

Urban Revitalization through
Art, Community and Ecology:
The Heidelberg Project

by

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abstract

Once known as the Motor City, Detroit is now rusted over with 90,000 vacant parcels and a 22% unemployment rate. Decline of manufacturing jobs, combined with a complex history of racism and discrimination, led to unprecedented population collapse and abandonment. The 2010 census revealed the dramatic exodus from Detroit was even greater than predicted: just over 713,000 residents remain, down from nearly 2 million in 1950. Leftover stretches of vacant land, totaling more than 40 square miles, pose an enormous physical and psychological challenge to residents and city officials forced to manage with what remains. Despite the challenges of vacant land, disenfranchisement, and economic hardship, many still see beauty in what's left of the city. Twenty-five years ago, Detroit-native Tyree Guyton created the Heidelberg Project, a two-block long environmental artscape on the city's eastside. The artwork became a beacon for his neighborhood and others like it, defiantly resisting the destruction wrought by neglect and disinvestment.

The research and design presented in this document expands the scope of the Heidelberg Project into a long-term vision for neighborhood redevelopment called the Heidelberg Cultural Village. This project lays the groundwork for the Cultural Village, a model for art-based neighborhood redevelopment in Detroit and other post-industrial cities. The work is presented in four chapters: Christian Runge examines how the Heidelberg Cultural Village can be integrated with emerging ecological and cultural land uses specific to a post urban Detroit. Fai Foen's work focuses on an alternative economic model that invests in the local economy and builds on existing human capacity to support sustainable redevelopment in Rustbelt communities. Sarah Alward explores how an art-based urban farm can allow for a diverse range of contributions from community members, creating an inclusive space to grow fresh, healthy food that has the potential to increase neighborhood investment and involvement. Finally, Dana Petit illustrates how a healing garden can respond to the social, psychological, and physical health issues stemming from the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood's experience with abandonment and poverty. Together, these design interventions are intended to serve as an incubator for physical, economic, and cultural sustainability and the center of community life for the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood.

acknowledgements

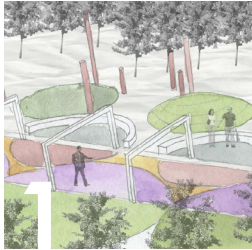
We would like to thank our friends, family, and the School of Natural Resources and Environment landscape architecture class of 2011 for their constant encouragement over the past three years. We would also like to thank SNRE's Office of Academic Programming for their generous financial support and reliable advice.

Thank you to artist Tyree Guyton for providing inspiration and allowing us to share in your vision for the future of the Heidelberg Project. Thank you to the staff at the Heidelberg Project for your support and advice for our participatory art event at the DOTS Festival 2010, especially Jenenne Whitfield, Executive Director; Sharon Luckerman, Development Director; and Michelle Figurski, Executive Assistant. We also would like to thank the volunteers who helped us run the art event, and the participants who generously shared their time, stories and creative talents with us. Your inspirational stories helped us gain a stronger understanding of the Heidelberg Project and gave depth to our designs.

To Brian Wilcox and the GroundWorks Team, thank you for providing impeccable professional support and equipment for the creation of our video documentary, *Dancing on the Street*.

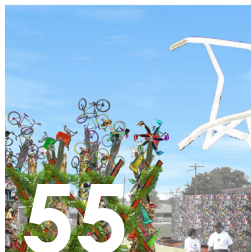
Finally, thank you to Professor Beth Diamond for your tireless support and thoughtful critique throughout this project. Working with you has pushed us to be better designers, stronger writers, and more capable presenters. Your dedication to Detroit and the Heidelberg Project has been an inspiration to us—we hope to continue to design culturally appropriate landscapes that use art and creativity to support sustainability and well being.

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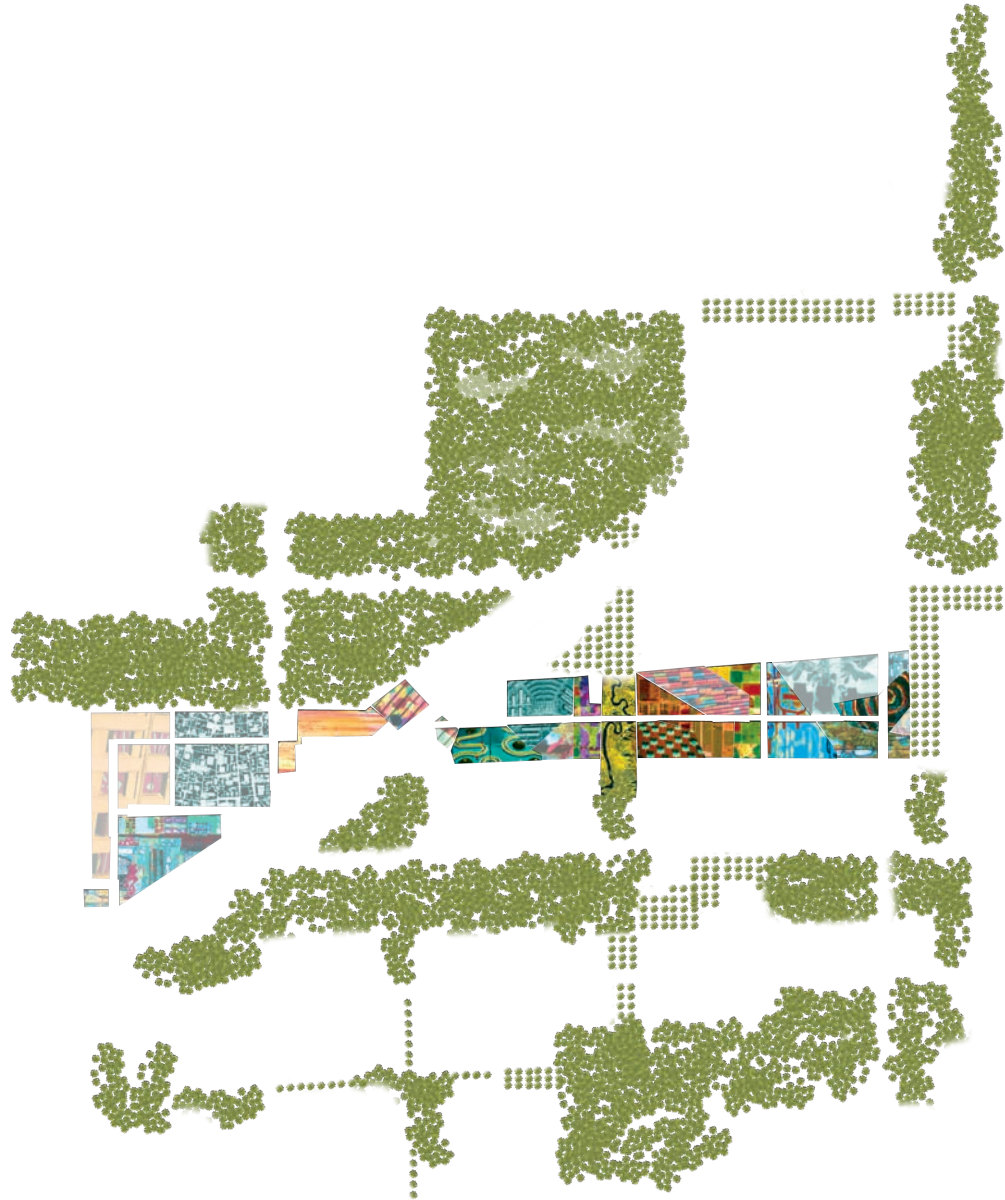
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Christian Runge

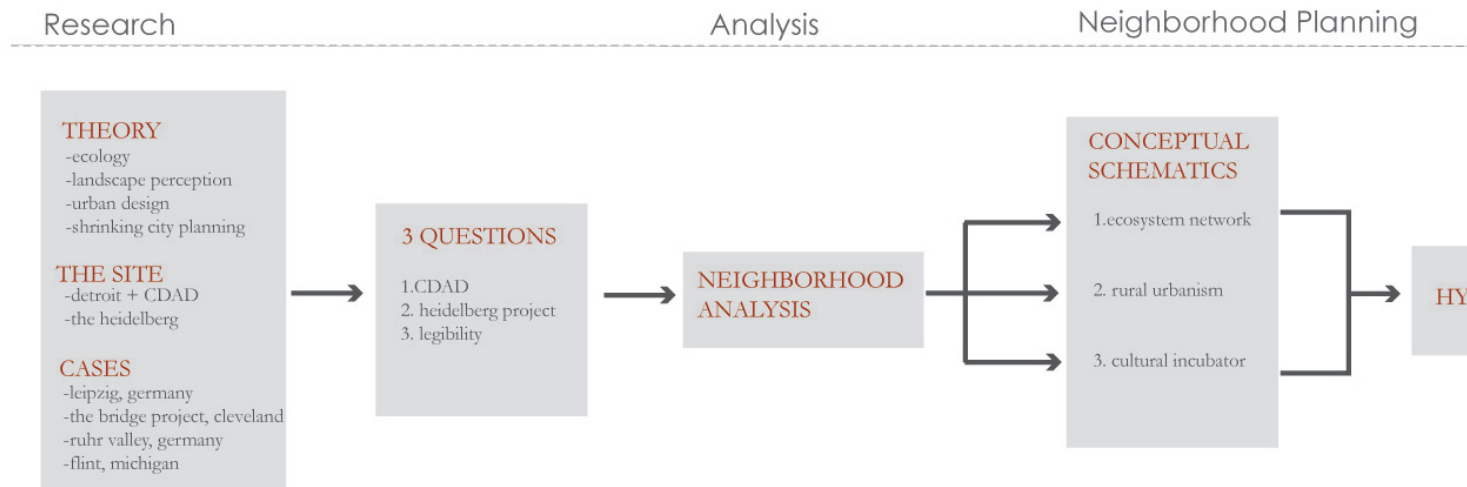
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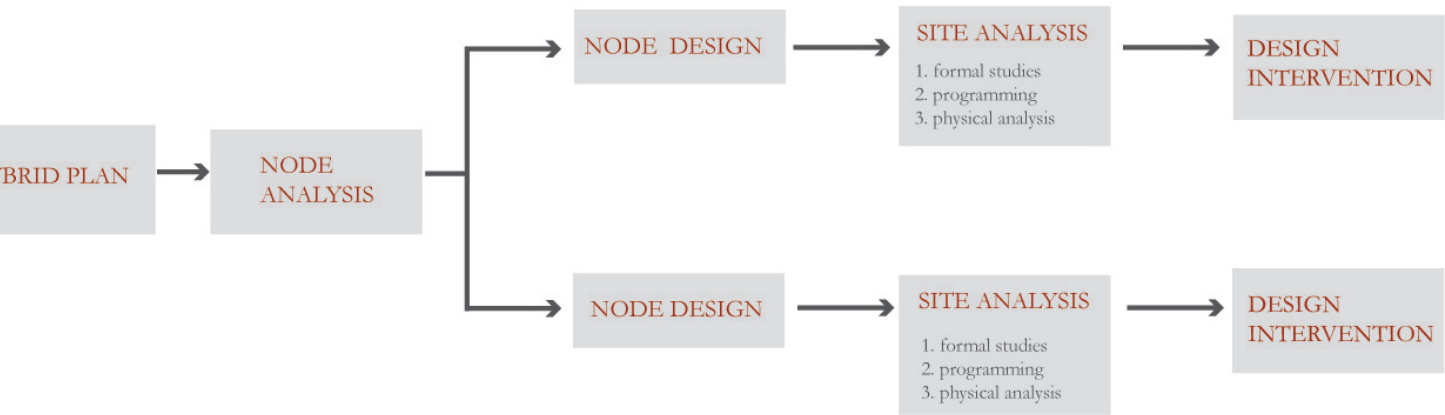
Tyree Guyton's Heidelberg Project is a world-renowned two-block-long environmental art installation constructed with materials scavenged from Detroit's abandoned neighborhoods. Guyton's creative approach to re-making the city from the pieces left behind serves as the conceptual foundation for a series of speculative redevelopment proposals for the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood where the Heidelberg Project resides. For over a decade the Heidelberg Project has been working to build a cultural village as a catalyst for neighborhood redevelopment. This paper will describe a series of neighborhood-scaled designs that map and overlay the physical, ecological, artistic, and cultural processes specific to this neighborhood. These designs specifically explore how the Heidelberg cultural village will interface with the surrounding neighborhood and with future land uses being proposed by the city. At a human scale, design interventions are proposed in order to improve legibility at strategic nodes within this emerging urban land system. The challenge inherent in these interventions will be to foster a sense of order while simultaneously supporting opportunities for creative expression and adaptive re-use.

These design proposals synthesize the most current research in the planning of shrinking cities, landscape ecology, traditional urban design theory, and art-based neighborhood redevelopment. First, the problem of shrinking cities will be examined from a developed nation perspective. Then, four precedents will examine art-based temporary use of vacant space; interim care of vacant land; and large-scale post-industrial landscape succession and eco-park development. Landscape ecology will be discussed as a general spatial theory that can guide and organize shrinking city planning, while post-industrial plant succession will be examined in order to better understand the potential structure of emerging ecological landscapes on vacant land. Traditional urban design theory will be reexamined to determine what principles can be used to guide the redesign of highly vacant neighborhoods. Finally, the economic benefits of infrastructure and city service re-alignment will be considered. This accumulated knowledge gleaned from disparate disciplines will lay the theoretical foundation for subsequent design proposals for the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood.



1.1 Research + Design Process

Site Designs





The Challenge of Shrinking Cities

The shrinking city is a multidimensional and international phenomenon encompassing regions, cities, and parts of metropolitan areas that are experiencing dramatic declines in their economic and social bases. The causes of this urban decline are many, though one common denominator is economic change resulting from the shift from a manufacturing to a service economy (Schwartz, 2008). Shrinking cities in the United States have also resulted from a relative growth in neighboring suburbs, a process laced with racial dimensions (Schwartz, 2008). Taken together, these processes have drained essential resources from many urban areas, leaving cities with diminishing fiscal bases (Pallagst, 2007).

However, these economic forces may physically impact cities and countries in different ways. Here in the United States, decline often occurs in the urban center creating a “donut” effect, while in European countries like Germany, shrinkage may occur in patches or in rings surrounding an historic center (Pallagst and Wiechmann 2005). In present day Detroit, the condition of many areas can aptly be described as post-urban. A neighborhood within a shrinking city may be considered post-



1.2 Remnants of an industrial decline, Detroit

urban when the severity of the vacancy and decline is so great that it loses its urban physical form or character. In the case of Detroit, observers have described the return of “urban prairie,” or the emergence of rural landscapes within close proximity to downtown. This novel condition suggests the need for unique approaches to urban redevelopment.

Discourse and planning paradigms dealing with shrinking cities are also varied. Even the most forward thinking cities, regions, or countries have only recently begun to establish new development strategies that are not based on limitless growth. However, an extensive planning debate about this issue has occurred in some European countries including Germany and the Netherlands. In both of these

countries, urban population change has been driven by industrial decline, while Germany in particular has also experienced emigration from East to West Germany following re-unification. One example of proactive planning is the German Shrinking Cities Initiative. While some planners were involved, the initiative is primarily the work of architects, artists and activists. This Initiative sponsored a well-received international exhibit on the conceptual and developmental possibilities shrinking cities offer, which has toured Western Europe and the United States, drawing large crowds of non-professionals (Rugare and Schwarz 2008). The shrinking city phenomenon has generally been overlooked until recently in international comparative research, and here in the United States most governments in declining Rust Belt cities have only recently relinquished the hope of a large-scale economic resurgence as a means of salvation (Schwartz, 2008). In general, this suggests the need for larger scale planning efforts in concert with architectural and art interventions.

Meanwhile, shrinking cities in the U.S. continue to struggle with staggering amounts of vacant land and decaying infrastructure that often accompany persistent job loss and population decline. Youngstown, Ohio is an example of one U.S. city that has already begun to grapple with this issue on a citywide planning scale. In 2002 the city began formulating a creative plan to let highly vacant neighborhoods keep emptying, and in some cases return to a natural state (Schwartz, 2008). The plan proposes to raze unused buildings, streets and alleys and create larger home lots, more green space and new parks. The city's plan is to depopulate, and de-urbanize and it does so deliberately by selling its rural, natural, and suburban qualities (Aslesen et al. 2010).

Precedents

The number of proven approaches to urban planning for shrinking cities is still few. These known methods vary from large to small in scale, and from building to landscape. They generally fall into three categories: art-based intervention, landscape care, and facilitated naturalization. While the impact of these examples may be temporary or site specific, they provide a foundation for exploring what approaches may prove useful in the re-making of Detroit.

Temporary Use

Temporary uses for vacant land provide opportunities for grassroots economic development, local tourism, and enhanced quality of life for residents of depopulating areas. Temporary uses are intended as low-cost and short-term. They provide a holding strategy that activates vacant land in ways that may facilitate a long-term, profitable use. Two examples of temporary use projects are the Bridge Project in Cleveland, and Hotel Neustadt, Germany.

Temporary Use: Cleveland Ohio

The BRIDGE PROJECT took place September 2009 at the abandoned streetcar level of the Detroit Superior Bridge in Cleveland, Ohio. Here, local and regional artists convened and showcased their work in one of the region's most amazing and underused locations.

The Bridge Project showcased the work of approximately forty artists and spanned the entirety of the bridge from the tunnels and catacombs at the west side of the bridge, to the arched walkway of the span itself, and to the large pillar decked area at the east side. The project highlighted the potential of abandoned infrastructure within the city to become re-inhabited as public space or as dramatic art piece (CUDC, 2009).



1.3 Art Event on the former streetcar level of Detroit Superior Bridge

Temporary Use: Halle Neustadt, Germany

In this remarkable effort, young artists transformed an empty Soviet-era residential tower into a themed event hotel that provided a wide range of entertainment and activities. During the timeframe when the Hotel Neustadt was open (August-October 2003), it had 2,952 overnight guests. While temporary in impact, this intervention changed Halle-Neustadt from a little-known, declining industrial city into a major regional tourist destination (Rick 2005). Halle Neustadt is part of a larger temporary use movement in Germany. Examples of innovative projects include youth-oriented extreme sports such as skateboarding, climbing, and biking complexes in former industrial sites as well as mobile cultural venues such as social clubs, artificial beaches, and performance areas in the city of Berlin (Oswalt 2005).



1.4 Artists at work on the Hotel Neustadt

Cues to Care: Parcel by Parcel

Work by Joan Nassauer in Flint, Michigan highlights small scale, low cost, and immediate techniques for improving the visual and ecological quality of neighborhoods with an abundance of vacant land. In *Vacant Land as a Natural Asset*, Nassauer et al. describe the “Market Substitution Principle” which proposes that time and community care can substitute for robust market conditions to create property



1.5 Visible care on vacant lot

value. Furthermore, they propose that ecosystem services achieved by local communities’ engagement in caring for the landscape creates enduring value. Short-term landscape care can mean high priority signage, lot mowing, mow-strips on the edges of vacant lots, native plantings, or tree plantings (Nassauer, 2008). Importantly, Nassauer et al. advocate that this type of short-term intervention in a system of fragmented vacant lots be based on long term, and

regional ecological planning (Nassauer, 2008). Patterns of vacancy and the social dynamics in Flint and Detroit are quite similar, making this an excellent strategy for vacant land management in either city for the next one to five years.

Landscape scale regeneration: Emscher Park, Germany

Large-scale landscape aggregation and regeneration has become possible in a post-urban cities like Detroit, where some neighborhoods are up to 90% vacant. However, there are no current examples of intentional landscape regeneration projects within this context. Nonetheless, large-scale brownfield redevelopment projects may provide a general guide for how to proceed. Emscher Park, in the Ruhr region of Western Germany, illustrates the latest thinking in ecological and economic regeneration of a former industrial region (EPA 2010). Emscher Park’s development planning - led by the International Building Exhibition (IBA) - is guided by ecological principles, which protect, increase, and shape undeveloped areas (EPA 2010). In addition to incorporating economic development goals into site reuse, open space preservation and public art are also high priorities within these brownfield projects. Within the Emscher Park open space system the well-known Duisberg Nord Landscape Park attains both of these goals by transforming a former ironworks into a public park. IBA’s overarching plan is to “integrate, shape, develop, and interlink” the existing pattern of open spaces left behind by the coal and



1.6 Regenerating industrial forest + art Installation



1.7 Landscape Park at Duisberg, Germany

steel industries, and to create seven regional green corridors that would form a complete park system of “European significance.” These corridors are intended to use few man-made resources while maintaining the area’s natural state (EPA 2010).

The Industrial Forests of the Ruhr (IFR) are of special significance to city planners that are contemplating large-scale landscape regeneration. The IFR are another innovative experiment in how to convert abandoned industrial lands into green space with little financial investment and it accomplishes this by fostering a landscape of natural succession. Over time the land returns in a gradual, controlled way to forest. Formally designed elements occur only at public access points that let residents and tourists experience the environmentally valuable and aesthetically appealing landscape that has resulted (Schwartz, 2008).

Ecological Opportunities

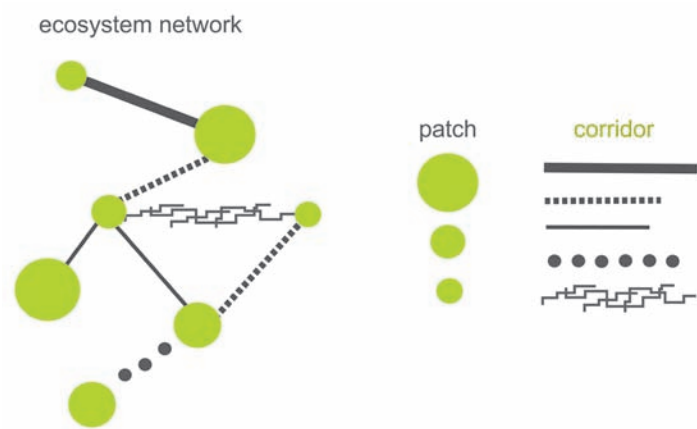
Ecosystem Network Theory

A great deal of discussion has already taken place about the role of ecological design in shrinking cities because they present planners with unique and unprecedented opportunities to incorporate sustainable natural systems into the urban core of sprawling metropolitan regions. Yet, how does one determine the appropriate scale of a sustainable system, and how can a planner or designer measure sustainability? Within the context of sustainable development, biodiversity should be considered a resource of prime importance to the future of life, human wellbeing, and economics (Constanza et al. 1997). Biodiversity is a vital component in ecosystem processes and in the ecological resilience of ecosystems, and is the long term insurance of a sustainable

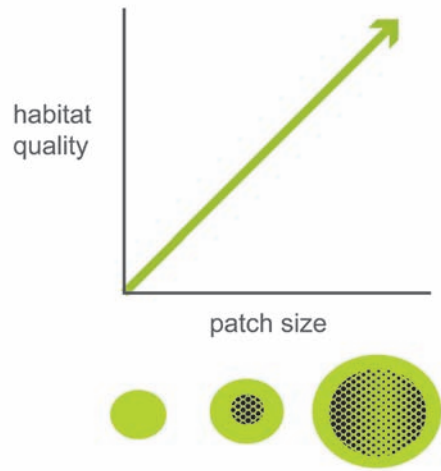
system (Opdam, 2008). The Ecosystem Network Concept, based on metapopulation ecology, may provide the most appropriate spatial framework for the preservation of biodiversity in metropolitan landscapes. Ecological networks are defined as a set of ecosystem patches (forest, marsh) functionally linked by flows of organisms and by interactions with the landscape matrix in which they are embedded (Fig. 1.8) (Opdam, 2008).

Networks can function at a variety of spatial scales, and are a general multispecies concept (Opdam, 2008).

Natural ecosystem patches are highly fragmented in metropolitan landscapes and often cannot support viable populations of many species (Opdam, 2008). Ecosystem networks may provide a solution to this because they enable the risks of fragmentation to be shared by the whole network. Importantly, they provide a spatial structure that allows populations to respond to climate change. Ecosystem networks are significant in the context of planning because populations within the network are dynamic in space and thus when the pattern of the network changes (by deleting or adding patches), its potential to support the metapopulation is maintained (Opdam, 2008).



1.8 Ecosystem Network diagram



1.9 Ecosystem patch size v. habitat quality

Many physical variables affect patch quality such as shape, vegetation type, soils, and water conditions. Furthermore, human factors such as proximity to traffic noise, recreation or industrial activity may also influence the success of more sensitive species. When planning open space at the neighborhood or city planning scale, the ultimate driver should be patch size. Because large patches are more heterogeneous than small patches, they are more likely to contain high quality habitat and as a result, an ecological network that includes large patches can generally be more sustainable (Fig. 1.9). Therefore, vacant land within shrinking cities should be aggregated into large patches that are linked by functional corridors when possible.

Post Industrial Woodlands

The concept of allowing open space to emerge within the borders of a Post Urban city like Detroit is now a commonly discussed solution for extremely vacant areas. Yet, as was highlighted in the case study of Escher Park, municipalities simply cannot shoulder the financial burden of maintaining these larger scale open landscapes to the urban park standard born in the early 20th century. Thus, with the exception of edges and high activity nodes, these landscapes must left be alone to evolve naturally with minimal outside facilitation. At most, the city and its partners may be able to afford to accelerate ecological succession through strategic tree planting.

Currently, researchers know very little about the dynamics of this type of reforestation in urban industrial areas. Ingo Kowarik, at the Technical University Berlin, provides a conceptual framework to understand the potential structure or actual ecological health of these novel systems. In contrast to traditional or non-urban woodland types, urban industrial woodlands offer very low habitat continuity but forest stands can still develop in two

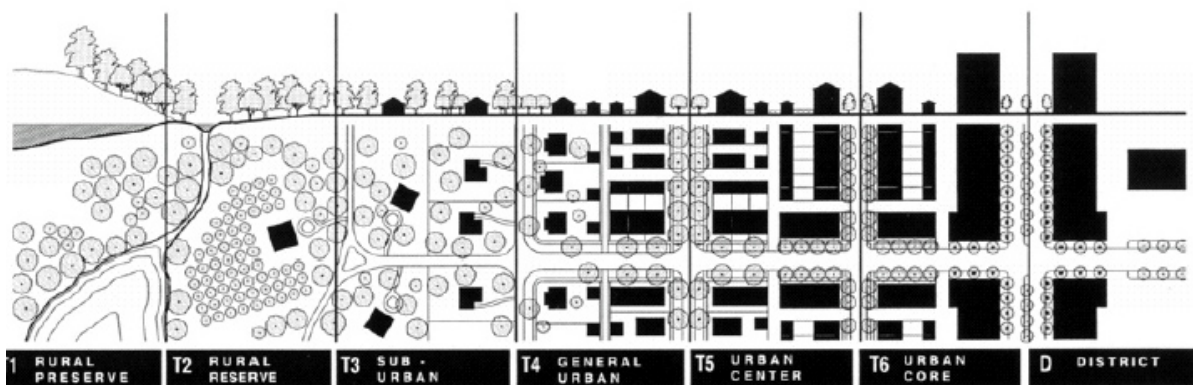


1.10 Emergent post industrial woodland

to three decades. The urban forest species pool will be made up of a large number of non-native species intermixed with some natives (Kowarik, 2005). The overall ecological make-up of these stands will be heavily dependent on context. As an example, the nearer a successional area is to habitat with stable native populations, the more likely it will contain a higher percentage of natives (Kowarik, 2005). It appears likely that without any intervention whatsoever, many successional areas within the city will ultimately be composed of a very large percentage of non-native species that have migrated from sites nearby. This is especially true for open spaces that are nowhere near any significant native habitat patches. Ultimately, complete restoration to a native stand condition is outside the realm of possibility for a shrinking city with limited economic means. A compromise approach is to plant stands of native trees and plants in an ecologically strategic manner in order to induce a more appealing and orderly ecological succession.

Urban Design in the Post-Urban Metropolis

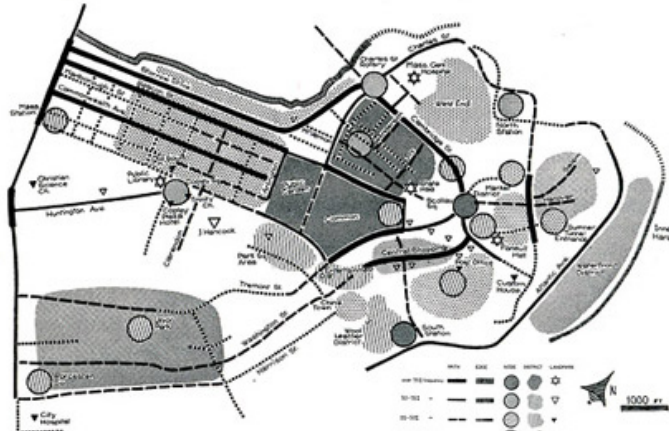
In Detroit today, all of the primary elements of Andres Duany's urban transect (Fig. 1.11) can now be found within the urban core itself, and are distributed across this landscape as a random mosaic. It quickly becomes clear when surveying this landscape that many of the rules of planning and design need to be re-written. One must ask whether there is a place for traditional 19th or 20th century urban design principals in the shrinking city. This paper argues that it is more important than ever to utilize tested urban design concepts to improve the condition of shrinking cities. Notably, four Lynchian concepts could still play a vital role in post-urban environments and these are: Legibility, Nodes, Edges, and Settlement Pattern.



1.11 Traditional urban transect (Andres Duany)

Legibility

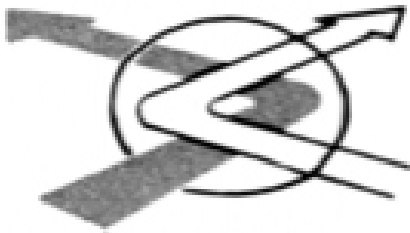
Legibility is one of the essential concepts underlying much of Kevin Lynch's urban design theories. Lynch defines legibility as the ease with which a city's parts can be recognized and can be organized into a coherent pattern (Lynch, 1960). A legible city would be one whose districts, landmarks, and pathways are easily identifiable and are easily grouped into an over-all pattern (Lynch, 1960). Finding novel ways to improve legibility within a disintegrating urban framework that contains large-scale naturalizing spaces and distributed settlement should be an objective of city designers because it promotes a sense of care, helps people navigate a changing urban environment, and provides a guide for the intensity of landscape maintenance.



1.12 City pattern in Boston

Nodes

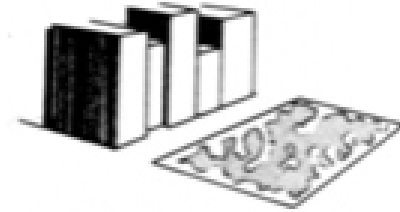
If legibility is a goal for shrinking city planning, then the Node stands out as the primary element that could drive the overall distribution of landscape maintenance, and the intensity of design interventions. Nodes are strategic foci into which the observer can enter, typically either junctions of paths, or concentrations of key characteristics (Lynch, 1960). In the shrinking city, these characteristics may include leftover urban forms, arterial streets, and naturalizing landscapes. Conceptually these nodes are relatively small points in the overall image of the city, but they may take on a variety of shapes and sizes (Lynch, 1960). In the case of a shrinking city like Detroit, where economic limitations are preventing civic leaders from heavily investing in public spaces, nodes will likely be articulated with small multifunctional parks or plazas, art installations, or even signs.



1.13 City Node

Edges

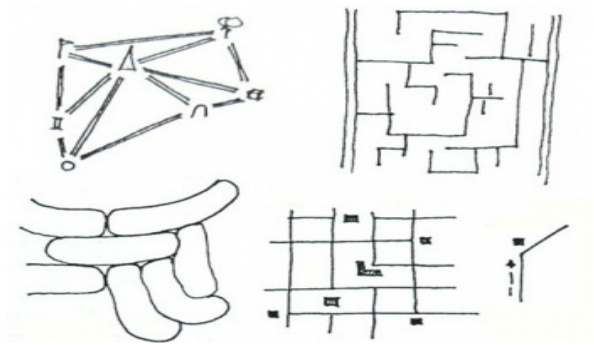
In Kevin Lynch's view, edges are linear elements not considered paths: they are usually, but not always, the boundaries between two kinds of areas (Lynch, 1960). Edges are especially important in the perception of a shrinking city, because widely disparate land uses will often be located adjacent to each other. Fields and farms may come into contact with urban residential neighborhoods, naturalizing forest may border residual commercial corridors, and funky artist enclaves may abut new mixed-use developments. Furthermore, the edges of intact natural habitat patches are often of the lowest ecological quality within the context of a highly fragmented metropolitan environment (Dramstad, 1996). However, in order to serve the goal of maintenance reduction in the Post-Urban neighborhood, the traditional concept of the edge may need to be expanded to include its potential role as a pathway. For instance, a manicured greenway path or street may be the appropriate boundary between a naturalizing area and a residential neighborhood. Designers will need to find new synergistic approaches that use edges as visually strong boundaries that also reinforce the perception of landscape care.



1.14 City Edge

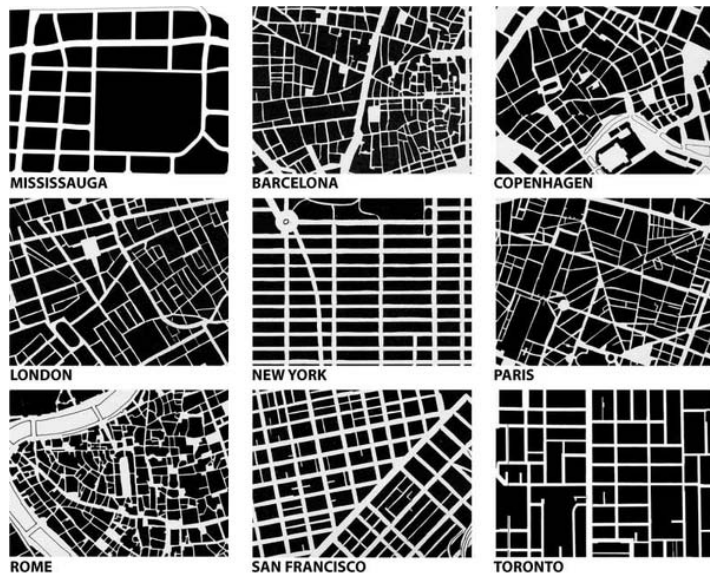
Settlement Pattern

Settlement pattern generally includes a city's network of streets, its building and block typologies, and its distribution of uses (Lynch 1981). When considering the shrinking city, it may be useful to ask whether the historic pattern of the city, especially the street network, is still useful. This question is especially important because reducing the costs of road maintenance can generate significant savings for the city over time. In most North American Rust Belt cities like Detroit, the street network is a rectangular grid. The grid provides city dwellers with numerous options for efficiently navigating the city when travel distances are short. Drawbacks to the grid include: wastefulness when all streets are brought to the same standard, butchery of terrain and natural features, visual monotony and lack of focus (Lynch 1981). If diagonals are lacking, then long trips become tediously indirect. Lynch highlights how many of these objections can be overcome: by developing street hierarchy, using the grid as a main framework with indirect side streets,

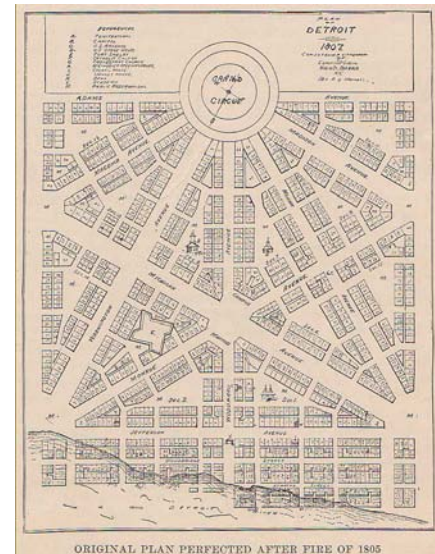


1.15 City Patterns

varying the spacing of grid lines, and appropriately using diagonals. Numerous opportunities exist to simply improve upon the existing grid system using Lynch's ideas as starting points for re-design. In Detroit, the grid and the diagonal "Woodward Plan" street plan can be the framework around which numerous side street modifications can be made. (Fig. 1.17)



1.16 Grid typologies



1.17 1807 Woodward Plan, Detroit

Opportunities for Infrastructure Realignment

A recent study completed by graduate students at the University of Michigan Planning department highlights the economic benefits of infrastructure realignment and city service reduction in highly vacant areas of the city. The study clearly shows several cases where the city can realize significant savings, and further examines whether this savings can be redistributed to stable districts within the city. In the emptiest areas of the city, infrastructure and service changes include:

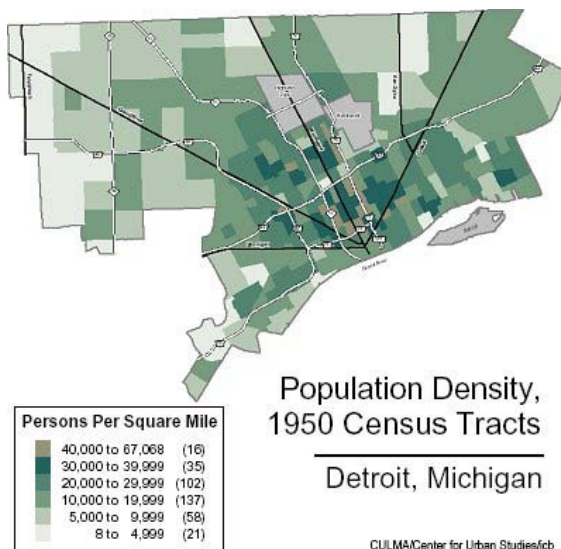
- *removal of roads or conversion to gravel or chip/seal*
- *removal of sidewalks*
- *water mains capped and filled*
- *disabling streetlights*
- *altering trash collection schedules*
- *elimination of snow and ice removal*
- *elimination of tree trimming*
- *elimination of vacant lot maintenance. (Aslesen et al. 2010)*

Several analyses bring the economic significance of infrastructure realignment into stark relief. The researchers found that the total cost of conversion of a paved road to gravel is roughly \$7,500 per mile over 25 years, which is less than the cost of resurfacing the road once (Aslesen et al. 2010). In addition, \$20,000 per year can be saved for every 100 lights that are decommissioned. In sum, the study found that in two highly vacant neighborhoods within the city, \$39.8 million could be saved from sources other than the general fund, \$68.8 million could be saved from the general fund, and \$4,325,000 could be saved in operating expenditures, over a 25-year period (Aslesen et al. 2010).

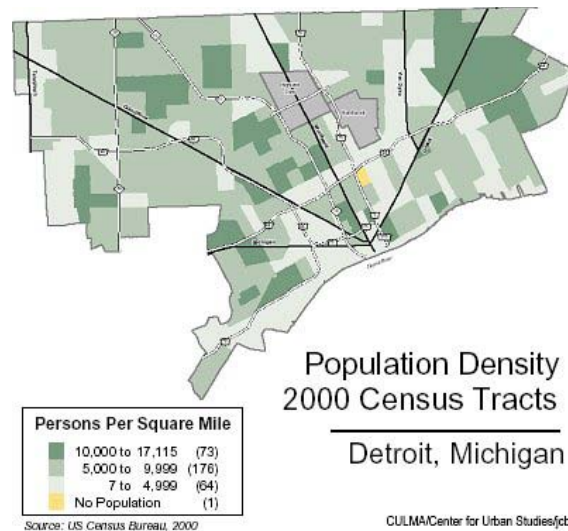


The Post-Urban Metropolis: DETROIT

The city of Detroit was established in the early 1800's as a trading hub, and by the turn of the century there were 285,000 people within the city (Woodford, 2001). By 1950, the population was close to 1.9 million residents. According to the 2010 census, the city population is 713,777 and this steep decline shows no sign of bottoming out. In just the last ten years, the city has lost over 200,000 people (U.S. Census, 2010). Population change in the entire Detroit metropolitan region presents a more complete picture of this disturbing trend. In 1950 the regional population, including the city of Detroit, was 3.2 million and eventually grew to 4.4 million by the new millennium. In other words, the regional picture shows that over a span of fifty years, a million residents left the city of Detroit while at the same time, a million residents were added to the suburbs. The underlying drivers of this population shift were deindustrialization and white flight, and these drivers are common to many industrial cities in the Eastern U.S. However, Detroit is unparalleled when it comes to racially motivated population change. Over this

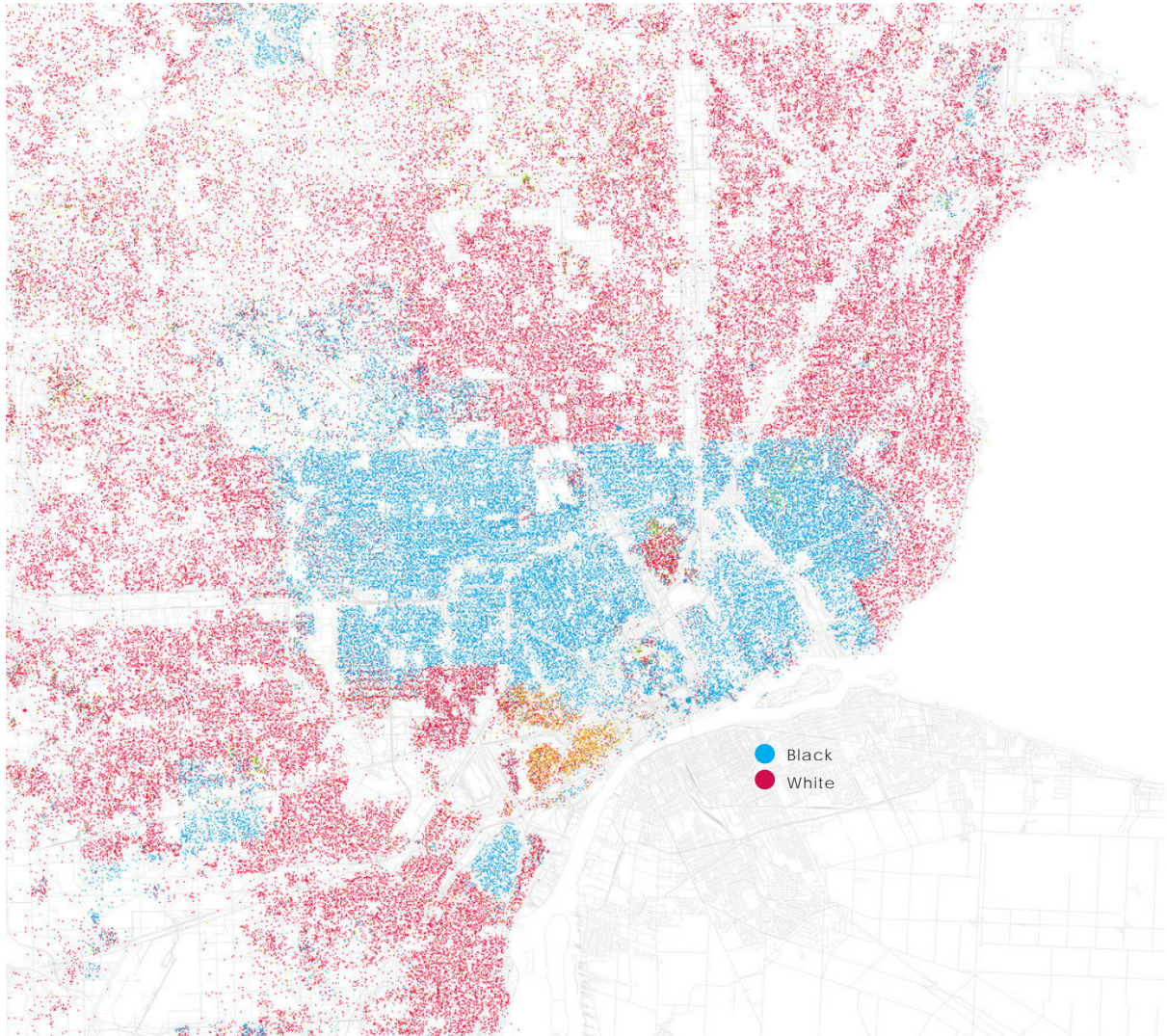


1.18 Detroit population (1950)



1.19 Detroit population (2000)

fifty year period, the city was vacated wholesale by white residents and the result is that Detroit is well over eighty percent black, while the suburbs are nearly eighty percent white (Fig. 1.20) (U.S. Census, 2010). Few cities have come close to this degree of self-segregation and this plays an important role in the politics and psyche of the town and its residents, especially regarding neighborhood landscape change. Residents rightly fear urban renewal, loss of sovereignty, and environmental injustice.



1.20 Detroit racial distribution

The consequences of urban disinvestment in the city of Detroit are sobering: in 2010 alone, the city closed seventy-seven parks, and up to half its public schools (CNN, 2011). The total footprint of the city – which could easily house San Francisco, Boston, and Manhattan combined – now has forty-nine square miles of vacant land (Detroit Free Press, 2008). Maintaining a network of infrastructure across this vast expanse is resulting in a number of novel challenges. First, water and sewer lines are part of an interconnected network, and the city is finding that it cannot simply turn off the water in a highly vacant neighborhood because these lines may deliver water to more stable neighborhoods. In fact, these lines travel all the way to the outer suburbs, crossing numerous political boundaries. Suburban municipalities

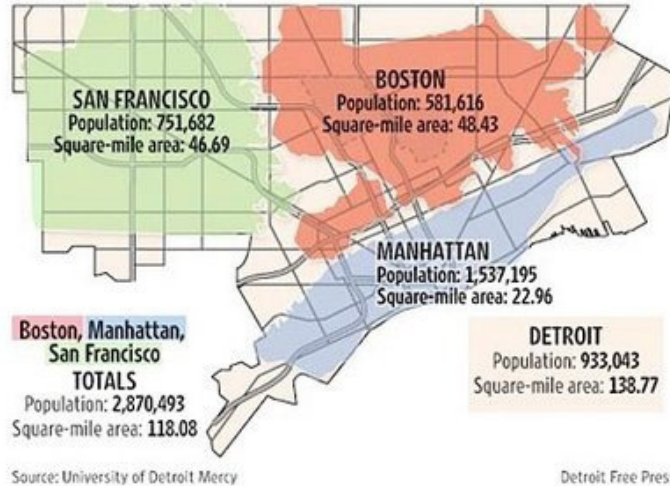
purchase water from the city of Detroit and there is conflict over the future control of this resource. To make matters worse, the city has no accurate maps describing the location of its underground infrastructure. Thus, the task of planning infrastructure realignment will be cost prohibitive.

For years, the city government has been rife with intense corruption, and its leaders have clung to recovery models based on growth. These growth models have relied heavily on corporate mega projects such as casinos and stadiums and they have done little to halt the downward trajectory of the city. Yet



1.22 MGM Casino project

Comparing Detroit to three other major cities



1.21 Detroit's oversized footprint

the current political dynamic in the city is changing and evolving very rapidly since the election of Mayor David Bing in 2009. Bing is the first city leader to openly propose that the city must be reshaped, and services and infrastructure must be reduced in areas with extreme vacancy. He is pushing these ideas forward under the program called the Detroit Works Project (DWP, 2011).

Running parallel to this top down process is the Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD), which is a group of Community Development Corporations that also acknowledge the need for a new direction in the city. CDAD has produced a “Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Framework” which coarsely describes nine potential land use typologies for the city. These typologies are a work in progress and meant as a conversation starter for community stakeholders and city leaders as they begin to envision their future city. The CDAD framework is essentially a continuum of land uses ranging from intensive urban development to low maintenance natural spaces (Fig. 1.23).



1.23 CDAD land use typologies

Development Typologies Include:

- *city hub*
- *village hub*
- *shopping hubs*
- *traditional residential*
- *low-density residential neighborhoods*

Typologies Unique to Detroit are (see Fig. 24-26):

- *urban Homesteads*
- *naturescapes*
- *green thoroughfares*



1.24 Urban Homesteads are extremely low-density residential districts that are best described as rural in character. They may or may not involve functional agriculture.



1.25 Naturescapes are low maintenance, minimally facilitated natural landscapes with no human occupation, and are not to be confused with typical urban parks, which require exhaustive maintenance.



1.26 Green Thoroughfares are pedestrian or automobile traveling corridors that are made up of low maintenance vegetation, and that link neighborhoods and naturescapes.

The Heidelberg Project

Against a backdrop of historical abandonment and newly emerging top down initiatives, stands the Heidelberg Project. Started in 1986 by artist Tyree Guyton, the Heidelberg Project is a world-renowned two-block-long environmental art installation constructed with materials scavenged from Detroit's many abandoned neighborhoods. Despite being demolished twice on orders from previous mayoral administrations, it remains the third most visited tourist destination in the city. Over 275,000 people from 95 countries tour the site every year. Its serves as a hub and an inspiration for local artists on the lower east side and beyond, and is home to the Heidelberg Street Festival. Today the Heidelberg Project is preparing to move art into infrastructure by laying the groundwork for a cultural village that will serve as a model for art-based neighborhood redevelopment in Detroit. Guyton's creative approach



1.27 The Heidelberg Project



1.28 Artist Tyree Guyton and the Fun House

to re-building the city from the pieces left behind, serves as the tactical foundation for a series of neighborhood design proposals that ask three questions:

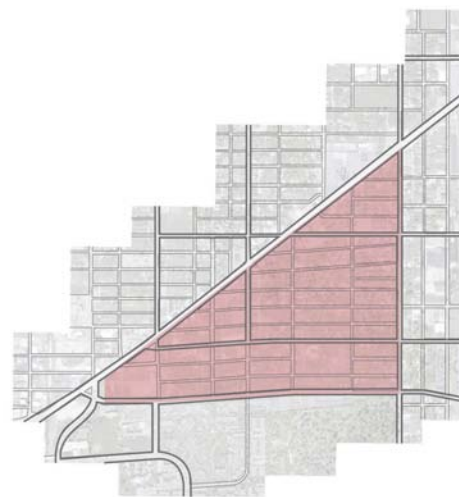
1. *How will CDAD land use typologies influence and impact the Heidelberg cultural village?*
2. *Conversely, how does the Heidelberg installation and cultural village influence further development of the CDAD typologies?*
3. *At a human scale, how can grassroots, art-based design interventions be integrated into these newly emerging land systems at strategic nodes in order to promote legibility and a sense of care?*

Overview of the McDougall-Hunt Neighborhood

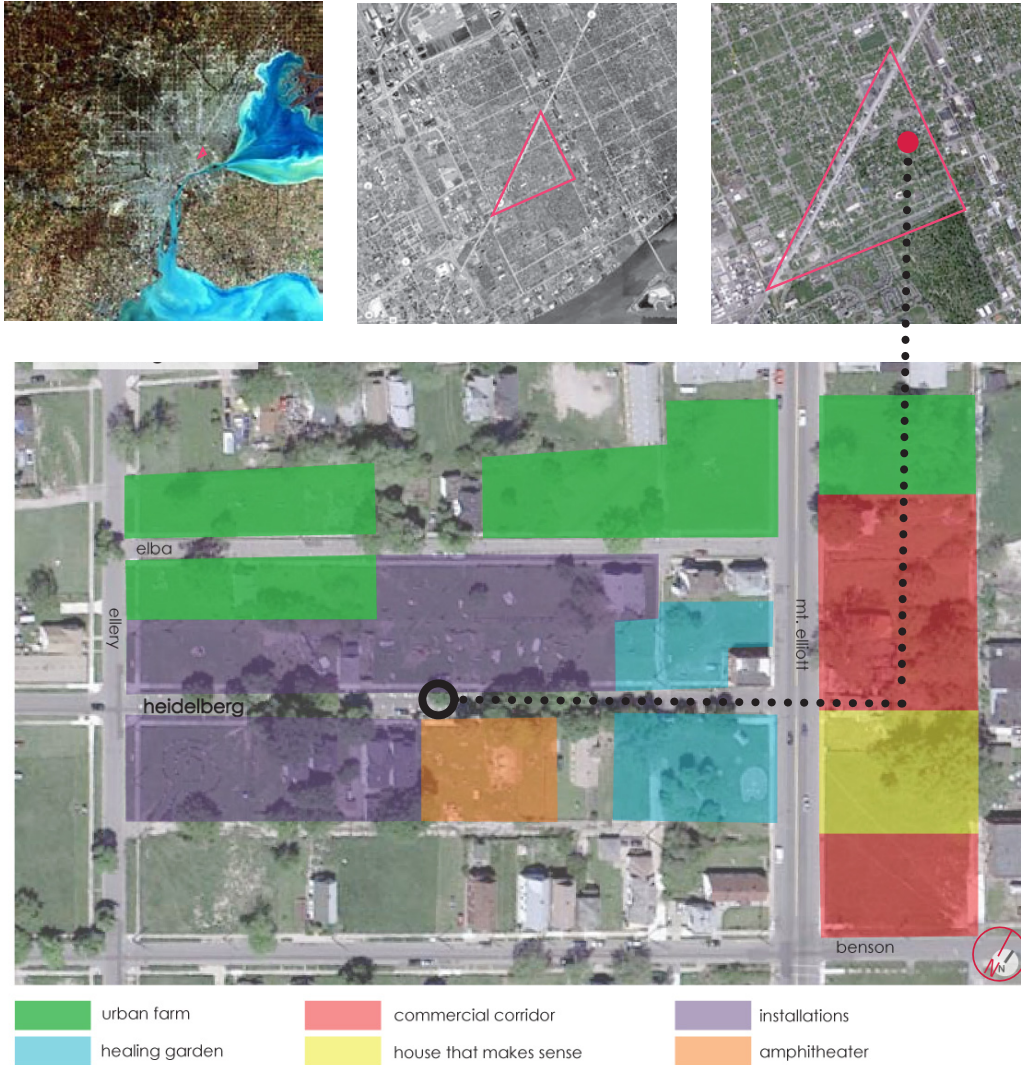


1.29 Neighborhood context

The McDougall-Hunt neighborhood was used as a study area to address these three questions through both theoretical and spatial lenses. The neighborhood is located in the lower east side of Detroit, the last remaining residential area of the historic African-American Black Bottom neighborhood (Fig. 1.29). McDougall-Hunt is roughly 220 acres - however the study area also includes the edges of three bordering neighborhoods in order to better understand the overall site context and to work at a scale large enough to potentially include all major CDAD typologies (Fig. 1.30). The street network is generally laid out in a horizontal grid pattern that is spliced diagonally by Gratiot Ave - an eight lane relict of 1807 Woodward plan - which leads directly to downtown. Mack Ave leads west to Mid-Town, a focal redevelopment area containing universities, biomedical facilities, and the Detroit Institute of Art. Mt. Elliot runs south towards the Detroit River. To the east, and running parallel to Mt. Elliot, is a thin band of primarily vacant industrial buildings. McDougall-Hunt is bordered to the southwest by Lafayette Park, a large multi-family development, which was a product of mid-century urban renewal. This development features a layout that is notably suburban in nature (in many areas the internal streets do not connect to the surrounding grid), but the development is now considered to be a successful mixed income district (Whitfield, 2010).



1.30 Study area



1.31 The McDougall-Hunt + Heidelberg Cultural Village [across scales]

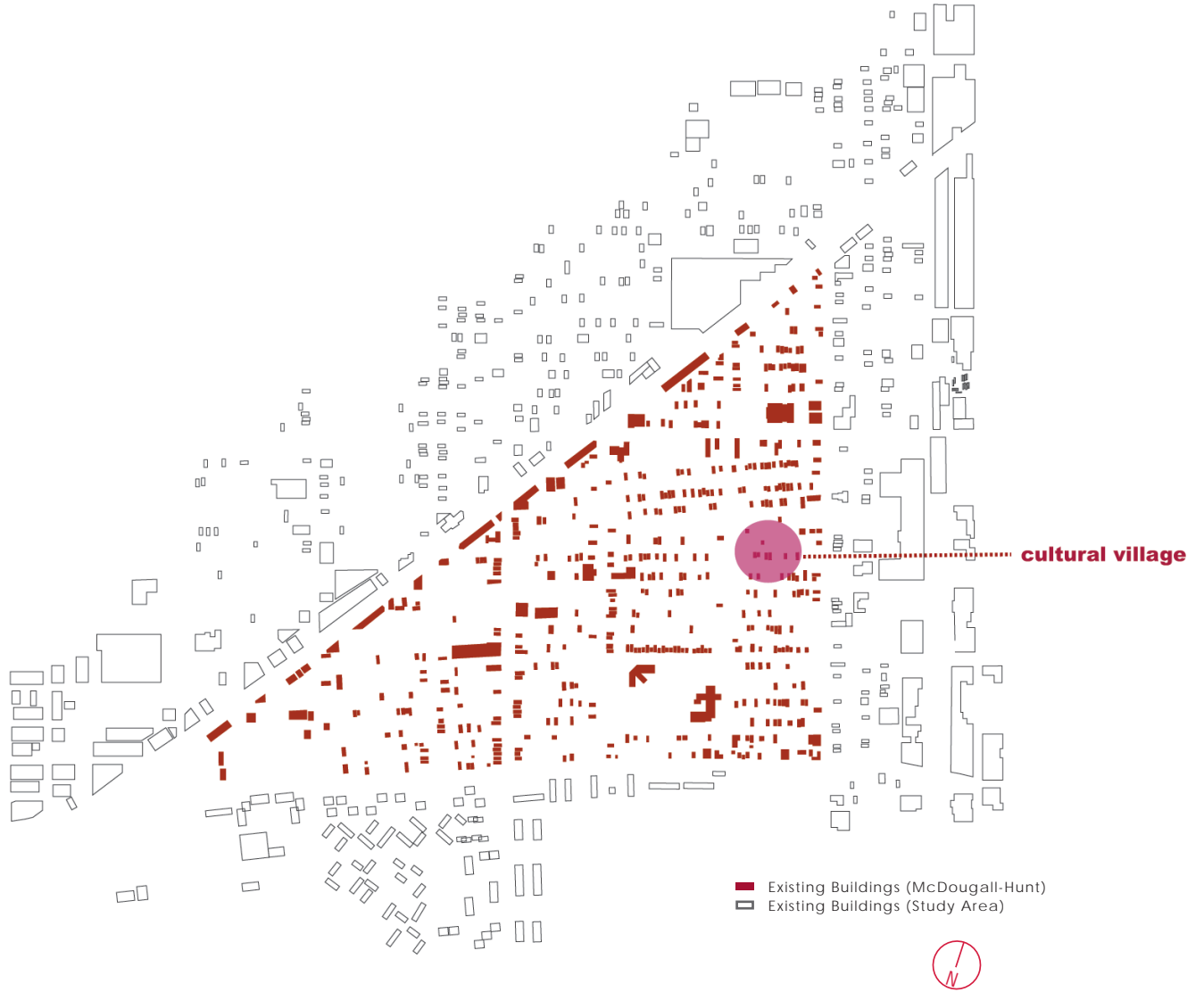
The neighborhood itself is home to approximately 1,800 residents, who are primarily African American (City of Detroit, 2010). The median income for the area is \$21,436, with roughly 50% of residents holding less than a high school diploma (City of Detroit, 2010).

The Heidelberg Project currently occupies two blocks within the neighborhood (Fig. 1.31). It is located on the eastern side of Heidelberg Street, which is only four blocks long and is bound by Gratiot Avenue and Mt. Elliot Street. The installation site is at the heart of what will be the future Heidelberg Cultural Village, an arts-based re-development project containing the House that Makes Sense community arts center that is the incubator for a new commercial corridor, a memorial garden, an art-based farm, and a sculpture park.

Historically, Detroit neighborhoods were made up of high-density single-family dwellings, but over time many houses were abandoned, demolished or burned down (Fig. 1.32). In McDougall-Hunt, this pattern of abandonment has left a built environment that is highly fragmented. As seen in figure 1.33, some blocks within the study area are up to 90% vacant.



1.32 Neighborhood Change



1.33 McDougall-Hunt built environment



1.34 Stable block condition in study area



1.35 Unstable block condition at west entrance to Heidelberg St.

The built environment only tells part of the story of this neighborhood. If the previous figure ground diagram is inverted -seeking out connected vacancies larger than two parcels - it becomes clear that the total aggregated void space is exceptionally large and is now driving the overall form and mass of the neighborhood (Fig. 1.36). Void spaces in this neighborhood can be considered either intentional or unintentional. Intentional voids include the Dequindre Cut, a crucial greenway for the city of Detroit that is constructed on an old sub-grade rail line, and Elmwood and Mt. Vernon Cemeteries. Elmwood Cemetery is an Olmstead inspired cemetery park with natural topography, a semi-natural creek called Parent Creek, and over seventy species of mature trees. Fencing currently prohibits direct access to this park.



1.36 McDougall-Hunt Void Spaces Inventory



1.37 Elmwood Cemetary



1.38 Parent Creek [Elmwood Cemetary]



1.39 The Dequindre Cut greenway

These intentional voids will become the crucial foundation of an ecological network in this neighborhood. Within this conceptual framework, the Dequindre Cut can be considered the largest corridor and Elmwood Cemetery can be considered the largest potential intact patch that also has a high degree of native species diversity. Unintentional voids have a much different character however. They typically appear in a state of decay, look uncared for, and are often used as dumping grounds. The sheer scale of these vacated spaces is unique to Detroit, and many neighborhoods close to the city center have taken on a semi rural character (Fig. 1.40-41).



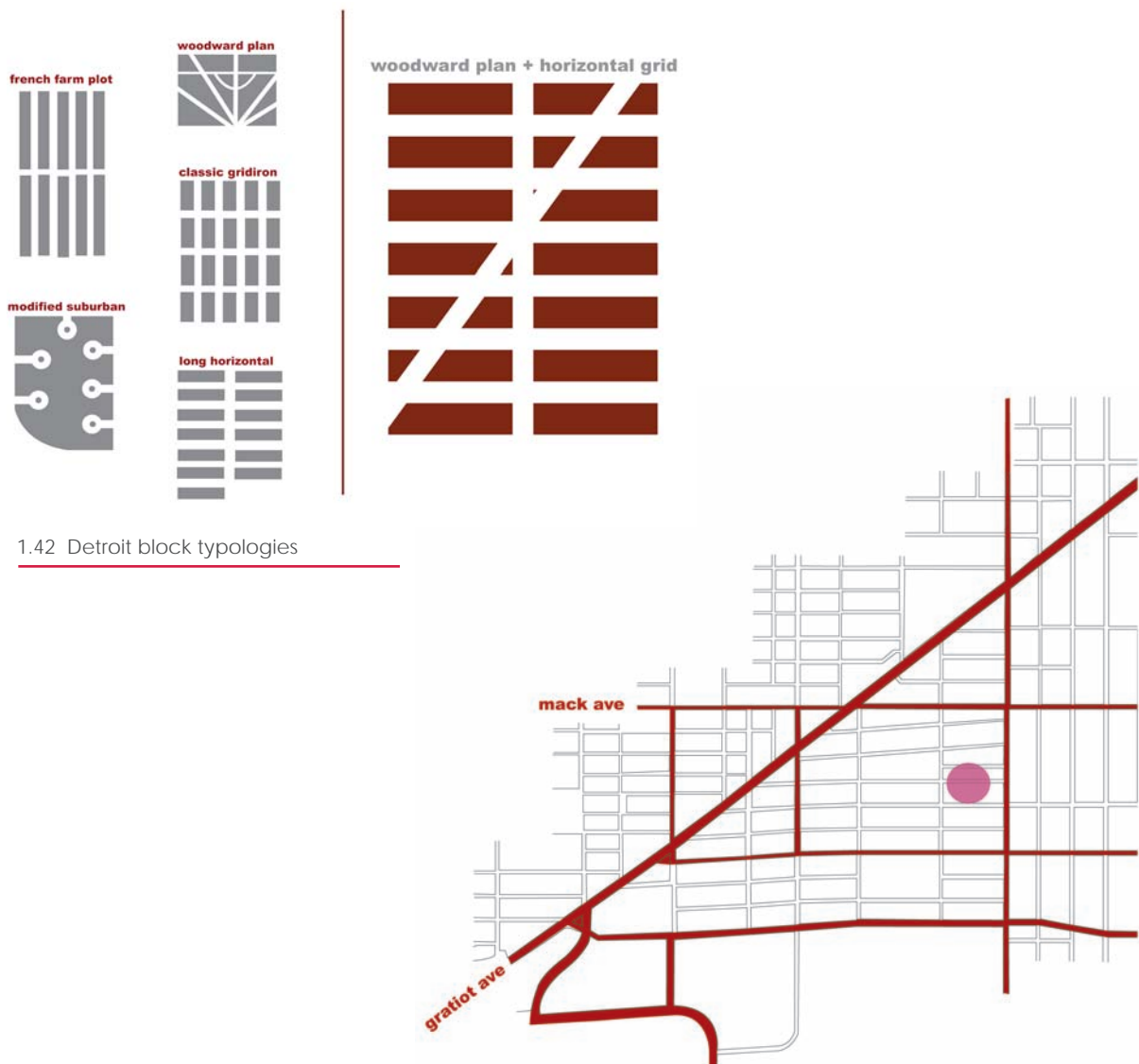
1.40 Large void space in study area



1.41 Fragmented void space in study area

Assumptions

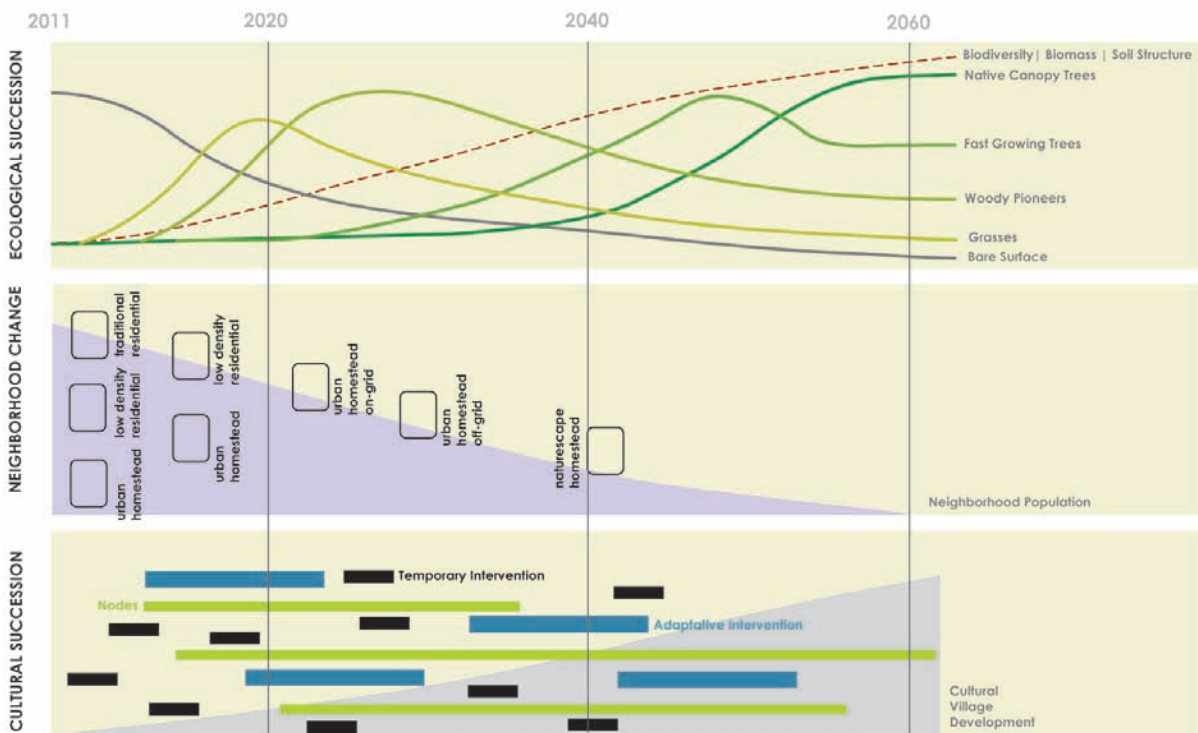
The concept schematic development for the neighborhood was based on several assumptions. First, major streets will be left intact and will form the framework for the development of all three land-use plans (Fig. 1.43). This approach was based on Lynchian city design principles and a thorough consideration of the many street and block typologies found in Detroit (Fig. 1.42). In fact, the grid with a diagonal artery such as Gratiot Avenue will likely provide useful structure to work with. As mentioned above, this structure can be the framework around which numerous side street and internal block modifications can be made.



1.42 Detroit block typologies

1.43 Grid framework

The second assumption is that these schematics will represent a thirty-year time scale that accounts for long-term ecological succession and equitable property transfer. The phasing plan in figure 1.44 describes the slowly evolving processes that may take place as these neighborhoods change over time. Equitable transfer of property will require time, patience, and sensitivity to long-term residents. Despite subsidies and tax incentives from the city, some long-term elderly residents may not wish to relocate from areas that are almost completely vacant because they retain a strong connection to their homes. These residents have often painstakingly maintained their homes for decades, and in many cases simply cannot afford to move to a stable neighborhood with higher property taxes (Aslesen et al. 2010). However, the city may accommodate these residents by offering alternative service or infrastructure delivery; by turning asphalt into gravel to slow cars; and by promoting a rural aesthetic that still allows residents to easily access urban districts (Aslesen et al. 2010). To address these properties in the long term, the city may wish to adopt a land deal tactic similar to what is used when state or national parks are created around private in-holdings. In these cases, the park is generally created around the private parcel(s) and the landowner may reach an agreement with the government entity to pass ownership of the land to the city through their will.



1.44 Phasing diagrams

Conceptual Neighborhood Schematics

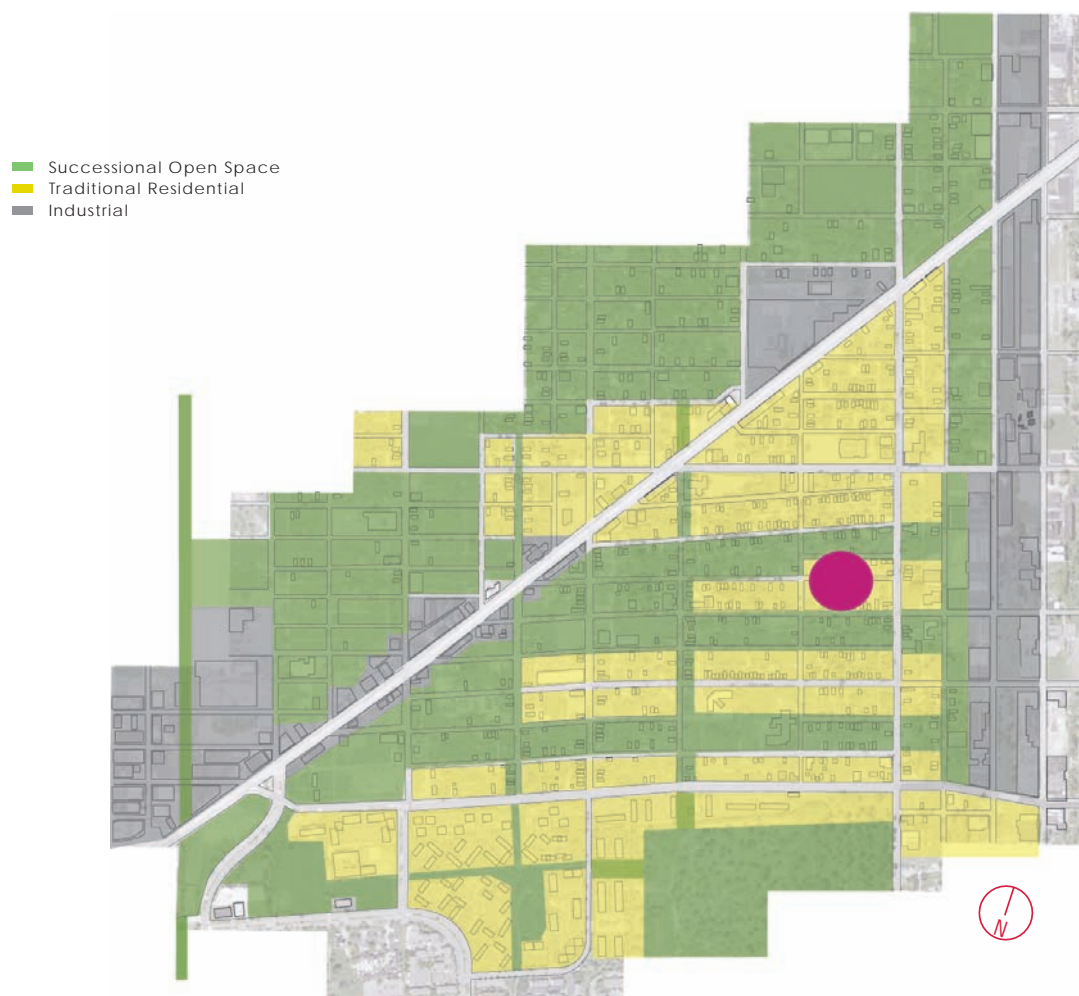
Ecosystem Network Schematic

The first schematic is based on Ecosystem Network theory, which is closely related to the naturescape and green thoroughfare typologies found in the CDAD framework.

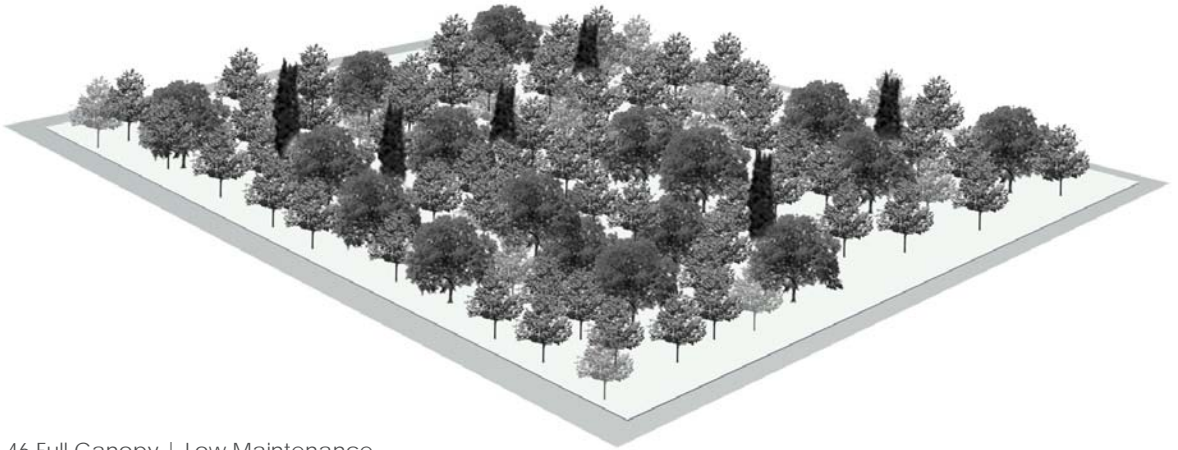
Ecosystem networks are a set of ecosystem patches functionally linked by flows of organisms and by interactions with a landscape matrix (Opdam, 2008). In order to form a resilient ecological network within this neighborhood, our goal should be to aggregate vacant parcels into large patches that are linked by functional corridors (Fig. 1.45). Aggregating vacancies also makes sense from an economic perspective because it reduces edge space, which requires more maintenance by the city (CDAD, 2010).

Figures 1.46-48 highlight several block-sized scenarios that show mixed forest and tree plantations.

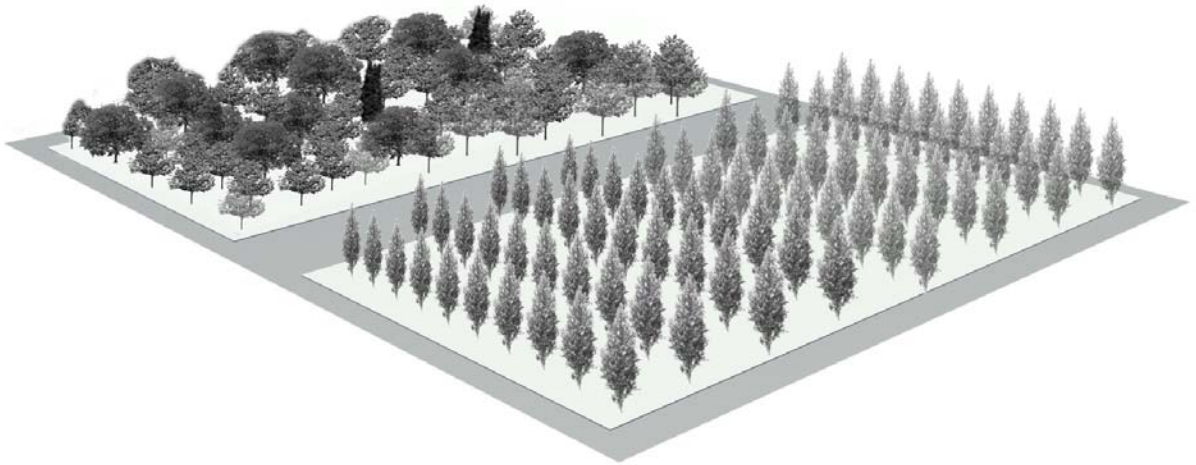
Remaining residential and commercial areas will retain their current density of twenty to thirty units per block and will be separated from ecological habitat by roads or higher maintenance open space (Fig. 1.48).



1.45 Ecosystem Network Schematic



1.46 Full Canopy | Low Maintenance



1.47 Full Canopy | Tree Plantation



1.48 Full Canopy | Residential



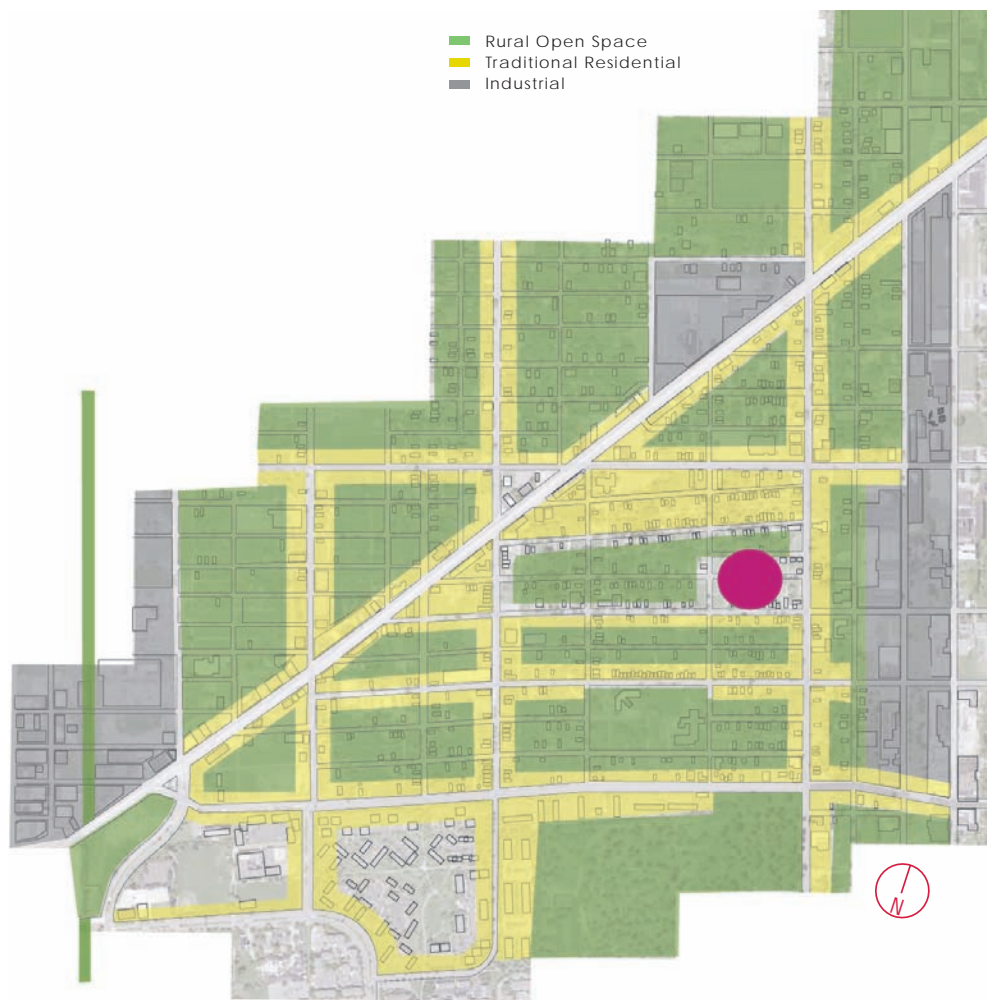
1.49 [Ecosystem Network Schematic] Current condition



1.50 [Ecosystem Network Schematic] Road and sidewalk create an legible edge between a ecological zone and a residential zone.

Rural Urbanism Schematic

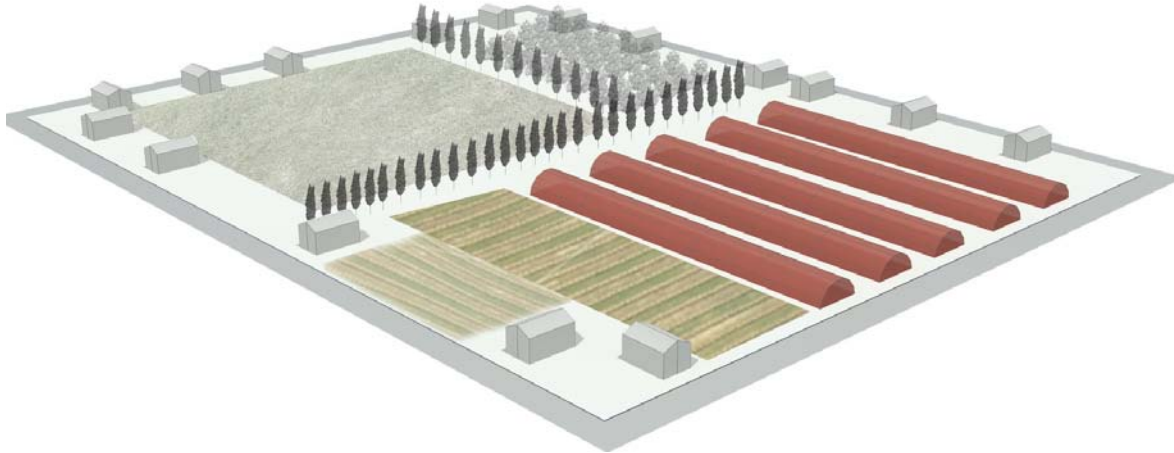
The second schematic is based on a concept of rural urbanism. This concept acknowledges that many neighborhoods in the city have already taken on the character of rural places, and that character should be enhanced or formalized to reduce the perception of urban blight and promote the positive aspects of low-density environments, which is best represented by the Urban Homestead CDAD type. These areas do not need not be working farms; there simply needs to be the perception of an orderly rural landscape, which can be achieved through dirt roads, fencing, pasture animals, and rural architecture. In rural urbanism these patches are enmeshed within the city fabric; they abut urban neighborhoods, commercial districts, and are connected to the city via transit. This schematic highlights one rural urbanism that clusters stable housing along major arterials and opens up the landscapes within the blocks to a variety of agricultural land uses (Fig. 1.51). The block diagrams show how housing densities would vary from one to forty per block (Fig. 1.52-54). They also show how original parcels would be dissolved over time and the orientation, size, use and ownership of the resulting larger parcels would be varied in nature.



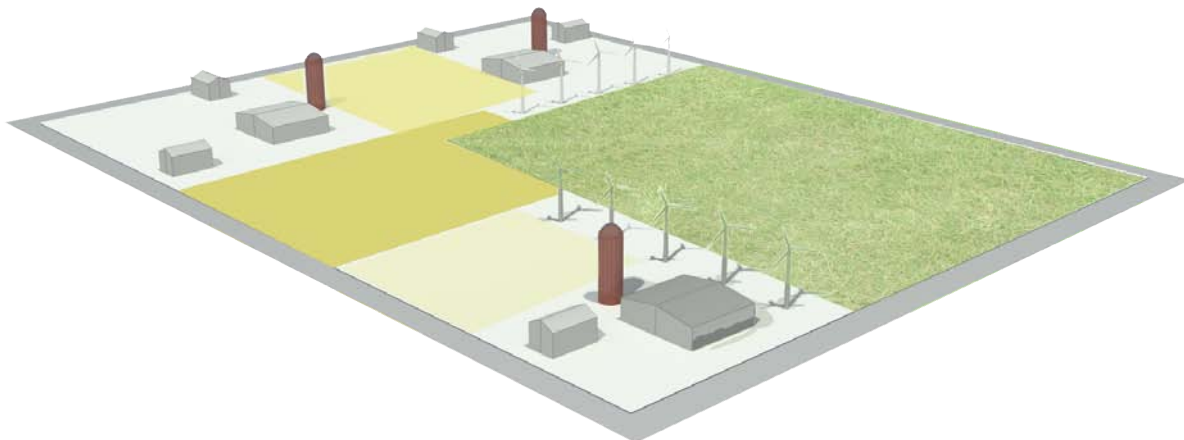
1.51 Rural Urbanism Schematic



1.52 30-40 units per block | Row cropping, Tree Plantation



1.53 10-15 units per block | Pasture, Greenhouses



1.54 3-5 units per block | Large scale farm operations



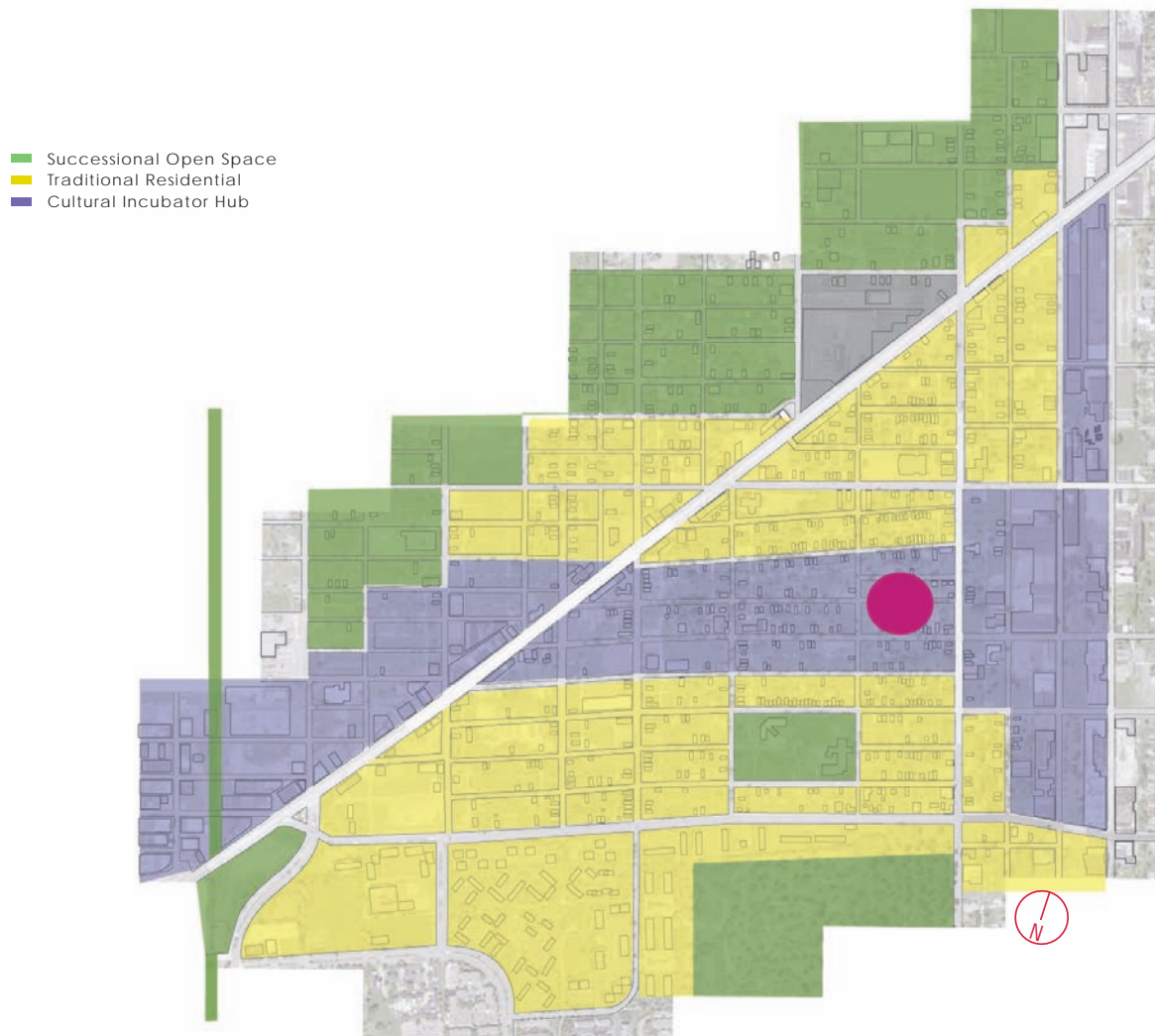
1.55 [Rural Urbansim Schematic] Current Condition



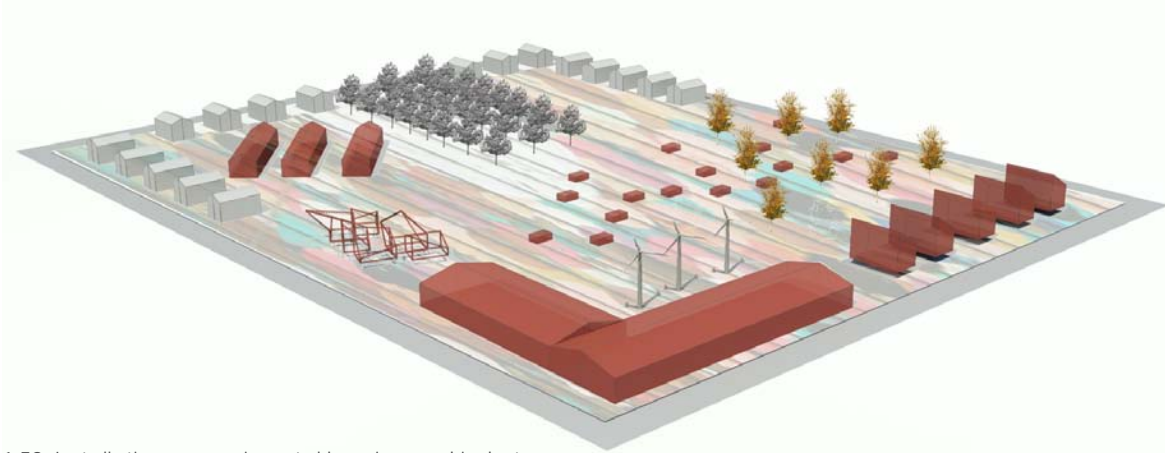
1.56 [Rural Urbansim Schematic] Fencing, dirt roads, and pasture animals foster a rural aesthetic in the city.

Cultural Incubator Corridor Schematic

The final schematic proposes a new CDAD typology that is directly inspired by the Heidelberg Project, and by the positive role of art activism in the context of Post Urban conditions. In many cities with excess vacant land, local entrepreneurs and artists often attempt to re-create their environments by retrofitting or renovating vacant buildings and spaces. However, local regulations, liability concerns and the objections of nearby landowners often prevent them from pursuing innovative temporary uses (Overmeyer, 2007). This newly proposed typology is called a Cultural Incubator Corridor. The Cultural Incubator Corridor features flexible zoning regulations and broader liability protections that aim to promote creative and experimental use of vacant space. As was found in cities from Halle Neustadt, Germany and Cleveland, Ohio, sometimes the best approach to vacant land reuse is to simply give it to an artist or entrepreneur and get out of the way.



1.57 Cultural Incubator Corridor Schematic



1.58 Installations, experimental housing and industry

Possible uses include:

- Large scale art installations exemplified by the Heidelberg Project (3)
- Small incubator businesses from commercial service to light industry (1,4)
- Experimental/adaptable housing, internal block modifications (2,5)
- Experimental/adaptable land use (2)
- Temporary use
- Temporary or evolving occupation

The spatial premise of this schematic is that major cultural incubator hubs should be linked together to maximize creative and economic exchange and to focus alternative land use practices in designated areas so as to minimize conflict with traditional urban or emerging ecological land uses. This schematic links Eastern Market, a beloved agricultural market and commercial district, to the Heidelberg Cultural Village, and then eastward to another potential artisan/industrial zone.



1



2



3



4

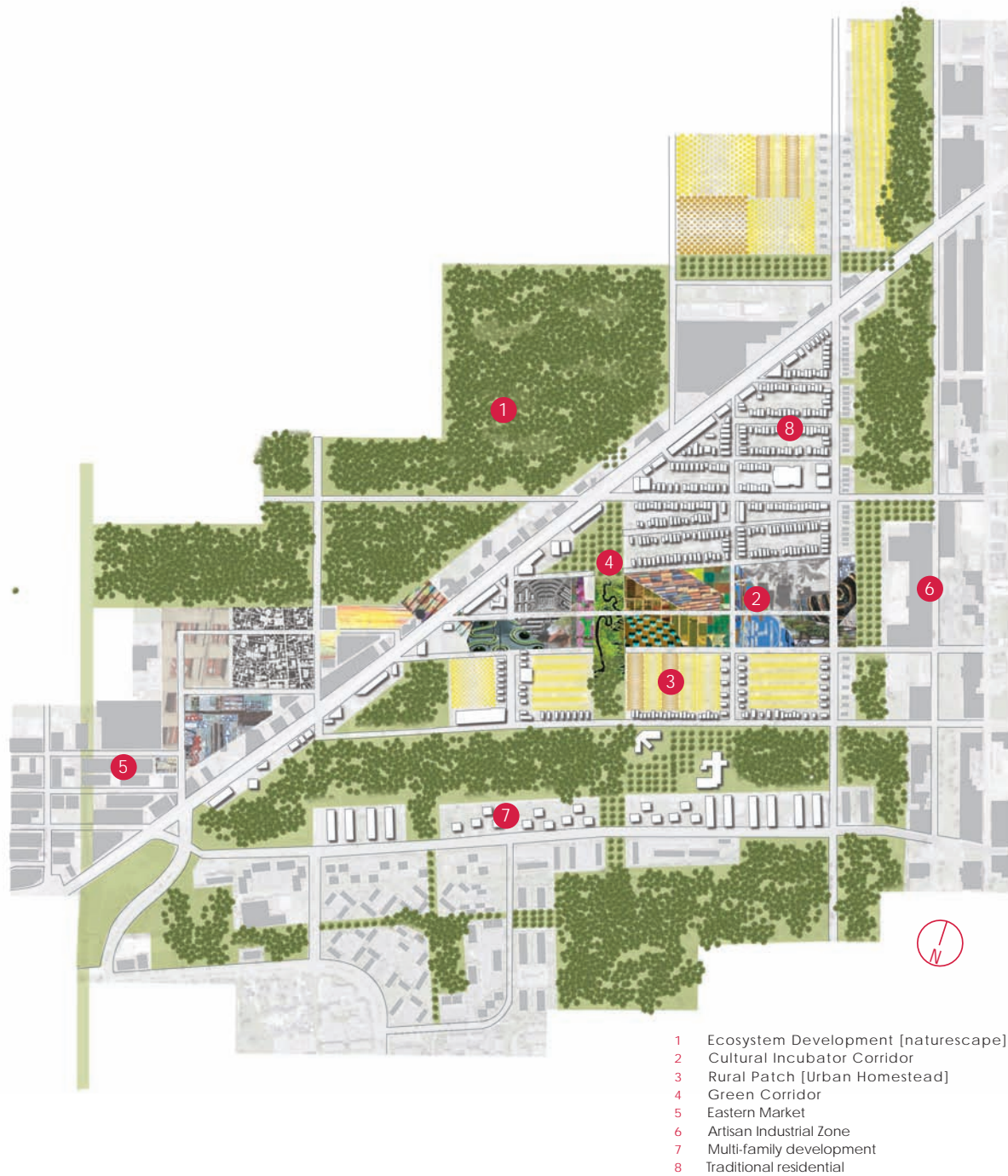


5

1.59 Cultural Incubator Corridor precedents

Hybrid Neighborhood Plan

The three conceptual schematics have been overlain to create a final hybrid neighborhood plan, which represents one of many potential scenarios that could unfold within the neighborhood and the city (Fig. 1.60).



1.60 Hybrid Neighborhood Plan

The essential components of the hybrid plan are that the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood:

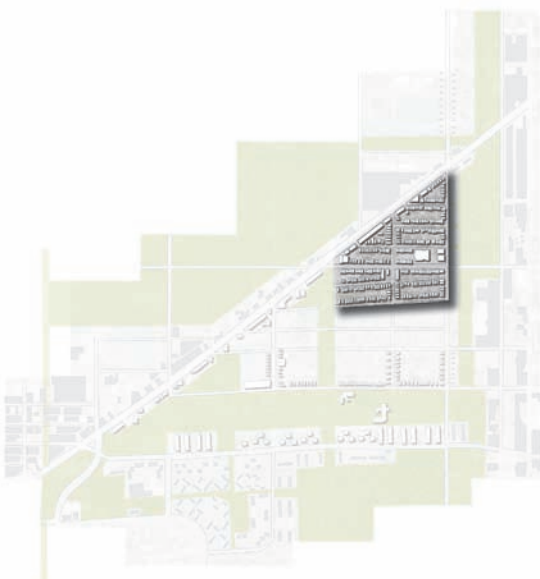
- Use the ecological network as an armature around which future neighborhood reconfiguration will take place (Fig. 1.61).
- Promote an intact cultural incubator corridor that intensifies and links creative enterprises to each other via a network of green thoroughfares and complete streets (Fig. 1.62).
- Reinforce areas of stable housing with traditional neighborhood housing types and densities (Fig. 1.63).
- Transition less stable areas to rural urban patches or new forms of multifamily development (Fig. 1.64).



1.61 Ecosystem Network



1.62 Cultural Incubator Corridor



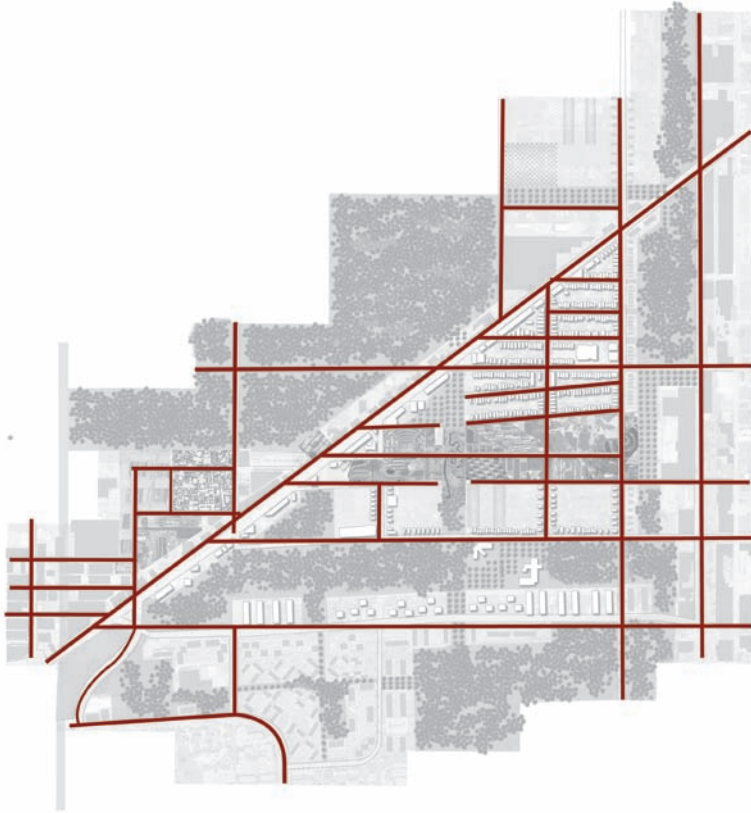
1.63 Traditional Residential Stronghold



1.64 Rural Patch + Multi-family Development

Infrastructure Realignment

Changes in infrastructure will vary widely even within this neighborhood. For example, road removal will result in reduced car circulation, while pedestrian circulation will be maintained or enhanced by developing green thoroughfares. Stable residential areas will see little change in city services or



1.65 Automobile Circulation



1.66 Pedestrian Circulation

infrastructure condition. Less dense areas may implement surface stormwater systems. The interiors of naturescapes will see the complete removal of paved surfaces, sidewalks, electric, and lighting. Only necessary sewer and water lines will remain and will be accessed by narrow dirt roads (Fig. 1.67).



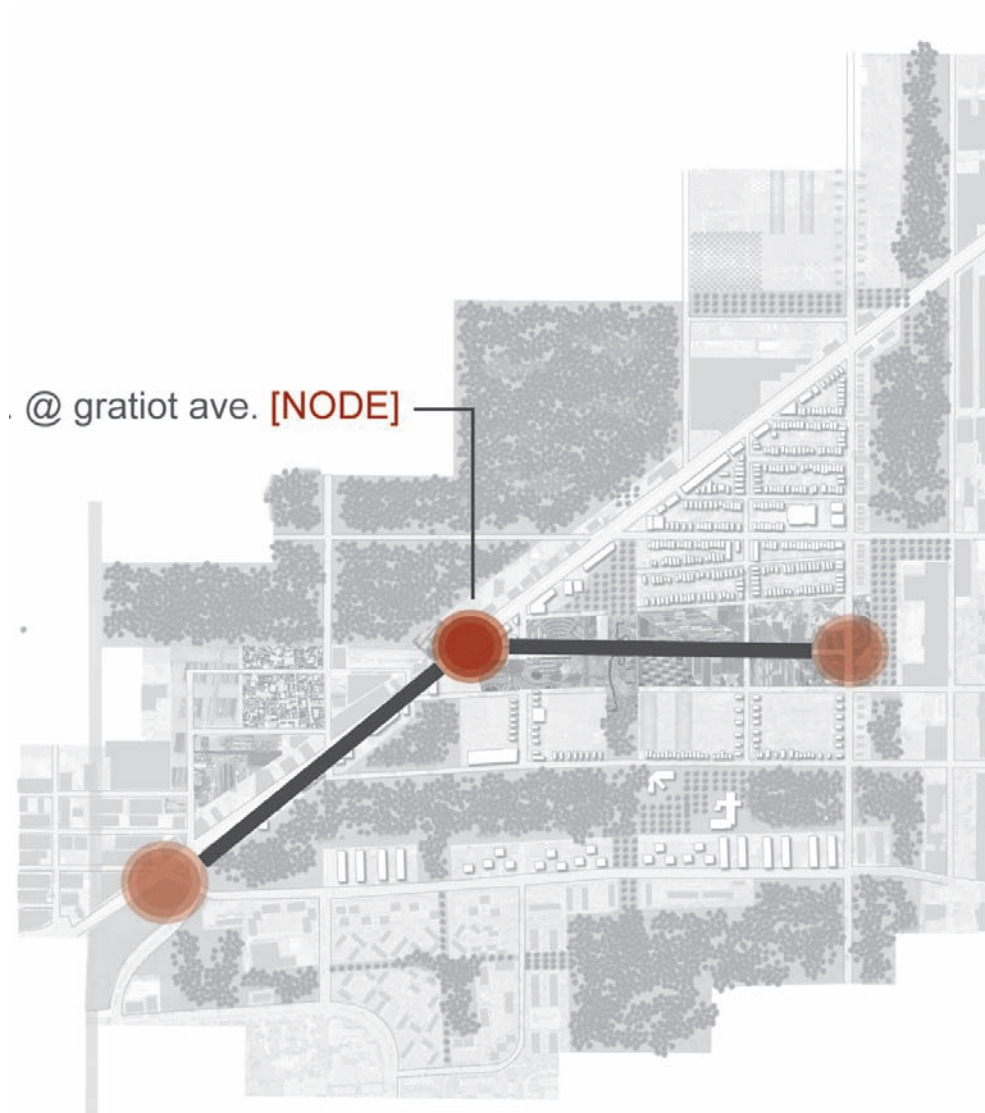
1.67 Infrastructure Realignment

	Option I	Option II	Option III
ROADS	paved roads	gravel/chip seal/paved road	gravel access roads
SIDEWALKS	standard sidewalks	reduced or modified sidewalks	sidewalk removal
STREETLIGHTS	standard streetlighting	strategic streetlight removal	street light removal
SNOW	standard snow removal	reduced snow plowing	eliminate snow plowing
TRASH PICKUP	standard trash service	reduced trash pick up	eliminate trash pick up
WATER SERVICE	maintain necessary water lines	maintain necessary water lines	maintain necessary water lines
SEWER	standard sewer lines	standard sewer lines	maintain necessary sewer lines
STORMWATER	stormwater piping	surface stormwater treatment	natural infiltration + evapotranspiration

1.68 Realignment Scenarios

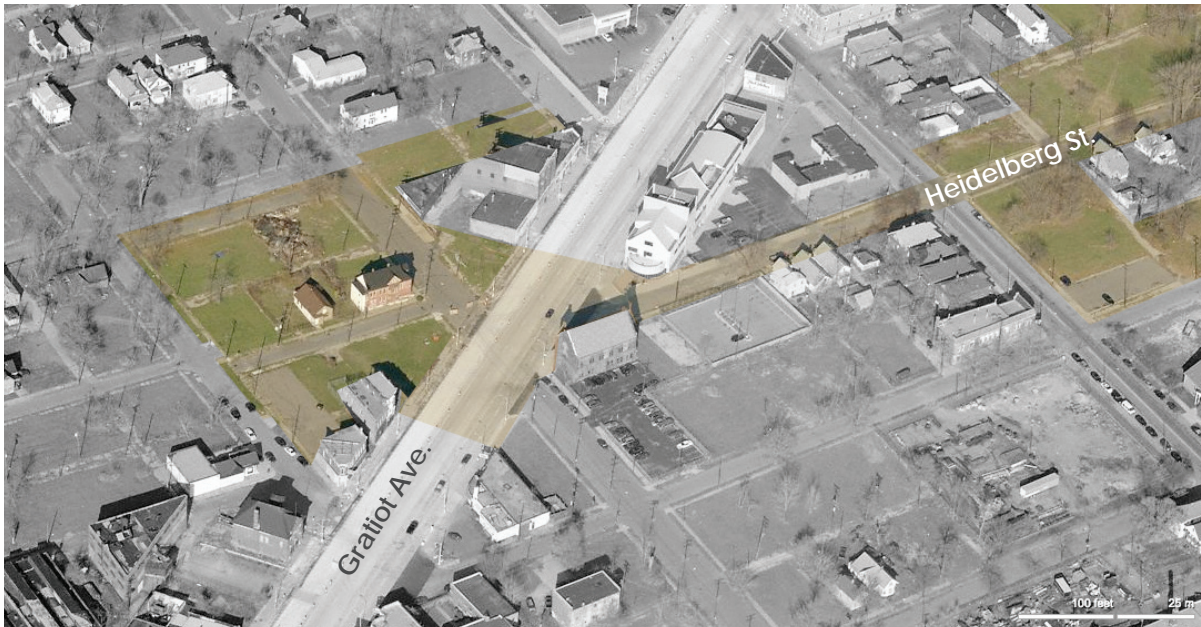
Node Design

As demonstrated by the University of Michigan planning study, there are tangible economic benefits to infrastructure realignment in highly vacant areas of the city (Aslesen et al. 2010). This paper proposes that resultant cost savings gleaned from infrastructure realignment in McDougall-Hunt should be redirected to strategic nodes where more intensive design interventions can promote landscape legibility and a sense of care. One such node is located where the west end of Heidelberg Street meets Gratiot Avenue (Fig. 1.69).

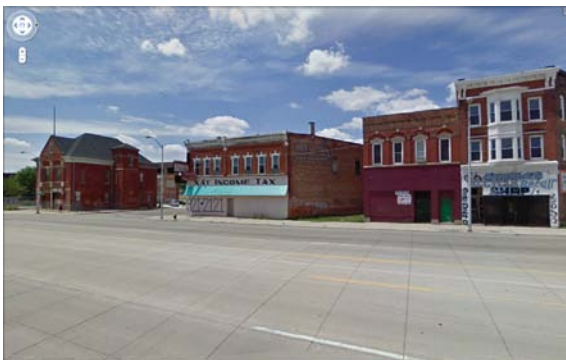


1.69 Potential Nodes in the McDougall-Hunt

At this node, cultural incubator hubs, naturescapes, green thoroughfares, an 8-lane boulevard, and traditional commercial strips all converge at a currently unmarked entrance to the Heidelberg Project. Taking cues from Guyton's work, this node can be redesigned to create a gateway to the future Cultural Village that is an engaging experience to pedestrians and cyclists traveling along the newly established greenways, yet is also visible to motorists from a distance.



1.70 Current site condition at the Heidelberg/Gratiot Node



1.71 Commercial strip on Gratiot Ave.



1.72 Void Space/Potential Naturescape near Gratiot Ave.

Programming Goals

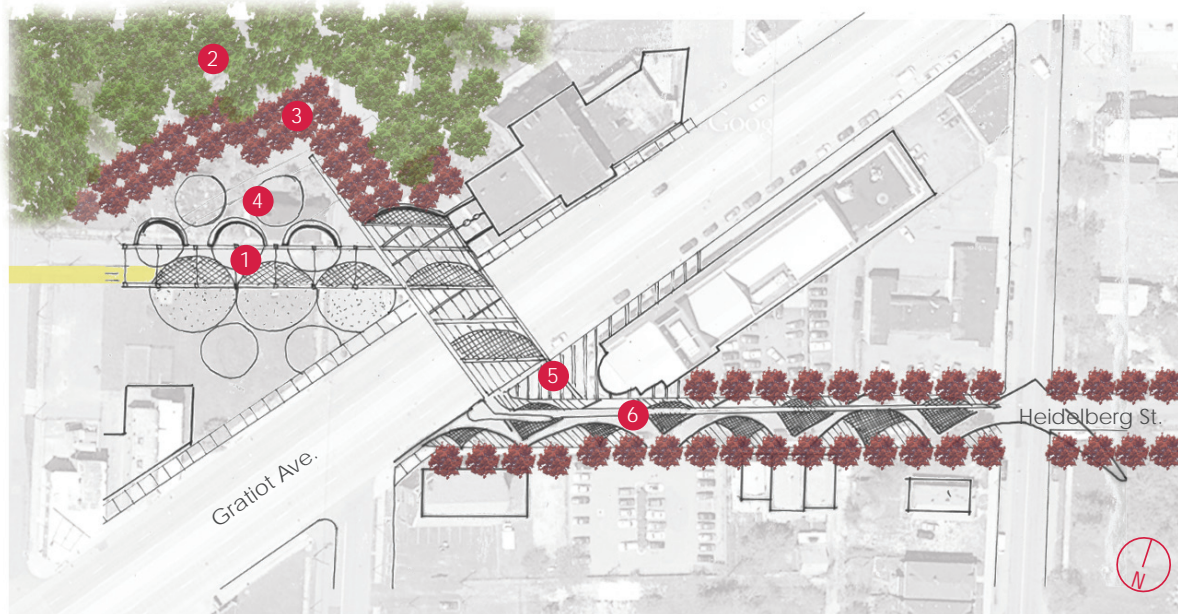
- *Create an entrance to Heidelberg St. that is visible to pedestrians and motorists*
- *Calm traffic on Gratiot Ave. by creating a more human scaled street scape*
- *Create a legible border between installation and naturescapes*
- *Use assemblage approach and aesthetic within installation*
- *Make the west entrance to Heidelberg more welcoming*
- *Create safe bicycle route*
- *Create comfortable places for small gatherings*

Site Design

As you travel along a greenway path from the Dequindre Cut, you enter the gateway node. The gateway is constructed as a frame where abandoned infrastructure, asymmetrical geometries, and the forms and symbols of the Heidelberg Project are pieced together by landscape architects and local artists to create an activated public space (Fig. 1.73).

Design elements include:

- *Geometrically arranged ornamental trees are used to frame the amorphous borders of the site (3).*
- *Iron gates, designed and forged by blacksmith and Heidelberg Associate Carl Neilbock, serve as a clearly marked entrance for pedestrians visiting the installation (1).*
- *Telephone poles, removed from naturescape areas, become elements of installation art. They emerge and grow out of the nearby forest, playfully interacting with small earth works, and finally converging as a massive sculptural piece at the entrance to Heidelberg St (4).*
- *A patterning system derived from Heidelberg iconography and street geometry inspires forms that could become seat walls, pavers, and small hillocks (6).*



1.73 Site Design

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Gateway Walk |
| 2 | Naturescape |
| 3 | Ornamental Trees |
| 4 | Pole Installation + Dotty Wottycologies |
| 5 | Sculpture and Sign |
| 6 | Pavers and Bike Path |



1.74 View looking across Gratiot Ave. towards the installation and gateway



1.75 View looking up Heidelberg St. past pole sculpture

This playful, yet functional intervention could be replicated at strategic nodes throughout the city by harnessing and coordinating the already existent creative energy of the many independent artists already working in Detroit. Locations for these nodes can be determined by careful neighborhood design that uses and expands upon the emerging CDAD typologies. Ideally, these qualitative neighborhood designs would be part of a citywide strategic plan.

Conclusion

Detroit is faced with complex and unconventional challenges that stretch the imagination of any thoughtful designer, planner or community member. All the rules need to be re-written, and so it is not a surprise that the city has languished, desperately clinging to old paradigms. Yet it does appear that city and community leaders are beginning to take the first tentative steps towards reconsidering what an environmentally and socially sustainable urban environment can be. It's vital that throughout this process, top down planning approaches, exemplified by the CDAD framework and Mayor Bing's "Detroit Works Project," be merged with the bottom up, community level activism found in organizations like the Heidelberg Project. This merger may best occur at the scale of the neighborhood, which has been the focus of this research, planning and design process. This paper suggests the benefits to the city and the Heidelberg Cultural Village of the following recommendations:

1. *Aggregate vacant land and use ecosystem networks as the armature for urban land reconfiguration.*
2. *Subtly alter low-density areas to enhance their emergent rural characteristics but enmesh them within the urban fabric of the district and city.*
3. *Employ artists in neighborhood-scaled city interventions and focus this creative energy within incubator hubs and at strategic nodes in order to promote legibility.*

These recommendations are intended to be a part of a conversation between civic leaders and the Heidelberg Project. They are a broad vision for a mutually responsive integration of the emerging Heidelberg Cultural Village with the rapidly changing landscape that makes up Detroit – an assemblage of ecology, art and infrastructure that can serve as a template for rebuilding the Post-Urban metropolis.

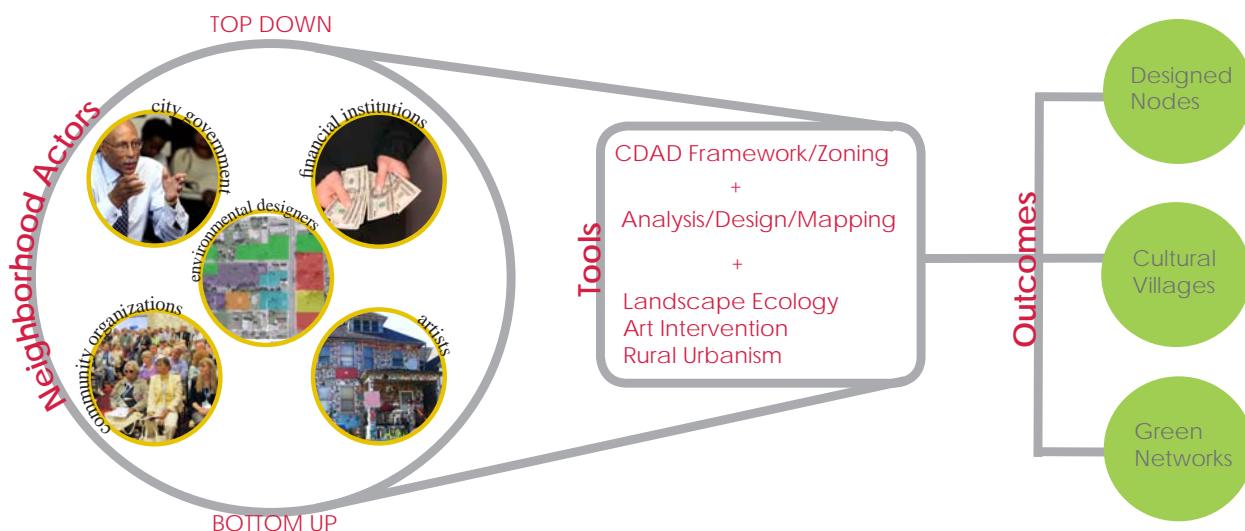


Fig. 1.76 Neighborhood Redevelopment Framework

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An Alternative Economic Model to Revitalization in Detroit:

Initiating a New Commercial Corridor for the Heidelberg Cultural Village

Fai Foen

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introduction

The Heidelberg Project is an internationally renowned, 2-block long environmental artscape in Detroit, Michigan that has transformed empty lots and abandoned homes into a place where people from all over the United States and the world come to experience an expression of hope amidst the ruins of industry. Created by Detroit artist Tyree Guyton, the 25-year old Heidelberg Project was started as a response to the growing blight and abandonment in the city. Guyton amassed the everyday, domestic objects leftover from his disintegrating childhood neighborhood and reassembled them on the abandoned houses and vacant lots. The artwork became a beacon of hope for his neighborhood and others like it, defiantly resisting the destruction wrought by neglect and disinvestment. Under the direction of Lead Designer Professor Beth Diamond, the Heidelberg Project is preparing to move art into infrastructure by laying the groundwork for the Heidelberg Cultural Village to serve as a model for art-based neighborhood redevelopment in Detroit.

This paper will describe how the design of a commercial corridor within the Cultural Village can invest in the local economy and contribute to rebuilding a devastated neighborhood into a self-sustaining community. Through an initial intervention of public space and a few key community-centered business anchors, the commercial corridor is intended to be a culturally responsive, accessible environment that threads social awareness and economic opportunity into flexible, adaptive spaces. The paper will begin by explaining how the concepts of sustainable livelihoods and flexible space create a basis for the commercial corridor to address the unique context and economic development challenges in Detroit.



2.1 The Party Animal House at The Heidelberg Project

Next, four precedents that embody these principles serve as examples for the commercial corridor. The first precedent demonstrates use of flexible space in a physical design to promote community development. The next two precedents are locally focused Detroit businesses that serve as components to a flexible space framework. One study shows how a locally focused business can spur adjacent development; the other

demonstrates how a social entrepreneurial approach to business builds human capacity as it builds profit. The last precedent highlights a thriving ethnic Detroit neighborhood that has survived discrimination and historic disinvestment through community activism and strong, integrated nonprofits.

Finally, based on this research, this paper will illustrate how the design of the main elements of the new commercial corridor—a plaza, an art center, and a food cooperative + café—can invite existing and new residents to meet, mix and grow into a hybrid community, providing a model for urban revitalization.

Concepts behind the commercial corridor focus on a culturally responsive, accessible environment that threads social awareness and economic opportunity into flexible, adaptive spaces. These four concepts are:

1. Tyree Guyton's philosophy of empowerment through art
2. Focusing on a local economy that builds on existing assets of residents and nonprofits
3. Capacity building through job training to provide local goods and services
4. Flexible design interventions that allow the community to adapt spaces to its own needs while minimizing barriers to potential entrepreneurs.

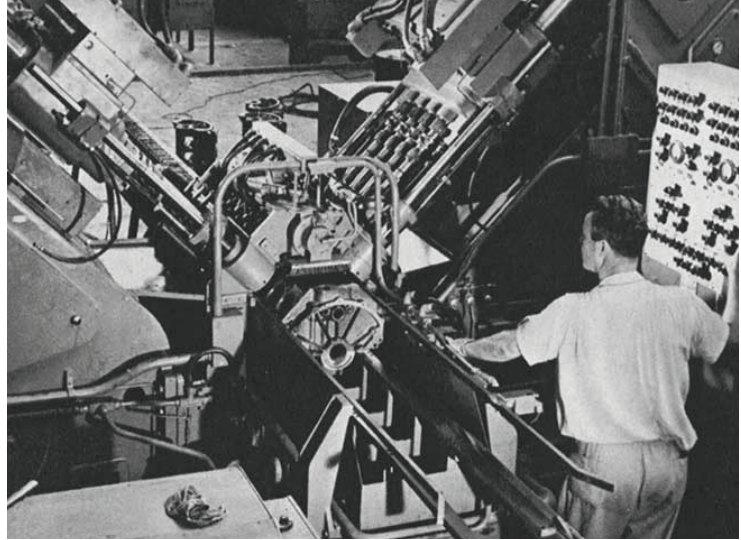


research

Urban Context

Industrialization, disinvestment, and decline

Once known for its reputation as the Motor City, Detroit is now rusted over with 90,000 vacant parcels (Detroit 2020 2011) and 36 percent of its population living in poverty (US Census 2010). The automotive industry that quickly built up the city in the first half of the last century was the same driving influence that deserted it in the second half. This industrial decline contributed to the unprecedented population collapse and the abandonment and vacancy observed today.



2.2 The automotive and manufacturing industry allowed Detroit to grow quickly, Chrysler Mound Plant circa 1960

The complex history of racism and discrimination that limited the economic and housing opportunities for African Americans is still reflected in the highly segregated contemporary metropolitan region where economic opportunities remain divided along racial lines. Blacks were given limited living options and were confined to some of Detroit's oldest and worst housing stock in the center of the city (Sugrue 1996). Those who sought better housing outside the city's slums were faced with practices such as "redlining", which was literally a practice of drawing red lines on maps to determine which areas of the city were unsuitable for development, investment and insurance¹—which turned out to be Black residential and commercial areas. Redlining was made illegal through Civil Rights legislation, but was still enforced under other social mechanisms and is in many ways, still in practice today.



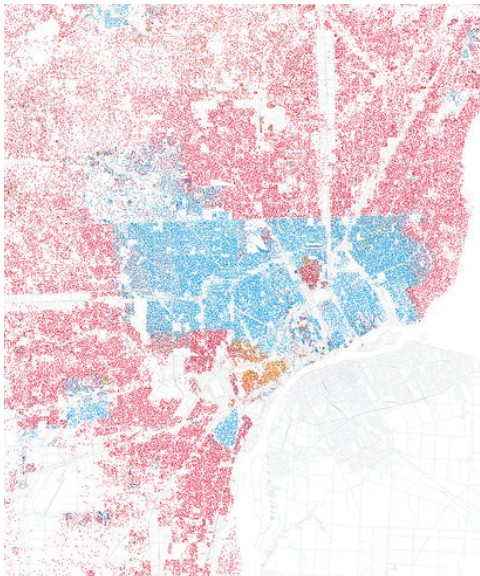
2.3 Quality housing was not available in the city for Black workers and their families, Children playing in a trash filled alley in Detroit, 1963



2.4 Billboard protesting black occupancy of the Sojourner Truth Homes, 1942



2.5 Racism and discrimination contributed to the pattern of vacancy we see today, aerial image of Eastside Detroit, 2011



2.6 Race and ethnicity in metropolitan Detroit. Red is White, Blue is Black, Green is Asian, Orange is Hispanic, Gray is Other. Data from Census 2000, created by Eric Fischer

Another practice that contributed to the segregated metropolitan region that currently exists played on the fears of white homeowners in regards to Blacks moving into their neighborhoods. White homeowners associated Black home seekers with the decrepit slums and believed that the property value of their own home would drop if the racial composition of their neighborhoods changed (Sugrue 1996). Unscrupulous real estate agents employed “blockbusting” to take advantage of and instigate White homeowners’ panic, who would sell their houses for a low price at any sign of Blacks moving in. Black home seekers, who were desperate for better housing, were willing to pay premium prices for the same houses (Sugrue 1996). This practice contributed to the pattern of Whites moving further and further outside the city as manufacturing jobs declined.

Since the 1950s, the city has experienced a 57 percent population decline, leaving a little more than 713,000 residents spread over 139 square miles (US census 2010). Despite Detroit’s decreased population, the city’s limited resources and huge financial deficit make it challenging to meet the needs of its residents. In a recent period of good governance, Mayor David Bing has spearheaded the Detroit Works Project. The goal of this 18-month visioning process is to shrink the city to reduce costly services in underpopulated neighborhoods. Although highly controversial, this process attempts to create a collective vision by building on the continuous work of foundations, non-profits and Detroit residents.

Economic Development Context

Traditional development leaves communities lacking

The growth of the automotive industry in the early 20th century led to unprecedented economic prosperity. Manufacturing jobs promised high wages with the most coveted assembly line positions paying five dollars a day at Ford Motor Company (Vargas 1993). These high wages ensured a consistent workforce despite horrific and even monotonous working conditions. Neighborhoods benefitted as higher incomes allowed workers to purchase homes and raise families. Downtown Detroit saw huge investments as businesses competed for workers' disposable income. One such business was the famed J.L. Hudson department store. Housed in the second tallest building in the city, Hudson's was fondly remembered for its glamorous displays that enticed shoppers with a plethora of consumer goods for purchase.

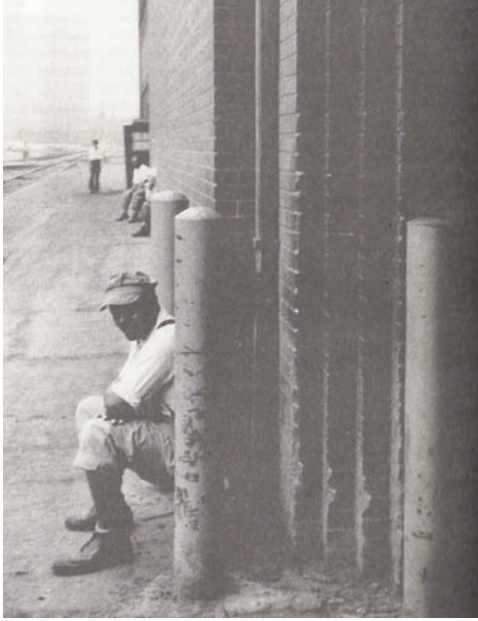
Following World War II, Detroit emerged as the leader of a regional system of manufacturing industry, bolstered by the automotive industry's conversion to military production during the war. This industrial network spread from the Midwest to the Northeast and accounted for one-sixth of the nation's employment. Yet, as borders opened to regional and international markets, manufacturers sought cheaper ways to produce their products and stay competitive. With advances in communication, transportation, and industrial technology, many were able to relocate factories to lower-wage regions in the South and eventually outside the country (Sugrue 1996). Because Detroit's economy was dependent on one industry, the city lost hundreds of thousands of jobs that could not be replaced during this process of deindustrialization (Sugrue 1996).



2.7 Shift change at the Ford River Rouge Plant, 1940s



2.8 Businesses like Hudson's department store once flourished along Woodward Avenue and sponsored downtown events



2.9 During the 1950s, Detroit's transforming industrial economy left many jobless



2.10 Residents have limited access to quality goods and services

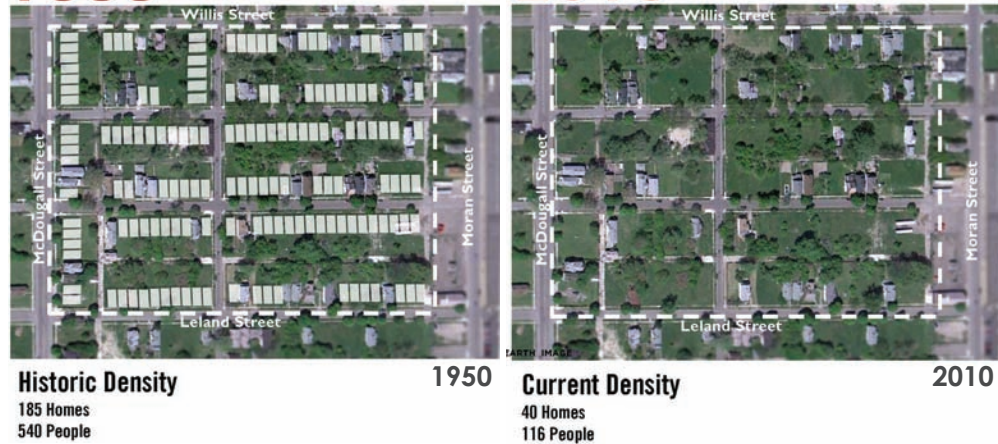
Over the last fifty years, the city has attempted to stem the decline of its industrial economy by focusing on downtown development in the form of sports stadiums and casinos. Investments in these large-scale corporate projects periodically drew in the suburban population, but ignored the needs of inner city neighborhoods and residents, which in turn contributed to the creation of micro-economies. A micro-economy is one where the frequency and the amount of transactions are insufficient to support the profit goals of medium to large enterprises (Micro-economic Initiatives Handbook 2009). Thus, the larger retail businesses such as grocery stores and retail chains found in the more affluent suburbs have not found it profitable to locate in neighborhoods like McDougall-Hunt, where the Heidelberg Project is located.

Through the lens of traditional development, which looks only at the density of households surrounding new development initiatives, it should not be surprising that many of Detroit's low-density neighborhoods have suffered from the lack of outside investment. The dependency on and lack of outside investment has diminished the post-industrial community's access to basic goods and services, as well as contributed to an excess of underemployed and under-skilled workers. The lack of employment opportunity has turned some entrepreneurs to criminal economies that can further deplete community resources. The trafficking in illegal goods and services, such as drugs, prostitution, gambling, loan-sharking and dealing

in stolen goods, can challenge the ability of a neighborhood to regulate itself and encourage unwanted behaviors of residents and visitors (Bursik & Grasmick 1993).

Although the rebuilding of post industrial cities like Detroit is an undoubtedly complex challenge, an appropriate place to start would be at the local economic level. Sustainable local economic development establishes a minimum standard of living for everyone and increases that standard over time (Blakely and Leigh 2010). This inclusive approach is extremely pertinent to Detroit residents who have suffered through its complex history of racism, discriminatory planning practices, and economic disinvestment; 22 percent of who are unemployed today (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). If initiated at the community and local

2.11 The significant decrease in households is undesirable in traditional development



level this type of development², and the resulting employment generated from it, can be more sustainable than relying solely on outside investment (Blakely and Leigh 2010). Given the present state of the U.S. economy and the repeal of Michigan’s Historic and Brownfield Tax Credits, any substantial amount of outside investment is highly unlikely in the immediate future.

At the same time, Detroit has significant investment opportunities that have been neglected by traditional development. Figure 2.11 illustrates today’s low density at the block level in McDougall-Hunt. Despite low housing density, existing residents still need to purchase goods and services, but must travel further outside their communities to do so. If the \$77.9 million retail leak from the area that includes McDougall-Hunt was spent closer to home, this money could be reinvested at the local level.

For communities that have been left devastated by past and present conditions, a good strategy to rebuild is to begin by building on existing internal strengths (Shuman 2000). Urban revitalization strategies stressing sustainable livelihoods and flexible space serve as an appropriate base for a social, economical and physical revitalization in the post-industrial context.

Sustainable Livelihoods and Flexible Space

An approach to building local opportunity in the commercial corridor

“Job loss is what’s hurting these cities. People are not going to move to a city just because it has a good green space system...we can make [Detroit] heaven on earth with urban design strategies, but if there’s not something for people to do here, if there’s not a functioning economy, it’s all for nothing.”

Terry Schwartz, Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative

Sustainable Livelihoods

The sustainable livelihoods concept acknowledges that both individual circumstances and the influence of broader institutional systems shape the options available to marginalized people that keep them trapped in



2.12 Job training can increase employment opportunities, such as the renovation and reuse of historic buildings

poverty (Making Waves 2005). Used by most humanitarian agencies working in developing countries, this concept inherently supports the local economy by employing a bottom-up approach that aims to help people cope and recover from shock (ICRC 2009: 13). While not located in a developing country, when compared to the International Committee of the Red Cross' (ICRC) description of commonly observed characteristics of low-income households, the city of

Detroit could be categorized economically as a “developing country” (ICRC 2009: 29). These characteristics include:

- a) Irregular flow of income
- b) Unpredictable economic environment
- c) Limited income-smoothing mechanisms, such as credit or loans, to make up for temporary lack of income
- d) Income-generating activities generally linked to the informal market, where consistent income and benefits like health insurance are limited
- e) Numerous poverty traps or self-reinforcing mechanisms that cause poverty to persist

Residents who have survived Detroit’s chronic crisis of disinvestment and decline over the last 60 years could directly benefit from the sustainable livelihoods approach. One method used by humanitarian agencies like the ICRC to create better options and improve the quality of life for marginalized workers is through vocational training. These educational programs and job trainings build human capacity in order to improve the employment possibilities of participants and their ability to start their own businesses. Such trainings can be provided through local training institutions and through apprenticeships in existing enterprises.

Flexible Space

Edensor et al. (2010) argue that creativity has an improvisational quality required for people to adapt to their particular circumstances. The concept of flexible space allows current and future stakeholders to exercise this creativity and adapt the space to their needs. It also allows individuals to decide when and how development takes place (Evans 2005). The flexible space concept inherently supports a bottom up approach to development, in accord with the sustainable livelihoods concept. These two approaches are

mutually reinforcing and complement Guyton's philosophy that each person can contribute to their own well being and that of their community. Integrating flexible space in the design of the new commercial corridor will allow it to grow organically, creating a place that reflects its unique community and original character.

One example of applied flexible space is weekly public markets which can reduce barriers for burgeoning entrepreneurs

who do not have the capital to rent permanent retail space. Alfonso Morales' research on public markets supports their effectiveness as business incubators (Morale 1995). Community-focused social networks and a low cost of entry support an entrepreneurial environment for people otherwise shut out of or displaced from the traditional economic structure.



2.13 DOTs festival on Heidelberg Street, 2010

For the unique situation of Detroit and the Heidelberg Cultural Village, a flexible, place-based urban design strategy that engages residents may be more successful in urban revitalization than a city planning department following cookie-cutter urban design guidelines or focusing on attracting a limiting definition of the “creative class”(Evans 2010). A commercial corridor that is physically and programmatically flexible invites groups and individuals to express their community's unique culture by adapting the space to their existing and future collective needs. This expression of culture, based on the everyday lived cultural practices and experiences of a community, contributes to the urban revitalization of a neighborhood on several levels—from the physical (re-use of brownfield land), to social (health and well being), to economic(un/employment, job quality) (Evans 2005:13, 16). The need for flexible space is especially important when communities are not yet established or embedded (Evans 2010), such as the case of the Heidelberg Cultural Village where the community will likely be a hybrid of existing and new residents.

As part of the visioning process for the commercial corridor, recommendations have been made for the programming of the designed spaces. Yet, the growth and vitality of the corridor will ultimately come from the people who eventually occupy these spaces and whose decisions are based on changing economic, social and political conditions. If the participants of the future commercial corridor can be supported in expressing their own creative aspirations, and adapt and adopt the proposed cultural spaces and communal venues according to their evolving social and collective needs, its success could then be measured by how those spaces are ultimately used, the diversity of activities that it attracts, and the opportunities it provides (Hertzberger 2001).

Precedents

Casa Familiar - Living Rooms at the Border:

Flexible space engages an existing cultural pattern to development

Architect Teddy Cruz's pilot project, Living Rooms at the Border (LRB) in the community of San Ysidro, California, demonstrates the use of flexible space that engages the community's creativity in neighborhood regeneration. Working with the well-established community organization Casa Familiar, Cruz sought to stimulate neighborhood redevelopment more holistically by carefully examining the existing development pattern within the community.



2.14 Ad hoc use in San Ysidro—additional living quarters

San Ysidro is exclusively Latino with median incomes that are 60 percent less than the rest of San Diego County. Two-thirds of the city's households shelter multiple families, contributing to the dense population that has changed this formerly homogenous suburban neighborhood with ad hoc uses of land. Examples include garages and outbuildings that have been converted to bedrooms for additional family members. The program of traditional living space expands to encompass commercial, cultural, social and religious entities, contrary to the local zoning conditions (Estudio Teddy Cruz 2010).

Physical Design

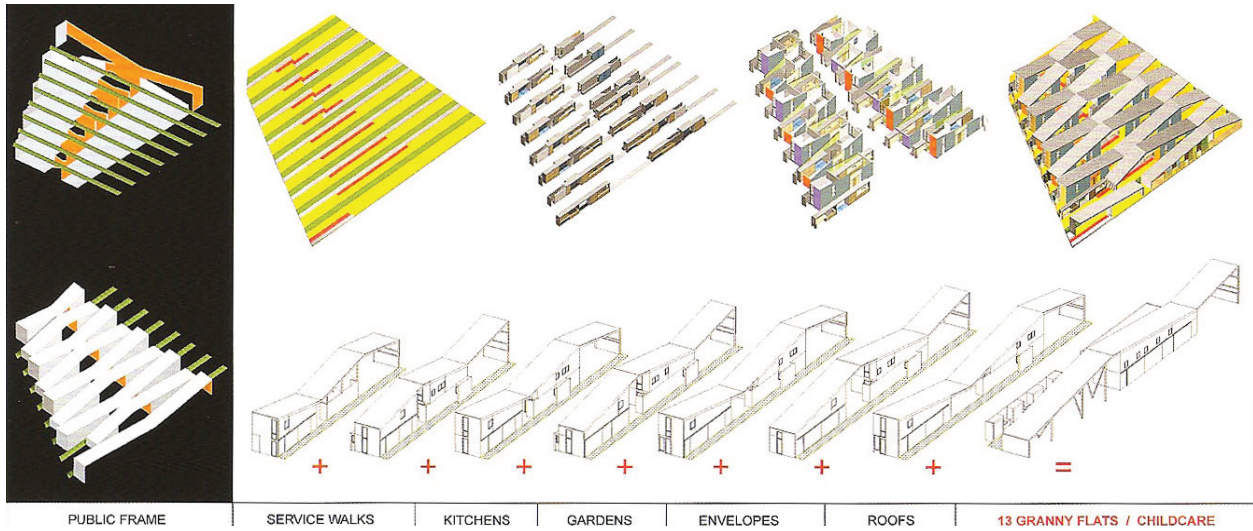
Cruz's response to San Ysidro's development pattern at Living Rooms at the Border is a flexible, multiuse complex. At the center of this complex is a retrofitted white stucco church that is expanded to house Casa Familiar offices and a community center. This center is flanked by parallel buildings that contain housing for small and large families, and adaptable community space for kitchens and gardens.

Lessons Learned

Like Living Rooms at the Border, the commercial corridor will have a central anchor—the House that Makes Sense Community



2.16 Character of San Ysidro



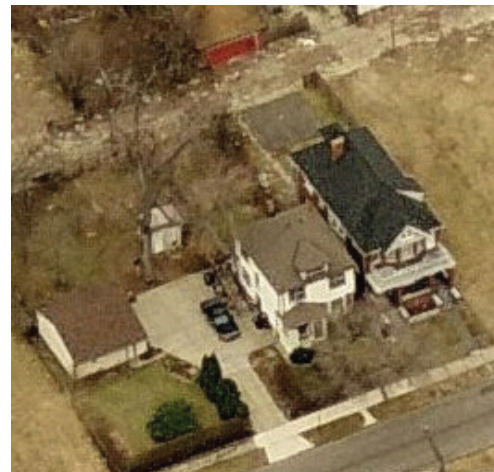
2.15 Design schematics for *Living Rooms at the Border*

Arts Center. Unlike the LRB, where there is an already existing community, the current population living in the vicinity of the Heidelberg Cultural Village is sparse. Instead of building off of an existing architectural framework, design interventions are intended to create an integrated dynamic between building and site that focuses the energy of the Heidelberg Project towards the regeneration of the neighborhood through the activities of the community.

In contrast to the densely populated city of San Ysidro, Detroit is characterized by residential blocks with 75 percent vacancy and a fragmented network of aging homeowners and single parent households (Anna E. Casey Foundation 2009). Detroit's pattern of development and adaptation is parcel by parcel, where long-time residents buy or simply appropriate adjacent parcels for a variety of uses, from increasing safety and security to building a larger homestead. The commercial corridor is representative of this pattern, as the Heidelberg Project is currently in the process of securing the individual parcels for this initial intervention.



2.17 Example of parcel by parcel development—a new driveway



2.18 Urban homestead on Detroit's Eastside

Although Detroit is much different than San Ysidro, the commercial corridor can also build on its existing cultural development pattern as well as engage Detroit’s active artist and cultural communities to catalyze and direct the focus of these efforts. Cruz’s strategies of employing municipal lots or “leftover urban fragments” to create subtle connections between the development and its surroundings creates a matrix of communal spaces that support everyday activities and allows informal businesses to form. In the context of Detroit, Cruz’s strategy is adapted to fit current practices in the development of vacant land, several parcels at a time.

Two examples of small, pioneering Detroit businesses are capitalizing on this idea and serve as inspiration for future entrepreneurship within the commercial corridor—Avalon Bakery and Sunday Dinner Company. Both are socially progressive models that reflect their unique local character in their physical environments and can be regarded as components in a flexible space framework that could help rebuild the neighborhood. Avalon Bakery initiated positive change that spread along the block where it is located, while Sunday Dinner Company demonstrates unique collaborations between its two owners and with local nonprofits.



2.19 Customers line up at Avalon Bakery, a neighborhood institution



2.20 Quality products with local character

Avalon Bakery: How one business can change the block

Avalon Bakery started its operations in 1997 on the rough Cass Corridor in Midtown. This area was once known as a place where one could buy drugs, sex and stolen merchandise at anytime of the day (Gray 2008). Today, this bakery has become a neighborhood anchor known for providing quality organic baked goods to area residents, local university students and nearby hospital workers. Owners Jackie Victor and Ann Perrault are deeply committed to social responsibility. Since its inception, Avalon’s business model has shown its dedication to the local community by paying a living wage to their largely Detroit and minority staff, offering health benefits and feeding the homeless.

As a small business, they have faced challenges, such as training staff and expanding their market,

with ingenuity and passion. Avalon's success sparked interest in other entrepreneurs, who noted how the owners transformed the once vacant building. "I have watched the evolution of this block for a number of years...this was a hole in the wall," said a hair stylist who worked in one of the businesses that have open since Avalon Bakery started. "I'd come by here and watch Ann work in here with her own hands. I knew it was someplace I wanted to be (Collins 2002)." The street now boasts a small natural food cafe and a collective that includes an art gallery and bookstore.

Physical Environment

Housed in a historic, single story brick building, Avalon Bakery's vibrant local feel extends into the landscape. On-street parking allows quick access to all of these businesses, while wide sidewalks welcome pedestrians and sets the stage for outdoor seating. There is space for a large hand-chalked sign advertising specials and the occasional sidewalk sale with its neighbors. Several mature street trees frame the space, providing shade in hot weather. Together this physical environment creates a friendly, open space that encourages locals to run in for their daily bread or to hang out for the daily chat.

Sunday Dinner Company:

A creative example of collaboration

East of downtown, Sunday Dinner Company combines social work and the culinary arts to train at-risk youth and ex-offenders to prepare and serve delicious soul food (Campbell 2011). Opened in 2010, the restaurant's southern cuisine is served buffet style to keep the menu affordable. The owners, Chef Eric Giles, the founding chef of a similar program called Kingdom Men's Café at the historic Eastlake Church of Detroit, and Dave Theriault, a businessman committed to reinvesting in the community, met during a corporate event Giles was catering.



2.21 Avalon Bakery's success has spurred new growth along the block. Top to bottom: Avalon Bakery, the Spiral Collective, Goodwell's Natural Food Market, adjacent to renovated lofts



2.22 Owners of Sunday Dinner Company: Chef Giles (l) and DavidThierault (r)

Working with a reentry employment program, supported by nonprofit organizations dedicated to poverty alleviation, allowed Giles and Theriault to provide training and employment to marginalized workers during the renovation of the restaurant's building, and continue on with their restaurant operations training program. The Heidelberg Cultural Village commercial corridor is intended as an attractor for community investment where entrepreneurs like the owners of Sunday Dinner Company, who have different backgrounds and skills, can cross paths, connect and collaborate.

Physical Environment

The sophisticated Sunday Dinner Company is housed in an attractive historic post office along Jefferson Avenue, sharing this stretch with a few empty store fronts, a national insurance company, a local pizza chain and party store. Although the interior of the restaurant is well appointed and accented with bright abstract paintings by a local Detroit artist, its beauty does not translate to the exterior. Besides decorative signage, the business does not take advantage of its prime location on Jefferson Avenue. Though highly accessible by automobile, its minimal street presence deters potential pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Still in its infancy, the future success of this business may yet inspire new entrepreneurs to the block.



2.23 The beauty of the well appointed interior does not make its way outside. Besides elegant signage, the restaurant has minimal street presence

Lessons Learned

In examining the precedents described above, it is possible to imagine the potential for locally and socially focused business models to provide skills and services in the community. In terms of flexible space and sustainable livelihoods, both serve as foundational components to a neighborhood scale framework for locally-based entrepreneurship. In order to strengthen these activities, the surrounding urban fabric can be enhanced through design interventions that reinforce community connections. Accommodating public street design can create a welcoming presence that attracts and facilitates social and business interactions. Wide sidewalks, street trees and good signage could attract foot traffic that would be vital to the success of the commercial corridor. Additions to exterior spaces, like locally-made bike racks, ground surface patterning and changing displays of culturally expressive artwork could further distinguish the commercial corridor, where human activity creates an open atmosphere and encourages others to frequent local business.

Combining socially progressive business models and a friendly, positive street presence gives incubator businesses the potential to create a safe and vibrant atmosphere that could spur adjacent development. While individual businesses serve as seeds for future development, the next local precedent describes how a neighborhood survived Detroit's tumultuous past through the social and entrepreneurial activities of its diverse community—Southwest Detroit.

Southwest Detroit: How community activism and strong leadership created a thriving neighborhood in Detroit

Southwest Detroit is a community of walkable neighborhoods populated by an established Mexican community who began to settle there in the early 1900s. Once part of the Corktown neighborhood, Southwest Detroit is isolated from the rest of the city by the Lodge Freeway, between Michigan Avenue, Fort Street and Livernois Avenue. The industrial history of this area is reflected in the residential blocks that



2.24 Popular Mexican businesses on Bagley Street

are edged with abandoned factories and industrial buildings. Despite this, commercial and retail businesses welcome visitors who dine at the many restaurants along Vernor Avenue. Residents can pick up their groceries at locally-owned bakeries and mercados along Bagley Street and can find services ranging from auto



2.25 Southwest Detroit is a growing community despite being isolated by highways

repair to banking. Paying a bill at city hall, attending school, and playing at local Clark Park is simply a walk through the neighborhood.

Like the rest of the city, Southwest Detroit has suffered through discrimination and disinvestment, ranging from the forced repatriation of Mexican immigrants to the construction of the Lodge Freeway that fragmented existing and established neighborhoods. Yet, through a dedicated community of residents and well funded, socially networked nonprofits, this area of Southwest Detroit has evolved into a diverse ethnic working class neighborhood that is home to a growing Latino, Black, and Arab American population (Badillo 2001).

Background

The first Mexican immigrant workers in Michigan were lured from Texas by jobs in the sugar beet industry, but word of high paying automotive jobs drew many of them to Detroit. Although they were generally spared the same level of discrimination faced by their Black co-workers, they were also often given the hottest and most fatiguing jobs and lived in cramped, unsafe conditions close to work. Unique to Mexican workers was that they became targets of repatriation programs when jobs became scarce. The growing community was stunted as the population of roughly 15,000 Mexicans living in Detroit shrank to merely a thousand in the years immediately following the Great Depression (Vargas 1993).



2.26 Businesses like this theatre opened to serve the thriving immigrant community

Despite this setback, the community was able to rebuild in Southwest Detroit as a new wave of Mexican immigrants arrived to fill new manufacturing jobs created by military production during World War II. Detroit once again became the center of industry as factories were converted from making automobiles to building tanks and airplanes. These workers and their families repopulated the changing Corktown neighborhood, and soon this critical mass attracted new businesses, such as restaurants and grocery stores, with products and services that catered to Mexican tastes. By the 1950s, bakeries, food processing enterprises, newspapers, banking and entertainment characterized this vibrant community (Delicato 2007).

Urban renewal during the 1960s left its mark as the construction of the Lodge freeway physically cut through the community and divided it in half. The Mexican community was able to reconsolidate in today's Southwest/Mexicantown neighborhood, although large tracts of land intended for light industrial development remained vacant and blighted (Delicato 2007).

Community Activism and the Role of Nonprofits in Neighborhood Revitalization

The civil rights and fair labor movements of the 1960s helped unify the Latino community in Southwest Detroit. Trained and experienced community leaders, like the members of the Steelworkers Union, allied with prominent church members to establish Latino Americans United for Political Action. Through their efforts, federal funding was gained for social services targeting Latinos, leading to a number of community agencies in Southwest Detroit that articulate and support Latino issues (Badillo 2003).

In 1989, the decade-old Southwest Development Business Association joined the Hubbard-Richard Community Council to form the Mexicantown Community Development Corporation



2.27 Urban renewal projects like the construction of the Lodge Freeway destroyed neighborhoods



2.28 Protesters in support of farm workers, 1968



2.29 Mural in Southwest Detroit



2.30 Southwest families celebrating new traditions in Clark Park

(Badillo 2003). The mission of this nonprofit was “to advocate for and build a stronger, more prosperous future for the historic, vibrant, and diverse Mexicantown community of Southwest Detroit through economic, business, and cultural development (MCDC, 2011).” Its role was to identify and address issues that impeded Southwest Detroit’s economic growth, such as parking, security and needed amenities. They were able to secure state funds by working with local stakeholders to develop and implement a shared vision.

Southwest Solutions is another nonprofit that has greatly contributed to the vitality of Southwest Detroit (Kavanaugh 2010). Started in 1970 to address mental health issues in the population, the nonprofit has since branched out to address other issues such as alleviating poverty, creating affordable housing, and job training. In January 2010, Southwest Solutions received a \$4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to train marginalized workers for future employment. This program, Detroit GreenWorks Solutions, partners with several dedicated agencies including The Greening of Detroit, Henry Ford Community College, and WARM Training Center to fulfill its goals (Detroit GreenWorks Solutions 2011).

For twenty-six years, Casa de Unidad (1980-2006), or Unity House, served as a key institution that focused on identifying, developing and preserving the Hispanic/Latino cultural heritage of Southwest Detroit. The nonprofit offered educational arts programs, exhibited artwork by Latino artists and hosted the annual “Unity in the Community Festival” in Clark Park. Aimed at unifying the diverse Latino community that had developed since the settling of the original Mexican community, this annual two-day festival “brought together local businesses, human service agencies, artists and entertainers for a weekend of cultural unity and celebration” (Casa de Unidad 2009). The nonprofit also published a study entitled: *Tradiciones del Pueblo: Traditions of Three Mexican Feast Days in Southwest Detroit* (1990). This project recorded a series of oral histories and interviews from the Latino community’s artistic and cultural traditions. The preservation and celebration

of culture continues on in nonprofit collaborations like the COMPAS collective that offers Latino performing arts classes, traditional Afro-Cuban dance, and theatre and performance art classes for youth and adults (Compass 2011). This collective includes several other Detroit cultural organizations and demonstrates the community's desire for multi-cultural celebration through its breadth of arts offerings.

Small business supports revitalization in Southwest

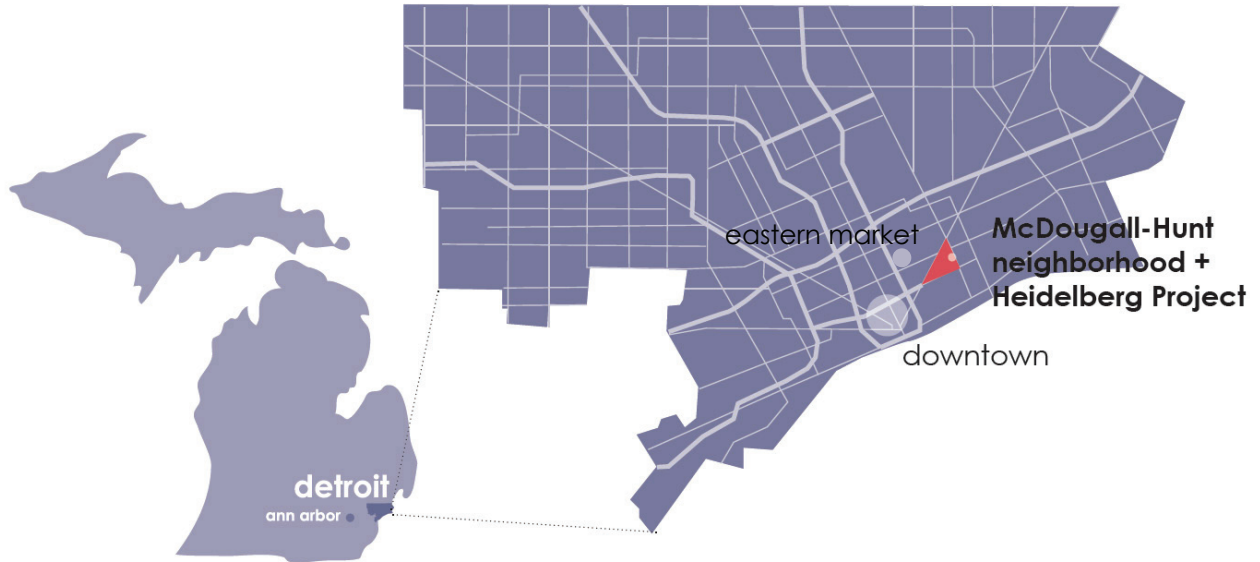
Nonprofit organizations have supported the economic, social and cultural needs of the area's population, which has doubled to over 90,000 people since the 1980s. These activities have spurred significant small business development—a 34 percent increase within the last three years (Guzman, 2010). In the process of making their own way, these residents have renovated entire blocks once ridden with gang violence and drug dealing and opened up thriving new businesses (Collins, 2002). One example is Jose De Jesus Lopez, owner of the restaurant Mi Pueblo Taqueria. The 12th child of a Mexican farmer, he labored in butcheries, restaurants and construction sites and used the money to purchase his \$10,000 house in cash. Eight years later, he resold the renovated house and was able to open the popular full-service restaurant. Small businesses like these benefit from walkable streets that go through residential blocks and build on assets like the recreational Clark Park, thus improving the livability of Southwest Detroit (Collins, 2002).

Though Southwest Detroit has suffered through many of the same challenges as the rest of the city, the adaptability of a dedicated community and its strong, integrated nonprofits have allowed this neighborhood to succeed, creating a pocket of urban stability in the heart of a hollow city.

Heidelberg Cultural Village + Commercial Corridor

The Heidelberg Cultural Village is a living experiment in transforming an “economically ravished, physically devastated African-American neighborhood into a locally-focused, art-based community that aims to be self-sustaining” (Diamond, 2010). It builds off the energy of artist Tyree Guyton's Heidelberg Project whose work has turned empty lots and abandoned homes into an artscape that transforms the way people see their world. Since the spring of 2010, a team of University of Michigan Master of Landscape Architecture students has been working to produce design proposals for the initial phase of the cultural village under the direction of Lead Designer, Professor Beth Diamond. In addition to the site plans for the commercial corridor, this iteration includes flexible art installation space, an urban farm, and a healing garden.

The commercial corridor is intended as an incubator framework for the evolution of community centered businesses along Mt. Elliott Street, directly across from Heidelberg Street. This section of Mt. Elliott has both residential homes and a few commercial businesses that include an active dry cleaner, a church, and the shell of a former corner store. Mt. Elliot connects to major arterials roads: Gratiot Avenue which leads to Downtown, and Mack Avenue which connects directly to the revitalizing Midtown district. The distance to

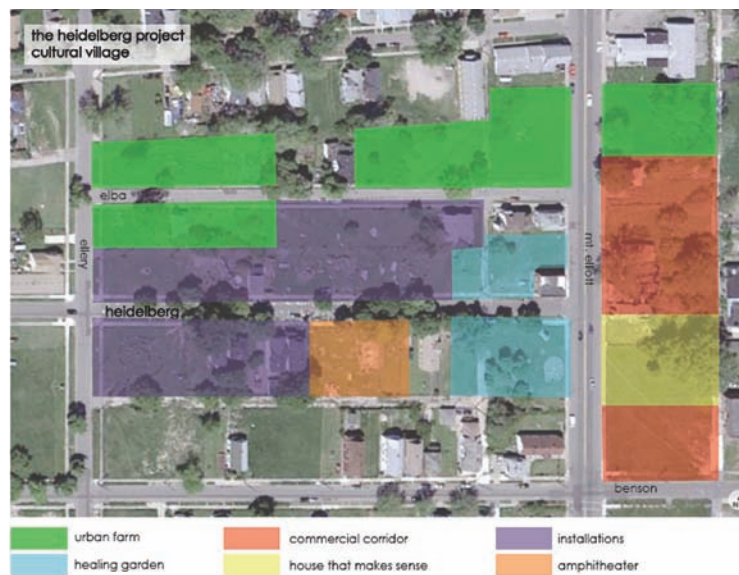


2.31 Heidelberg Project context map

downtown is 2.4 miles and the historic Eastern Market, where the Saturday market attracts as many as 40,000 weekly visitors, is 1.25 miles away.

The commercial corridor is inspired by Guyton's philosophy that each person is a creative individual whose skills and knowledge can be tapped to contribute to their own well being and that of their community. Through this idea, Detroiters do not wait for others to fix their world, but rely on their own abilities to transform their neighborhoods into more socially just and sustainable communities. At the same time, the commercial corridor must welcome and attract newcomers, because a commercial area can only develop and become self-sufficient through a mutually supportive balance of diverse energies and activities.

At present, the location of the commercial corridor is home to the Heidelberg Project installations entitled "New York State of Mind". This piece was a response to four burnt out and abandoned houses seen as eyesores and potentially dangerous places. Guyton transformed these abandoned structures with an assemblage of paintings and domestic materials that contrasted against the layers of paint, charred wood panel, brick, and plywood.



2.32 Elements of the proposed Heidelberg Cultural Village

The most striking features of this installation are colorful plywood paintings of taxis. When asked the meaning of the taxi paintings, Guyton responded that, “We are all going somewhere. Do you know where you are going?” (Interview 2010). “The New State of Mind” Plaza being proposed for the new commercial corridor references this installation and embodies the idea that the paths of many individuals can cross and with these crossings open up opportunities for connection and collaboration.

In December 2010, the two central houses in this series were demolished by the city and the Heidelberg Project is currently in the process of acquiring these lots and the surrounding parcels for the House that Makes Sense Community Arts Center.



2.33 Commercial corridor context



2.34 New York State of Mind, an Installation by Tyree Guyton prior to the removal of two structures in Winter 2010



2.35 Colorful paintings of taxis at the New York State of Mind installation



Explanation of Design

The New State of Mind Plaza ① is the central public space within the commercial corridor. The surface of the plaza is made of an assemblage of reclaimed brick and concrete and studded with recycled glass bottles, coins from around the world and toy cars. Performances can be held on the plaza stage, ② where old train rails and shopping cart adorned trees create a sculptural backdrop. The plaza is framed by The House That Makes Sense Community Arts Center ③ on the south and the Heidelberg Co-op + Café ④ to the north. From the café, there are excellent views into the plaza and to the Pocket Art Park ⑤ that features a rotating display of work on colorful circular concrete pads set into the ground. Several public open spaces unique to the commercial corridor can be seen nearby. Visitors can explore these areas on accessible paths made of fragments of recycled concrete leading from Mt. Elliott Street. Past the Pocket Art Park, visitors can walk along accessible gravel paths made of recycled concrete to the

2.36 Plan view of the Commercial Corridor

- ① New State of Mind Plaza
- ② Stage
- ③ House That Makes Sense
Community Art Center
- ④ Heidelberg Co-op + Café
- ⑤ Pocket Art Park
- ⑥ Spiral Garden
- ⑦ Toilet Garden
- ⑧ Sunbath Hill
- ⑨ Artist in Residence House
- ⑩ Artful stormwater detention



2.37 A view of a busy weekday morning in The New State of Mind Plaza as residents, school groups, customers, and visitors go about their day

formal Spiral Garden **6** which leads to a series of planted reclaimed toilets nestled in a “river” of flowering perennials within the Toilet Garden. **7** The main feature of the garden is the bathtub “grotto” filled with tumbled glass, framed by a “curtain” of flowering clematis vines that climb gaily beaded wire supports. Walking north on the perennial path leads to Sun Bath Hill **8** where visitors can take an elevated walkway to get a more extensive view of the Cultural Village or take a seat at the dramatic cut in front of the hill. This sitting area is accented by a concrete retaining wall where volunteering plants drape over a graffiti mural. Anchoring the south end of the commercial corridor is the Artist in Residence Live/Work Studio **9** where an artistically driven front yard design demonstrates stormwater management within a series of maintained vegetated detention pods. **10**

The New State of Mind Plaza

The principle public open space within the commercial corridor is the New State of Mind Plaza located on Mt. Elliott at the terminus of Heidelberg Street. The plaza draws in the street’s energy and creates a flexible space that physically responds to the two buildings that frame it: The House that Makes Sense Community Art Center and the Heidelberg Food Co-op + Café, both designed by Nick Lavelle. The House that Makes Sense to the south of the



2.38 The sculptural form of the stage backdrop is the visual focal point in the plaza



2.39-40 Visitors to The House That Makes Sense Community Art Center can enjoy the use of the plaza (Building design and model by Nick Lavelle)



2.41-2 The Heidelberg Co-op + Cafe is a pedestrian and bike friendly neighborhood amenity located right Mt. Elliott Street (Building design and model by Nick Lavelle)

plaza is to serve as a community arts center and headquarters for the Cultural Village. The spiral-shaped structure will house a visitor's center, offices, an art gallery, an indoor/outdoor classroom, and a gift shop. The Heidelberg Food Co-op + Café to the north has seating facing the plaza that provides an excellent place for regulars and visitors to take in the daily activity. The backdrop for the stage utilizes sculpture to visually connect the two buildings in addition to the artful use of locally reclaimed industrial and domestic materials for paving surfaces.

The Stage

The backdrop of the plaza stage is composed of vertical layers of sculpture that increase in height from Mt. Elliott and embody the aesthetic of the Heidelberg Project. The first layer is crisscrossing old train rails, rising roughly 10 feet high. These corroding rails support a growth of green vines that contrast against the rusting metal while visually connecting to 15-foot tall tree trunk sculptures. The trunks are colorfully painted and studded with domestic objects like bikes, shopping carts and kitchen sinks. Paying homage to Guyton's



2.43 Author's rendering of how recycled materials could be combined in the plaza's surface design

work, these assemblages of natural and man-made objects combine into sculptures that become organic in form.

Surface Material for the Plaza

Using recycled and reclaimed material for the plaza reflects the Heidelberg Project's aesthetic of building something new from the pieces that have been thrown away and reduces unnecessary waste. A variety of reclaimed materials are incorporated into the plaza's surface design, including recycled concrete, bricks, glass bottles and coins.

Chunks of old concrete removed from the sidewalks and driveways of vacant residential lots are hand placed and mortared and then polished to reveal the aggregate underneath. Since most aggregate is locally quarried, polishing reveals the subtle beauty of a local material.

Discarded liquor and wine glass bottles, gathered from local parks and streets, are set directly into the plaza's concrete surface or into circular pavers. When fired in a kiln and flattened, these green, blue, brown and clear bottles take on a jewel like character that local artist Lisa Rodriguez demonstrates in her stained glass-like gateway installation on the southwest corner of Heidelberg Street. Such bottles are to edge and accent main circulation



2.44 These recycled materials include donated international coins, brick, tile and glass bottles



2.45 Paths made from recycled concrete leads visitors to the Pocket Art Park (foreground) and Toilet Garden (background)

paths in the plaza and throughout the site.

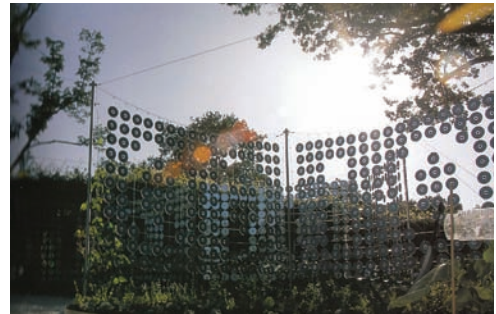
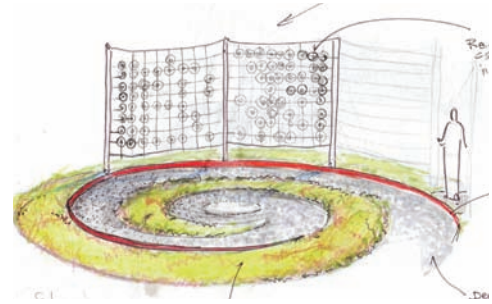
International coins donated by world travelers are to be embedded in the pavers surrounding the House That Makes Sense. The inclusion of coins reinforces the penny theme in the House That Makes Sense – a name that celebrates and acknowledges the hundreds of thousands of pennies donated by school children for the future arts center. The cultural diversity represented by the international coins is meant to illustrate how everyone is welcome to come together and create in the Heidelberg Cultural Village.

Additional café seating adjoins the Pocket Art Park that will exhibit rotating art displays. Adjacent to the Co-op + Café is a path that leads to the Toilet Garden. Using a river of plants that “flow” to the Spiral Garden conveys how waste can be symbolically cleansed and made beautiful.

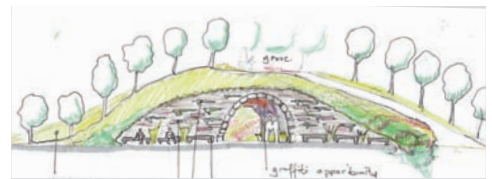
A sod hill made from construction debris of the House that Makes Sense provides a different vantage point for the neighborhood, while a retaining wall cuts into this form to create a dramatic sitting area accented by ruderal (volunteer) plants.

Program

Proposed programming of the commercial corridor supports sustainable livelihoods and flexible space



2.46 Old compact discs make an elegant screen at the Spiral Garden



2.47 Volunteer plants and graffiti enliven the sitting area at the Sun Bath Hill

concepts, implementing lessons learned in the previously examined precedents for flexible business models. The House that Makes Sense houses classrooms that are designed to support arts education activities, but could also be leased by community organizations such as the Detroit Black Community Food Network to train small-business entrepreneurs.

Like Southwest Solutions, the commercial corridor could provide a neighborhood base to orchestrate green job training, small business development and social entrepreneurship that support the community in fostering its own redevelopment. Partnering with nonprofits that offer green job training not only builds self-sufficiency but also healthy environments. Examples include the WARM Training Center that teaches home weatherization and Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice whose trainees learn how to safely reclaim building materials from abandoned structures.



2.48-9 The Cafe's kitchen could be used to make value added products after hours

The Heidelberg Food Co-op + Café is intended to provide commercial space for two fully functional businesses, as well as incubator entrepreneurial space. Having the co-op and café housed in the same building increases the success of both businesses. For example, if the co-op has a slow start with low membership, the café's influx of customers could bring in additional patrons. If the café receives only daytime traffic, then the co-op could ramp up afterschool cooking classes. If both businesses experience growth, they could then negotiate their shared space until one or both relocates somewhere else within the Cultural Village.

The co-op could also help bolster the food security movement of Detroit with a member-owned grocery store, where residents and visitors can conveniently purchase healthy products and produce from the urban farm to be located adjacent to the commercial corridor. The co-op might help stimulate the local food economy by being open to stock new local products and connect with other local food enterprises. The co-op model could retain revenue in the local economy by providing local worker income, sourcing locally grown produce, and utilizing local suppliers and services when possible. Classes in nutrition, in-store tastings and cooking demonstrations could contribute to supporting a healthy community.

Within the co-op, the café could serve as an active hub for customers by providing an excellent place for regulars and visitors to grab a coffee and chat or simply take in the activity of the plaza. The café's kitchen could serve double purpose by being rented out in the evenings for food entrepreneurs to make their value-

added products like jams, baked goods and candy. This feature could be especially handy for processing the summer harvests from the Cultural Village's future urban farm.

Outdoor Market

An important economic component to the plaza would be the establishment of a weekly public market that would bring local food sellers, artists, craftsmen, new entrepreneurs and buyers to the Cultural Village to exchange, purchase, and barter goods and services. Established businesses, groups and individuals could rent a space to not only sell their products but also to try out new products and business ideas. When the plaza is not being

Conclusion

The New State of Mind Plaza is intended as the public gathering space for daily life in the commercial corridor. This feature of the Cultural Village supports strategies for sustainable livelihoods and flexible space that invite diverse contributions to arts-based neighborhood redevelopment. Public events, like a weekly public market, festivals, and performances could create a framework of activity that the community could participate in and build upon. Residents on their way to buying groceries, a local artist meeting with school children, an elderly group of men playing cards, teenagers on their way to work in the Co-op + Café and visitors taking photos could all enjoy the plaza as a shared public space. By drawing in the diversity of users within the Heidelberg Cultural Village with economic, social and cultural opportunities, the plaza provides a low barrier to the mingling between insiders and outsiders, black and white, inner-city and suburban. This fertile interaction has the potential not only to strengthen the local economy, but also to encourage the understanding and creativity necessary to support real economic revitalization and social change for the city of Detroit.



2.50-1 Above: Author leading a landscape training course through the GreenWorks Solutions Program. Below: The three year old restaurant, Good Girls Go to Paris, serves fresh crepes at Eastern Market, where they also buy many of ingredients

Notes

1) Insurance agencies took advantage of this practice by charging higher insurance rates in these areas, arguing that the likelihood of accident or crime was higher. Regardless of the individual's insurance history, these rates could be twice that of those charged to white communities, even if driving and home insurance records were identical (Renaissance Observer 2006).

2) The businesses that occupy traditional shopping development, such as a Krogers grocery store, Borders Bookstore, or Target, are commonly seen to provide both goods and services and employment. For a developer in the Midwest to even consider implementing a typical big box strip mall they would expect to see roughly 25,000 households within a 5-7 mile radius, or 4,166 households per square mile (Eppink 2010). Based on a typical block, Detroit has roughly 1986 households per square mile (Policy Audit DWP 2010).

3) Because traditional development requires a general number of households to consider a retail project, it is not surprising to learn that Detroit has an estimated retail leakage of \$1.7 billion (Detroit Neighborhood Market Drill Down 2007).

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Bringing Food Home:

Blending Art and Urban Agriculture at Detroit's Heidelberg Project

Sarah Alward

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“We hope for better things; it shall rise from the ashes.”

Speramus meliora; resurget cineribus

Coined by Father Gabriel Richard in 1805, Detroit’s city motto, “Speramus meliora; resurget cineribus,” has both reflected and foretold the story of a city that has seen more than its share of hardship. The motto originally recalled the devastating 1805 fire that burned much of the city to the ground. Today, after more than 61% of its population has left and the city stands as a hollowed out shell of its former self, the motto couldn’t be more relevant.

The 2010 census revealed that the dramatic exodus from Detroit after its industrial collapse was even greater than predicted: just over 713,000 residents remain in the city (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), down from nearly 2 million in 1950 (Gibson 1998). The leftover stretches of vacant land pose an enormous challenge to the residents and city officials who are forced to manage with what remains. While many in the city see this empty land as a stark reminder of the vibrant neighborhoods that were lost, an increasing number of Detroiters see a more productive, hopeful future: the potential for urban farming. With over 40 square miles of vacant land to work with (Gallagher 2008), urban farms are restoring many of the city’s abandoned lots and parks to productivity and bringing Detroit residents new pride and fresh, healthy food.

Paralleling the growth of urban farms is an emerging movement of grassroots urban art projects. Experimental artists have been drawn to the city because of its plethora of cheap houses and “anything-goes” attitude. Many of these new projects are built upon the shoulders of a Detroit icon, the 25-year old Heidelberg Project. This two-block long environmental artscape was created by the artist Tyree Guyton in response to the urban blight that had begun to



3.1 Empty land in central Detroit

take over his neighborhood after the 1967 riots. Built on the vacant land of his community, Guyton used scavenged materials and his signature painted polka dots to engage visitors in a dialogue on pain and loss, as well as hope and renewal.

Until now, the rise of urban farms and public art in Detroit were largely independent. The research and design exploration described in this paper attempts to merge the two movements through the creation of an urban farm at the Heidelberg Project, one component of a new neighborhood revitalization vision called the Heidelberg Cultural Village. In keeping with Guyton's philosophy of using art as a catalyst for change, the proposed Heidelberg Urban Farm incorporates art and creative expression into every facet of its design, construction and visual character. This approach demonstrates the potential for art-based urban agriculture to increase neighborhood investment in the long-term evolution of the project and opens up possibilities of how urban farming could serve as a nexus for other forms of neighborhood redevelopment.



A Brief History of Community Gardens

Coincidentally, the historic roots of community gardens in the United States can be traced back to the late 1800s in Detroit (Milburn and Vail 2010). Due to a standstill in manufacturing, an economic depression plunged many into poverty and unemployment all over the country. In the spring of 1894, Detroit mayor Hazen S. Pingree began a program he called “Relief by Work,” better known as Pingree’s Potato Patches. Recognizing the need for both work and food, Pingree organized a citywide effort to allow the poor and unemployed to cultivate some of the nearly 8,000 acres of land that was idle and unused in the city (Pingree 1895).

In the middle of June 1894, ads were placed in newspapers asking for money and seeds, as well as

land that could be cultivated. Land was offered at more than sufficient quantities, in parcels from a single lot to a hundred acres apiece. Land was plowed and staked off into parcels from 1/4 to 1/3 of an acre—large enough for a family to raise potatoes to last through the winter and enough vegetables for the summer (Pingree 1895). The majority of poor families who took advantage of the opportunity already knew how to farm, but those who didn’t were given instruction. The first year, they harvested



3.2 Potato harvest in 1896

large crops of potatoes, squash, turnips, sweet corn, tomatoes, beans, and other vegetables. Despite the poor soils, late start to the gardens, and nine weeks of drought, Pingree Potato Patches were a great success. About \$14,000 of food, mostly from potatoes, was harvested at a cost to the city of only \$3,000¹ (Pingree 1895).

The following year saw even greater yields and higher participation; over 1500 plots covering 455 acres were under cultivation, nearly all within city limits. The money raised from these farms saved taxpayer

¹ Equivalent to roughly \$350,000 of produce from a \$75,000 investment in 2011 dollars.



3.3 WWII gardening poster



3.4 Victory gardeners with their bounty

dollars as no able-bodied person received aid from the Poor Commissioner without first cultivating land. The Poor Commissioner motto stated plainly: “He who will not work shall not eat” (Pingree 1895, 176). Pingree and his potato patches became a model of urban agriculture for other struggling cities, and similar plans were adopted with varying degrees of success in Omaha, Buffalo, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Boston, and New York City.

Since that time, Bassett (1981) describes the cyclical interest and disinterest of community gardens as “movements,” responding to social or economic hardship, interest in nature, urban beautification, patriotism, or healthy food production. Wartime movements, like the Liberty Gardens in WWI and Victory Gardens during WWII, encouraged citizens on the home front to “hoe for liberty” and cultivate much-needed food in a time of severe shortages (Bassett 1981). The recruitment of “soldiers of the soil” prompted millions of Americans to grow food in their backyards, schools, and vacant lots, and changed the perception of gardening from an activity for the poor to a noble and patriotic effort. At the height of the Victory Garden movement in 1944, 20 million gardens produced 40% of the vegetables consumed in the US (Bassett 1981). However, when the war ended and prosperity returned, vacant land that was once given freely for gardening was taken back and saved for a more lucrative use.²

Present-day community gardening is rooted in the community garden movement and environmental activism of the 1960s and ‘70s. The driving force behind these gardens is largely the same as today’s: economic necessity, urban disinvestment, and most notably, rising environmental concerns (Bassett 1981).

² According to Bassett (1981), the rise and fall of community garden movements is less a response to diminished interest in gardening, but rather the unavailability of vacant urban land.

The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 and the Clean Water Act in 1972 prompted an increase in environmental awareness and activism that, in some cases, led to an interest in local, sustainable, and chemical-free food.

But it's not just these issues that sustain interest in community gardening. Numerous publications have praised community gardening for its ability to improve physical and mental health, increase access to healthy food and better nutrition, improve neighborhood safety, provide opportunities for community development, and build social capital (Wakefield et al. 2007). Social capital is a common goal for many neighborhood revitalization projects, because the term refers to building a social network that works together to effect mutual, positive change. Reischl, and Allen (2010) credit community gardens with other social benefits, such as increasing collective efficacy, strengthening feelings of community and pride, and boosting morale amongst residents. Lovell (2010) cites multiple ecological and cultural functions of gardens, including the conservation of biodiversity, microclimate control, preservation of cultural heritage, and improved neighborhood aesthetics. Particularly relevant to Detroit, however, is the role community gardens can play in improving the local food system.

Food in Detroit

Food is not hard to come by in Detroit; the average family would only have to travel a few blocks to purchase some type of food (Gallagher 2007). The issue lies in the type of food available. According to a 2007 report, over half a million Detroiters live in a food desert—areas that have an imbalance of food options. This means that the nearest grocery store is at least twice as far away as the nearest fringe retailer like fast food restaurants, convenience stores, or liquor shops, where fresh and healthy options are extremely limited. As a result, residents living in food deserts are statistically more likely to suffer or die prematurely from a diet-related disease (Gallagher 2007).

Urban agriculture can be part of the solution to increase food security and improve community health (Bellows, Brown, and Smit 2003). The availability of fresh produce in a food desert is the most obvious benefit of urban agriculture (Whelan et al. 2002), putting consumers in close proximity to the production of food. By engaging in agriculture, participants learn about food production and become more

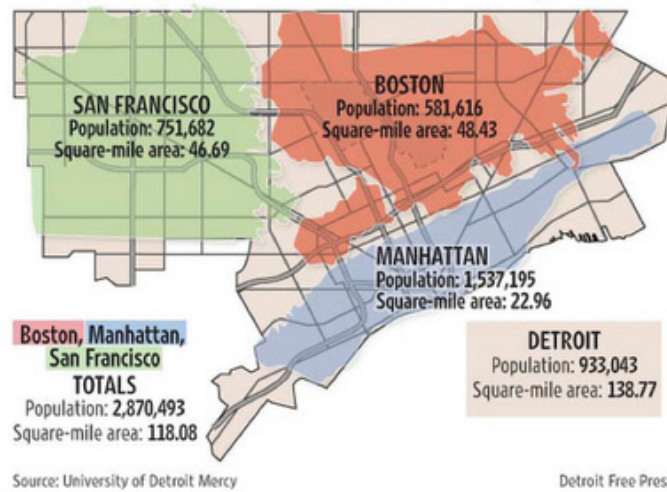


3.5 Access to fresh, healthy food is limited in Detroit

aware of the overall food system (Lyson and Raymer 2000), which could then lead to healthier food choices. The act of gardening itself is also associated with “satisfying labor, physical and mental relaxation, socializing, and a means to produce food and beauty” (Bellows, Brown, and Smit 2003, 6).

Detroit is uniquely positioned to be a pioneer in urban agriculture due to its incredible amount of vacant land (Mallach et al. 2008). Figure 3.6 shows the sheer size of Detroit’s city boundaries. San Francisco, Boston, and Manhattan can all easily fit within Detroit’s 139 square miles with room to spare. At the time of the first publication of this figure in the Detroit Free Press in 2008, more than 30% of the city, or 40 square miles, were vacant—roughly the footprint of San Francisco. Since 2008, another 220,000 people have left the city. According to the 2010 census, Detroit’s current population sits just above 713,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). For a city that was built to support nearly 2 million in 1950 (Gibson 1998), its area and infrastructure are vastly out of scale for the 39% of the population that remains today.

Comparing Detroit to three other major cities



3.6 Detroit’s oversized city footprint



3.7 Ribbon farm plots along the Detroit River, 1749 (Dunnigan 2001)

Unprecedented white flight to the suburbs in the 1950s coupled with the collapse of the auto industry and Detroit’s manufacturing economy can be blamed for much of the population decline (Fine 1989). But before the rise and fall

of Detroit's industrial legacy, the city was home to fertile ribbon farms that lined the Detroit River (Dunnigan 2001). Recently, many have been taking steps back in that direction. Urban farms and a network of garden support organizations are cropping up all over Detroit, returning fresh food and a new hope to a city that could use a little of both.

The Garden Resource Program is a collaboration of some of the largest urban farming organizations in the area: Greening of Detroit, Detroit Agriculture Network, EarthWorks Urban Farm, and the Michigan State University Agricultural Extension. Since 2003, this collective has provided resources, education, and support to hundreds of home, school, and community gardens in the city. In 2009, over 263 community gardens, 55 schools, and 557 families received seeds and locally grown transplants from the organization, together producing over 163 tons of food. In addition to material support, the Garden Resource Program offers over 50 educational workshops a year, a nine-month Urban Roots Community Gardening Training Program, and an urban beekeeping program (GRP 2011).



3.8 Malik Yakini at D-Town Farm

D-Town Farm is one of the largest urban farms in Detroit, and is run by the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN). According to its founder, Malik Yakini, this four-acre organic farm is a “community self-determination project” (Yakini 2010). DBCFSN seeks to address Detroit's food insecurity on four levels: through citywide food policy, a food-buying coop, youth education, and the establishment of the urban farm (White 2010). Like many urban farms in Detroit, secure land tenure was a serious

problem for D-Town Farm. Before settling into their current location in Rouge Park, they were forced to move twice. In June of 2008, after two years of meetings and negotiations with the city, DBCFSN signed a license that gave them use of the land for 10 years (DBCFSN 2011). Today, D-Town Farm demonstrates how a community-run organic garden can put unused land to productive use and can serve as a source of income for farmers (Yakini 2011). Produce from D-Town farm is currently being sold on-site at Rouge Park and at Eastern Market, Detroit's oldest and largest public market.

The Catherine Ferguson Academy (CFA), a high school for pregnant and parenting teens, has two acres of farm west of downtown. Under the direction of science teacher Paul Weertz, students at CFA care for goats, chickens, ducks, a horse, beehives, an orchard, and vegetable gardens (DPS*b*). For over fifteen years, Weertz has used his agriscience class to connect urban students to nature and food. He and other CFA faculty developed the farming curriculum to meet three main objectives: teach proper nutrition and parenting skills, give inner city students first-hand farm experience, and increase understanding of

rural America and where food comes from (Burgmaier 2004). Because of this farm, all CFA students have access to the fresh produce that is often too scarce or too costly for teens in Detroit. This is particularly important because 80% of the student body at CFA qualifies for free or reduced school meals (DPSa). While the farm has played its role in launching CFA into the media spotlight, most notably through the 2009 documentary *Grown in Detroit*, the school is faced with an uncertain future. Robert Bobb, the Detroit Public Schools' Emergency Financial Manager has slated CFA for closure during the summer of 2011, despite strong public outcry.



3.9 Catherine Ferguson Academy

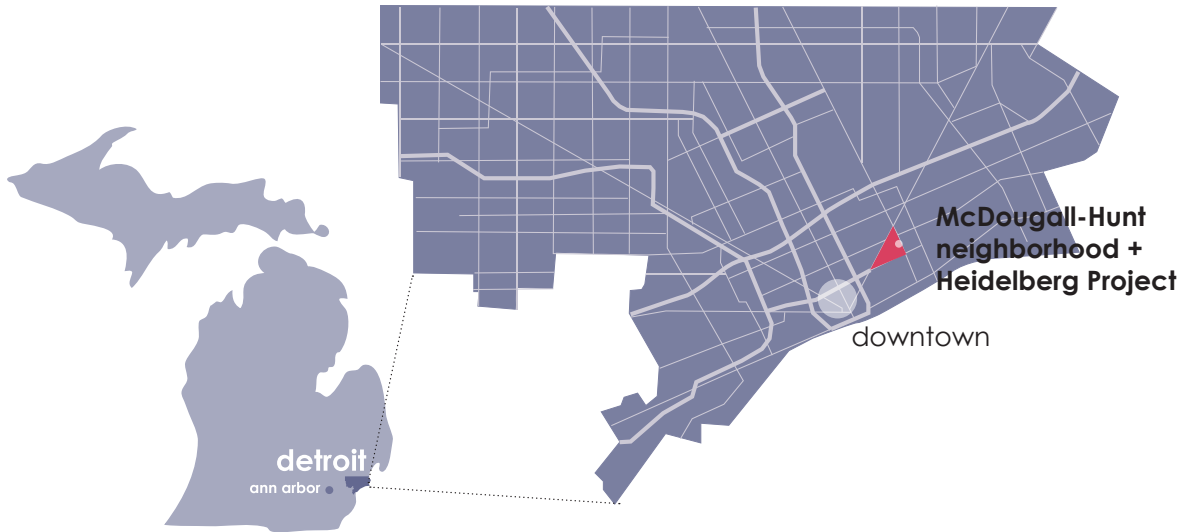


3.10 John Hantz at his home garden

A completely different approach to urban farming in Detroit is Hantz Farms. This Detroit-based for-profit company wants to take urban farming to a citywide scale and is trying to buy up thousands of acres of vacant land to create the world's largest urban farm (Hantz Farms Detroit 2011). However, two years after John Hantz originally announced his plans, there is still little to show of the farm. This controversial project has been slowed down by two major barriers:

Michigan's Right to Farm Act and the uncertainty surrounding Mayor Dave Bing's Detroit Works Project (Berman 2011). The Right to Farm Act was originally enacted in 1981 to shield rural farmers from nuisance lawsuits coming from residents surrounding existing farms. Allowing commercial farming within the city therefore removes the rights of residents to complain about the sights, smells, and noises coming from these agricultural activities. In addition to this state act, Detroit is currently not zoned for agriculture —so far, urban farms in the city are operating “under the radar” of current policies (City of Detroit Planning Commission 2010). The other obstacle, the Detroit Works Project, is an essentially “right-sizing” initiative that seeks to restructure city infrastructure to better serve its reduced population. Mayor Bing is hesitant to sell large areas of land to Hantz Farms before the Detroit Works plans are finalized (Berman 2011).

In addition to these larger projects, numerous single-family and neighborhood farms exist throughout the city, from single lots to entire blocks. However, the unique context of the Heidelberg Project provides opportunities to create an urban farm distinct from any others in the city.



3.11 Heidelberg Project context map

The Heidelberg Project + Cultural Village

The Heidelberg Project sits within the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood on the lower east side of Detroit, one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the city. While once a thriving community of entrepreneurs, musicians, and autoworkers, the neighborhood suffered during the race riots of 1943 and again in the social uprising of 1967, events which many feel the city never recovered from (Shibley et al. 2005). Residents who had the financial resources left the neighborhood in droves—taking their businesses and jobs to the suburbs and leaving behind a fragmented and disenfranchised population (Shibley et al. 2005).

Tyree Guyton, who grew up on Heidelberg Street, witnessed the rapid decline of his neighborhood. Faced with the increasing blight and abandonment, Guyton responded with art. In 1986, Guyton assembled the scavenged remains of his neighborhood onto vacant houses, turning dangerous abandoned buildings into sculptures. In Guyton's mind, he was taking what was discarded by society and turning it into something beautiful (Shibley et al. 2005). Throughout the project's controversial history—some see junk where others see art—the installations have been torn down and rebuilt on two separate occasions in the 1990s.

Through his work, Guyton provokes thought, promotes

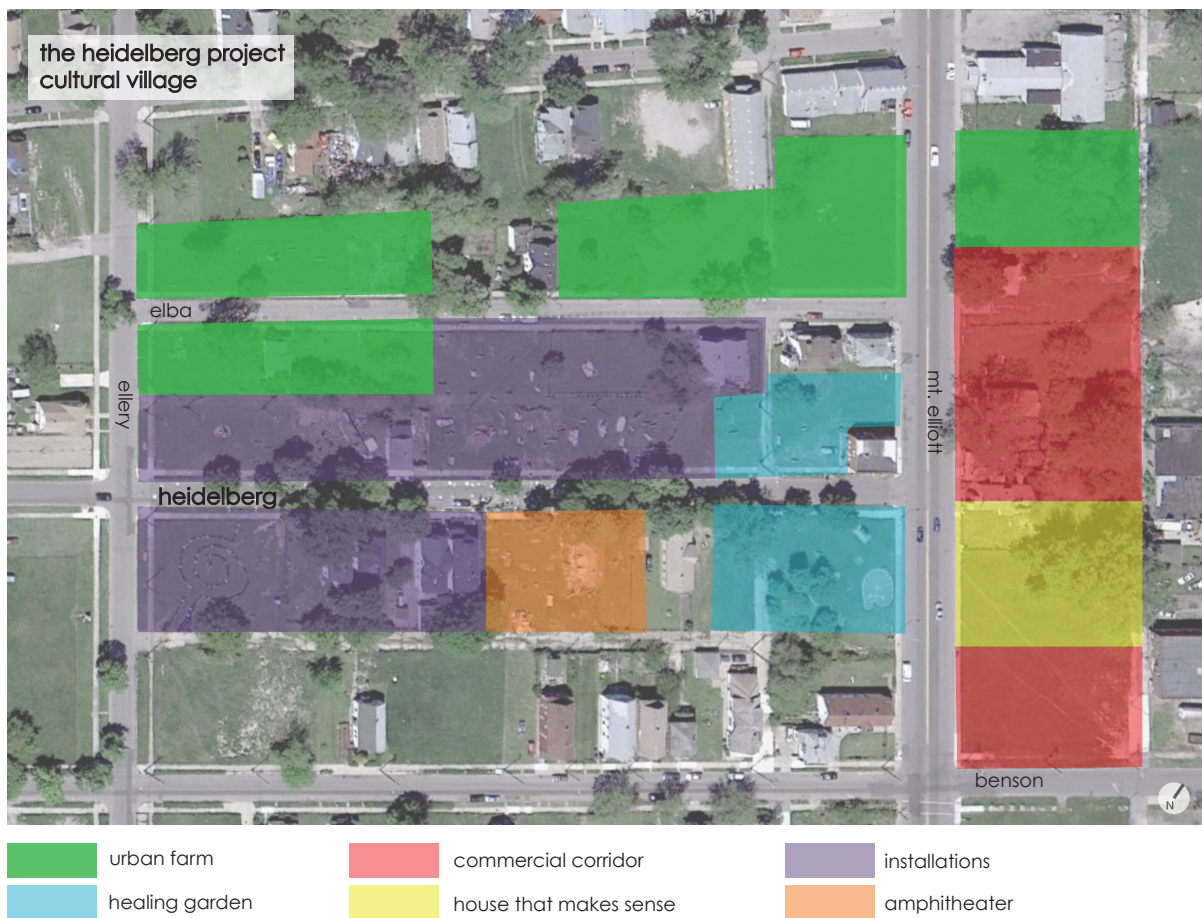


3.12 Guyton and the Heidelberg Project

discussion, and inspires action to heal broken communities. Now in its 25th year, the internationally renowned Heidelberg Project is the third most visited cultural attraction in Detroit and receives over 275,000 visitors annually. The Heidelberg Project is also a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that seeks to “improve the lives of people and neighborhoods through art” via community development, arts education, and youth organizing (Heidelberg Project 2011).

The Cultural Village expands the scope of the Heidelberg Project, weaving Guyton’s art and message into a long-term vision for neighborhood redevelopment. Since the spring of 2010, five University of Michigan Master of Landscape Architecture students under the direction of Lead Project Designer, Professor Beth Diamond, have been researching and designing the first iterations of this vision. In addition to the urban farm, site plans for the Cultural Village include a healing garden, a sculpture park, and a community arts center—The House That Makes Sense—that will serve as the anchor for a new commercial corridor.

The Heidelberg Project is an ideal location for an urban farm due in part to its proximity to Detroit’s



3.13 Elements of the proposed Heidelberg Cultural Village



3.14 Heidelberg Urban Farm context



3.15 Existing planters at Heidelberg

Eastern Market. Eastern Market is a six-block public market that has been feeding Detroit since 1891 and draws upwards of 40,000 people each Saturday (Detroit Eastern Market 2011). For the first time last summer, Eastern Market set up a produce stand on Heidelberg Street that started the conversation among residents and visitors about access to fresh, local food. Now, Eastern Market has identified Heidelberg as a potential site for expansion as they look to increase their market gardens around the city.

Creating a farm at the Heidelberg Project can also build upon the seed of garden interest already evident on site. The brightly painted sides of a few wooden planters tucked in beside Guyton's art installations along Elba Place. Just across Ellery Street is "Farmer John," a neighborhood resident whose 1/8-acre garden overflows with vegetables and cotton each summer (Heidelberg Project n.d.). Building off these existing gardens, and using the energy and momentum of the Heidelberg Project, plans for the Heidelberg Urban Farm seek to combine art and farming into a space where residents are empowered to cultivate food, create art, and nourish their community.

Public Art + Food in Practice

Art has the ability to change the way people look at reality (Matilsky 1992), making art a powerful force in urban revitalization and the transformation of cities. However, the role of public art is undergoing a transformation of its own, moving from traditional civic monuments towards a more "socially inclusive and aesthetically diverse practice" (Sharp, Pollock, and Paddison 2005, 1014). According to Americans for the Arts, community art programs have proved to be a potent force in neighborhood development by building social capital, actively engaging diverse groups of residents, and physically transforming public spaces to encourage civic dialogue (AFA 2007). By drawing upon the skills and imaginations of residents,

community art reflects the uniqueness of the neighborhood where it was conceived. Together, the creativity of individuals can be transformed into a greater public good while building social capital and working towards the attainment of important community goals (Guetzkow 2002).

Inclusive art projects emphasize the process, not the product. Including others in the process of creating art allows participants to find their voice, validate their own history and traditions, and establish identity (Bischoff 2009). Participation also fosters a sense of ownership and pride, and can improve physical and psychological well-being (Guetzkow 2002).

The individual and neighborhood benefits of community art projects very much parallel those benefits that result from community gardening, however, not much formal research has been done looking at how the two intersect. Mostly art makes its way into the garden through painted fences, statues, or recycled planters. Some gardens elicit contributions from local artists to create intricate gates, sculptures, arbors, or murals. All of these additions to the garden help establish a garden's identity and sense of place (Walter 2003).



3.16 Inclusive public art can reflect the community

For the Heidelberg Urban Farm, art is incorporated as an organizing element of the garden, not simply as an addition to the space. This is a concept with precedents in the contemporary landscape: Public Farm 1 and the Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson Community Garden, both in Queens, New York.

Public Farm 1

In the summer of 2008, New York-based Work Architecture Company took art and agriculture to new heights by creating a 30-foot tall temporary working farm at the Contemporary Art Center in Queens. The towering structure was made out of cardboard tubing and featured more than 50 varieties of fruits and vegetables (Andraos and Wood 2010). Marcel Van Ooyen, Executive Director of The Council on the Environment of New York City and consultant to Public Farm 1, said of the project, "People think farming is farming, architecture is architecture, and art is art, but this project blurred the lines between those things in ways that were really accessible" (Andraos and Wood 2010, 156). Through this project,



3.17 Public Farm 1 merged art and farming in Queens, NY



3.18 Visitors enjoy PF1

New Yorkers were introduced to a very innovative type of urban farming, and a very productive form of architecture.

Designing a way to introduce art and food together in an attractive and interactive way was key. Elodie Blanchard, the fabric consultant for the project, said Public Farm 1 “was a truly beautiful structure... If you lost the design of it, then people wouldn’t get as interested, and then it wouldn’t have been as good” (Andraos and Wood 2010, 163). The unique design of this farm is what made people flock to visit it by the thousands. Fritz Haeg, author of *Edible Estates*, noted that Public Farm 1 was not a solution to a problem or a literal vision of a possible future, but rather “handmade piece of pragmatic poetry” (Haeg 2010, 11). It was different enough to attract attention, beautiful enough to get people excited, and interesting enough to challenge the way people thought about farming in the city.

Despite being an intriguing look at how art and farming can meet, Public Farm 1 was never meant to be a permanent fixture; by the end of the summer the project was completely dismantled and recycled.

Curtis ‘50 Cent’ Jackson Community Garden

A more recent and more permanent look at how art can be incorporated into community gardens can be found at the Curtis ‘50 Cent’ Jackson Community Garden (CJCG) in Queens, New York. This 10,000 square-foot garden was designed by Walter Hood and built through the collaboration of Bette Midler’s New York Restoration Project and rapper 50 Cent’s G-Unity Foundation. Midler and her foundation have been revitalizing neglected neighborhood parks around New York since 1995; recently, according to



3.19 Rapper 50 Cent and the New York Restoration Project collaborated to create a unique community garden

the New York Times, she has been “courting imaginative designers to enlarge the scope of community gardens” (Raver 2008). Midler, understanding that community gardens should be much more than simply a place to grow food, said that “everyone who has a stake in the garden is able to use it the way they want to: some want to grow fruits and vegetables, others want a quiet place, some want to play ball. So all these things have to be taken into consideration” (Raver 2008).

Hood insisted that public spaces should reflect the culture of the community, saying “artists who are involved in making these places are responsible for elevating communities and their environments to a level of artistic beauty that really connects people to the world around them” (G-Unity Foundation 2011). At CJCG, art is indistinguishable from functional garden features—six ten-foot-tall blue rainwater collectors funnel water from overhead structures into a 1,500-gallon underground cistern, eliminating the need for gardeners to hook up hoses to a fire hydrant across the street. For the raised wooden planter boxes, Hood used simple geometric forms and planted them with a combination of colorful ornamentals, neat boxwood edges, and edibles.

CJCG successfully demonstrates that growing vegetables “doesn’t mean you have to be in this hard agricultural space”(Hood in Raver 2008). By creating a multi-use garden that responds to the needs of the community, this garden is an inspirational example of how art and farming can create a beautiful and functional community asset.



Programmatic and Design Goals

The design for the Heidelberg Urban Farm builds off the precedents of successful community art projects and community gardens to create a space with several goals:

1. *Increase access to fresh, healthy food and connect people to their food source*
2. *Provide opportunities for diverse contributions from the community*
3. *Put vacant lots to productive use in a way that reflects the aesthetic and philosophy of the Heidelberg Project*
4. *Serve as a new model for urban agriculture in Detroit that challenges the way people think about farming in the city*



3.20 Elba-Ellery Park today

Current Site Conditions

The site for the 1.88-acre farm is situated in four segments along Elba, a one-block-long street with extremely high vacancy. At the southwest corner of the site is Elba-Ellery Park, a narrow grassy lot that contains several raised planting beds and some of Guyton's

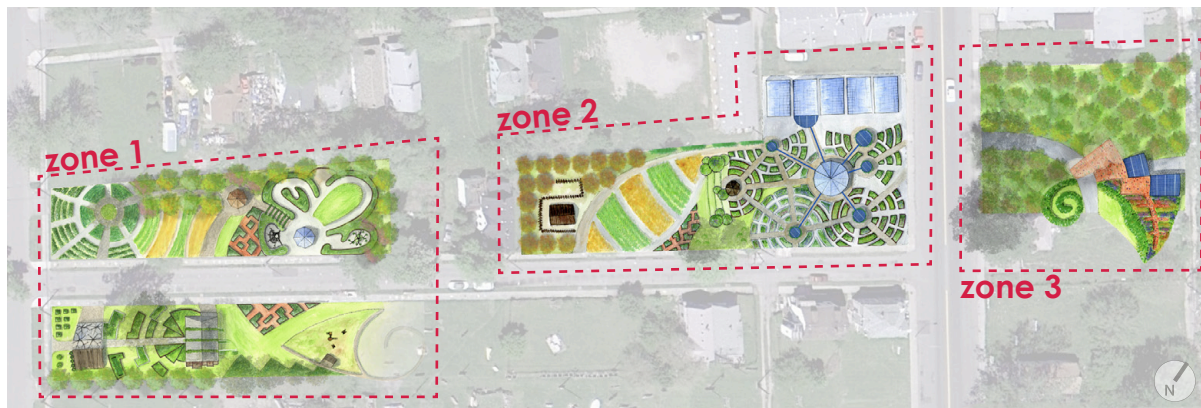
Heidelberg Project installations. There is also a small playground with swings and a jungle gym adjacent to the block's one remaining resident. Across the street are five empty residential lots and one of Guyton's painted houses. This edge of the urban farm will adjoin a new sculpture garden being designed as part of the larger Cultural Village.

Northeast of the occupied home are ten more lots, all currently empty and minimally maintained. The site also borders Mt. Elliott, where it abuts an existing dry cleaner. The final segment of the farm, currently an open stretch of lawn adjacent to a small church, stretches across Mt. Elliott. Directly south of the farm site is the future commercial corridor, also part of the planned Heidelberg Cultural Village. In total, this farm will cover nearly two acres and replace an underused park and 25 empty parcels of land.

No soil testing has been done at this time, but property that once contained buildings with lead paint are at a high risk for soil contamination (Murphy 2009). Because Elba-Ellery Park is too narrow to be zoned for housing, it is unlikely that structures were ever put on this land; therefore, soil contamination is likely less of a problem here than elsewhere on the site. Before any planting begins, soil must be tested and remediated as necessary.

Design Explanation

Because the project site is long and narrow, the design will be discussed in three segments starting from the southwest on Elba Place and moving northeast (Fig. 3.21).



3.21 Design for the Heidelberg Urban Farm



3.22 Zoomed in planview of the children + demonstration garden

Zone 1: Children's Garden and Demonstration Garden

The west portion of the site contains the Heidelberg Urban Farm's berry patch, children's garden, demonstration area, and goat playground.

Radiating beds of soft fruits and berry bushes, such as strawberries and raspberries, surround an existing, mature tree **1**. Crops here can be planted directly into the ground, since there is a lower risk of soil contamination in the undeveloped park space. A fruit tree-lined path leads visitors to a two-story lookout tower **2** that affords views over the long strips of annual grains and corn **3**. The first floor of the structure can be used for storage. Moving under the row of planted arbors brings people into the central area of the children's garden.

Providing children with their own, hands-on garden space encourages them to make good food choices from an early age, and also fosters an environment for experimental learning, a love of the outdoors, stimulating social interaction, and cultural exchange (National Gardening Association 2011). In the middle of the children's garden is a small glass greenhouse **4** that showcases colorful fruits and vegetables year-round. A series of small, outdoor activity areas spread out from this point, all framed by low raised beds constructed out of a variety of different recycled materials. A metal canopy along the herb garden edge **5** provides some shade for the outdoor classroom space, large enough to seat 35-40



3.23 Perspective looking into the children's garden

people. Beyond that, the keyhole garden ⁶ demonstrates how planting space can be maximized by reducing path area (Hemenway 2009). A small builders garden ⁷ tucks into the very back of the site, where children have the opportunity to build and destroy the creations they make out of sticks, bark, pinecones, and other natural materials. A small hillock for active play borders the building garden. The last area in the children's garden builds off the work of Heidelberg resident artist Tim Burke. The central focus of this space is a sculptural tree ⁸ that holds up baskets overflowing with potted strawberries, flowers, and upside down tomatoes. Similar to Burke's guardrail flower sculpture that is currently on exhibit at his outdoor Heidelberg Street studio, this metal tree could be created out of recycled materials and be a playful example of where food can grow.

A 2,000-square foot goat playground ⁹ and demonstration garden sit across the street from the children's area. Detroit municipal code currently forbids keeping goats in the city (City of Detroit 2011); however, the Catherine Ferguson Academy has already set the precedent for keeping goats and other farm animals in town. Cob walls frame the goat area on two sides and shape the sculpture garden space directly to the east. Metal fencing forms the third, arcing edge of the pen and will allow visitors to see into the goat exercise yard. The farm could start with two female Nigerian Dwarf Dairy Goats, known for their high milk yield and quiet disposition. Each animal needs 16 square feet of shelter and 250 square



3.24 Guyton's clock house as it is today



3.25 Gutter garden



3.26 PVC pipe planting wall

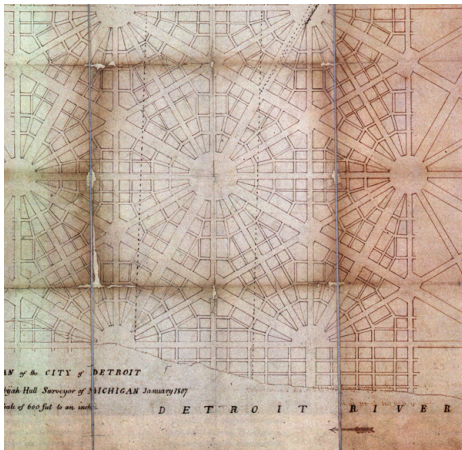
feet of exercise space (Lost City Goats 2011), meaning the goat population could expand to eight animals as the farm grows.

The demonstration garden ¹⁰ sits to the west, showing that vegetables grow essentially wherever you let them—in traditional raised planters, stone herb spirals, and even up and over one of Guyton's painted houses. The garden contains a covered gathering area and storage shed ¹¹, with a path leading to Guyton's clock house. Playing off of Guyton's theme, raised planters are segmented into wedges like the hours on a clock ¹². As the hour segments move from the ground to the side of the house, PVC piping and old gutters allow these lines to extend along the face of the building and over the roof. On the far side of the house, the line of vegetation zigzags back to the ground in a planted PVC pipe wall ¹³.

The clock house is currently vacant; as the farm builds up around it, the house can either stay unoccupied or be renovated to accommodate a farmer-in-residence on the site. Finally, garden scraps and goat waste can be composted in bins directly behind the building ¹⁴.



3.27 Zoomed in planview of the central gardens and greenhouses



3.28 Detroit's 1807 Woodward Plan (Dunnigan 2001)



3.29 Recycling concrete for planter beds

Zone 2: Central Gardens and Greenhouses

Due to its visibility along Mt. Elliott Street and its proximity to the future commercial corridor, the central gardens and greenhouses are the Heidelberg Urban Farm's most public face. The design for this area plays off of the hub-and-spoke street layout of Detroit's 1807 Woodward Plan (Dunnigan 2001). Raised planter beds **1**, created from recycled concrete, scavenged sheet metal or painted wood, radiate out from vertical farm kiosks **2**. These kiosks showcase vertical farming techniques, collect solar energy on their roofs, and channel rainwater overhead into a central water cistern and circular greenhouse. The interior kiosk space can also be used for tools and storage.

The central feature of this area is a large circular greenhouse **3**, which can showcase hydroponic farming or simply serve as a passive solar greenhouse and educational space. In addition to the circular structure, five more passive solar greenhouses **4** would provide 3,000-square feet of space to extend the growing season and provide indoor storage. A solar shade canopy attached to one greenhouse would be an



3.30 Looking towards the central greenhouse

ideal place for volunteers or trainees to get out of the sun over lunch or before a training workshop.

Moving west from the radiating beds, a gazebo shelter and three wide grassy steps **5** provide more resting space. Round stock tanks offer a different type of raised planting bed. Nearby, a flexible open space **6** allows planting or installations to change yearly, depending on the visiting farmer/artist-in-residence.

A large swath of grains and corn **7**, orientated for maximum solar exposure, creates a sense of movement in the wind. If soil contamination is a problem here, planting sunflowers or other known phytoremediating species could help remove contaminants from the soil. Phytoremediation would be a low-cost and easily implemented intervention for cleaning up large areas of soil; however, it may take several years to ensure



3.31 Stock tank planters



3.32 Inoculated mushroom logs

soil is clean enough for agricultural activity (Turner 2009).

Finally, in the shadiest corner of the garden is the mushroom and chestnut farm. According to the Michigan State University Extension, chestnuts are Michigan's most commercially viable nut (MSUE n.d.). The foliage from these nut trees ⁸ can help to shade oak logs ⁹ that are inoculated with shiitake and oyster mushroom spawn. Growing mushrooms is a relatively low-cost endeavor that requires a lot of labor. However many Michigan shiitake growers are rewarded with high demand and high retail prices for fresh mushrooms (Kidd 1998). The adjacent building can be used as a workspace and storage area for both operations.



3.33 Zoomed in planview of the community orchard and kitchen

Zone 3: Community orchard and kitchen

The final portion of the farm contains the community orchard, kitchen and patio, and honey house. Painted hubcaps created by local schoolchildren lead visitors through the fruit orchard ¹ towards the covered, outdoor dining area ², where youth learning about preparing fresh food serve up delicious meals for the community. An apiary alongside a new kitchen ³ brings honey production to the farm, and the structure adjacent to the kitchen will accommodate the processing of honey for sale ⁴. Cut flowers ⁵ will be grown in a garden next to the honey house to be sold at the market just east the farm



3.34 Entrance to the community orchard and gathering space

site in the commercial corridor. The form of this flower garden, along with the spiral of grasses and lawn **6**, fits into the adjacent design of the market and plaza space.

Planting at the Farm

Although the design described above suggests some of the more permanent elements of the Heidelberg Urban Farm, most of the garden is intended to be planned and planted anew by the community each year. The raised bed layout provides an empty framework for gardeners to decide which fruits and vegetables will be grown every season, allowing an ever-changing palette of plants to reflect the culture, creativity, and aesthetics of the community and provide ongoing opportunities for participants to shape the space (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004). Suggested fruits and vegetables that are appropriate for Michigan's climate are listed in Appendix A.

Physical Design Analysis

A paper by Milburn and Vail (2010) identifies four factors that can contribute to functional community garden design: site selection, accessibility, garden spaces, and site elements. The design of the Heidelberg Urban Farm addresses all of these factors.

Site Selection

The site for the Heidelberg Urban Farm is in an already vacant area that will not require the removal of

any structures, which is ideal. It is also a sunny location with plenty of light throughout the day. While the site contains several large canopy trees, most of these can be preserved; in fact, several of these trees have been specifically worked into the design of the farm.

Locating the garden within walking distance of the primary gardeners is also important; Milburn and Vail (2010) note that most participants should be located within a quarter to half mile from the site. The garden's proximity to the Heidelberg Project ensures that it sees plenty of foot traffic.

Published literature suggests that the long, linear shape of the garden is less than ideal; Mathers (2007) writes that a compact square or circle shape is the best way for gardeners to share central resources and maximize community interaction. However, the lengthy street frontage of the Heidelberg Urban Farm may prove to be an asset by providing easy vehicular access for moving soil, plants, and equipment across the site. In order for gardeners to have easy access to storage and equipment, these resources are available in multiple locations across the Heidelberg Urban Farm. Gathering spaces for community interaction also occur throughout the site.

Access to water is another crucial factor in successful community gardens (Milburn and Vail 2010). In the Central Garden area, the cistern beneath the circular greenhouse can be the primary source of water. While costly, other sources of water will likely need to be installed to ensure that no part of the garden is beyond 50' of a water source. The water meter from Guyton's clock house could be a water source for the display garden, and the fire hydrant at the children's garden could be a temporary source until a water meter can be installed. The orchard may be able to use the water hookup at the existing house adjacent to the site to the east until the new kitchen and honey house are constructed.

Land tenure, currently one of the biggest challenges for community gardens in Detroit, will not be a problem for the Heidelberg farm. The Heidelberg Project already owns or is in the process of acquiring all the vacant lots within the proposed site boundaries of the farm and will have permanent control over them.

Accessibility

To ensure that the garden is a welcoming place for everyone in the community, it needs to be accessible to people with a range of abilities and ages (Payne and Fryman 2001). This includes ensuring that there are areas for people to sit or lean, canopy for shade, stable surfaces, barrier-free access to planting areas, appropriately sized pathways, and planting areas that accommodate height and reach limitations (Friends of Troy Gardens n.d.). The layout and materiality of the farm design accommodates these concerns by allowing for raised beds to double as 18"-tall seat walls. There are also gazebos, indoor shelters, structural

canopies, and tree cover that can provide shade on a hot day. All central pathways through the garden are 5' or wider, while smaller paths through garden beds are 36", wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair (U.S. Department of Justice 2010). These paths can be made of an ADA-accessible material such as compacted gravel. Finally, the variety of heights, shapes and widths of the planting beds ensure that there are plenty of options for those gardeners with limited reach—all radiating raised planting beds in the Central Garden are only five feet across and allow for access on both sides.

Garden Spaces

The garden is a great place for people to meet and interact, and designing spaces to facilitate this interaction can make the garden a valuable asset to the community (Milburn and Vail 2010). The Heidelberg Urban Farm provides a variety of gathering spaces in each section of the garden, ranging from shade canopies to gazebos to public greenhouse areas. In addition to the largest gathering space in the community orchard, there is also a stretch of lawn in the children's garden and in the Central Garden that could be used for classes, parties, or other events.

The importance of gathering spaces in a garden cannot be undervalued, as they create a sense of place, build identity, and increase social capital among gardeners (Payne and Fryman 2001). These are spaces for daily socializing, special events, and cultural celebrations—activities that, in turn, strengthen the fabric of the neighborhood. In a study of Latino gardens in New York City, garden participants preferred spending time in the community garden over a nearby park; the garden is the environment they helped shape, and the structures there were ones they had a hand in building (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004). The New York City gardens included in the study were home to Christmas celebrations, dance performances, outdoor theater, and musical events. Other activities, such as voter registration and health fairs, were also held in these gardens (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004). Gathering spaces have been included in the design of the Heidelberg Urban Farm without presupposition of what the garden participants will want them for, and the form of these spaces may develop over time.



3.35 Making seed bombs at the Georgia Street Community Garden



3.36 Gardeners shape their own space in the community

Site Elements

Milburn and Vail (2010) cite that the most important and common site features of a community garden are tool sheds, signs and information, fencing, and public art. At the Heidelberg Urban Farm, storage for tools and other equipment is accommodated in several different areas across the site—because of the farm’s linear form, multiple locations for these resources have been provided. While signs and fencing were

not addressed in the layout of this farm, it is important to consider how their aesthetic and location can both provide information to passersby and encourage interest. While fencing can maximize safety and minimize vandalism, the Heidelberg Urban Farm has been designed with the intention that there will be no exterior fence between the sidewalk and the garden. The decision to keep the farm area open and accessible reflects the same openness of the art installations at the Heidelberg Project. Guyton has been working in the community for 25 years and it is hoped that the same respect for his outdoor artwork will translate to the farm as well. Fencing off the farm, which was designed to draw people into the site and encourage visitors to engage with the space, sends a message directly in opposition to Guyton’s foundational philosophy. Further, because the garden is part of the larger Heidelberg Cultural Village, there will be plenty of visitors and many eyes available for surveillance, which can help improve the safety and maintenance of the garden.

Milburn and Vail (2010) discuss art as an added feature to the garden that can allow gardeners to shape their space. In the case of the Heidelberg Urban Farm, art is prevalent throughout the space and is reflected in all parts of its visual character. Rather than just allowing for certain areas to be decorated with sculpture or murals, the garden beds themselves can be works of art created from the discarded remains of the neighborhood.



3.37 Murals are a traditional way art is incorporated into gardens

Programmatic Analysis

The Heidelberg Urban Farm was designed to provide the framework that would empower people to grow food and create art in a way that would build social capital and community pride. Specifically, the four overarching goals mentioned previously and repeated here were considered during the programmatic design of this space:

1. *Increase access to fresh, healthy food and connect people to their food source*
2. *Provide opportunities for diverse contributions from the community*
3. *Put vacant lots to productive use in a way that reflects the aesthetic and philosophy of the Heidelberg Project*
4. *Serve as a new model for urban agriculture in Detroit that challenges the way people think about farming in the city*

This section will examine how these goals are met through the design of the Heidelberg Urban Farm.

Increase access to fresh, healthy food and connect people to their food source

The Heidelberg Urban Farm provides nearly two acres of space to grow food and participate in the farm's planting, cultivation, harvest, and consumption of fresh produce. A study conducted in Flint, Michigan found that adults who participated in community gardening consumed 1.4 more fruits and vegetables per day than those who did not participate (Alaimo et al. 2008). The authors also found that community gardens offer a potential source of nutrition intervention because they address a barrier that some urban residents face when trying to eat a healthy diet: limited availability to fresh produce (Alaimo et al. 2008). Quite simply, growing food at the Heidelberg Urban Farm will increase the access to and availability of fresh, local produce.

However, a 2010 study found that simply increasing access to healthy and nutritious food does not necessarily increase consumption, particularly for low-income households (Walker, Keane, and Burke 2010). What needs to come hand-in-hand with food access is food literacy, or the knowledge to make informed decisions about food choices (Foresight 2011). Darrin Nordahl describes in his book, *Public Produce*:

...to be able to see, and eventually recognize, food in all stages of plant development, all around us, is akin to immersion education for a foreign language. Our new language of public produce could become both the medium and the object of instruction in a nation where few have ever had an opportunity to see produce in its native habitat, much less pluck it from the vine. Food does not have to be eaten to have value. Just being able to see the bounty and diversity of edibles in our environments can be educational and may prompt diversity in our diet, while making us more food fluent. (2009, 117).

The visibility and potential for education and interaction at the farm could be instrumental in increasing food literacy by connecting people to their food source, thereby helping people make more informed food choices. The very presence of the farm has value, but having opportunities for interaction increases that value even more. Educational and community events held in the garden can increase understanding and acceptance of food grown at the farm. The Heidelberg Project has a wide network of volunteers, and the farm could be the site of volunteer meetings, harvest festivals, and yearly celebrations. The biennial Dancing on the Streets Festival held at the Heidelberg Project could also be an opportunity to introduce people to the farm and increase interest in the food and activities happening there.



3.38 Painting planters at the Heidelberg

Provide opportunities for diverse contributions from the community

The purposeful combination of art and farming is a powerful one that can activate more members of the neighborhood than either element alone. Elders can teach novice gardeners how to farm, since many of Detroit's residents have roots in the agrarian south (Owens 2008). Since 1992, youth have been learning to farm from experienced residents with the Gardening Angels through the Detroit Summer program, a multicultural and intergenerational organization that fosters the "youth-led movement to rebuild, redefine, and re-spirit Detroit from the ground up" (Detroit Summer 2006). Pairing young and old community members together creates a partnership that trains future community leaders and builds transgenerational relationships and ensures all age groups are

invested in the quality of life within the neighborhood (Rhea 2004). Those participants without green thumbs who grew up around Guyton and his painted polka dots may feel more compelled to contribute to the garden artistically. Creating one space that provides opportunities for both farming and art could provide the most benefits to the widest range of people.

Because many fruit and vegetable plants are annuals, there will be significant opportunities for people to contribute to the garden every year. By participating in the planting, people can shape the physical look of the garden. They can also help decide the types of food they would like to grow and eat, making the garden a true reflection of the community that builds and tends it.

The growth and ultimate size of the farm will depend on community interest and participation levels. Therefore, the farm can start out small, serving as an outlet for existing organizations like the Greening

of Detroit and Earthworks Urban Farm. As interest grows, so too can the farm. Paralleling the Heidelberg Project's visiting artist program, a visiting farmer in residence could live on the site. Because the Heidelberg Project is already an established non-profit institution with considerable neighborhood connections and resources, their large group of volunteers, active youth organization, and educational programming could all be integral to the farm's success.

Put vacant lots to productive use in a way that reflects the aesthetic and philosophy of the Heidelberg Project

The 700,000-plus residents who remain in Detroit must deal with the abandonment and blight of their city on a daily basis; putting the vacant land surrounding the Heidelberg Project to active and productive use could dramatically improve the way residents value their community. In a study by Armstrong (2000), having a community garden nearby improved the attitude of residents towards their neighborhood in 51% of the gardens. Transforming vacant land into a verdant garden makes a strong statement about the productivity that can bloom from the emptiness left behind in the city, and the integration of recycled and repurposed materials reflects the artwork of Guyton himself.

While the Heidelberg Urban Farm reflects the unique character and creativity of the Heidelberg Project, Walter (2003) found that successful community gardens are less about grand design and more about facilitating a dialogue where the community identifies, prioritizes, and visualizes its own space. The question is: what happens when the community is largely made up of visitors, and the few residents who remain are elderly? In the case of the Heidelberg Urban Farm, working with the community largely means working with the Heidelberg Project. Guyton has already taken huge strides towards visualizing and shaping the aesthetic of the neighborhood, and this garden could be the next evolution.



3.39 Current site of the Heidelberg Urban Farm

Serve as a new model for urban agriculture in Detroit that challenges the way people think about farming in the city

Urban agriculture in Detroit is nothing new; as discussed in previous sections, there are numerous examples of successful community gardens and urban farms all over the city.

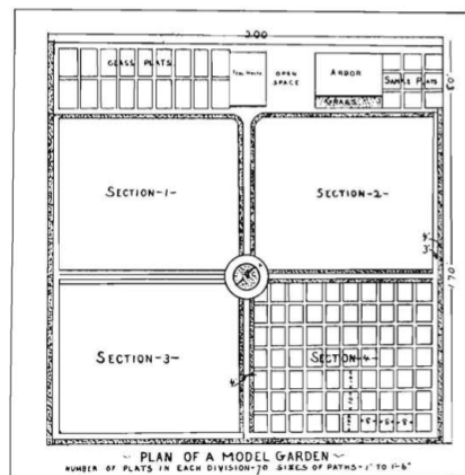
However, the Heidelberg Urban Farm is the first example that uses art as an organizing element in the garden, reflecting the context of its community and seeking to include more people than a farm that focuses primarily on productivity.

This combination of art and farming provides a very different look to urban agriculture, breaking down stereotypes that farms must be rectangular, generic places. As Public Farm 1 and the Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson Community Garden in Queens both demonstrated, productive garden spaces don't have to look like traditional farms. Gardens for food can be just as individual and unique as gardens for ornamental plants—through art, these environments can become more inclusive and welcome all members of the community while also reflecting a strong sense of place.

While an art-infused farm makes a lot of sense given the context of the Heidelberg Project, this is not the only place in the city where a less traditional form of urban agriculture could be applied. Experimental art projects are popping up all over the city. An abandoned police station in southwest Detroit is currently undergoing renovations as part of a \$1.3 million project to transform it into the headquarters for 555 Gallery and Studios, a non-profit arts organization (Voss 2010). The two-story brick building will house classrooms, artist studios, performance spaces, offices and retail space. It will also



3.41 Detroit's Yes Farm



3.40 Farms do not have to be rectangular!
(Bassett 1981)

contain Detroit Farm and Garden, a landscaping supplies and design service to help support the city's growing urban agriculture movement. Merging art with farming could benefit this future project as well.

Other Detroit artist collectives are transforming their own communities, including the Yes Farm on Detroit's east side and Power House Productions in a neighborhood near Hamtramck.

These new projects are a few of Detroit's growing collective of artists and urban pioneers who are challenging what typifies a "normal" Detroit neighborhood, turning empty houses into art and including the public in neighborhood transformation from the bottom up. By incorporating an element of community-involved agriculture, these projects could reach out to another segment of society and potentially have even greater effects.



3.42 Power House Productions

Conclusion






Detroit has undergone tremendous change over the past sixty years, and the 40 square miles of now-vacant land is a testament to the abandonment that characterizes the city today (Gallagher 2008). While Detroit has a history in community gardening, a recent surge in urban farms and experimental art projects create the context for a new type of agriculture in the city—art-based urban farming. Sited at the internationally renowned Heidelberg Project, the Heidelberg Urban Farm builds off of the Project creator Tyree Guyton's core philosophy of creating something beautiful out of what was left behind (Shibley et al. 2005). Recycled and repurposed materials are used to create a framework for art and food production, upon which the community can transform the two-acre farm into a space that reflects the uniqueness of the neighborhood. The Heidelberg Urban Farm will replace 25 vacant lots and an underused park; transforming this empty land into a productive farm can dramatically improve the way residents value their community (Armstrong 2000).

The physical design of the Heidelberg Urban Farm has many traits of successful community gardens, such as accessible paths and garden beds, locations for equipment and storage, and places to gather together (Milburn and Vail 2010). However, creating a vibrant and valuable space is not simply meeting a set of criteria; for this farm to become a long-term part of the neighborhood, community members must be able to shape it and make it their own. The value of an art-based urban farm is crucial here; by creating a space that allows a diverse array of contributions from participants, whether through art, farming, or education, this farm can be an inclusive space that activates more people than a traditional garden alone. Through these diverse contributions, this farm can be a source of fresh, healthy food, a safe place to meet with friends, a lush backdrop for cultural events, and a constantly changing gallery of art.

Appendix A: Suggested Fruits, Vegetables + Nuts






Plant selection for the garden should reflect the tastes and preferences of the participants. However, the fruits, vegetables, and nuts suggested here could be used as a jumping off point. This list is reprinted with permission from Susan Fancy, a master gardener from the Michigan Center for Sustainability at Grass Lake Sanctuary in Manchester, Michigan. These varieties are all appropriate for Michigan's climate and would be appropriate for an urban garden at the Heidelberg Urban Farm.

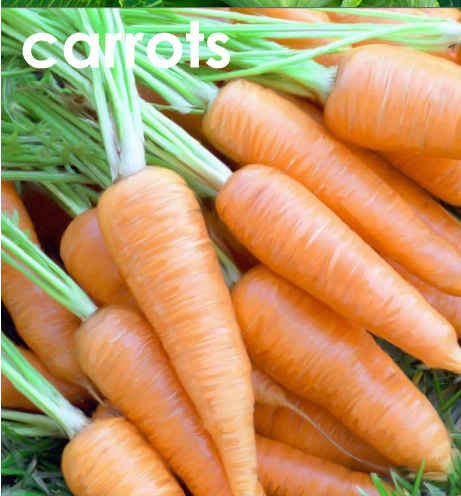

PERENNIALS







 <p>fruit trees</p>	<p><u>Apples</u>: Delicious, Honeycrisp, Haralson, Liberty <u>Peach</u>: Reliance, Red Haven, Elberta <u>Plums</u>: Methley, Santa Rosa <u>Pears</u>: Moonglow, Honeysweet <u>Asian Pears</u>: 20th Century, Shinko, Shinseiki, Hosui, Kikusui <u>Persimmon (native plant)</u>: Yates <u>PawPaw (native plant)</u>: NC-1/Canada's Best, PA Golden <u>Quince</u>: Pineapple <u>Sweet Cherries</u>: Lapins, Meteor <u>Sour Cherries</u>: North Star</p>
 <p>nut trees</p>	<p><u>Chestnut</u>: Chinese Superior <u>Shagbark Hickory</u> <u>Walnut</u> <u>Almond (cold hardy)</u> <u>Pecans (cold hardy)</u> <u>Hicans</u></p>
 <p>vines</p>	<p><u>Grapes</u>: Concord, Red Seedless Reliance <u>Arctic Kiwi</u>: Arguta (male) + Anna (female), Kolomikta (male) + Krupnoplodaya (female)</p>
 <p>shrubs</p>	<p><u>Figs</u>: Brown Turkey <u>Blueberries</u>: Elliott, Chippewa, Northland, Blueray, Bluejay, Jersey, Patriot, Bluecrop, Rubel, Northland, Reka, Elizabeth, Pink Champagne <u>Serviceberry</u>: Smokey (native plant) <u>Cultivated Elderberry (native plant)</u>: Blue, Black</p>
 <p>groundcover</p>	<p><u>Strawberries</u>: June Bearing Honeoye, Everbearing Ozark <u>Wild Blueberry (native plant)</u>: Littlecrisp, Ruby Carpet <u>Lingonberries</u>: Red Pearl, Ida <u>Cranberries</u>: Howe, Ben Lear</p>

 <p>brambles</p>	<p><u>Fall Raspberries:</u> Heritage, Autumn Britten</p>
 <p>other perennials</p>	<p><u>Jerusalem Artichoke</u> <u>Scorzonera:</u> Schwarze Pfahl <u>Asparagus:</u> Jersey King <u>Rhubarb</u></p>








ANNUALS

 <p>amaranth</p>	<p>Grain Amaranth (120 days) Vegetable Amaranth (50 days)</p>
 <p>beans, bush string</p>	<p>4" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed Dragon Langerie (55 days) Provider PMR (48-54 days) Gold Rush Yellow Wax (55 days) Golden Lumen Wax (50-55 days)</p>
 <p>beans, dry shelling</p>	<p>2-3" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed Jacobs Cattle Bush Shell (80-100 days) Yin Yang Shell (75 days) California Blackeye Pea Black Jet (104 days) Italian Rose Shell (70 days) Hutterite Soup Bean Coco Rubico</p>
 <p>beans, fava</p>	<p>6" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed Broad Windsor (70 days)</p>
 <p>beans, pole + runner</p>	<p>5'x4' spot, 2" plant spacing Scarlet Emperor Runner (75 days) Sunset Runner (75 days) Rattlesnake Pole (65 days) Italian Pole (60-70 days) Blue Lake Kentucky Wonder Pole Kentucky Blue (58 days)</p>

 <p>beets</p>	<p><i>4" plant spacing, 5 rows per 4'-wide bed</i></p> <p>Detroit Dark Red Touchstone Gold</p>
 <p>broccoli</p>	<p><i>1.5' plant spacing, 2 staggered rows per 4'-wide bed</i></p> <p>Coronado Crown Broccoli (60 days) Nutri-Bud Broccoli (55-70 days)</p>
 <p>cabbage</p>	<p>1.5' plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed</p> <p>Cabbage Parel (50 days) Cabbage Primax (60 days) Cabbage Storage #4 (95 days) Cabbage Cairo Red (90 days)</p>
 <p>carrots</p>	<p>2" plant spacing, 5 rows per 4'-wide bed</p> <p>Scarlet Keeper (70-80 days) Kurota Chantenay (80-90 days) Necoras (68 days) Yaya (60 days) White Satin (68 days) Scarlet Nantes Good Keeper (65-75 days) St. Valery (60-80 Days) Good Keeper Heirloom Danvers Half Long (75 days) Chantenay Red Cored (75 days) Carnival Blend</p>
 <p>celery</p>	<p>Tall Utah</p>
 <p>chard</p>	<p>6" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed</p> <p>Chard Bright Lights (60 days) Chard Fordhook Giant (50 days) Chard Neon Glow</p>
 <p>choy + tatsoi</p>	<p><i>12-18" plant spacing, 2 staggered rows per 4'-wide bed</i></p> <p>China Choy (65-75 days) Asian Tatsoi (45 days)</p>
 <p>collards</p>	<p><i>4' plant spacing</i></p> <p>Collards Georgia Southern (55-65 days)</p>

 <p>corn</p>	<p><i>4 rows separated by 24" apart each</i> XTRA-Tender 270A (71 days, great for freezing) XTRA-Tender 277A (81 days)</p>
 <p>cucumbers</p>	<p><i>4' plant spacing</i> Cucumber Satsuki Madoori Marketmore PMR Sweeter yet Burpless Hybrid</p>
 <p>herbs</p>	<p>Fennel Parsley Italian (80 days) Oregano (perennial) Genovese Basil Red Rubin Basil Large Leaf Basil Ocimum Cilantro Slow Bolt (45-70 days) French Thyme Spearmint Peppermint</p>
 <p>kale</p>	<p><i>2' plant spacing, 2 staggered rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Ripbor White Russian Kale (50-60 days) True Siberian Red Russian (50-60 days) Dinosaur Kale (50-60 days) Red Ursa (55-65 days)</p>
 <p>leeks</p>	<p><i>3" plant spacing, 5 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Leek Lincoln (110 days) Bandit (120 days)</p>
 <p>lettuce</p>	<p>Emerald Oak (55-60 days) Green Deer Tongue (50-60 days) Simpson Black Seeded (50-55 days, low bolt, never bitter) Buttercrunch (50-55 days, heat tolerant, slow to bolt) Rouge De Grenoblouse (55-60 days, bolt resistant) Green Star (53 days) Coastal Star Romaine (57 days, heat resistant) Nevada Summer Crisp (48 days, heat resistant) Mottisone Summer Crisp (heat resistant) Golden Purslane Winter Density (fall plantings) Tres Fin Maraichere Frisse Endive (fall planting)</p>

 <p>mustard greens</p>	<p><i>6" plant spacing</i> Mizuna Mustard Greens</p>
 <p>onions, yellow</p>	<p><i>4" plant spacing, 5 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Stuttgarter</p>
 <p>parsnips</p>	<p><i>2-6" plant spacing, 3 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Parsnip Hollow Crown or Harris (105-110 days) Cobham Marrow Improved (120 days) Parsnip Gladiator (110 days)</p>
 <p>peppers</p>	<p><i>18-24" plant spacing</i> Ace (50 days green, 70 days red) King of the North (57 days green, 68 days red) Purple Beauty (55 days purple, 75 days red) Golden California Wonder (60 days green, 78 days gold) Gourmet Orange Sweet Pepper (58 days)</p>
 <p>potatoes</p>	<p><i>18" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Red Pontiac (mid to late season) Goldrush (early midseason) Kennebec (late midseason) Onaway Butterball Russet Blue Victor</p>
 <p>quinoa</p>	<p>Brightest Brilliant Rainbow</p>
 <p>radishes</p>	<p><i>3" plant spacing, 5 staggered rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Radish Easter Egg II</p>
 <p>rutabagas</p>	<p><i>8" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Rutabaga American Purple Top (90 days) Huguenot Ole Red</p>

 <p>scallions</p>	<p><i>1" plant spacing, 5 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Scallion Guardsman (50 days) Scallion Evergreen Long White (120 days)</p>
 <p>scorzonera</p>	<p><i>6" plant spacing, perennial if desired</i> Hoffman's Schwarze Pfahl</p>
 <p>shallots</p>	<p><i>4" plant spacing, 4 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Shallot Dutch Yellow Shallot Red Sun</p>
 <p>snow peas</p>	<p><i>2" plant spacing on fence</i> Goliath (68 days) Oregon Sugar Pod II</p>
 <p>spinach + arugula</p>	<p><i>4" plant spacing, 2 rows per 4'-wide bed</i> Spinach Bloomsdale Long Standing (45 days) Arugula (40 days)</p>
 <p>squash, summer</p>	<p><i>5' plant spacing</i> Cucurbita Pepo Yellow Warty Crookneck Partenon Zucchini Ronde De Nice Flying Saucers Zuchetta Rampicante</p>
 <p>squash, winter</p>	<p><i>4-5' plant spacing</i> Triamble Victor or Red Warty Thing Marina Chioggia Galeux D'Eysines Lower Salmon River Acorn Delicata Sweet Dumpling Semi Bush Small Sugar Pumpkin Spaghetti Butternut</p>



2.5-3' plant spacing

Tomato (78 days, early, blight-resistant)

Legend (68 days, late, blight-resistant)

Pink Beauty (74 days)

Bellstar Roma (65 days)

Roma VF (65 days)

Milgren Rose Tomato



6" plant spacing

Turnip Purple Top White Globe (57 days)

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The Heidelberg Black Bottom Garden:

Addressing the legacy of urban renewal through art and landscape

Dana Petit

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Throughout history, diverse cultures have turned to natural landscapes and gardens for spiritual sustenance as well as physical and psychological healing. In Detroit, 60 years of urban crisis and abandonment has led to a situation in which both the urban landscape and the people of the city are in desperate need of healing. While the city suffered from changing economic conditions and loss of industry, a history of racism at all scales from the institution to the individual has also caused lasting social and cultural strife. Urban renewal projects in the two decades following the Second World War destroyed the vibrant, African American neighborhoods of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley and contributed to an atmosphere of distrust. Although these neighborhoods were destroyed decades ago, the negative effect their removal had on the African American community of Detroit has never been publicly acknowledged or resolved.

For the last 25 years, Tyree Guyton's Heidelberg Project has used art as a medium for collectively healing the psychological pain of his neglected neighborhood. The Heidelberg Black Bottom Garden builds on this tradition by creating an art-based garden space that reflects on the historical experience of Paradise Valley and Black Bottom and their destruction via urban renewal. The Black Bottom Garden merges landscape and art in order to create a transformative medium for individual and collective healing.

The potential for this garden to address the social and cultural legacy of urban renewal in Detroit is analyzed in relation to two types of healing landscapes – memorials and therapeutic gardens. Through historic analysis, literature review, a staged art event for community engagement, and applied design, the garden's potential to acknowledge the impact of urban renewal and to validate the cultural narrative of Detroit's African American community is examined.



1.1 Tyree Guyton's Obstruction of Justice House on Heidelberg Street



The Heidelberg Project

As a lifelong resident of Detroit, Tyree Guyton has seen his childhood neighborhood on Heidelberg Street go through many changes – from a family-centered community to the chaos of the 1967 riots and then escalating abandonment and deterioration. In 1986, Heidelberg Street was in dire straits when Tyree Guyton started transforming the two-block area surrounding his mother’s house into what eventually became an internationally renowned artscape. Guyton converted empty lots and abandoned houses into an environmental artwork composed primarily of materials scavenged from the decaying neighborhood. As his art started to attract attention and visitors, the presence of drugs and prostitutes on the street declined. Still, the community surrounding the Heidelberg Project continues to experience severe economic disinvestment with 50% vacancies and one of the highest poverty rates in the country (Shibley et al. 2005).

Despite these challenges, the Heidelberg Project has become a legible beacon of life and hope for the city. Guyton regards his art as medicine for the spirit of Detroit. The newly proposed Cultural Village is intended as the next iteration of the Heidelberg Project with the goal to serve as the physical, economic, and cultural center of community life for the surrounding McDougall-Hunt neighborhood. This art-based neighborhood redevelopment project is to include a community arts center anchoring a new commercial corridor, an urban farm, a sculpture garden and the Heidelberg Black Bottom Garden memorializing the historic African American neighborhoods of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley.

While residents have suffered from Detroit’s unfolding urban crisis over the last sixty-five years, artistic expression has emerged as a powerful medium for personal and communal healing. In keeping with Kenneth Helphand’s theory of “defiant gardens,” the Heidelberg Project is a testament to the resilience of a community in adverse conditions, asserting its humanity through the creative act of remaking its environment (Helphand 2006). Helphand’s book, *Defiant Gardens* traces how soldiers, prisoners of war, Jewish ghetto residents and Japanese-American internment camp residents created gardens in order to cope with the dehumanizing conditions of WWI and WWII. Similarly, Tyree Guyton’s art installations can be seen as a defiant response to dehumanizing neglect throughout Detroit.

The DOTS Festival

In order to understand the cultural significance of the Heidelberg Project to neighborhood residents and visitors, my colleagues and I organized a public art event as part of the annual Heidelberg Dancing on the Street (DOTS) Festival in August, 2010. The event was designed to allow residents and visitors to share their stories, cultural narratives, and experiences of the Heidelberg Project by painting ceramic tiles while being interviewed on video (Figure 1.2).

The crowd at the DOTS Festival was highly diverse, including lifelong residents of Detroit and the immediate neighborhood, visitors from the suburbs, first-time visitors, long-time supporters, artists, elderly, teens and children. Because of this diversity participants offered many different perspectives on the Heidelberg Project. One resident of Heidelberg Street enjoyed living “in the thick of the Heidelberg Project” and said that meeting visitors from all over the world made him feel proud of his neighborhood (M. Reynolds, interview, August 14, 2010). A number of artists at the event saw Guyton’s art as the inspiration for a Detroit-wide art movement that is playing a key role in the revitalization of the city (T. Burke, interviews, August 14, 2010; C. Goines, interview, August 14, 2010). Tim Burke, an artist-in-residence at the Heidelberg Project, related an intensely personal story about how Guyton’s art lifted him from depression and inspired him to become a found-object artist (T. Burke, interview, August 14 2010). One resident did not enjoy the aesthetic of Guyton’s art, but acknowledged that it made the neighborhood a safe place for her children (personal communication, August 14, 2010).

Many participants appreciated Guyton’s ability to transform an abandoned neighborhood into an internationally respected art installation. For a city that has lost 61% of its former residents, turning what others have discarded into art is a powerful metaphor. But for older residents, admiration for the Heidelberg Project was muted with regret for the loss of the previous community. They described a vibrant and thriving neighborhood; the home to many African American families recently immigrated from the South (P. Glenn, interview, August 14, 2010). Their stories highlighted the present community’s sense of loss and give historical context to Guyton’s art. Understanding this context places the Heidelberg Project in a historic continuum that gives meaning to the accomplishments of the Heidelberg Project and provides insight for the future direction of the Heidelberg Cultural Village.



1.2 Interviewing a participant at the public art event at the DOTS Festival

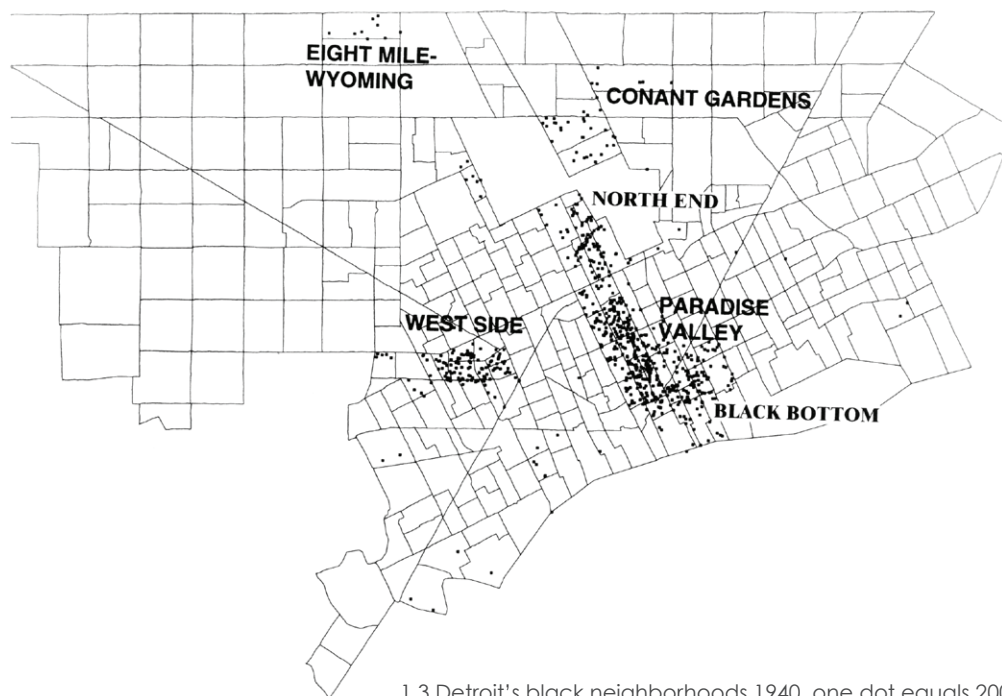
Historic Experience

“My husband, baby and I sleep in the living room. When it rain or snow it leap through the roof. Because of the dampness of the house my baby have a bad cold. We have try very bad to fine (sic) a place, and every where we go we have been turn down because of my baby.

Ethel Johnson, 1949, in a letter to Governor G. Mennen Williams (Sugre: 1996, 33)

The Heidelberg Project is located in one of the few remaining residential areas of Black Bottom, a historic African American community destroyed through urban renewal. Even though Black Bottom and the adjacent neighborhood of Paradise Valley were major centers of African American community, few physical reminders of their existence remain. In order to understand the perspective of older residents in the community surrounding the Heidelberg Project, the historic narrative of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley must be explored.

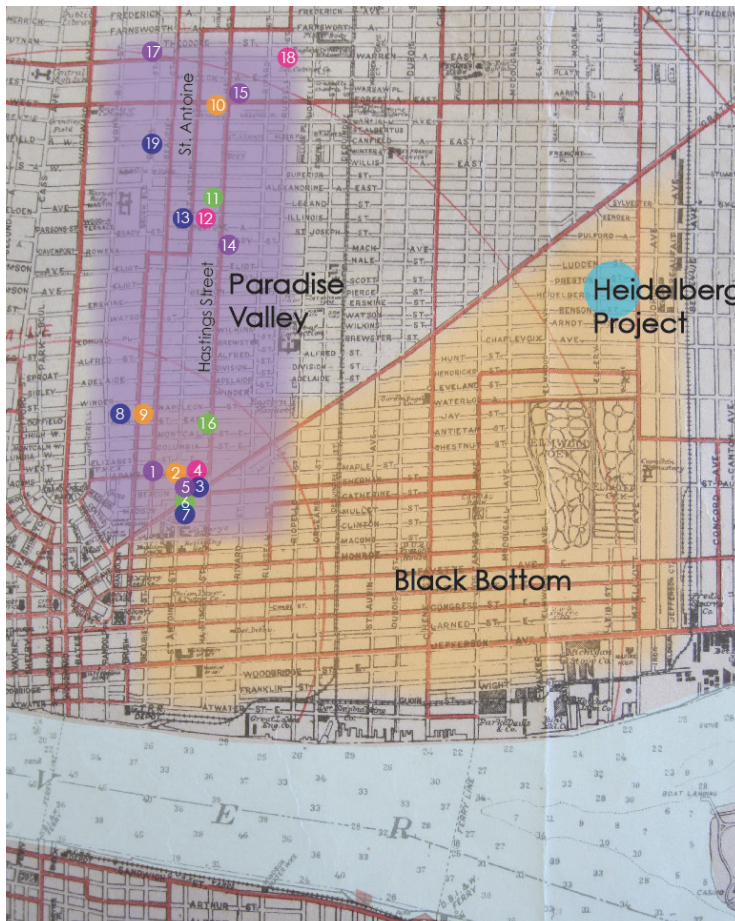
Although African American migration to Detroit began in the 1840s spurred by the Underground Railroad, Black Bottom and Paradise Valley saw their origin in the Great Migration during the first three decades of the 20th century. In 1914, 5,751 African Americans lived in Detroit (Williams 2009). By 1940, their population had grown to 145,000 (Williams 2009). Many immigrant families hoped to own their own property, build their own homes, and work in Detroit’s booming industrial economy.



1.3 Detroit's black neighborhoods 1940, one dot equals 200 people (Sugrue 1996)

Unfortunately, a variety of factors combined to thwart these hopes. Housing options for all Detroiters were limited due to city-wide housing shortages, but African Americans were further limited by racially restrictive housing covenants and by acts of hate and intolerance organized by neighborhood associations (Sugrue 1996). Most blacks were forced to settle in Paradise Valley and Black Bottom (Figure 1.3) (Sugrue 1996).

Paradise Valley and Black Bottom emerged as two distinct, but interrelated communities. Black Bottom was a working class, residential neighborhood bounded by Gratiot Avenue, Brush Street, Vernor Highway, and the Grand Trunk railroad tracks (Figure 1.4) (Williams 2009). The older residents of Heidelberg Street and surrounding areas grew up in this community and remember it fondly as the home to many strong families and successful businesses. Paradise Valley was a commercial and entertainment district centered on the intersections of Hastings Street and St. Antoine with Brush and Adams (Figure 1.4) (Bjorn 2001). Black-owned jazz clubs, hotels and restaurants lined these streets, forming the backbone of the community (Bjorn 2001). The clubs featured the very best jazz performers of the time, and served as a meeting ground for musicians and entertainers as well as white and black audience members (Bjorn 2001). The business owners of Paradise Valley are still remembered for their role in helping those in need and maintaining a safe atmosphere in the neighborhood, despite the presence of illegal gambling, alcohol and prostitution (Bjorn 2001, Thomas 1997)



1.4 Clubs in Paradise Valley, 1930s (Bjorn, 2001)

- 1 Club Plantation
- 2 Band Box
- 3 Buffalo's
- 4 Russel House
- 5 Melody Club/Club Paradise
- 6 B & C
- 7 Jess Faithful's Rhythm Club
- 8 Club Harlem
- 9 Brown Bomber Chicken Shack
- 10 Forest Club
- 11 Cozy Corner
- 12 Chocolate Bar/Cotton Club
- 13 MDL Club
- 14 Ace Bar
- 15 Tuxedo Grill/Club Tuxedo
- 16 Rose Bud Inn
- 17 Garden Terrace/Rhythm Club
- 18 Palm Garden Cafe
- 19 Harlem Cave

Living conditions in Black Bottom and the residential sections of Paradise Valley were often harsh. Federal housing officials rated two-thirds of the housing units in Paradise Valley as substandard. Buildings needed major repairs or were overcrowded. Units often lacked toilets, running water, heating, or lighting (Sugrue 1996). Sanitation services also left much to be desired in both neighborhoods – infrequent trash pick-up led to large piles of garbage that harbored rats and mice (Sugrue 1996).

Despite these and other challenges, Black Bottom and Paradise Valley developed a strong sense of community as residents worked together to elevate their social and economic status. The Detroit Urban League, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the Second Baptist Church, and other churches offered many resources to individuals and families (Sugrue 1996, Williams 2009). Figure 1.9 lists key community organizations and businesses in the community and the services they provided residents.

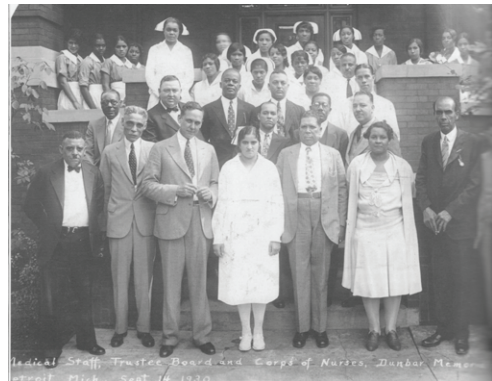
A robust business community emerged that provided a variety of professional services and basic amenities to residents. In 1920, African Americans in Black Bottom owned a bank, movie theater, co-op grocery, and the only African American-owned pawnshop in the United States (Williams 2009). The community included 17 physicians, 22 lawyers, 22 barbershops, 13 dentists, 12 cartage agencies, 11 tailors, 10 restaurants, 10 real estate dealers, 8 grocers, 6 drugstores, 5 undertakers, 4 employment offices, a few gas stations, and a candy maker (Williams 2009). Figure 1.4 lists jazz clubs in Paradise Valley in the 1930s.



1.5 Boarding houses in Black Bottom (Williams 2009)



1.6 Black Bottom family (Williams 2009)



1.7 Dunbar Memorial Hospital (Williams 2009)



1.8 Paradise Valley club owners (Borden 2003)

Key Community Organization	Role
Dunbar Memorial Hospital	Medical services. Career opportunities for African American medical professionals
Booker T. Washington Trade Association	African American business association. Founded by Rev. William H. Peck and his wife, Fannie Peck of the Second Baptist Church.
Housewives League of Detroit	Founded by Fannie Peck to organize African American housewives to support African-American-owned businesses and products.
Dunbar Community Center	Founded by John Dancy, Director of the Urban League. Served as a clinic, job placement office, and cultural center.
Nacirema Club	African American social club.
Liberty Life Insurance Company	Created jobs, served a capital base, and helped keep dollars in the community.
Green Pastures Camp	The City's only summer camp for African American children. Provided outdoor recreation opportunities and job skills training. Run by the Urban League.
United Service Organization	Supported Black Bottom's members of the armed services.
Detroit Urban League	Many programs focused on improving housing and employment opportunities for African Americans.
Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church	Hosted a school; an agency to assist migrants find housing and food; and a jobs bureau.
Second Baptist Church	Oldest black congregation in Black Bottom. Hosted early abolitionists. Helped settle black migrants.

1.9 Key Organizations in Paradise Valley and Black Bottom 1914-1950 (Sugrue 1996, Williams 2009)

Although residents of Paradise Valley and Black Bottom experienced racial intolerance and difficult living conditions, they achieved many things, such as a successful business community, safe and stable family neighborhoods, and engaged community groups. Restoring public memory of these community's achievements is one of the key goals of the garden.



1.10 Green Pastures Camp, 1931 (Williams 2009)

Urban Renewal

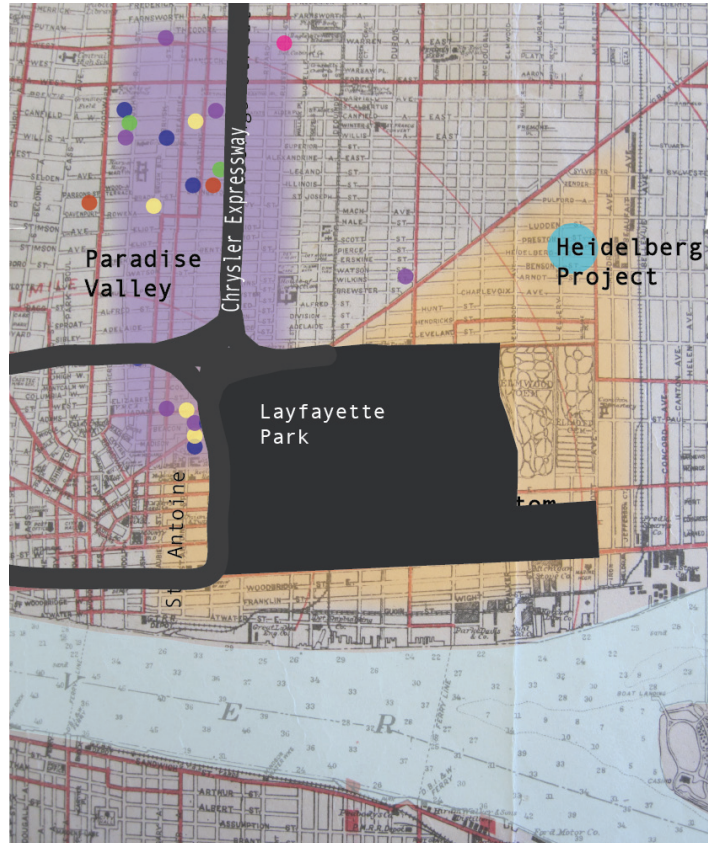
"I think it would have been so much nicer to have built places for people to live in than a highway and just put people in the street."

Harvey Royal, displaced by Edsel Ford Freeway (Sugrue:1996, 48)

By 1946, Mayor Edward Jefferies had marked Black Bottom and Paradise Valley for urban renewal (Williams 2009). Eventually, the Chrysler Freeway replaced Hastings Street, the heart of Paradise Valley (Figure 1.11) (Thomas 1997). Large portions of Black Bottom were replaced with Lafayette Park, an apartment and townhouse development designed by Mies van der Rohe (Thomas 1997). In time, Lafayette Park and associated adjacent redevelopment projects encompassed 500 acres of what was formerly Black Bottom (Figure 1.11) (Thomas 1997).

Detroit's city planners and traffic engineers thought the new freeway system would modernize urban life and grow the city's economy, but they also saw highway construction as a "handy device for razing slums" (Sugrue: 1996, 46) While white middleclass neighborhoods were minimally disrupted by highway construction, the Chrysler Freeway, the John C. Lodge Freeway, and the Edsel Ford Freeway all cut through areas with large African American populations (Sugrue 1996).

In Paradise Valley, the city offered minimal help to relocate residents and businesses even though actual construction of these projects was delayed for 10 years after the plans were announced (Sugrue 1996). During this time, homes and businesses lost value and fell into disrepair. Landowners could not find buyers for property that soon would be condemned, and they also could not move without money from selling their property (Sugrue 1996). Living conditions in the area deteriorated further as residents had no real motivation to make improvements to condemned buildings. Options for relocating were extremely limited due to segregated housing practices and a city-wide shortage of low-income housing. Officials were unsympathetic to the plight of dislocated families (Sugrue 1996).



1.11 Urban Renewal Project

In the case of Lafayette Park, city officials were concerned that Black Bottom's unsightly slum conditions threatened the business community of downtown (Thomas 1997). They saw redevelopment as a way to replace poor quality housing with modern apartment buildings and townhouses and to attract white middleclass residents to the city center (Thomas 1997). Detroit's African American community also largely supported slum clearance during the 1940's, based on the expectation that it would be replaced by new, low-income housing for the existing community



1.12 Corner of Eliot and St. Antoine, 1935 (Williams 2009)

(Thomas 1997). In contrast, Lafayette Park offered limited housing for existing residents, forcing them to crowd into other, already overcrowded, African American neighborhoods (Thomas 1997).

While Lafayette Park and the Chrysler Freeway were the first blows to Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, other projects followed that continued to displace African American residents. By 1964, plans were set to replace large portions of what remained of Paradise Valley with the Medical Center, University City, and the Cultural Center, all projects intended largely to cater to white, middleclass preferences (Thomas 1997). African American residents protested adamantly against all of these projects. The siting of the projects illustrated the repeated failure of city officials to value existing African American communities over their redevelopment agenda.

Ironically, although many of Detroit's urban renewal projects were intended to attract white residents to the city center, on the whole, urban renewal may have exacerbated the pace of racial change. Displaced black families were forced to move into white neighborhoods when their homes were condemned. Often times, radical change within a neighborhood took place even when only one or two black families moved into a white neighborhood (Thomas 1997). After their arrival, real estate agents frequently canvassed the neighborhood, convincing white families to sell their homes before prices declined (Thomas 1997). As white families left, black families moved in, further convincing remaining white families that the neighborhood was in decline (Thomas 1997). While many people blame the riots of 1967 for the white, middleclass exodus out of Detroit, it began in the 1950's, driven, in part, by racial intolerance (Sugrue 1996, Thomas 1997).

Contemporary Issues

Population in Detroit peaked at 1.9 million in the 1950's, and has since dropped (Sugrue 1996). The 2010 census revealed a population of 713,000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). Detroit has lost 61% of its former population and has over 49 square miles of vacant land within its boundaries (Gallagher 2008). Scattered across 139 square miles, Detroit's remaining residents live amongst dilapidated buildings, crumbling infrastructure, and overgrown, vacant lots (Gallagher 2008).



1.13 Vacant home in Detroit, 2010

Detroit's deteriorating urban neighborhoods undermine the health of residents. In a study of women's perceptions of health in Detroit, Schulz (2004) found the loss of community infrastructure (grocery stores, health providers, hospitals, and pharmacies) was perceived as a major impediment to health. Women also identified lack of social control in public spaces as a barrier to outdoor physical and social activity (Schulz 2004). Throughout the city, vacant lots and buildings have become sites of illegal dumping and other crimes; and police and other city services cannot be counted on to respond effectively (Schulz 2004). Israel et al. (2002) found that for women on Detroit's East Side, chronic stressors, such as worrying about physical safety, family life, distrust of the police, and financial vulnerability, lead to increased symptoms of depression and decreased general health. The health impacts of Detroit's urban deterioration are not race-blind. Schultz (2002) presents evidence that race-based residential segregation in Detroit disproportionately exposes African Americans to negative health effects of concentrated poverty. In response to the obvious negative consequence of abandonment, city officials and community leaders are attempting to envision how Detroit's urban landscape could be re-configured to better serve the city's current population. Mayor Bing's Detroit Works initiative as well as the Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD) are aimed at guiding the shrinkage of the city's infrastructure and neighborhoods. Their work has received national media attention. For example, the New York Times carried a debate in which experts discussed how large areas of Detroit's less-populated neighborhoods could be re-purposed for agriculture or habitat (Bradley et al. 2011).

While many of the changes being considered by The Detroit Works and CDAD are necessary to create a more efficient, healthier, and safer city, residents are concerned that their homes and neighborhoods will be marked for demolition. Part of the challenge of right-sizing Detroit is addressing the legacy of distrust and disenfranchisement that originated with the destruction of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley over 60 years ago.



Gardens as Vehicles for Cultural Healing

In a city faced with so many deeply entrenched problems, one may question the capacity of art and gardens to address real problems in resident's lives. While it cannot be denied that Detroit needs practical solutions for its physical and economic problems, it is also clear that Tyree Guyton's art has touched the lives of many individuals and has a stabilizing effect on the neighborhood. Kenneth Helphand's book *Defiant Gardens* provides a theoretical context for understanding the power of the Heidelberg Project as a symbol of revitalization in Detroit (Helphand 2006). Helphand traces how soldiers, prisoners, victims of war, and internment camp residents created gardens to survive dehumanizing situations during WWI and II. Like Guyton's Heidelberg Project, these gardens allowed people to recreate a sense of "home" by taking some control over a chaotic situation and to defiantly express their own humanity by creating something beautiful. According to Helphand, a garden's defiant meaning is accentuated by its context – an artscape in the ghetto or a flower garden at the frontlines of war accentuates the power of art and gardens to beautify and comfort because of their incongruous setting.

Whereas most of the gardens discussed in Helphand's book were transitory in nature, lasting only as long as the wars, the Heidelberg Cultural Village aims to become a self-sustaining community, a permanent fixture on Detroit's urban landscape. From its start as one artist's act of defiant creativity in the face of urban decay, the Heidelberg Cultural Village is now ready to become an institution of community life. While the original spirit of defiant creativity must not be lost in the transition, the Cultural Village should honor and acknowledge the neighborhood that older residents nostalgically remember and serve the needs of the neighborhood's current residents.

By merging the functions of a healing garden and memorial, the Heidelberg Black Bottom Garden is positioned to meet these requirements. As a memorial, the garden can formally acknowledge the cultural triumphs and tragic destruction of Paradise Valley and Black Bottom. As a healing garden, it can offer a restorative respite from the stressful conditions experienced by so many of Detroit's residents. Plants can serve as a new medium through which to carry on Tyree Guyton's tradition of defiant creativity, in addition to found object artwork.

Garden as a Memorial

A wide range of scholars from geographers to cultural studies theorists have studied how memorials and monuments can shape public memory and transfer meaning (Doss 2010; Hoelscher 2004). The idea of using a memorial to resolve collective emotional pain and to honor the experience of ordinary people originated with Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. (Savage 2009). Before the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, most monuments were dedicated to heroic individuals or events. Since its construction, memorials throughout the U.S. have been used to assert the experience of particular groups of people and to process public feelings of grief, gratitude, fear, shame, and anger (Doss 2010). Erecting a memorial is a way for groups to demonstrate their social influence by asserting publicly that certain events, people, or locations are worthy of remembrance (Alderman 2000). Moreover, memorial sites can actively shape public interpretation of the past by making history tangible and visible (Alderman 2000).

The memorial *Danzas Indigenas* by mural artist and activist Judith Baca helped the southern California community of Baldwin Park re-examine their history from pre-colonial times to the present (Figure 1.14) (Pohl 1996). Since Baldwin Park is home to many different cultural groups with complicated historic



1.14 *Danzas Indigenas*, Baldwin Park, California

relations, *Danzas Indigenas* portrays a complex, multi-faceted view of the community's past, which, according to Baca, "challenges the whole colonial missionary system" (Pohl 1996). Many elements in the memorial are left ambiguous in order to illustrate multiple points of view and invite visitor engagement. For example, one inscribed quote reads, "It was better before they came" (Doss: 2010, 369). While this comment came from a white politician discussing Mexican immigration after World War II, visitors could also assume it referred to Spanish colonists, or any other of the many groups of immigrants that have settled in the region.

In 2005, the ambiguity of this quote and others sparked controversy when an anti-illegal immigrant group called Save Our State (SOS) demanded that this quote and others be removed from the memorial's arch. Claiming that the quotes were "offensive and seditious" and "anti-American," SOS used protests at *Danzas Indigenas* to advance their anti-immigration agenda (Doss: 2010, 370). In response to SOS's protests, artist Judith Baca organized nonviolent protest and a mobile art installation titled *You Are My Other Me*. During the

protest, thirty people held aloft the 90 foot stretch of placards with images and quotes on both sides that included statements such as “Good art confuses racists” (Doss: 2010, 373).

Eventually, the Baldwin Park City Council issued a resolution honoring Baca and Danzas Indigenas that read: “The strong sentiments expressed by people who make various interpretations of its meaning after 12 years is a testament to its value as an artwork” (Doss: 2010, 373). While the memorial was not intended to evoke angry reactions, its ambiguity led to the exposure of racism and provoked constructive public discourse on the topic of immigration. Like Baldwin Park, Detroit has also experienced a complex history; both white and black residents have suffered from the deterioration of the city and responsibility for the deterioration is contested. The Heidelberg Black Bottom Garden might be a place where ambiguity and subtle subversion can be effectively used to provoke needed public discourse.



1.15 Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial, Duluth, Minnesota

Another function of contemporary memorials is focused on bearing witness to past wrongdoing. The Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial in Duluth, Minnesota, acknowledges the lynching of three African American men on June 15, 1920 (Figure 1.16) (Doss 2010). The memorial consists of a small plaza in downtown Duluth, located across the street from the site of the lynching. The plaza is framed on two sides by stone walls inscribed with quotes from various authors, the most prominent of which reads: “An event has happened upon which it is difficult

to speak and impossible to remain silent” (Doss: 2010, 254). The walls include bas-relief bronze statues of the three men, whose views are focused across the street to the site of the lynching. According to Doss, the dignified representation of the three men restores their subjectivity, reminding viewers of each man’s individual personhood. The specific sequencing of quotes arranged on the walls instills viewers to recognize their own complicity in racial violence (Doss 2010).

For many years, Duluth’s history of racial violence was suppressed. Official local histories, like *Duluth: Sketches of the Past* (1976) omitted the lynching (Doss 2010). While Bob Dylan’s 1965 song “Desolation Row” refers to the event, a first full historical account did not appear until 1979 (Doss 2010). Creating a memorial put an end to the community’s ability to deny its ignominious history and illustrated a desire to work for a

better future (Doss 2010). Similarly, Detroit's urban landscape omits record of Paradise Valley and Black Bottom. Creating a memorial that bears witness to their unjust destruction limits the ability of viewers to deny Detroit's history of racism, while suggesting the desire to work for a more just future.

Garden as a Setting for Healing

Throughout history, diverse cultures have turned to natural landscapes for spiritual sustenance and wellbeing. In modern times, environmental psychologists, medical doctors, horticultural therapists, and landscape architects are exploring the various mechanisms through which contact with nature, in the wild and in the garden, can improve mental wellbeing. The gardens discussed in Kenneth Helphand's book demonstrate that even small, planted areas can provide respite to people in extremely difficult situations.

Environmental psychologists have explored the benefits of nearby nature for inner city residents. Frances Kuo demonstrated that residents of the Robert Taylor Housing Project in Chicago who lived in buildings surrounded by trees and greenery had greater psychological resources for coping with poverty than people living in buildings without nearby green space (Kuo 2001). Kuo also has linked trees and greenery to lower crime rates and reduced domestic violence, as well as greater self-discipline and concentration (Kuo and Sullivan 2001; Faber et al. 2002).

Attention Restoration Theory may explain why nearby nature improved the coping ability of participants in Kuo's study. Developed by Rachel and Stephen Kaplan, Attention Restoration Theory (ART) argues that natural settings engage our attention in an effortless way that leaves people feeling rejuvenated (Kaplan 1995). ART proposes that many aspects of modern life require directed attention because they are uninteresting, unattractive and distracting. Long period of directed attention causes attentional fatigue, which results in lower concentration and problem-solving ability and greater irritability and accident-proneness (Kaplan 1995). Because natural settings engage attention effortlessly, they allow people to recover from attentional fatigue, thereby increasing their ability to cope with adversity (Herzog et al. 1997). Frances Kuo's Chicago study demonstrated this connection – people who lived near greenery reported better coping skills and scored higher on a test of mental concentration (Kaplan 1995, Kuo 2001). According to Herzog et al. (1997), restorative experiences may also provide opportunities to reflect on larger life issues, which could also contribute to coping ability.



1.16 Robert Taylor Housing Project, Chicago

Applying theories about the benefits of greenery and open space to Detroit raises questions of context and cultural association. While many neighborhoods have street trees, shrubs, and wildflowers growing in vacant lots, these spaces are often perceived as threatening, unsafe and lacking of social control. Sensitivity to cultural context is needed to create a space that provides opportunities for restorative experiences.

Kenneth Helphand's theories provide some clues as to how gardening could help Detroiters reclaim their relationship to their city's open spaces. Helphand discusses gardens as a domesticating tool, allowing people to take some control over a chaotic situation, to recreate a sense of "home" (Helphand 2006). Similarly, Detroit's current urban agricultural movement is allowing community members to take control of the city's vacant land and create a safe space for community life.



1.17 Yard art of Susie Evans. (Westmacott 1992)

Urban gardens in Detroit are not the first instance of African American "defiant gardens." Throughout the US, African Americans have engaged in "yard art," a tradition of displaying assemblages of found objects and plants imbued with personal and spiritual meaning in residential yards and gardens (Gundaker and McWillie 2005). Many of the techniques and symbols used in these gardens are directly relatable to West African traditions. Transforming a home into a work of yard art can be seen

as a defiant act of cultural preservation. Despite pressure to conform to the broader population's cultural standards, yard artists use garden art to assert their life experiences, ethical values, and beliefs about the spiritual and physical world. (Gundaker and McWillie 2005)

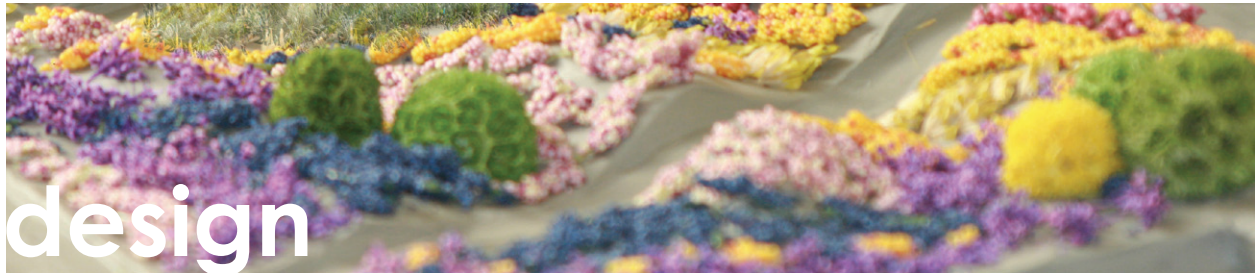
Alice Walker in her essay "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens" examines how African American women have used everyday arts, such as gardening, to nurture their creativity. She describes her own mother's garden as a riot of colors with carefully orchestrated blossoms from spring to fall. Creative acts like gardening, singing, or quilting allowed African American women to maintain their dignity and sense of self, despite living in a society that denied their creative potential or need for self-actualization (Walker 1983). According to Walker, the absence of a creative outlet may have caused some African American women in the post-Reconstruction South to suffer from depression or other mental illness (Walker 1983). As Helphand makes clear, the benefit of a garden is not just the setting it creates, but also the mental succor that emerges from engaging in a creative act (Helphand 2006).

By examining African American yard art and Alice Walker's essay within the context of "defiant gardens," we can see that the creative act of making and caring for a garden has been a survival tactic for generations. There is a wealth of African American garden traditions that were drawn upon for the design of the Black Bottom Paradise Garden. Plants can be used to communicate the Heidelberg Project's message of transformation and renewal. Many people, consciously or unconsciously experience plants as a metaphor; throughout the seasonal cycle, plants can represent birth, growth, death, and renewal (Helphand 2006). This representation of the transformation of decayed organic matter into healthy plants may resonate with Heidelberg enthusiasts, similar to Guyton's transformation of garbage into art. Integrating plants into Tyree's found object artwork solidly grounds the Heidelberg Project's metaphor of rebirth into the organic processes of nature.



1.18 Yard art of Wess and Sue Willie Lathern, Oakman Alabama. (Gundake McWillie 2005)

Plants can also be used in the garden to create a restorative setting. The Kaplans have identified four characteristics of restorative settings: being away, extent, fascination, and compatibility (Kaplan 1998). Being away refers to spaces that are physically and conceptually separate from the source of mental fatigue. Extent refers to spaces that engage the mind and promote mental exploration. Spaces that elicit fascination engage the mind effortlessly. Compatibility refers to spaces that support the activity at hand. For example, a garden exposed to intense, hot sun may not be compatible for mid-day relaxation, or swarms of mosquitos may limit opportunities for contemplation in a natural area. While the Kaplans note that natural settings often have all four of these characteristics, they also suggest that spaces can be designed to achieve them (Kaplan 1998).



Site Context

The garden is located at the intersection of Heidelberg Street and Mt. Elliott Street. It is bisected by Heidelberg Street and extends from the alley to the south of Heidelberg Street to Elba Place to the north. A community arts center which will serve as the anchor for a new commercial corridor will be located to the east of the garden across Mt. Elliott Street. Because of its prominent location, the garden needs to clearly mark the entrance to Heidelberg Street. The portion along Mt. Elliott will need to respond to the public character of the commercial corridor.

1.19 Site Context



Cultural Village

- Urban Farm
- Black Bottom Garden
- Amphitheater
- Community Arts Center
- Installations Area
- Commercial Corridor

Existing Features

- 1 Human Sundial
- 2 Entrance Sign
- 3 Party Animal House
- 4 Alien House
- 5 Street Trees
- 6 Existing Homes

A sculpture garden extends to the west of the site further down Heidelberg Street. The north side of the healing garden is intended to facilitate pedestrian flow into the art installation area and enhance its physical and visual connection.

Existing **6** homes and apartments about the garden to the north, east, and south. The yards around these homes will be buffered for privacy and clearly marked as distinct from the public garden spaces.

Preserving existing art installations and other features on site was a key priority. The **2** entrance sign and **1** human sundial constructed from recycled bricks and bottles by local artist Lisa Rodriguez have been incorporated into the entrance area off of Mt. Elliot. Views of Tyree Guyton's **3** Party Animal House and **4** Alien House from Heidelberg Street were also preserved. **5** Mature trees along the street and within the site were incorporated into garden beds to minimize soil compaction within their drip line.



1.20 Sundial by Lisa Rodriguez



1.21 Alien House by Tyree Guyton



1.22 Entrance sign by Lisa Rodriguez



1.23 Plan View

-
- 1 Human sundial
 - 2 Promontory and arbor
 - 3 Memorial wall
 - 4 Open lawn
 - 5 Earth-form wave
 - 6 Entrance sign
 - 7 Totem crest

Narrative

The Garden tells the story of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley through an interpretive landscape sequence that narrates African American arrival in Detroit, experiences of challenge and hardship, and the struggle to overcome these challenges.

The Garden's main entrance evokes the hopeful arrival of African Americans to Detroit (Fig. 1.24). As visitors walk up a gentle incline to a **2** raised promontory, they see glimpses of the rest of the garden. The promontory is bordered by a metalwork arbor planted with vines.



1.24 Entrance to garden

1.25 Potential content for memorial mosaic



Visitors leave the promontory via a declining ramp to enter a recessed area formed by a ³ curving memorial wall that includes a map, quotes, and other images illustrating the cultural triumphs and loss of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley (Fig. 1.25 and 1.26). The map will locate Paradise Valley, Black Bottom, and the Heidelberg Project and illustrate the extensive re-shaping of Detroit's urban landscape. Removed streets and building footprints will overlay the currently existing roadmap of the city. The map will also locate key historical businesses, institutions, and jazz clubs throughout the city. Quotes about the neighborhoods could be collected from residents and visitors to the Heidelberg Project, but historic statements from the officials who decided to replace Paradise Valley and Black Bottom as well as the residents themselves will also be



1.26 Promontory and memorial wall





1.27 Totem crest

included. Images will depict famous residents and key leaders as well as average residents of the two neighborhoods. While historic photographs can be used as a basis for design, the map and images could be rendered in stone and tile mosaic.

As visitors turn from the wall, they see an expanse of extensively planted ⁵ wave-like earth forms rippling out from the memorial wall and crossing Heidelberg Street. Paths cut through the earth forms, leading the visitors out of the recessed area into the rest of the garden. The earth forms create a soothing rhythm, reminiscent of breath, waves, or gospel music. The earth forms may be thought of as waves or ripples of energy from Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, radiating out from the memorial wall. Alternatively, they could be thought of as gently flowing water, soothing the pain of past injustices.

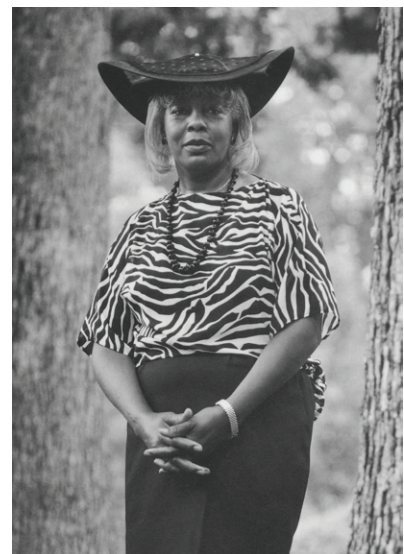
The earthen waves crest across Heidelberg Street with a higher berm that is lined with ⁷ totem-like found object artwork (Fig. 1.27). These sculptures would be created by local artists or community groups. Made of re-purposed scraps of buildings and cast-off objects, the totems illustrate how the spirit of Detroit's historic African American neighborhoods is being re-born from the pieces of its past. The totems are arranged along a broad path through the garden, with seating walls on the other side to provide a contemplative space for visitors to sit, reflect and relax. The seating wall would be covered with tiles painted at the public art event at the DOTS Festival (1.30).



1.28 Potential watcher for the garden

The totems make use of the symbolic lexicon of yard art. A common symbol in yard art is that of the “watcher” – mannequins, animal figurines, and anthropomorphic groupings of objects placed at entrances and thresholds that remind visitors to “behave as if all the world is watching.” The totems in the Black Bottom Paradise Garden can be understood as “watchers,” looking out on the rest of the garden from their ridge.

Figure 1.28 illustrates what a potential totem might look like. Standing on a podium of charred timbers from burnt out buildings, the totem is made of a discarded mannequin crowned with an elegant hat, modeled after African American women’s church hats. Black women have a long-standing tradition of wearing glamorous hats to church on Sunday as a symbol of respect for themselves and their communities (Fig. 1.29) (Cunningham 2000). Wearing her church hat, the totem rises out of the ashes of the city’s past with self-respect and dignity. The garden’s arbor, earth forms, and planting design are also all modeled after the dramatic sculptural forms of church hats.



1.29 African American church hats (Cunningham 2000)

Diversity of Experience

In addition to illustrating African American experience in Detroit, the landscape sequence creates a variety of spaces that provide visitors with choices about the type of settings they wish to inhabit. While visitors new to the garden may choose to walk through in the choreographed sequence outlined above, residents and regulars may just head to their favorite spot.

The area on the **6** corner of Heidelberg Street and Mt. Elliott is an open, social area where visitors can sit on bench walls and watch people enter Heidelberg Street and the plaza across Mt. Elliott. People who want to see and be seen may be attracted to this space.

The **2** raised promontory provides views of the rest of the garden, but it is sheltered by a metalwork arbor that could create a dreamy, romantic atmosphere.

The recessed area under the promontory provides a more somber, quiet ambience. The **3** curving memorial wall creates a convex space that could encourage visitors to engage with the memorial in solitude rather than as a collective.

To the southeast of the recessed area, an **4** open lawn shaded by arching trees provides space for large groups to gather for events or for individuals to sprawl out during the summer.

The straight path bisects the **5** waving earth forms allowing visitors to walk amongst the plants and enjoy a feeling of movement and flow. The beds are edged with walls made of concrete and recycled bottles. At points where the waves rise high enough, visitors can sit on the walls and observe the plantings.

Across Heidelberg Street, the earth waves rise into a **7** higher ridge. A wider path down the center of the ridge is lined with seating benches that provide a view of the garden and the sculpture garden along the center of Heidelberg Street. The seating bench is covered with tiles from the DOTS Festival, August 2010 (Fig. 1.30). The plantings on this side of the street are more open and colorful, creating a more social, celebratory environment.



1.30 Painted tiles from the DOTS festival, 2010

Planting Design



Plants are used to reinforce the garden's narrative and to shape the diverse experiences offered in different areas of the garden.



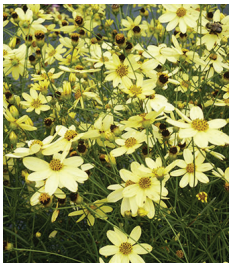
Trees and shrubs are used to shape and distinguish different spaces within the garden. All existing street trees on the site are maintained. Honey locust trees are placed to the north of the totem crest, creating a transparent screen between the healing garden and the sculpture garden. Weeping cherry trees along the berm that shelters the memorial wall create a somber, enclosed space. Where the garden abuts existing homes, mixed shrub borders create a sense of privacy and separation.



The waving earth forms are covered with drifts of groundcovers between six to eighteen inches tall, low enough to avoid obscuring the shape of the earth forms themselves. The foliage and blossom color of the groundcover shifts with the mood of the garden's narrative, from subdued dark green and white along the memorial wall to brighter yellow, blue, and magenta along the totem crest. Bold color and a loose, eclectic planting style are used to fit with the Heidelberg Project aesthetic. Upright perennials are occasionally strung along the borders between two larger drifts of groundcover, providing vertical accent and color contrast throughout the garden.



Occasional groupings of rounded shrubs dotted throughout the groundcover frame views and lead the eye across the garden. The shrubs are a play on Guyton's dot theme, and will include a variety of sizes and foliage colors. The topiary dots, in addition to the use of color and loose, playfulness of the groundcover plantings, help to translate the Heidelberg Project aesthetic into the medium of plants.



1.31 Recommended groundcover plants, listed from the top:
 Stachys byzantina 'Lamb's ear,'
 Tiarella cordifolia 'Brandywine Foamflower,'
 Ajuga reptans 'Black Scallop,'
 Alchemilla mollis 'Lady's Mantle,'
 Rosa 'Flower Carpet Amber,'
 Coreopsis verticillata 'Moonbeam'
 Nepeta 'Walker's Low'

Opportunities for Engagement

Many opportunities exist for community members to contribute to the design and construction of garden elements. Beyond the totems, other features such as the memorial wall and arbor are intended as opportunities to showcase the work of local artisans. While individual artisans are identified below, each artisan may engage a variety of community members in the creative process.

Carl Nielbock, an expert metalworker and proprietor of C.A.N. Art Handworks in the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood, could construct the arbor. Nielbock has created wrought iron gates, fences, and other decorative pieces for architectural restoration projects around the city (Fig. 1.32). Teenagers from the neighborhood could assist in the arbor since C.A.N. Art Handworks offers an apprenticeship program that employs local youth.



1.32 Metalwork gazebo by Carl Nielbock

The memorial wall could be designed and constructed by local mosaics artists. Pewabic Pottery, a historic Detroit ceramic studio, has designed and constructed mosaic murals for many prominent locations throughout the city. Hubert Massey, a local African American muralist, recently completed a mosaic mural commemorating Mexicantown at the Bagley Pedestrian Bridge that connects southwest Detroit to Canada (Fig. 1.33). He is part of the Detroit Mural Factory, a group of muralists who work with communities to create public art (<http://detroitmurfactory.com/>).



1.33 Hubert Massey's Bagley Bridge mosaic

Artist Lisa Rodriguez recently worked with community members at the Heidelberg Project to construct the Human Sundial and Welcome Sign out of recycled brick, mason block, and glass bottles. Rodriguez could be commissioned to lead community members (as volunteers or employees) in the construction of seating walls and bed edges throughout the garden using similar materials.



The research presented earlier from Schulz (2002, 2004) and Israel (2002) demonstrates that chronic stress has a significant impact on the health of Detroit's African American residents. While visiting a garden may not entirely alleviate the harsh experience of poverty in Detroit, Kuo (2001) demonstrated that trees and greenery decrease mental fatigue and improved people's ability to cope with poverty. From these studies, it seems reasonable to suggest that an opportunity for restorative experiences could improve the health and welfare of visitors and neighborhood residents. The garden will meet the Kaplan's four characteristics of restorative settings:

Being Away: Through the use of hedges and earth works, the garden creates a space apart from everyday life so that visitors can leave behind their normal concerns. The ramping entrance and arbor will create a distinct entrance experience, signaling to visitors that they are entering a place apart. In contrast to the surrounding neighborhood, the garden are lushly planted with colorful blooming plants and that clearly convey a sense a care and intention. While some areas of the garden are be open to the surrounding neighborhood, the cohesiveness of the earth forms and planting design clearly distinguish the garden as a distinctive experience.

Extent: By offering a visually coherent but complex space, the garden provides a setting for mental exploration. The promontory and totem crest both rise above the surrounding landscape, creating ideal settings for viewing the garden and also providing intriguing vistas for visitors within the garden and surrounding area. The diversity of experiences within the garden could also contribute to a visitor's sense of the garden's extent. As visitors walk through the garden, the various colors, shadiness, openness, and general mood could contribute to their sense of the garden's extent and potential for exploration.

Fascination: The inclusion of the totems, the memorial wall, and carefully arranged plantings engages the mind and promotes mental exploration.

Compatibility: The diversity of experience within the garden contributes to the garden's compatibility for a variety of uses. Enclosed, shady areas around the memorial wall create a comfortable space for quiet, solitary contemplation. The totem crest area is more open, enabling social interaction. While many neighborhoods in Detroit offer extensive tracts of naturalizing, vacant land, these areas often fail to provide residents with

opportunities for restorative experiences because they don't feel safe and lack compatibility, Kaplan's fourth key characteristic. According to Schulz (2004), many residents are afraid to walk around their neighborhoods or visit neighbors because of crime and loss of community. The garden's crisp bed edges, intentional design, and regular maintenance should indicate to visitors that the garden is a well-maintained, safe space to enjoy the outdoors. Also, the Heidelberg Project's many visitors and residents will provide "eyes on the street" that will contribute to the safety of the garden.

Like the victims of WWI and WWII that Helphand discusses, residents of Detroit have an estranged relationship with their surroundings – many settings within the city are feared and associated with random violence. The soldiers, prisoners of war and others discussed by Helphand used gardens to transform otherwise hostile territories into temporary homes (Helphand, 2006).

Tyree Guyton's art installations have already transformed the neighborhood, creating a safe environment for children and adults to enjoy. The Heidelberg Black Bottom Garden could extend this tradition of creative self-expression to transform vacant lots through the medium of plants and other garden materials into a living work of art.

Creating a garden may be one way for residents to express hope in the future and trust in one another. The garden

provides a number of opportunities for social engagement in its construction and maintenance. According to Helphand, the act of gardening during times of human crisis and war: maintained morale by providing a recreational outlet, allowed for expression of threatened cultural values, allowed for the expression of hope and belief in a better future, and encouraged people to organize as a community and work together.

Individuals who participate in the construction and maintenance of the garden may benefit in ways similar to those discussed by Helphand. Schulz (2002) demonstrated that female residents of Detroit's eastside who have access to emotional support (love, trust, and empathy) and instrumental support (tangible assistance) experience less chronic stress. Individuals who help create and maintain the garden may actually receive emotional or instrumental support throughout the process. For some community members, working on the construction of the garden may be an opportunity to develop job skills and earn income. For others, volunteering to care for the garden could be a way to expand their social network and build a sense of community. The Heidelberg Project currently has a strong volunteer network that brings people from the



1.34 WWI soldier's trench garden (Helphand 2006)

neighborhood and wider Detroit metropolitan region together. The Black Bottom Paradise Garden could build on this tradition of volunteering and community building.

The garden builds off of Tyree Guyton's use of a symbolic, visual language. For people who appreciate and relate to Guyton's work, found-object art elements of the garden, such as the watchers, may be especially meaningful. The memorial wall communicates in a different way that may be more accessible to other visitors. Unlike Guyton's work, which operates on a fairly abstract level, the memorial wall will include literal images and quotes that clearly relate the memorial to Paradise Valley and Black Bottom. The memorial wall's materiality of stone and mosaic may read as more "official," making use of the social power of a memorial to demonstrate that a group of people has judged Paradise Valley and Black Bottom as worthy of commemoration (Alderman 2000).

Locating a memorial to Black Bottom and Paradise Valley within the Heidelberg Cultural Village could enable the community to take ownership of the historic legacy of these neighborhoods. It creates a legible connection between the existing community and the past. The map on the memorial wall is intended to restore a sense of the physical location and extent of these neighborhoods before and after urban renewal and to limit the ability of viewers to deny their unjust destruction. The quotes and images displayed on the memorial wall could highlight poor living conditions in Black Bottom and Paradise Valley and the racial prejudice that motivated the siting of urban renewal projects.

As illustrated through the Danzas Indigenas case study, the meaning of the memorial may vary depending on the perspective of visitors (Doss 2010). For residents of the neighborhood, the memorial may communicate a proud history of cultural accomplishment. People who identify with the residents of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley may find comfort in the fact that the memorial bears witness to their triumphs and unjust destruction. Like the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial, the garden could instill viewers to recognize their own complicity in racial and social injustice and inspire them to take action against it (Doss 2010). It is also possible that some viewers may reject the garden's representation of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, as in the case of Danzas Indigenas. While it is impossible to know exactly what about the memorial could cause a reaction, such controversy might provide a healthy way and a safe public platform for Detroiters to process the unacknowledged legacy of urban renewal.

A key challenge for contemporary race-related memorials involves drawing attention to injustice while avoiding the victimization of the memorials subjects. Victimization is thought to deny agency – the ability to independently take action and make choices to advance oneself (Cheng 2000). When we only focus on how outside forces such as the economy, race, and class have affected the lives of African Americans; we ignore all the ways they have responded to these problems. Defiant gardens, such as the Heidelberg Project, yard art, and Detroit's urban gardens, are a testament to the agency of oppressed people. Honoring this tactic in the Memorial Garden draws attention to the agency of African Americans in Detroit.



Historian Thomas J. Sugrue argues that the Detroit's economic decline can be traced to the 1940's and 50's and is most apparent in the joblessness, housing segregation, and ghettoization experienced by African Americans in Black Bottom and Paradise Valley (Sugrue 1996). Although urban renewal projects were intended to create a positive future, the failure of city officials to see value in Detroit's African American communities as well as racial intolerance on the part of white residents contributed to the city's decline.

Today, Detroit once again stands on the cusp of citywide change, similar to the scale of urban renewal in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. At this moment in history, collective scrutiny of the past is needed to avoid committing the same mistakes. In many ways, Detroit still as racially divided as it was at the beginning of the urban renewal era. Detroit is still one of the most segregated metropolitan regions in the country, with many African Americans still living in unhealthy, impoverished neighborhoods (Schulz 2002). And studies as recent as the 1990's demonstrated that various ethnic groups throughout the region are remarkably intolerant of sharing their neighborhoods with individuals of a different race or ethnicity (Steeh 1993, Lambert 1990).

A memorial garden in the Heidelberg Cultural Village is an appropriate setting for citizens to reflect on the relationship between racism and urban crisis in Detroit. The Cultural Village is located in Black Bottom, the very neighborhood that was most disadvantaged by urban renewal. By creating a legible connection between the currently existing community and Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, the memorial garden could instill pride in the community's achievements at the same time it draws attention to how urban renewal contributed to the neighborhood's current state of decay. The garden aims to provoke public discourse on race, but also to instill empathy between racial groups.

The garden builds on the legacy of the Heidelberg Project as a defiant response to dehumanizing neglect and abandonment. Through the healing power of art, Tyree Guyton transformed an abandoned neighborhood into an internationally renowned environmental artscape. Guyton's art demonstrates Kenneth Helphand's theory that creativity and compassionate care can transform even the most dehumanizing landscapes into healing gardens. While one garden cannot solve all of Detroit's problems, it can potentially express the type of compassion, empathy and care that is needed to bring the city and its communities back to life.

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