connections between parks and neighborhoods

Creating connections to the parks enhances residents' access to parks and recreational areas, allowing residents greater use of the parks. The following strategies aim to improve connections between parks and among different parts of Brightmoor.

### Develop the Lyndon Greenway

The Lyndon Greenway Plan proposes a series of improvements along Lyndon Avenue to encourage physical activity.<sup>18</sup> The vision is for the Lyndon Greenway to become a pedestrian and bicycle friendly route that connects Stoepel and Eliza Howell Parks. The plan recommends incorporating vacant lots, particularly corner lots, into the greenway as pocket parks, which can become demonstration parks for native plants or butterfly gardens.<sup>19</sup> Installing public art exhibits, information panels, trash receptacles, and signs and improving lighting along the greenway would encourage its use. These improvements will reinforce a physical connection between Eliza Howell, the neighborhood, and Stoepel Park.<sup>20</sup>

The Healthy Environments Partnership (HEP) encourages using the Lyndon Greenway, once built, to increase residents' physical activity levels. Through the "Walk Your Heart to Health" program in 2007, HEP organized walking groups and established safe walking routes in parks and throughout Brightmoor. The Lyndon Greenway has the potential to help residents improve their health by having a safe corridor to walk through. Figure 8.8 shows HEP's walking routes within the neighborhood.<sup>21</sup>

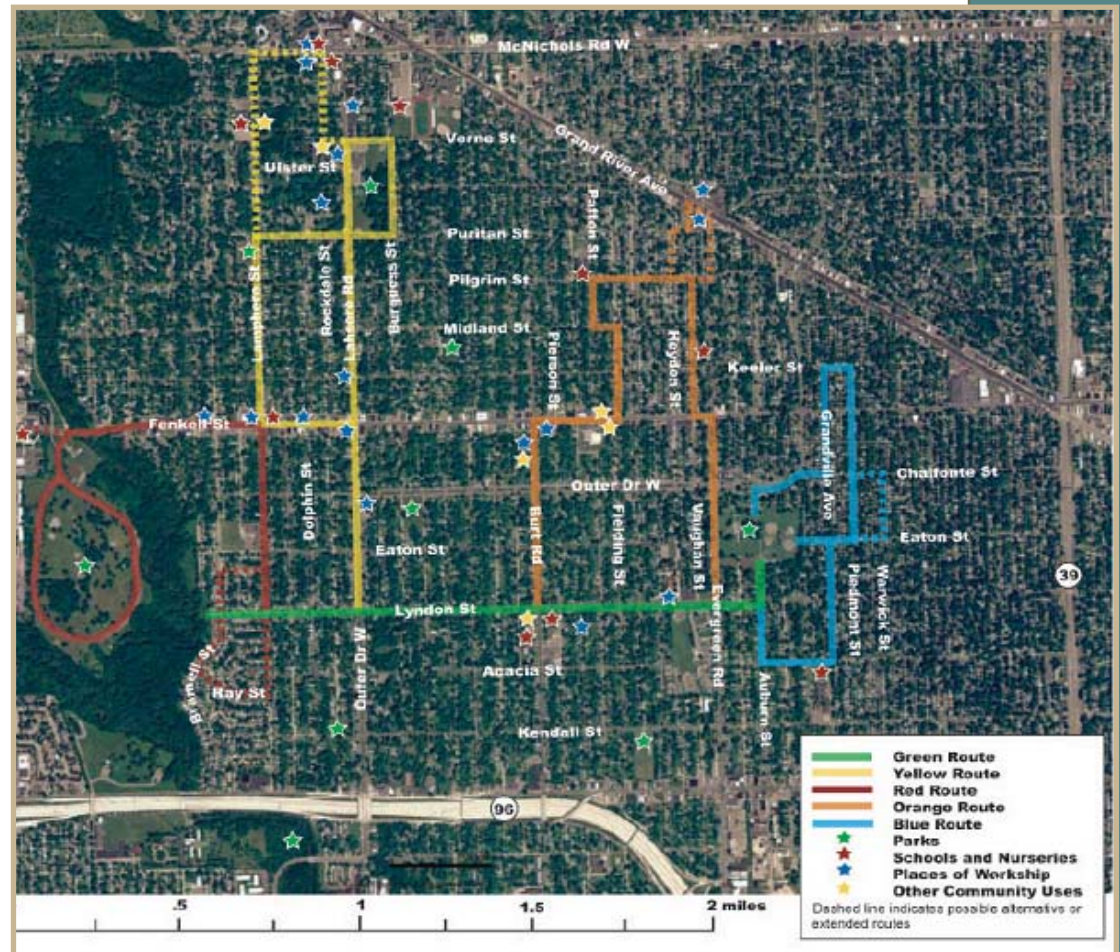


Figure 8.8: HEP walking routes

Source: Healthy Environments Partnership.

*Create a new entrance to Eliza Howell Park at the end of Lyndon Avenue*

Eliza Howell's main entrances at the north and south accommodate vehicles but provide no sidewalks for pedestrians. Lyndon Avenue could become a link into the neighboring residential areas through a bicycle and pedestrian entrance, which would offer a safe and pleasant route. This new entrance could promote additional use of the parks and increase safety.



**Figure 8.9: The current Lyndon Avenue entrance to Eliza Howell Park**



**Figure 8.10: What the Lyndon Avenue entrance could become**

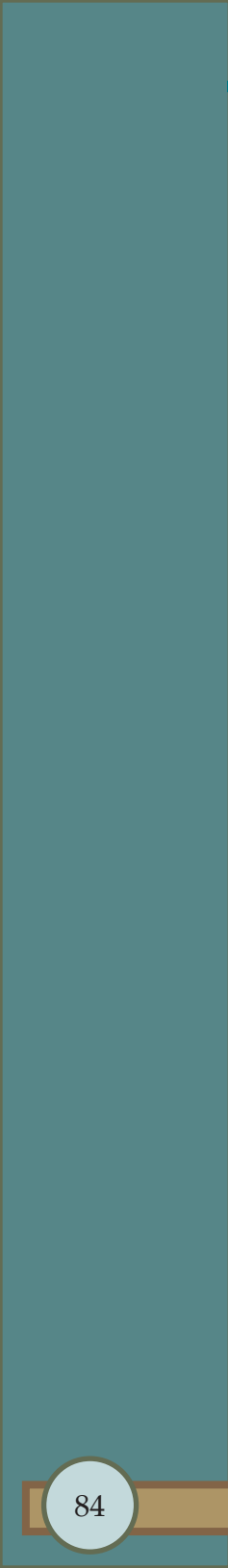
## *Encourage infrastructure improvements that enable people to walk and bike*

Improved sidewalks, street trees, bicycle paths, and lighting would provide residents with safer routes through the neighborhoods. Consistent investment along the most heavily traveled streets would link the parks with the Lyndon Greenway and nearby homes. The Brightmoor Alliance or residents could work with the city's Public Lighting Department and the Department of Public Works to get these infrastructure improvements in the capital improvements agenda.

Brightmoor's parks are important assets. The parks and open spaces can become safer, more accessible, and more heavily used. Well-maintained, active, and better connected parks can enhance the value of surrounding neighborhoods, and encourage physical activity. The previous chapters discussed strategies to promote the vision for residential areas and parks and green space. The next chapter will outline strategies for strengthening business clusters in Brightmoor.

### Notes

- 1 Brightmoor Community Meeting, Detroit: March 18, 2008.
- 2 Zachare Ball, Wayne County Rouge Program Office, Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project/Rouge Project, interview conducted by Tim Parham on January 14, 2008.
- 3 Detroit Recreation Department (DRD), "DRD Strategic Master Plan, 2006, [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Portals/0/docs/recreation/pdf/PDF%20files/1st%20Page.pdf](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Portals/0/docs/recreation/pdf/PDF%20files/1st%20Page.pdf) (accessed March 18, 2008).
- 4 Scott Brinkman, Planning, Design and Construction Management, Detroit Recreation Department, City of Detroit, interview conducted by Erin Schumacher on March 11, 2008.
- 5 Donna Erickson Consulting, Inc. (DEC), "Brightmoor's Lyndon Greenway: Catalyst for Community Revival," Healthy Environments Partnership, [westernopenlands.com/pdf/Lyndon%20Greenway.pdf](http://westernopenlands.com/pdf/Lyndon%20Greenway.pdf), June 2007, (accessed April 10, 2008).
- 6 Detroit Recreation Department (DRD), "DRD Strategic Master Plan, 2006, [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Portals/0/docs/recreation/pdf/PDF%20files/1st%20Page.pdf](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Portals/0/docs/recreation/pdf/PDF%20files/1st%20Page.pdf) (accessed March 18, 2008).
- 7 Brightmoor Community Meeting, Detroit: March 18, 2008.
- 8 National Recreation and Park Association, "Health Benefits of Parks and Recreation," 2007, [www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=2488](http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=2488) (accessed April 22, 2008).
- 9 Amy Schulz, "Connecting Brightmoor Land Use with Health," Presentation, Health Behavior & Health Education, University of Michigan School of Public Health (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008).
- 10 Brightmoor Community Meeting, Detroit: March 18, 2008.
- 11 Office of the City Clerk, City of Detroit, "Citizen Radio Patrol Assistance Program of Detroit," [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Legislative/CityClerk/clerk\\_RadioPatrol.htm](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Legislative/CityClerk/clerk_RadioPatrol.htm) (accessed April 18, 2008).
- 12 Jennifer Dixon, et al., "Volunteers Patrol against Rape," *Detroit Free Press* (November 25, 1999, sec. B).
- 13 Clark Park Recreation Center, "Teaching Our Youth to Dream: About Us," [www.clarkparkdetroit.com/about\\_us.html](http://www.clarkparkdetroit.com/about_us.html) (accessed April 23, 2008).
- 14 Schulz, 2008.
- 15 Project for Public Spaces, "Public-Private Partnership Increases and Diversifies Use," [www.pps.org/parks\\_plazas\\_squares/info/parkuse/success\\_bushnellpark](http://www.pps.org/parks_plazas_squares/info/parkuse/success_bushnellpark) (accessed April 18, 2008).
- 16 Steve Alman, Wayne County Parks and Recreation, interview conducted by Erin Schumacher on March 11, 2008.
- 17 DRD, 2006.
- 18 DEC, 2007.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 NDND Press Release, "Lyndon Greenway," not dated.
- 21 Schulz, 2008.



This chapter identifies areas in Brightmoor best suited for businesses. Fenkell and Schoolcraft serve as the commercial streets in Brightmoor.<sup>1</sup> Vacant storefronts and industrial buildings along these roads are left from years past when a larger population could support these retail corridors. Current economic conditions and population densities can no longer support entire corridor-style business districts. However, concentrations of businesses, or business clusters, remain at some high-traffic intersections in Brightmoor. This chapter identifies five locations where businesses exist and where new business activity could be most successful (see Figure 9.1) and outlines strategies to strengthen these business clusters.

### *Business Clusters:*

- Lahser and Fenkell
- Trinity to Braile on Fenkell
- Evergreen and Fenkell
- Outer Drive and Schoolcraft
- Evergreen and Schoolcraft



**Figure 9.1 Business cluster locations along Fenkell and Schoolcraft**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor's data file, parcel map data file, and parks GIS layer, 2007; ESRI.

Demand for retail services in Brightmoor exists despite the current condition of the business districts. In 2007, Social Compact, a national not-for-profit corporation that promotes business investment in low-income communities, performed a market study in Brightmoor. According to their *DrillDown Market Overview*, the total income of all residents in Brightmoor was about \$280 million in 2007.<sup>2</sup> Demand for grocery and clothing stores and restaurants exists in Brightmoor, but residents spend most of their money outside the area due to a lack of retailers within Brightmoor (see Table 9.1).

Not only can Brightmoor residents support more retail economically, but new business could bring in customers from the greater area. Major roadways connect Brightmoor to Redford Township to the west and the Grandmont and Rosedale Park neighborhoods of Detroit to the northeast. Approximately 19,000 cars per day travel along Fenkell Street between Telegraph and the Southfield Freeway (M-39).<sup>3</sup> Nearly 120,000 cars travel along I-96 through the southern portion of Brightmoor every day.<sup>4</sup> SMART and DDOT buses run along Grand River Avenue, Evergreen Road, and Fenkell Street every half-hour, and with less frequency along Telegraph and Schoolcraft Roads.<sup>5</sup> These routes form connections with Redford to the west, Rosedale Park to the north and east, and potential customers in Livonia, Southfield, Dearborn, and elsewhere in Detroit.

<b>Expenditures of Brightmoor Residents in 2007</b>			
	Total Spent	Spent Outside of Brightmoor	Estimated Square Feet Potential
All Grocers	\$ 19,300,000	\$ 17,000,000	48,951
Apparel	\$ 9,500,000	\$ 8,700,000	25,689
Restaurants	\$ 13,800,000	\$ 12,000,000	51,522
All Retail	\$ 87,200,000	\$ 55,500,000	
* Numbers include areas east of Brightmoor Alliance's boundaries for Brightmoor			

**Table 9.1: Retail Demand in Brightmoor**

Source: Social Compact, *Catalyzing Business Investment in Inner City Neighborhoods*, DrillDown Market Overview, DEGC 2007

## *Fenkell Street Corridor*

Fenkell Street has historically been Brightmoor's most important area for business activity, a two-mile main street of shops, restaurants, and services for both residents and visitors. Although gas stations, liquor stores, and vacant buildings now dominate Fenkell, several strong structures and businesses offer starting points for additional commercial development. Most of the buildings along Fenkell extend to the sidewalk, creating a potentially inviting streetscape for pedestrians. In addition, Fenkell is well-served by Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) bus route 18, which has the tenth highest average weekday ridership among DDOT routes.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 9.2: Thea Bowman Community Health Center**

## *Schoolcraft Road Corridor*

Schoolcraft Road is a one-way service drive that runs along the north and south sides of I-96 and turns into a two-way street east of Patton. The buildings on the north side of Schoolcraft, from Trinity Street to Evergreen, are almost completely vacant. Creative reuse of existing buildings occurred at the corner of Jason and Schoolcraft, where a vacant industrial building has been converted into the New Beginnings Genesis Bible Christian Center (see Figure 9.3). Large buildings with surface parking lots diminish Schoolcraft's appeal to pedestrians, despite sidewalks and pedestrian bridges that connect the north and south sides of Schoolcraft over I-96. West of Outer Drive, northern Schoolcraft is a less appealing location for businesses because the road dips below the sight line of the highway. Schoolcraft is served by DDOT route 43, and SMART route 805 brings commuters back and forth to downtown Detroit from the park-and-ride lot located at Fenton and Schoolcraft.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 9.3: New Beginning Genesis Bible Church**



## Brightmoor Business Clusters



**Figure 9.4: Grandy's Coney Island at the corner of Fenkell and Lahser**

### Fenkell and Lahser

This intersection could be ideal for small businesses serving nearby residents and passersby on Fenkell. Over 13,000 cars travel through this intersection every day. DDOT bus route 18 serves this location, running every half hour.<sup>8</sup> Grandy's Coney Island, a Marathon gas station, a liquor store, and a tire store currently operate at the intersection of Fenkell and Lahser. A number of vacant storefronts and lots on both the east and west of this intersection could be used for future retail businesses.



**Figure 9.5: U.S. Post Office at Braile and Fenkell**

### Fenkell between Trinity and Braile

Fenkell between Trinity and Braile has a variety of assets. The old Guardian Bank building and Paulie's Hardware store are two of the most architecturally significant structures in Brightmoor. The new U.S. Post Office and the Thea Bowman Community Health Center near Braile generate activity in the area. NDND targeted the area south of the post office and Guardian Bank Building for development. Trinity Estates, a residential development planned by Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist Church, will add new residents near this business cluster. Future retailers could provide goods and services to nearby residents and benefit from customers who visit the already existing businesses and institutions in this cluster.



**Figure 9.6: The former gas station at Fenkell and Evergreen**

### Fenkell and Evergreen

Single-family homes on the southeast and northwest corners of this potential cluster could be a location for seasonal produce stands or other informal retailers. Despite the residential surroundings, the intersection has high traffic volume with almost 30,000 cars traveling along Evergreen every day and 19,000 along Fenkell.<sup>9</sup> This location also provides access to both SMART and DDOT bus routes going in four directions.<sup>10</sup> A former gas station sits vacant at the intersection's northeast corner, while an active gas station occupies the southwest corner. A permanent retailer could locate at the corner of Evergreen and Fenkell in the future.



**Figure 9.7: Sonny's Hamburgers at Schoolcraft and Evergreen**

### **Schoolcraft and Evergreen**

This intersection could accommodate retail establishments that serve a regional market. Proximity and accessibility to the highway, which brings 120,000 cars through the southern portion of Brightmoor daily, and the high traffic volume along Evergreen make this location a possibility for a major retailer.<sup>11</sup> Two gas stations, a liquor store, and Sonny's Hamburgers are located at the intersection.



**Figure 9.8: The former laundromat at Schoolcraft and Outer**

### **North Schoolcraft and Outer Drive**

Outer Drive winds through Brightmoor, intersecting major roads such as Evergreen, Lahser, Schoolcraft, and I-96, and provides an important regional connection. A retail store at the intersection of Schoolcraft and Outer Drive would attract some of the 27,000 drivers that pass through this intersection each day, in addition to some of the many commuters along I-96.<sup>12</sup> Currently a gas station and vacant former laundromat occupy the intersection. In addition, a small vacant lot abuts the gas station to the north.

Strategies for concentrating businesses and retail at the Fenkell and Schoolcraft clusters focus on keeping these areas clean and safe, marketing redevelopment opportunities, and encouraging new business activity. These strategies could help bring new jobs to Brightmoor and generate tax revenues for the city. Improving the condition of these highly visible areas could help further develop Brightmoor's identity and importance in the region.

## Business District Realignment Strategies

### Present a clean and safe environment

- *Improve or demolish derelict buildings that are unsafe or unsightly*
- *Upgrade pedestrian features*

### Market redevelopment opportunities in the retail clusters

### Encourage entrepreneurial use of vacant lots and buildings



**Figure 9.9: Dumping in front of a vacant building on Schoolcraft Road**

The Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA) works to improve southwest Detroit through community and economic development. Founded in 1957, SDBA develops real estate to attract commercial businesses, provides grants to local businesses for façade improvements, helps market local businesses through a local newspaper, and hosts an annual "Shop Your Block" event. In addition, SDBA's newly established Clean and Safe Business Improvement District (BID) generates funds to maintain sidewalks and remove graffiti on two sections of West Vernor Highway, for a total of 13 blocks. SDBA provides matching grants of \$7,500 for new businesses to create attractive storefronts. These grants have resulted in over \$1.65 million in improvements since 2003.<sup>13</sup>

## **Strategy: Present a clean and safe environment**

Improving safety and cleanliness is the first step in strengthening business clusters in Brightmoor. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program, a neighborhood's commercial district is the "most visible indicator of community pride."<sup>14</sup> The Brightmoor Alliance recently asked Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative (NDNI) to deal with prostitution along Fenkell Street, and NDNI assigned police foot patrols along the street. Residents and community leaders believe this presence has greatly improved safety along Fenkell. Increased policing is only one step to improving safety in Brightmoor's business districts. This plan proposes many additional strategies the Brightmoor Alliance and others can use to make business clusters on Fenkell Street safer, more inviting retail environments.

### *Improve or demolish buildings that are unsafe or unsightly*

Repairing or removing derelict buildings could help create a clean and safe atmosphere near businesses in Brightmoor. The Brightmoor Alliance and others could use this strategy in the areas between the potential retail clusters to improve the appearance of Fenkell and Schoolcraft. Where repair or removal is not feasible, public art and murals can create signs of life and investment on vacant structures. Programs implemented through various levels of government work to improve vacant, abandoned, and derelict structures. Following are some programs for a 'Main Street' atmosphere, public art, and demolition.

#### **A 'Main Street' atmosphere**

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Neighborhood Main Street Initiative (NMSI) offers a structure for community non-profit groups and business associations to organize themselves to finance and support economic development in traditional 'Main Street' commercial districts. The Main Street program has worked across the nation to revitalize old commercial corridors. They estimate that, for every \$1 spent on Main Street programs, about \$40 is reinvested into the designated retail district.<sup>15</sup> Main Street programs address a variety of issues but focus on four major points: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.<sup>16</sup> These programs do not offer direct funding but help local organizations create their own financing options. In Detroit, the Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (ONCR) serves as the main funder for main street programs. The Re\$store Detroit! and ReFresh Detroit! programs direct money into designated main street areas. The Re\$store program offers technical assistance, training, and funding to community organizations working to revitalize business districts. The ReFresh Detroit! program, short for the Façade Renovation and Exterior Structure Habilitation program, provides matching grants to businesses for façade improvements.<sup>17</sup> ONCR programs offer a place for Fenkell business owners to start as they plan for future activity at the business clusters. The Brightmoor Alliance could apply for inclusion in the ONCR programs because of the neighborhood's designation as a NDNI area.

## Public art

Several public art projects are already occurring in and around Brightmoor. Located in neighboring Old Redford, on Lahser just north of McNichols, Artist Village serves as a community arts workshop and education center.<sup>18</sup> Their Public Arts Workz (PAWZ) program teaches mural painting with the goal of building job skills through art.<sup>19</sup> Through Motor City Blight Busters' Painting the Town program, PAWZ members paint numerous buildings and storefronts to make abandoned buildings less unattractive. Motor City Blight Busters' Artist Village project serves as an example of how public art can show investment in a once neglected area.<sup>20</sup> The Brightmoor Alliance could approach PAWZ to create murals at key locations along Fenkell or Schoolcraft.

The Detroit Partnership's "DP Day" has focused volunteer efforts on creating public art in the past.<sup>21</sup> Mural painting or other public art projects in these clusters could be a focus of DP Day. Together with PAWZ, Detroit Partnership volunteers could help to beautify unsightly buildings in Brightmoor's retail clusters.

The College for Creative Studies, a Detroit art and design school, recently received a grant from the Skillman Foundation for a public art project in Brightmoor. The project has two parts and will take place in late summer 2008. First, CCS students will hold public meetings to decide where the public art should go and what form it should take. This pilot project aims to spur similar community-generated projects. Second, CCS students will design banners that will be located throughout the neighborhood.<sup>22</sup> The Brightmoor Alliance might recommend focusing these projects at the retail clusters along Fenkell and Schoolcraft. Banners and public art on Fenkell and Schoolcraft could encourage investment and strengthen community identity.

Jefferson East Business Association (JEBA) formed in the late 1970s as a business association along Jefferson Avenue on Detroit's eastside. The organization uses the Main Street four-point approach and runs programs for business development, cleanliness and safety, planning and development, and promotion. JEBA helps area business owners apply for loans and provides façade improvement grants of up to \$15,000 in partnership with ONCR. Police and volunteers help JEBA keep Jefferson Avenue clean and safe, while planning and development programs focus on streetscape improvements. A recent comprehensive streetscape and parking plan resulted in a total of \$100,000 to hire consultants and commission technical streetscape construction documents to help implement the plan. Each summer since 2004, JEBA organizes Jazzin' on Jefferson, a festival that includes jazz, blues, food, arts and crafts, and more. The festival draws both residents and visitors from outside the area and fosters community identity.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 9.10: Festival attendees at Jazzin' on Jefferson paint a mural**

Source: [www.jazzinonjefferson.org](http://www.jazzinonjefferson.org).

## Demolition

Both the City of Detroit and Wayne County have programs focused on repairing or removing commercial buildings in disrepair (see Chapter 6 for more information). Residents or community organizations can call the Building and Safety Engineering Department to have them inspect a commercial structure and determine whether it needs demolition. Commercial buildings within Detroit are required to obtain a Certificate of Compliance which is given after passing a safety inspection.<sup>24</sup> If property owners fail to comply with codes, the City may assess fines until the owner repairs the building. When necessary, the Department of Public Works will demolish structures that violate code.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, citizens can contact the Wayne County Nuisance Abatement Program (NAP) to report deteriorated buildings. If a structure is deemed a nuisance, the county may order the owner to demolish it. Prioritizing the removal of neglected buildings in business clusters will help to increase the safety and comfort of shoppers.



Figure 9.11: Vacant buildings on Lahser Road, north of Brightmoor



Figure 9.12: Vacant storefronts on Fenkell Street



**Figure 9.13: A bicycle rack at Frankford and Girard created as part of the Artsrack Project**  
Source: [www.nkcddc.org](http://www.nkcddc.org).



**Figure 9.14: Bench designed by a Kensington artist on Frankford Avenue**  
Source: [www.nkcddc.org](http://www.nkcddc.org).

### *Upgrade pedestrian features*

Improving streetlights, landscaping, sidewalks, and benches along Fenkell and Schoolcraft could benefit businesses. Making the streets and sidewalks more accessible to pedestrians will improve the look and feel of these retail clusters. The Brightmoor Alliance and other community organizations could petition NDNI to prioritize capital improvements along Fenkell and Schoolcraft.

Once a critical mass of businesses exists in the cluster locations, two tools to generate revenue to pay for further improvements might be feasible – tax increment financing (TIF) and a business improvement zone (BIZ):

- TIF applies to a specific area where property values are expected to rise. The increase in tax revenues funds public improvements within the boundaries of the TIF. Legislation passed in 2005 authorizes municipalities to establish Corridor Improvement Authorities and use TIF to finance public improvements along aging commercial corridors.<sup>26</sup> A Fenkell Avenue Corridor Improvement District is not feasible at this time but may become an option if retail development increases in the future.
- BIZs are districts where property owners tax themselves to generate funds for improvements within the zone. More than 30 percent of business owners must agree to establish the BIZ. Businesses can elect to improve sidewalks, develop lighting standards, plant trees, and acquire property within the zone.<sup>27</sup> The lack of businesses close to one another would limit the effectiveness of a BIZ in Brightmoor at this time. However, if new businesses develop in the clusters, a BIZ might focus investment to help businesses succeed.

New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) organized two public art programs along Frankford Avenue, a residential and commercial corridor in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>28</sup> The Frankford Avenue Bench Project enlisted local artists to paint concrete benches at public transportation stops. Their Frankford Avenue Artsrack Project installed creative bicycle racks to encourage bicycle riding in New Kensington and to promote local businesses.

## ***Strategy: Market redevelopment opportunities in the retail clusters***

Business clusters could serve as centers of activity from which new business grows. NDND and other developers could consider these retail clusters as they choose sites for new development. To focus development in these areas, the Brightmoor Alliance, NDNI, current land owners, and nearby residents could work together to create specific development plans for each cluster. These plans could serve as a marketing tool to attract new retail development.

The business cluster between Trinity and Braile on Fenkell offers opportunities for both rehabilitation and demolition of existing structures to create a new center of business activity. From Trinity to Burt, structures on the south side are in poor condition. A bird's eye view of the block shows missing roofs, indicating that these buildings might not be salvageable (see Figure 9.15). The city's Building and Safety Engineering Department could evaluate these buildings for structural integrity; if they are found to be unsalvageable or dangerous, the Building and Safety Engineering Department could order them demolished. In the meantime, temporary art created in partnership with Artist's Village could enliven the building façades and make the block appear more welcoming.

The north side of this block is more active, with Paulie's Thrifty Hardware (see Figure 9.16) on the corner of Burt and Fenkell, a liquor store, and a shop to sell gold for cash. The building located on the northeast corner of Trinity and Fenkell appears to be in good condition. Its corner location could serve as a good site for a small restaurant similar to Scotty Simpson's further west on Fenkell.



**9.15: The block of Fenkell between Trinity and Burt**  
Source: maps.live.com.



**9.16: Paulie's Thrifty Hardware**





**Figure 9.17: The Guardian Bank Building, where NDND plans to locate its new office**

Aside from an auto parts store on the southwest corner, the south side of the block between Braile and Pierson on Fenkell is vacant (see Figure 9.18). However, the buildings appear in good condition for rehabilitation. Currently, six buildings and seven vacant storefronts exist on this block. Their proximity to the post office, a new Coney Island restaurant, the pharmacy, and the medical clinic make them prime candidates for rehabilitation and redevelopment. These buildings have six different owners, including NDND and the City of Detroit. The Brightmoor Alliance could spearhead a planning effort to organize property owners of this block and create a redevelopment and marketing plan. This effort could begin by contacting the Fenkell Business Association and communicating with committed stakeholders such as NDND, the city and the owner of Paulie’s Hardware.

NDND and Trinity Community Development Corporation (CDC) have development plans that will create new activity on the south side of Fenkell. NDND is planning a “town center” development and moving their office to the former Guardian Bank building on Burt Road and Fenkell Street (see Figure 9.18). The town center development would encompass the bank building and a large portion of vacant land to the southeast. Trinity Estates is a residential development planned by Trinity CDC south of Fenkell between Trinity and Blackstone. These two developments could help increase business activity in this area of Fenkell.



**Figure 9.18: Empty storefronts on the south side of Fenkell between Braile and Pierson**  
Source: maps.google.com.

**Strategy: Encourage entrepreneurial use of vacant lots and buildings.**

Vacant lots and buildings with extra space near the potential retail clusters offer places where entrepreneurs can sell goods. Business owners could benefit from traffic generated by temporary uses such as a fruit stand or flea market. Eventually, NDND and other community organizations could acquire buildings to use as flexible office space for entrepreneurs to rent inexpensively. These spaces could serve as business incubators where residents could start business ventures without fear of serious financial repercussions.

The City of Detroit Zoning Ordinance classifies temporary uses by their “short term or seasonal nature and by the fact that permanent improvements are not made to the site.”<sup>29</sup> Current regulations do not allow temporary retail stands on privately owned vacant property.<sup>30</sup> However, the Brightmoor Alliance could use Brightmoor’s NDNI designation as leverage to petition the city to allow temporary retail uses in the retail clusters to capitalize on existing transportation routes. For example, the vacant gas station on the northeast corner of Fenkell and Evergreen has adequate parking space and area to set up a produce stand or other seasonal retail use either on the site or nearby (see Figure 9.20). The nearly 50,000 cars and over 6,000 bus riders provide a large potential customer base for this site (see Figure 9.19).<sup>31</sup>



**Figure 9.19: Site of former gas station on Fenkell that could host temporary uses**

Sources: Detroit Planning and Development Department, assessor’s data file and parcel map data file, 2007; ESRI; Phone interview with Shirley Adams, Detroit Department of Transportation (April 24, 2008), Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Intersections and Roads Database, 2005.



**Figure 9.20: Former Sunoco gas station on the northeast corner of Fenkell and Evergreen**

The Multi-Ethnic Education and Economic Development (MEED) Center in Dallas, Texas started in the 1990s, celebrating the diversity in East Dallas and providing assistance to low and middle income entrepreneurs.<sup>32</sup> The center provides shared office space at below market rents as well as seminars and other training and support to entrepreneurs. Participants at the MEED Center have access to office equipment and conference rooms.<sup>33</sup>

The strategies outlined in this chapter could help strengthen businesses in Brightmoor. These strategies, along with those described in Chapters 5 through 8, require multiple partners to carry them out. Each strategy has a different timetable for implementation. Chapter 10 will outline a time period and potential partners to implement each strategy discussed in the plan.

## Notes

- 1 City of Detroit Planning and Development Department, "City of Detroit Master Plan," (Detroit: 1992); City of Detroit Planning and Development Department, "City of Detroit Draft Master Plan (Detroit: 2004); Katherine Beebe and Associates, "Brightmoor Revitalization Strategy" (Detroit: October 2001).
- 2 Social Compact, Inc., "Detroit Neighborhood Market Drilldown," Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (Detroit: October 2007).
- 3 Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), "Major Road Segments in Southeast Michigan," [www.semCog.org/Data/Apps/network.report.cfm](http://www.semCog.org/Data/Apps/network.report.cfm) (accessed March 20, 2008).
- 4 SEMCOG, 2008.
- 5 Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) "Routes and Schedules," [www.smartbus.org/Smart/Ride%20SMART/Route.aspx](http://www.smartbus.org/Smart/Ride%20SMART/Route.aspx) (accessed January 22, 2008); Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT), "Bus Info," [www.detroitmi.gov/ddot/businfo/index.html](http://www.detroitmi.gov/ddot/businfo/index.html) (accessed January 22, 2008).
- 6 Shirley Adams, Detroit Department of Transportation, interview conducted by Tim Parham on April 24, 2008.
- 7 SMART and DDOT, 2008.
- 8 DDOT, 2008.
- 9 SEMCOG, 2008.
- 10 SMART and DDOT, 2008.
- 11 SEMCOG, 2008.
- 12 SEMCOG, 2008.
- 13 Southwest Detroit Business Association, "Southwest Detroit Business Association," [www.southwestdetroit.com/](http://www.southwestdetroit.com/) (accessed April 30, 2009).
- 14 National Trust for Historic Preservations (NTHP), "Main Street: Revitalizing Your Commercial District," [www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1&site=1](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1&site=1) (accessed April 22, 2008).
- 15 NTHP, "Economic Statistics: The Main Street Program's Success Historic Preservation Equals Economic Development," [www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=7966&section=2](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=7966&section=2) (accessed April 24, 2008).
- 16 NTHP, "The Four Points," [www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=47&section=2](http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=47&section=2) (accessed April 24, 2008).
- 17 Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization, "Re\$tores Detroit! ReFresh Detroit! Joint Application form," City of Detroit, May 31, 2006, [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Portals/0/docs/neighborhoodcommrevitalization/pdf/Joint%20Application.pdf](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Portals/0/docs/neighborhoodcommrevitalization/pdf/Joint%20Application.pdf) (accessed April 29, 2008).
- 18 Chazz Miller, "Public Art Workz: Up! 'A Detroit Story,'" [publicartworkz.tripod.com/index.html](http://publicartworkz.tripod.com/index.html) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 19 Amy Lange, "On the Mark" Real Detroit Weekly, [www.realdetroitweekly.com/article\\_1375.shtml](http://www.realdetroitweekly.com/article_1375.shtml) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 20 Motor City Blight Busters, "Artist Village," [www.blightbusters.org/artistvillage.html](http://www.blightbusters.org/artistvillage.html) (accessed April 22, 2008).
- 21 Tom Szczesny, email to Bonnie Wessler, March 21, 2008. More information on the Detroit Partnership can be found at [www.thedp.org/](http://www.thedp.org/).
- 22 Mikel Bresee, College for Creative Studies, interview conducted by Tim Parham on March 20, 2008.
- 23 Jefferson East Business Association, [www.jeffersoneast.org/index1.php](http://www.jeffersoneast.org/index1.php) (accessed April 30, 2008) ; Robin Duncan, Business Development Director, Jefferson East Business Association, interview conducted by Tim Parham on April 30, 2008.
- 24 City of Detroit, *Building and Safety Engineering Department FAQs- Demolition Department*, 2008, [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Departments/BuildingsSafetyEngineeringDepartment/BSEDFAQs/tabid/1472/Default.aspx](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/Departments/BuildingsSafetyEngineeringDepartment/BSEDFAQs/tabid/1472/Default.aspx) (accessed May 3, 2008).
- 25 City of Detroit, 2008.
- 26 Citizens Research Council (CRC), "Survey of Economic Development Programs in Michigan," 2nd Edition, June 2007, [www.crcmich.org](http://www.crcmich.org) (accessed April 2, 2008).
- 27 CRC, 2007.
- 28 "Arts Projects and Events" New Kensington Community Development Corporation, [www.nkcdc.org/content.sp?cat=ARTS&varcontentcat=ARTS\\_PROJECTS\\_AND\\_EVENTS](http://www.nkcdc.org/content.sp?cat=ARTS&varcontentcat=ARTS_PROJECTS_AND_EVENTS) (accessed April 30, 2008).
- 29 City of Detroit Zoning Ordinance, "Temporary Uses in General," Division 6:

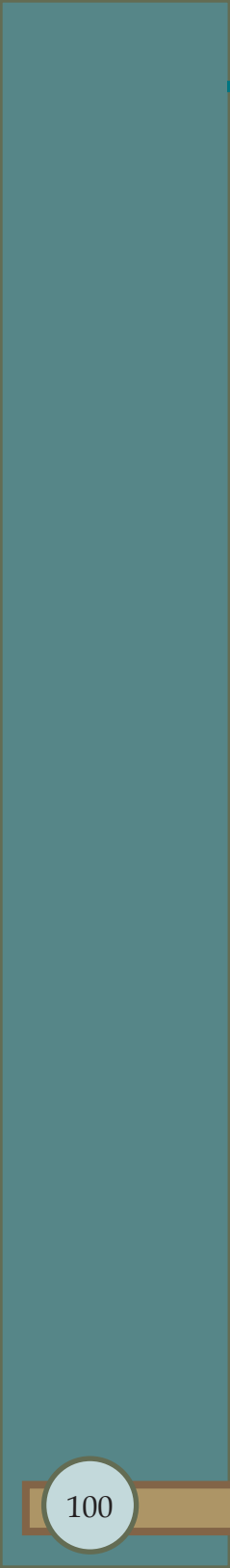
Temporary Uses and Structures, Article XII 61-12-421(1) (December 20, 2006).

30 City of Detroit Zoning Ordinance, "Temporary outdoor retail sales," Division 6: Temporary Uses and Structures: Sec. 61-12-437, Article XII 61-12-437(1) (December 20, 2006).

31 SEMCOG, 2008; DDOT, 2008.

32 Multi-Ethnic Education and Economic Development (MEED) Center. "History," 2008. [www.meedcenter.com/history.htm](http://www.meedcenter.com/history.htm) (accessed May 1, 2008).

33 MEED, "Business Assistance," 2008, [www.meedcenter.com/history.htm](http://www.meedcenter.com/history.htm) (accessed May 1, 2008).



Implementation of the proposed land use strategies relies on collaboration among involved residents, community leaders, city officials, and community-based organizations. By joining forces, people, agencies, and organizations can have a powerful impact in Brightmoor. The following list identifies potential partners:

- Brightmoor Alliance
- Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
- Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development (NDND)
- Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative (NDNI)
- Skillman Foundation
- City of Detroit Planning & Development Department
- The Greening of Detroit
- Motor City Blight Busters
- Michigan State University Extension Service (MSU-E)
- Detroit Recreation Department
- Michigan Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S)
- Healthy Environments Partnership (HEP)
- Local colleges and universities, such as the College for Creative Studies, Wayne County Community College, and the University of Michigan
- Neighborhood associations, such as the Eliza Howell Neighborhood Association
- Local elementary, middle, and charter schools
- Brightmoor's churches and religious organizations
- Residents
- Community leaders



The strategies in this plan will take varying amounts of time to implement. Some can be put into action immediately, such as code enforcement and foreclosure prevention, while others, such as large scale urban agriculture and renewable energy production, require considerable resources and partnerships. The following tables show possible timing for implementation of the strategies.

**Short Term:** These are strategies that interested residents and local organizations can implement. Many of these strategies can begin almost immediately with a small group of dedicated residents. Implementation requires minimal funding and little to no coordination with local government or outside partnerships.

**Intermediate:** These strategies require forming partnerships or stronger relationships among involved groups. Some initiatives may meet expected time frames, while others affected by outside forces may not. Implementation may require funding from outside sources.

**Long Term:** Long-term strategies require creating or forming new partnerships among local organizations and outside investors. They rely heavily on partnerships and depend on favorable market conditions. These may need significant capital investment.

The following tables show strategies, implementation time frames, and potential partners. These time frames and partnerships will vary depending on future conditions.



STRATEGY	INITIAL TIME PERIOD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Code enforcement	Immediate	Brightmoor Alliance, NDNI, neighborhood associations and block groups, Northwest District City Hall, residents
Publicize existing foreclosure prevention programs	Immediate	Brightmoor Alliance, neighborhood associations and block groups, religious organizations
Encourage community gardening	Immediate	NDND, MSU Extension, Greening of Detroit, Murphy Middle School, residents
Develop parks programming and events	1-6 months	Detroit Recreation Department, Brightmoor Alliance, NDND, residents, religious organizations
Start foreclosure prevention programs	1-6 months	Brightmoor Alliance, NDNI, residents
Coordinate existing homeowner maintenance assistance programs and research forming new ones	1-6 months	Brightmoor Alliance, Motor City Blight Busters, NDND, NDNI, local skilled trade organizations, residents
Demolish vacant, open, and dangerous housing	1-6 months	Brightmoor Alliance, NDNI, Motor City Blight Busters, Detroit Partnership, residents
Clean up illegal dumping	1-6 months	Brightmoor Alliance, Northwest District City Hall, Detroit Partnership, Motor City Blight Busters, NDNI, residents
Support additional security for parks	1-6 months	Detroit Police Department, NDNI, Detroit Recreation Department, residents

**Table 10.1: Short-term strategies**



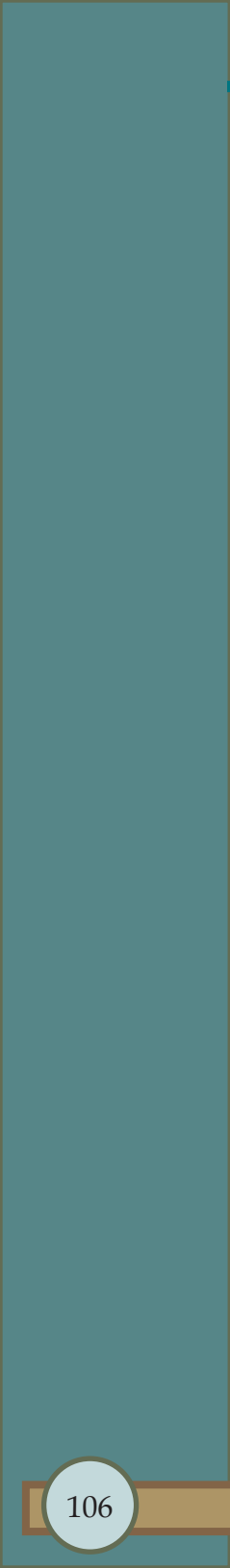
STRATEGY	INITIAL TIME PERIOD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Lobby for investment in capital improvements to enhance pedestrian access	1-3 years	Brightmoor Alliance, NDND, HEP, Detroit Planning & Development Department, NDNI
Locate and develop pocket parks	1-3 years	Brightmoor Alliance, neighborhood associations and block clubs, religious organizations , residents
Support moderate scale community gardening	1-3 years	MSU Extension, Greening of Detroit, Local Schools, residents
Promote and expand adjacent lot transfer program	1-3 years	Brightmoor Alliance, NDNI, City of Detroit Planning & Development Department
Develop guidelines for Detroit homesteading	1-3 years	Brightmoor Alliance, NDNI, City of Detroit Planning & Development Department
Study feasibility of educational campus	1-3 years	Brightmoor Alliance, Detroit Public Schools, Wayne County Community College
Promote strategic infill development, both residential and commercial	3-7 years or as the market allows	NDND and other nonprofit developers, NDNI, Habitat for Humanity, City of Detroit Planning & Development Department
Implement the Lyndon Greenway Plan	3- 7 years	NDND, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan Greenway Initiative, NDNI, HEP, Detroit Recreation Department
Stimulate entrepreneurial scale urban agriculture through education	3-7 years	MSU Extension, Greening of Detroit, Black Farmers of Michigan, residents, local farmers, schools
Incorporate vacant lots adjacent to parks into park land	1-3 years	Detroit Recreation Department, county and state governments
Develop façade improvement program on Fenkell	3-7 years	Fenkell Business Association, Wayne County, Business Improvement District
Nominate Fenkell Street for Main Street program	1-3 years	Detroit LISC, Fenkell Business Association, Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization

**Table 10.2: Intermediate strategies**

STRATEGY	INITIAL TIME PERIOD	POTENTIAL ACTORS
Implement renewable energy production	1-10 years	NextEnergy, Biomass Research and Development Initiative, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
Assemble land for large-scale urban agriculture	2-10 years	NDNI; NDND; residents; MSU-E; City, County and State Governments; local farmers
Study market feasibility for recreation center	3-7 years	Private developers
Create an entrance to Eliza Howell on Lyndon Avenue	3-7years	Detroit Recreation Department, NDND, neighborhood associations and block clubs
Redevelop Eliza Howell as a regional destination park	5-9 years, when funding becomes available	Detroit Recreation Department, Wayne County, Huron-Clinton Metroparks
Implement corridor improvement programs or business improvement districts	8-10 years	Fenkell Business Association, Detroit Planning and Development Department

**Table 10.3: Long-term strategies**

This land use plan’s purpose is to guide decisions about future land reuse and development in Brightmoor. It takes into consideration residents’ needs and desires, market forces, current land uses, and existing infrastructure to lay out potential strategies for creative reuse of land within five types of land use areas in Brightmoor. Interest from outside partners such as the Skillman Foundation and community organizations such as NDND provides grounding for the strategies mentioned above. These strategies encourage residents to take advantage of the partnership opportunities available and to bring a brighter future to Brightmoor.

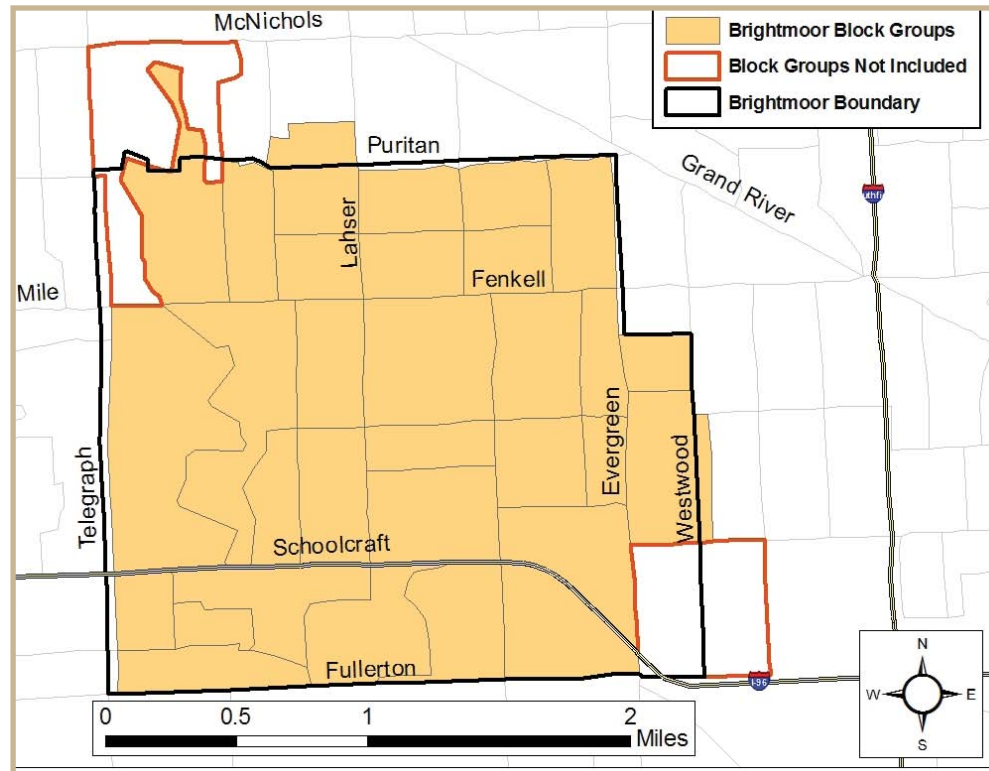


# APPENDIX A: METHODS

## Analysis of Census Data

The following definitions of the Brightmoor area were used to analyze Census data, according to the street boundaries and their intersection with tracts and block groups. SF3 level data for 1990 and 2000 includes block groups (see Figures A.1 and A.2), but this unit of analysis was not available for 1980. Instead, census tracts were used, and where the Brightmoor boundary split two tracts in half, only one was included. This adjustment had to be made only once. The interactive maps on DataPlace and Social Explorer served as the basis for selecting the 1980 Census tracts. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) layers downloaded from ESRI were used to select the 1990 and 2000 Census block groups.

1980 TRACTS	BLOCK GROUPS
5434	N/A
5435	N/A
5436	N/A
5437	N/A
5438	N/A
5439	N/A
5440	N/A
5441	N/A
5442	N/A
1990 TRACTS	BLOCK GROUPS
5434	1 2 4
5435	2 3 4 5
5436	1 6 7
5437	1 2 3 4
5438	3 4 5
5439	2 4 5
5440	1 2 3 4
5441	4 5 6
5442	2 3 4
5443	2
2000 TRACTS	BLOCK GROUPS
5434	1 2 3
5435	2 3 4 5
5436	1 6 7
5437	1 2 3 4
5438	1 2
5439	1
5440	1 2 3
5441	4 5 6
5442	2 3 4
5443	2

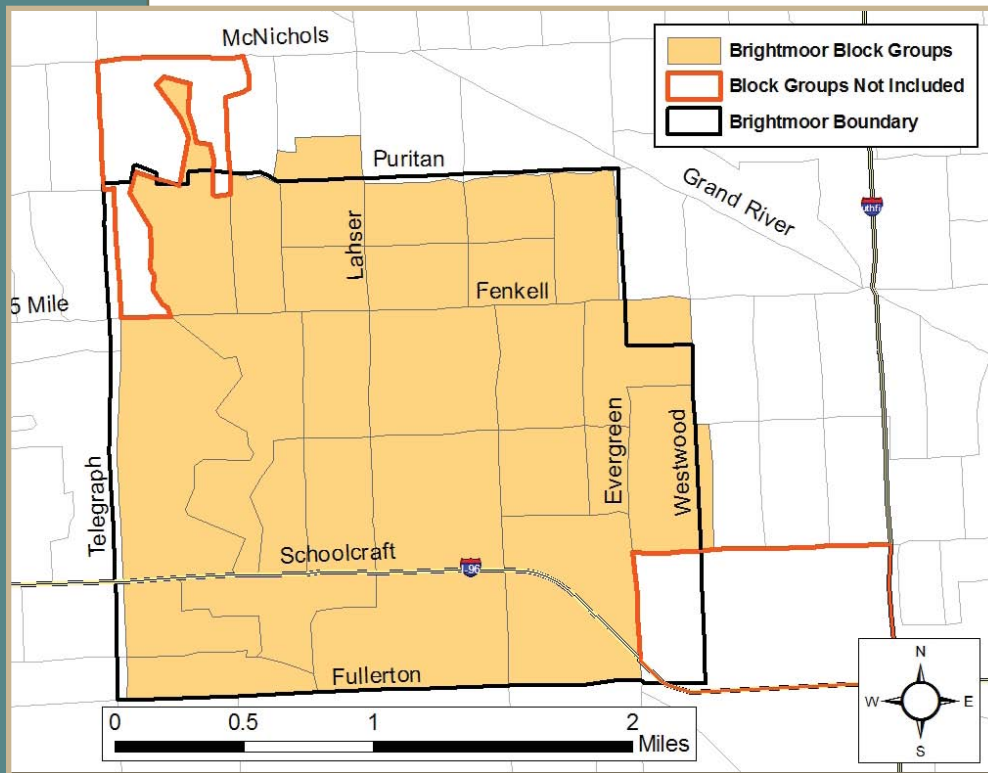


**Figure A.1: 1990 block groups used in Census analysis**

Sources: ESRI

Note: As of 2007, the excluded block groups were primarily commercial and industrial land uses and therefore irrelevant for residential analysis.

**Table A. 1: Census tracts and block groups used in Brightmoor analysis**



**Figure A.2: 2000 block groups used in Census analysis**  
Source: ESRI

## Analysis of Land Use Data

### *Home Ownership*

Home ownership was determined using the 2007 Detroit assessor's data file. To determine whether a structure was owner-occupied, these steps were followed using ArcGIS:

1. Open the attribute table.
2. Compare the property address (PROPADDRESS) to the taxpayer address (TAXPAYERAD). When they

matched, the property was assumed to be owner-occupied.

3. Remove from selection commercial and industrial properties by selecting out any properties with an occupancy status (CIOCCUPANC) other than blank or "Apartment."
4. Remove from the selection properties with an address along Fenkell and Schoolcraft because field work confirmed that few if any single-family residential homes front these streets.
5. Use "Select by Location" to remove vacant lots from the selection.

### *Average Home Value*

Average home value for all of Brightmoor was determined using the 2007 Detroit Assessor's data file. The following steps were followed, using ArcGIS:

1. Open the attribute table.
2. Create a new field for market value by doubling the state equalized value (CURSEV).
3. Use "Select by Location" to select all parcels in the reinforcement, revitalization, and reinvention areas.
4. Remove from selection all parcels with an occupancy status (CIOCCUPANC) other than blank or "Apartment."
5. Remove from selection all properties with address along Fenkell or Schoolcraft.
6. Remove from selection all properties that are vacant land.
7. Remove from selection all properties with a taxable status (TAXABLESTA) other than blank or "Taxable."
8. Remove from selection all properties with a current

state equalized value equal to zero or greater than \$150,000. The latter was determined by observing that all properties with an SEV greater than \$150,000 were commercial, industrial, or multi-family apartment complexes. All those with SEV of zero were assumed to be vacant or missing data.

9. Total the market value of the selected properties and divide by the number of selected properties.

### *Vacant Land*

These properties were identified using field work and internet maps research. For the areas between Lamphere and Burt and between Fenkell and Schoolcraft, teams drove every road and marked each parcel of property as either “vacant land,” “derelict house,” or “house.” Later, these data were used to select parcels from the parcel file to export to new shapefiles in GIS.

For the rest of Brightmoor, the “bird’s eye view” available at Maps Live ([maps.live.com](http://maps.live.com)) was used to identify vacant land by matching their maps up with the City of Detroit parcel shapefile and selecting vacant parcels from the parcel file using GIS.

### *Figure-Ground Map*

The figure-ground map was created by using Google Earth’s most recent images (copyrighted 2008). Rooftops were drawn in Adobe Illustrator to create the full map.

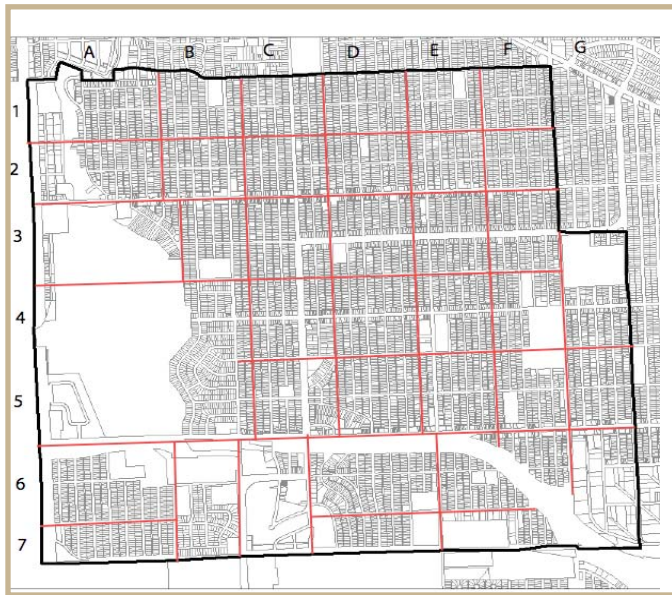
### Neighborhood Characterization

The following assessment form was used in field work to characterize Brightmoor's residential areas into three planning areas.

#### Ground Truthing: Sub-district Observation Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am pm End Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am pm  
Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Direction of focus: North South East West

On the diagram below, please indicate which group of blocks you are documenting by outlining the boundary and shading it in. *The groups are divided in approximately 10 block units.*



Overall volume of street traffic

\*Please indicate by street name where the volume differs, if it does so.

a. Light (occasional cars)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Moderate

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Heavy (steady stream of cars)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Street Condition

\*Please indicate by street name where the condition differs, if it does so.

a. Poor (broken pavement and potholes that obstruct drivability)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Moderately good (occasional pothole or in need of some repair)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Very good (in good condition with no need of repair)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Sidewalk Condition

\*Please indicate by street name where the condition differs, if it does so.

a. Poor (non-existent or unusable by disabled)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Moderately good (usable, but in need of repair)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Very good (in good condition with no need of repair)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there trees lining the streets in an orderly pattern?

YES NO

Describe the condition of the vegetation: maintained,  
overgrown, in need of vast removal \_\_\_\_\_

Are there people visible on the streets? YES NO

If so, what kinds of activities are they partaking in?

Are any of the following present in the area?

Circle all that apply

- a. Abandoned cars, tires
- b. Trash or discarded beer or liquor containers in the streets, yards, or alleys
- c. Graffiti
- d. Condoms littering the ground
- e. Signs of drug proliferation (i.e. Plastic baggies, discarded hypodermic needles, etc)
- f. Other noticeable negative characteristics,



describe\_\_\_\_\_

Overall, how would you describe the area?

STABLE    BORDERLINE    ABANDONED    VACANT

What is the majority of the residential housing?

- a. Detached single-family
- b. Multi-family attached/Duplex
- c. Other\_\_\_\_\_

In general, how would you rate the condition of **most** of the residential units?

\*Please indicate by street name where the condition differs, if it does so.

- a. Very well maintained (not in need of repair or repainting)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Moderately well maintained (in need of some repair or repainting)

Where\_\_\_\_\_

- c. Poor (in need of serious structural repairs and surface treatment)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

- d. Abandoned/Vacant (overgrown or burned out)

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

What types of building materials are used on the majority of the residential housing?

- a. Brick
- b. Aluminum siding
- c. Wood
- d. Combination or other\_\_\_\_\_

Are there streetlights present?    YES    NO

If near dusk, is the lighting sufficient?\_\_\_\_\_

## Comments from Community Meetings

### MEETING 1, FEBRUARY 5, 2008

Attendees to this meeting included residents, church pastors, church members, police officers, a real estate agent, and representatives from LISC, NDND, and Grandmont/Rosedale CDC. Attendees gave the following input:

#### Brightmoor Today

- *Brightmoor as a transitional community, people aspire to get out of it, not a community of choice*
- *Find out what the community wants*
- *Longing to feel comfortable in neighborhood*
- *Lack of participation*
- *Belief that the land should somehow stay under local control- perhaps forming block clubs, land banks, etc. Vacant land could be put to much better use, why won't they let the community members try? Why don't the pastors do something? Why isn't there a program to help the neighbors buy the land they neighbor?*
- *One participant mentioned that his neighborhood has formed a CDC or HOA, which helps coordinate the little things, like sidewalk snow removal (coordinate the 12-year-olds looking for that kind of work). Could be rolled into workforce development. There is a lack of leaders connecting with the 18-40 year old residents- they're all aiming for kids and seniors.*
- *Divide between the "owner" and the "renter" mentality. Renters are trying to get out of the neighborhood. Owners are trying to keep the neighborhood a neighborhood, trying to improve things, but an uphill battle*
- *Community gardens in the Smith Homes*
- *Park in the center of Brightmoor, off Outer Drive near Greydale is called "boring" and "just a grassy patch," nothing that's attractive to anyone.*
- *Eliza Howell Park: the bike trail is dangerous. It's dangerous at night in the park in general, and "useless" in the winter.*
- *Must go up to 8 Mile for skate park, swimming at Rouge Park.*
- *Hubert apparently was remodeled before closing. It has a large gym and two large auditoriums. Possible uses suggested: teen/adult vocational education, job training, computer training, charter high school or middle school*

#### Vision for Brightmoor

##### Safety

- *Tranquil- feel safe to walk in neighborhood*
- *Community-based neighborhood patrol*

- *Challenge the community to embrace itself- get involved*
- *Information center needed*
- *New police substation right in the middle of Brightmoor*
- *Decrease crime*

#### Community Activities

- *Connect Brightmoor assets (e.g. schools, Grand River retail, Murphy nature preserve in Eliza Howell)*
- *Develop and evolve arts*
- *Opportunity in center of Brightmoor to propose a “wild and crazy” land use that will serve as community center*
- *Bring all points together- North, South, East, and West*
- *Bring community together by bringing in families and fellowship*
- *Someplace where people can go to find out how to do things (check deeds, check landlords, find out about community meetings, etc)*

#### Housing

- *Sentiment of, “Use a building, Don’t lose a building.”*
- *Concentrate development to achieve greater density, need strategy to concentrate housing*
- *Land bank property*
- *Inventory of property to hold owners accountable for its condition, use eminent domain to condemn blighted properties and clear land*
- *Housing program that provides incentives for repairs and home improvements*
- *Home insurance in Brightmoor too high, area redlined by insurance agencies*
- *Townhomes for retirees or those who don’t want responsibility of home close to EH park*
- *Larger home lots for residential; some residents have been trying to acquire lot behind houses for years but have been denied by the City*

#### Education & Youth

- *Hubert School as a job training center*
- *Centralize high school -end the conflict between the communities based on which high school students attend; need high school in Brightmoor – right now only 2 charter HS, no DPS*
- *Need preschool, banks, schools, youth employment, places for youth*
- *Story of a group of kids who put together a 9-hole golf course, going from lot-to-lot*

#### Parks & Recreation

- *Capitalize on the Lyndon Greenway- use it as a leg of a loop connecting Eliza Howell, Stoepel, and a future sports center. Perhaps loop in the commercial development as well. Should be both bike and walking friendly*

- *Theater, skating rink, or swimming pool, or YMCA*
- *Lake Brightmoor or Mt. Ski Resort*
- *Redevelop the Crowell Community Recreation Center and focus new housing near the existing and intact pockets to the north*
- *Enhance the greenway on Lyndon. Children/ elderly center adjacent to Leland Baptist. Revitalize and expand the current community center into a cultural arts center*
- *Wildlife reserve- keep industry out, as the rest of Detroit has been overtaken, and Brightmoor is one of few areas left in city with natural assets*
- *Nature center north of Eliza Howell to teach children about nature*
- *Greenways/bike paths seen as way to connect community- want north-south connection and bike path around Brightmoor*
- *Possibility for a greenway or trail system that goes around the whole community and/or connects North and South Brightmoor*

#### Business

- *Need businesses along Fenkell; Town-center type retail on Fenkell and Burt; franchises on Fenkell*
- *Irving Theater (empty site) mentioned. Good space for another theater or get something in for the kids*
- *Banking and supermarket in Brightmoor – looking for essential services*
- *Brightmoor business association?*
- *Reuse old bank*
- *Update Paulie's Hardware to make a cluster of retail on Fenkell*
- *Grocery store on the old theater site or at old laundromat on Rockdale and Schoolcraft*
- *Change area near Detroit Community School (south of Schoolcraft) as a light industrial area for job creation*
- *Need regional retail and businesses on Schoolcraft to bring in those passing by on expressway- also need sign (take advantage of Brightmoor's name)*

#### MEETING 2, MARCH 18, 2008

During the second community meeting, held on March 18, 2008, students presented a variety of land use options and strategies based on the input from the first meeting, fieldwork, and research. Attendees included some people from the first meeting- residents, pastors, and representatives from LISC, NDND as well as a few new residents.

#### Reinforcement and Revitalization Areas:

- *Adjacent lot transfer program is a good idea but isn't administered well*

- *Standards should be developed to determine whether a vacant house should be torn down*
- *New housing must keep the scale and aesthetic of the existing neighborhood*
- *If going to do infill houses, do it near the schools*
- *Good home is often destroyed/stripped and then becomes uninhabitable or undesirable quite quickly*

#### Reinvention Areas

- *Definite preference for reuse of existing facilities/sites over new-build; Redford or Hubert- both suggested as “new” high school site*
- *Brightmoor has never had a high school but concern over whether there are enough students in Brightmoor*
- *Partnership/synergy between the high school and the recreation center*
- *Recreation center must be affordable, if privately run*
- *Something is better than nothing*
- *Current parks do not seem to be meeting residents’ needs*
- *Need business first and then housing will follow*
- *Need consistency in residential development; NDND large two-story homes should not be next to single-story old homes.*
- *Homesteading must be done beautifully, so that lots are not parking lots or mud lots; Use design guidelines*
- *Market value of new homes and current properties must be maintained*
- *Want something really dynamic for reinvent area*
- *Homes on large lots with walkways/paths through area are a good idea*
- *About purchasing lot behind house- “you must consider the alley easements”- the city refused him b/c it said he could push his property across the easement*
- *Lots of red tape with adjacent lot transfers*
- *Fences could be put up to prevent people from using lots as parking areas*
- *Need guidelines and fair treatment- no consistency currently from the city*
- *Problems exist between the city and the state about transferring ownership from state to city to an individual*
- *Clearing title can also be a problem*
- *Homeowners should be given priority and use guidelines to ensure they maintain properties correctly*
- *Can we purchase lots across the street?*
- *Current assets should be used rather than building new, such as school buildings, homes that are still good*
- *Brightmoor identity is unknown*
- *“We would move tomorrow if we could,” but stay because of lower taxes and cost of housing*
- *People like to have neighbors*
- *South of Schoolcraft would be good for urban agriculture*

- *From one resident, specifically:*
  - *Eliza Howell Park- reinforce picnic area, new canopy, comfort station, update baseball, basketball, and volleyball areas, road repair, native trails, more picnic areas, tables, grills, make Rouge River accessible to canoeing*
    - *Floodplain- revert to naturalized area with wildflowers and plants compatible with floodplain ecosystem*
  - *Bramell/Lamphere, Schoolcraft-Lyndon- redevelop housing in the remaining areas*
  - *Illiad Street, West Side- develop nature walkway/parkway, fence in area upgrade to extension of Eliza Howell Park, redevelop area with homes and expanded lots*
  - *Burt Rd-Glendale- Brightmoor Skills Development Center to provide training for young adults in the following areas: masonry, carpentry, and agricultural*
  - *West Burt Rd to Dolson- agricultural development, wildlife/land preserve*
  - *I-96 Service Drive- close and enclose the area*
  - *West Outer Drive- maintain residential area*
  - *Wilson Playground- redevelop playground*
  - *Schoolcraft and West Outer Drive to Evergreen- retail and produce markets, shopping plaza*

#### **Parks & Green Space:**

- *Create a regional activity in the Brightmoor parks system for both the residents and the neighboring communities is well-supported*
- *The idea of a dog park is somewhat supported, but people are concerned about what kinds of dogs might be brought into the park*
- *Expansion of community gardening and small-scale urban agriculture is also seen as a good accessory use to the park and greenspace*
- *Expand the parks to include the vacant adjacent land is well supported*
- *Keep it simple. Don't make the plans for the spaces too elaborate (in regards to the Lyndon greenway). People just want a safe space to interact with nature.*
- *Open up the river to activity: paddle boats, kayaks, canoes – connecting to a larger regional context*
- *Utilize the vacant land near the edges of the park and along the greenway with community gardening*

### Business clusters:

- *Sites along Fenkell*
  - *Lahser/Fenkell*
  - *Post Office/Med Clinic/Drugstore*
  - *Near Eliza Howell (good spot for new residential, multifamily?)*
  - *Old theater site an opportunity for a business incubator; those workers would then help support small retail in the area*
- *Grocery store- between Lahser and Evergreen along Fenkell, perhaps near the post office; also a Laundromat, the one on Schoolcraft and Outer Dr was heavily used by community members*
- *Concern about criminal activity, police need to take care it before businesses will come back; walking police beats along Fenkell – what happened to them? Mini police station along Grand River? Mobile police stations?*
- *Vacant properties don't necessarily attract criminal activity, people do illegal things out in the open, about the mindset not necessarily the built environment*
- *Skyline Communication (mobile phone store) is an asset to the community*
- *Expand on existing businesses, allow them to acquire properties adjacent or close by to expand operations and utilize vacant land along commercial corridors*
- *Some community residents didn't want to see more commercial on Fenkell, think the street's too narrow, wanted to see it developed with residential instead, and thought one large mall/big box development on Evergreen and Schoolcraft would be sufficient to serve the needs of the Brightmoor community*
- *Some wanted Fenkell developed as a bike/pedestrian-friendly street with benches, trees, flowerboxes, places to stop along the way, bike parking*
- *Parking in front of the retail stores to make them safer? And taking parking off of one side of the street to turn into a bike lane*
- *Public art in vacant buildings*
- *Need for more children's activities*
- *Two planned church development projects along Schoolcraft – City Mission plan at Stout, and Greater Southern Missionary plan at Kentfield*
- *Sustainability ideas like windmills, energy efficiency*
- *Street closures- way of improving security, easing traffic along Fenkell; but this might attract dumping, decrease security*

# APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

The following list of organizations can be used to obtain more information about various programs and initiatives mentioned throughout the land use plan. The list is organized by chapter unless otherwise noted. All contact information was confirmed in April 2008.

## *General*

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative (NDNI), City of Detroit	NDNI designated Brightmoor as a priority area for redevelopment.	Address: 7310 Woodward Avenue, 4th Floor, Detroit Telephone: 313-628-1100 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a>
Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC)	LISC supports nonprofit organizations working in Brightmoor with technical and financial assistance.	Address: 660 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1111, Detroit Telephone: 313-596-8222 Website: <a href="http://www.lisc.org/detroit">www.lisc.org/detroit</a>
Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development (NDND)	NDND is a local non-profit community development corporation that has been working in Brightmoor since 1989. Their activities include new housing construction and rehab in Brightmoor, home ownership courses, a lease-to-own program, and development of the Lyndon Greenway.	Address: P.O. Box 231132, Detroit Telephone: 313-535-9164 Website: <a href="http://www.ndndhomes.org">www.ndndhomes.org</a>
Skillman Foundation	The Skillman Foundation primarily funds projects related to children's development through their Good Schools and Good Neighborhoods programs.	Address: 100 Talon Centre Drive, Suite 100, Detroit Telephone: 313-393-1185 Website: <a href="http://www.skillman.org">www.skillman.org</a>



## Chapter 5

Foreclosure Prevention		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Detroit Homeownership Preservation Enterprise (Detroit H.O.P.E.)	Detroit H.O.P.E. gives presentations on foreclosure prevention and has a telephone hotline and website for information and counseling for mortgage foreclosure prevention.	Telephone: 888-995-HOPE (4673) Website: <a href="http://www.detroithope.org">www.detroithope.org</a>
Save the Dream, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)	This state program provides a list of homeownership counselors and their contact information to help individuals keep their homes.	Address: Cadillac Place, 3028 W. Grand Boulevard, Suite 4-6000, Detroit Telephone: 313-456-3540 Website: <a href="http://www.mshda.info/counseling/search">www.mshda.info/counseling/search</a>
FHA Secure, Fair Housing Administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	This federal program assists individuals to refinance adjustable rate mortgages when government-issued.	Telephone: 1-800-CALLFHA Website: <a href="http://www.fha.gov">www.fha.gov</a>
<i>Detroit Legal News</i>	<i>Detroit Legal News</i> publishes a list of homes going through the foreclosure process in Wayne County. Access to this information is through paid subscription, though non-profits may receive a copy through the publisher's donation program.	Address: 1409 Allen Road, Suite B, Troy, MI 48083 Telephone: 800-875-5275 or 248-577-6100 Website: <a href="http://www.legalnews.com/detroit">www.legalnews.com/detroit</a>

### Home Repair Programs

Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Senior Emergency Home Repair Program, Housing Services Division, Planning and Development Department, City of Detroit	Senior Emergency Home Repair Program provides city grants for low-income senior homeowners to repair furnaces, plumbing, roofing, electrical systems, and structural repairs.	Address: 65 Cadillac Square, Suite 1700, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-3461 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find Planning and Development Department in the alphabetical list of departments.
Lead Hazard Reduction Program, Housing Services Division, Planning and Development Department, City of Detroit	Lead Hazard Reduction Program is a city lead removal program for low-income homeowners, especially those with children under the age of six.	Address: 65 Cadillac Square, Suite 1900, Detroit Telephone: 313-628-2565 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and click on "Planning and Development Department," then click on "Housing Services"
Owner-Occupant Property Improvement Program (PIP) Loan, Michigan State Housing Development Authority	The PIP loan is a state program that provides low-interest loans for home improvements for low-to-moderate income homeowners. First Independence Bank is the entity administering this program in Detroit.	Address: 44 Michigan Avenue, Detroit Telephone: 303-256-8446 Website: <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/mshda">www.michigan.gov/mshda</a> , click on "Home Improvement" and then "Property Improvement" Contact Person: J. Diane Dixon
Frogtown Facelift Program, Greater Frogtown Community Development Corporation	Frogtown Community Development Corporation's (CDC) Frogtown Facelift Program provides loans for home improvements and repair to residents who earn up to 80 percent of the St. Paul, Minnesota, metropolitan region's median income.	Address: 533 North Dale Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103 Telephone: 651-789-7400 Website: <a href="http://www.greaterfrogtowncdc.org">www.greaterfrogtowncdc.org</a>

Infrastructure Improvements		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Safe Routes to School Program (SR2S)	SR2S provides programming support and funding for sidewalk repairs, painting crosswalks, other physical improvements near elementary and middle schools. A description of participation requirements can be found on their website.	Address: c/o Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, P.O. Box 27187, Lansing, MI 48909 Telephone: 800-434-8642 or 517-347-7891 Website: <a href="http://www.saferoutesmichigan.org">www.saferoutesmichigan.org</a> Contact Person: Derrick F. Hale
Madison East End Community Association	Madison East End Community Association organized a community lighting project to help improve safety in their neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland.	Contact Person: Mitchell Henderson Telephone: 410-563-2267

Hubert School Reuse		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Office of Real Estate Administration, Detroit Public Schools	The former Hubert School can be leased from Detroit Public Schools.	Address: 3011 W. Grand Boulevard, 10th Floor, Detroit Telephone: 313-873-6170 Website: <a href="http://www.detroit.k12.mi.us">www.detroit.k12.mi.us</a> , click on "Administration" and then "Facilities Management and Auxiliary Services"

## Chapter 6

Code Enforcement		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Department of Administrative Hearings (DAH), City of Detroit	Contact DAH to report code violations such as failure to remove snow and ice, reporting abandoned vehicles, failure to maintain the exterior of a property, solid waste, and illegal dumping.	Address: 561 E. Jefferson Avenue, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-0098, or 311 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments," and find "Department of Administrative Hearings"
Nuisance Abatement Program, Prosecutor's Office, Wayne County	Deteriorated properties can be reported as a nuisance and can be seized if owners do not respond to requests to fix or demolish them.	Address: 1200 Frank Murphy, Hall of Justice, 1441 St. Anthoine Street, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-5831 Website: <a href="http://www.waynecounty.com/prosecutor/forfeiture.htm">www.waynecounty.com/prosecutor/forfeiture.htm</a> . Email: <a href="mailto:info@fixitupwaynecounty.org">info@fixitupwaynecounty.org</a>

Building Demolition and Deconstruction		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Demolition Division, Building and Safety Engineering Department, City of Detroit	Demolition Division coordinates building demolitions for the city.	Address: Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, 2 Woodward Avenue, Room 412, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-2733 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments," and find "Building and Safety Engineering Department"
Los Pistoleros	Los Pistoleros, a Detroit-based group, advocates deconstruction of buildings rather than demolition. They reuse salvaged materials in remodeling projects and new buildings.	Contact name: Phillip Cooley Telephone: 313-962-9828

### Building Demolition and Deconstruction, *continued*

Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Resource Energy Efficient House, Inc. (REEHouse)	REEHouse of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, deconstructs abandoned houses and reuses materials in new construction.	Address: 3832 North Port Washington, Milwaukee, WI 53212 Telephone: 414-265-0616 Contact Person: Bert Simmon
Harambee Ombudsman Project, Inc. (HOPI)	HOPI, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin, community development corporation, trains youth to deconstruct and construct houses in their Youth from Fast Track job training program.	Address: 335 West Wright Street, Milwaukee, WI, 53212 Telephone: 414-264-7822 Website: <a href="http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/org/hopi/">www.neighborhoodlink.com/org/hopi/</a>

### Illegal Dumping

Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Northwest Neighborhood City Hall	Call the neighborhood city hall to inquire about obtaining city dumpsters to appropriately dispose of waste.	Address: 19180 Grand River Ave, Detroit Telephone: 313-935-5322 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find "Neighborhood City Hall"
Public Works Department, City of Detroit	Call the Department of Public Works to report illegal dumping and to obtain signs to discourage illegal dumping.	Address: Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, 2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 513, Detroit Telephone: 1-800-545-4948 (Illegal Dumping Hotline) or 313-224-3901 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find "Department of Public Works"
New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC)	Organizers at NKCDC in Philadelphia planted trees and installed attractive fencing around vacant lots to discourage and prevent illegal dumping. They also have public art programs (Chapter 9).	Address: 2515 Frankford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19125 Telephone: 215-427-0350 Website: <a href="http://www.nkcdc.org">www.nkcdc.org</a>

Adjacent Lot Transfer Programs		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Planning and Development Department, City of Detroit	The Planning and Development Department can be contacted for more information about city-owned lots adjacent to an owner's property.	Address: 65 Cadillac Square, Suite 2300, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-6380 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find "Planning and Development Department"
Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority (MLBFTA)	MLBFTA, of the State of Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Growth, sells tax-reverted properties to adjacent property owners.	Address: 3028 W. Grand Avenue, Suite 4-600, Detroit Telephone: 313-456-3590 Website: <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/dleg">www.michigan.gov/dleg</a> and clicking on the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority link.

Pocket Parks		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Northamptonshire Pocket Parks, Northamptonshire County Council	Planning and good organization on both the city government and local organizations' parts help make the pocket parks successful in Northamptonshire, England. More information about pocket parks and how this county manages close to 80 pocket parks can be found on their website.	Address: P.O. Box 93, County Hall, Northampton, NN1 1AN, UK Website: <a href="http://www.pocketparks.com">www.pocketparks.com</a> Email: <a href="mailto:rdouglas@northamptonshire.gov.uk">rdouglas@northamptonshire.gov.uk</a>

Community Gardening		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Urban Roots Gardener Training Course, The Greening of Detroit	The Urban Roots program is a hands-on community gardening training program. The program not only teaches horticulture skills but also community organizing and leadership training. The Greening of Detroit also provides seeds, plants, and technical assistance related to community gardening.	Address: 1418 Michigan Avenue, Detroit Telephone: 313-237-8736 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitagriculture.org">www.detroitagriculture.org</a> .
Michigan State University Extension (MSUE)	MSUE offers technical assistance for community gardening, including soil diagnosis and plant nutrient testing.	Address: 640 Temple Street, 6th Floor, Detroit Telephone: 313-833-3412 Website: <a href="http://www.msue.msu.edu">www.msue.msu.edu</a>

## Chapter 7

Urban Agriculture		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Small Plot Intensive (SPIN) Farming, Institute for Innovations in Local Farming	SPIN farming is an urban agriculture and business approach used to determine what crops to cultivate and sell locally.	Address: 2220 Kater Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146 Website: <a href="http://www.spinfarming.org">www.spinfarming.org</a> Contact Person: Roxanne Christensen Email: <a href="mailto:rchristensen@infocommercegroup.com">rchristensen@infocommercegroup.com</a>
Somerton Tanks Farm	Somerton Tanks Farm in Philadelphia uses the Small Plot Intensive (SPIN) farming method on half an acre of land.	Address: 2220 Kater Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146 Website: <a href="http://www.somertontanksfarm.org">www.somertontanksfarm.org</a>
Detroit Agricultural Network (DAN)	DAN collaborates to promote urban agriculture in the city. They host an annual garden tour of Detroit's urban gardens.	Address: 200 West Parkhurst Place, Detroit. Telephone: 313-869-7199, mailbox 3 Website: <a href="http://www.geocities.com/detroitag/index.html">www.geocities.com/detroitag/index.html</a>
Earth Works Garden	Earth Works Garden urban farm on the eastside of Detroit contains a growing plot, a greenhouse, composting, and bee apiaries.	Address: 1264 Meldrum Street (Greenhouse) and 2131 Meldrum Street (growing plot), Detroit Telephone: 313-579-2100, extension 211 Website: <a href="http://www.earth-works.org">www.earth-works.org</a>



Recreational Facility		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
High Velocity Sports (HV Sports)	HV Sports in Canton, Michigan, could be a model for a similar recreation facility in Brightmoor. In addition to a number of different sports facilities, they offer personal training, team building courses, summer camps, and sports clinics.	Address: 46246 Michigan Avenue, Canton, MI Telephone: 734-487-7678 Website: www.hvsports.com

Educational Campus		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Detroit School of Arts, Detroit Public Schools	Detroit School of Arts partners with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Detroit Public Television. Partnering with these professional organizations allows working professionals to mentor students and use the school facilities after school hours.	Address: 123 Seldon Street, Detroit Telephone: 313-494-6000 Website: www.detroitk12.org Contact Person: Dr. Denise Davis-Cotton

### Alternative Energy Production

Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
WWJ950 Newsradio Alternative Energy Directory: Version 2.0	A 57-page document listing all entities related to alternative energy industry in Michigan.	Website: <a href="http://www.wwj.com/pages/831997.php">www.wwj.com/pages/831997.php</a> Contact Person: Matt Roush Email: <a href="mailto:mnroush@cbs.com">mnroush@cbs.com</a>
Energy Cooperative Association of Pennsylvania	Since 1979, the Energy Cooperative works with residents to produce alternative energy while educating members to reduce energy consumption in Philadelphia. Surplus energy is sold to electricity suppliers.	Address: 1218 Chestnut Street, Suite 1003, Philadelphia, PA 19107 Telephone: 1-800-223-5783 or 313-413-2122 Website: <a href="http://www.theenergy.coop">www.theenergy.coop</a>
Energy Office, Department of Labor and Economic Growth, State of Michigan	The state Energy Office provides information about renewable energy production and could be a funding source for alternative energy projects.	Address: 611 West Ottawa Street, P.O. Box 30221, Lansing, MI 48909 Telephone: 517-241-6228 Website: <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/dleg">www.michigan.gov/dleg</a> and click on "Energy Office" link

## Chapter 8

Parks and Recreation		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Recreation Department, City of Detroit	This city office plans programs and capital improvements for the city's parks and recreation facilities.	Address: 18100 Meyers Road, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-1100 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find "Recreation Department"
Northwestern District Office, Detroit Police	Detroit Police organizes CB radio patrols to increase safety in neighborhoods.	Address: 11450 Warwick Street, Detroit Telephone: 313-596-1100 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find "Police Department"
Public Lighting Department	Detroit's Public Lighting Department can be called to report missing, damaged, or malfunctioning public street lights.	Address: 9449 Grinnell Avenue, Detroit Telephone: 313-267-7202 or 313-224-0500

## Chapter 9

Main Street and Commercial Revitalization		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Main Street Program, National Trust for Historic Preservation	Works to help revitalize main street commercial districts through technical assistance and information sharing, focusing on four areas: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.	Address: 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 Telephone: 202-588-6219 Website: <a href="http://www.mainstreet.org">www.mainstreet.org</a>
Re\$store Detroit, Refresh Detroit and Small Business Detroit! Microloan Programs, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization, City of Detroit	These city programs work to revitalize Detroit's commercial areas by providing assistance such as loans to repaint storefronts and help establishing small businesses through microloans.	Address: 65 Cadillac Square, Suite 3200, Detroit Telephone: 313-224-6380 Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov">www.detroitmi.gov</a> , click on "Departments" and find "Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization"

Public Art and Murals		
Name of Organization	Description	Contact Information
Public Art Workz (PAWZ) at Artist Village	Located in neighboring Old Redford, Artist Village serves as a local community visual arts workshop and educational center. PAWZ members painted numerous buildings and storefronts in Old Redford to lessen the negative visual impact of abandoned buildings.	Address: 17340 Lahser Road, Detroit, MI Telephone: 313-334-2919 Website: <a href="http://www.publicartworkz.org">www.publicartworkz.org</a> Contact Person: Chazz Miller
College for Creative Studies (CCS)	CCS, a Detroit art and design school, recently received a grant from the Skillman Foundation for a public art project in Brightmoor. CCS plans to incorporate a public participation process to determine public art locations and types in Brightmoor.	Address: 17340 Lahser Road, Detroit, MI Telephone: 313-664-7937 Website: <a href="http://www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu">www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu</a> Contact Person: Sioux Trujillo